

Policy	Trainee Participation in Mandatory Academic Events
Date Approved	March 18, 2025
Approved By	Postgraduate Medical Education Committee
Approved by SOMAC	May 12 th , 2025
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Review to Commence	May 2028
Responsible Portfolio/Unit/Committee	Postgraduate Medical Education Committee
Responsible Officer(s)	Associate Dean, PGME
Related Policies	PARO-OTH Collective Agreement

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the expectations for the participation of trainees during mandatory academic events (MAEs). MAEs are part of residency training, and are integral in supporting acquisition of knowledge and skills needed for competence development. There is a joint responsibility by programs and trainees to support participation. This policy provides guidance where there are repeated avoidable absences from MAEs.

This policy addresses the following [CanERA Institutional Accreditation Standards](#):

Standard 3: Residents are prepared for independent practice.

Element 3.2: The residency program provides educational experiences designed to facilitate trainees' attainment of the outcome-based competencies and/or objectives.

Requirement 3.2.2: The residency program uses a comprehensive curriculum plan, which is specific to the discipline, and addresses all the CanMEDS/CanMEDS-FM Roles.

Indicator 3.2.2.3: The curriculum plan addresses expert instruction and experiential learning opportunities for each of the CanMEDS/CanMEDS-FM Roles with a variety of suitable learning activities.

Requirement 3.2.4: Residents' clinical responsibilities are assigned in a way that supports the progressive acquisition of competencies and/or objectives as outlined in the CanMEDS/CanMEDS-FM roles

Indicator: 3.2.4.4: Residents' clinical responsibilities do not interfere with their ability to participate in mandatory academic activities.

2. Definitions

2.1 Mandatory academic event (MAE) Include, but are not limited to academic half days, PGME educational events, grand rounds, seminars, retreats and journal clubs. Each program has the discretion to label additional academic events as 'mandatory'. When such a designation is given, this policy shall also apply.

3. Principles

The Mandatory Academic Event (MAE) policy is grounded in the CanMEDS and CanMEDS-FM framework and specifically, the roles of scholar and professional. These roles emphasize engagement, accountability, commitment to professional responsibilities and adherence to ethical standards. Participation in MAEs is a fundamental aspect of scholarly development and professionalism in residency education and reflects the following principles:

3.1 Professionalism: Trainees have a professional obligation to attend educational opportunities like MAEs, recognizing their importance in achieving discipline-specific competencies and contributing to their overall professional growth.

3.2 Accountability and Responsibility:

Consistent participation in mandatory academic events (MAEs), except in extenuating circumstances, reflects a trainee's accountability to their program, peers, and patients. This commitment fosters a culture of responsibility essential for delivering high-quality, patient-centered care. Furthermore, adhering to the designated time for MAEs demonstrates an ethical commitment to balancing clinical duties with educational priorities, in alignment with the PARO-OTH collective agreement. This integration of learning into practice is crucial for professional development and overall patient care.

3.3 Role Modeling: Active participation in MAEs contributes to role modeling professionalism and scholarly activity for peers and junior trainees and clerks. It fosters an environment of respect, dedication and excellence in medical education.

3.4 Continuity of Education: Regular attendance ensures continuity in the trainee's journey, allowing for sustained progress in achieving CanMEDS/CanMEDS FM competencies and fulfilling competency-based medical education's mandate of seamless and integrated learning.

4. Responsibilities

4.1 The Program will:

4.1.1 Provide trainees with protected time to attend MAEs in adherence with accreditation standards and the PARO-OTH Collective Agreement.

4.1.2 Collaboratively decide between the home and receiving programs, if off-service trainees will return to their home programs for their MAE or stay at their off-service rotation. This should happen well in advance to facilitate service coverage and academic schedule planning.

- 4.1.3 Ensure that trainees are working with their academic advisors to confirm that through a mix of MAEs and clinical education that they are meeting the program objectives.
- 4.1.4 Notify the PGME office if a trainee (s) is unable to attend a PGME MAE with a legitimate absence (booked vacation, post-call etc.).
- 4.1.5 Ensure off-service trainees are not scheduled to cover the clinical responsibilities of their colleagues at the expense of their own protected time for MAEs.
- 4.1.6 Ensure that the learning needs of off-service trainees are factored into the receiving rotations MAEs if off-service trainees are to attend receiving program MAEs
- 4.1.7 Document absences from MAEs in the trainee file and develop a system for monitoring attendance.
- 4.1.8 Record any documentation related to excused absences and/or unexcused absences in the trainee's file.
- 4.1.9 Respond to patterns of repeated unexcused absences as per section 5.

4.2 The Trainee will:

- 4.2.1 Contact the program director (PD) or delegate in the event of an unplanned absence at an MAE, as soon as possible after the absence.
- 4.2.2 Obtain pre-approval from the PD or delegate if attendance at a PGME MAE is not possible, including providing documentation when required.
- 4.2.3 Consult their PD (or delegate) and/or academic advisor to determine if an alternative means of fulfilling the requirement is available, if they are scheduled for call or clinic duties, or if they are otherwise approved to be absent during an MAE.

4.3 The PGME Office will:

- 4.3.1 Notify home programs of absences from PGME MAEs.
- 4.3.2 Collaborate with programs and trainees if the program determines that attendance at a PGME MAE is not possible for one or all their trainees and arrange an appropriate alternative, if necessary.
- 4.3.3 Provide a suitable alternative if the trainee is unable to attend a PGME MAE.

5. Procedure for Non-compliance

If a program director has determined a pattern of repeated unexcused absences, trainees will be in breach of professional and scholarly expectations. The program director may elect to do the following, which includes but is not limited to:

5.1 Academic make up session:

The program can require the trainee to participate in a comparable educational activity, an additional didactic session or a structured teaching activity.

5.2 Independent Learning Assignment:

The program can assign a task that demonstrates comprehension of the material covered during the missed session, such as:

- Completing a written summary of the missed lesson
- Preparing a presentation on the topic for their peers

- Submitting a critical appraisal of related journal articles.

5.3 Habitual Absence:

If a trainee is consistently absent, the program may consider:

5.3.1 Professionalism Assessment: The program director will review the documented absences and evaluate them under the trainee's ability to demonstrate competency in the domain of professionalism. Multiple unexcused absences require a meeting with the program director and may result in a professionalism and/or scholar modified learning plan (MLP) or remediation plan, following the usual steps for determining such plans.

Approval History:

PGMEC – prior policy was the Resident Participation in Academic Half-Day (AHD) while Off-Service	March 24, 2022	SOMAC	May 13, 2024	Faculty Board	May 29, 2024
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