

INTERACT

Research Mentoring for Undergraduate Students

Amala Integrated Medical Research Department (AIMRD)

Amala Institute of Medical Sciences (AIMS)

1. Objective

The objective of **INTERACT** is to introduce undergraduate MBBS students at Amala Institute of Medical Sciences (AIMS) to structured research exposure, scientific thinking, and translational research principles at an early stage of their medical training. This program aims to cultivate research aptitude, critical appraisal skills, and ethical research conduct among UG students, while fostering interest in clinician–scientist career pathways.

INTERACT is designed as a **mentorship and capacity-building initiative**, not a compulsory research supervision program. It complements the existing MBBS curriculum by providing guided exposure to research methodology, literature analysis, data handling, and scientific communication, without interfering with academic teaching or assessment structures.

2. Scope

This program applies to:

- All interested **MBBS undergraduate students** (Phase I–IV) at AIMS
- Scientists and researchers affiliated with **AIMRD**
- Faculty members supporting undergraduate academic and research activities

INTERACT accommodates both **voluntary participation** and **faculty-nominated students**, ensuring inclusivity while maintaining manageable mentor engagement. The program supports short-term projects, observational studies, literature-based research, ICMR-STs proposals, case series, audits, and basic translational research exposure.

3. Program Structure

INTERACT follows a **tiered mentorship model** tailored to undergraduate learning levels:

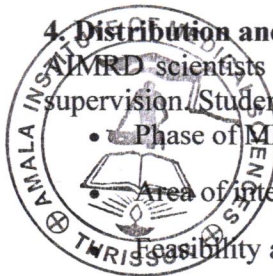
- **Exposure Level** – Introduction to research concepts, ethics, and literature appraisal (Phase I & II)
- **Engagement Level** – Guided participation in small research projects, data collection, or analysis (Phase II & III)
- **Output-Oriented Level** – Manuscript preparation, abstract writing, conference presentation, or STS submission (Phase III & IV)

The emphasis is on **learning-by-participation** rather than independent research ownership.

4. Distribution and Mentorship Assignment

AIMRD scientists will act as **research mentors** for groups of UG students rather than individual supervision. Students will be grouped based on:

- Phase of MBBS
- Area of interest (clinical, laboratory, public health, translational)
- Feasibility and mentor availability



Each AIMRD scientist may mentor **multiple small student groups** simultaneously, ensuring exposure without excessive individual workload. Faculty members from clinical or pre-clinical departments may serve as **academic facilitators**, where required.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 AIMRD Scientists

- Introduce students to research methodology and scientific reasoning
- Guide literature search, hypothesis framing, and basic study design
- Provide input on data interpretation and scientific writing
- Conduct workshops on ethics, plagiarism, and publication standards
- Mentor students toward abstracts, posters, or manuscripts where feasible

AIMRD scientists will **not replace faculty teaching roles** or act as formal academic supervisors.

5.2 Faculty Facilitators

- Encourage and identify interested UG students
- Support feasibility within departmental and institutional norms
- Facilitate access to clinical material, records, or lab exposure where applicable
- Ensure academic alignment with MBBS curriculum requirements

5.3 UG MBBS Students

- Participate actively and responsibly in mentoring activities
- Adhere to ethical guidelines and institutional regulations
- Maintain professionalism, punctuality, and academic integrity
- Seek feedback and apply scientific suggestions constructively

6. Mechanism of Implementation

1. Program Orientation

An annual INTERACT orientation will be conducted for interested MBBS students, outlining objectives, opportunities, and expectations.

2. Student Enrolment

Students may enrol voluntarily or through faculty recommendation. A basic expression-of-interest form will capture research inclinations.

3. Mentor Allocation

Students will be grouped and assigned to AIMRD mentors based on interest and feasibility.

4. Mentoring Sessions

Periodic group meetings (monthly or bi-monthly)

Workshops on research basics and scientific communication

Hands-on exposure where applicable



5. Research Output

Depending on duration and commitment, students may progress toward:

- ICMR-STC or similar proposals
- Conference abstracts/posters
- Review articles or short communications

6. Program Completion

Students completing defined milestones may receive **INTERACT participation or completion certificates.**

7. Communication and Coordination

AIMRD will coordinate the program through a designated **INTERACT Program Coordinator.** Communication will occur via:

- Official institutional channels
- Scheduled meetings and announcements
- Departmental faculty liaisons

Periodic review meetings will assess student engagement, mentor feedback, and overall program effectiveness.

8. Ethics, Confidentiality, and Academic Integrity

All undergraduate research activities under INTERACT will comply with:

- Institutional Ethics Committee (IEC) guidelines
- Data confidentiality and patient privacy norms
- Plagiarism and authorship standards

Students will be sensitized to responsible conduct of research, including informed consent, data authenticity, and ethical publication practices. Any research involving human subjects or patient data will proceed **only after required approvals.**

9. Expected Outcomes

INTERACT aims to:

- Build early research culture among MBBS students
- Improve critical thinking and evidence-based medicine skills
- Increase UG participation in institutional research output
- Create a pipeline of research-oriented PG aspirants and clinician-scientists



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