MD Program

Student Assessment Policy

Student Assessment Component: *Policy #SA-05 v15*
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1.0 Purpose

1.1 This document outlines the principles that address student performance at the course level. Overall student performance is addressed through the MD Program's Academic Performance Advisory Group (APAG) Terms of Reference, and the Student Progress & Promotions Policy.

2.0 Principles

2.1 All student assessment will be consistent with and based upon overall curricular objectives and competency framework of the MD Program.

2.2 Student assessment will be designed with the goal of ensuring students have achieved the stated curricular objectives informed by elements of competencies, and clinical presentations of the Medical Council of Canada.

2.3 Student assessment will be guided by available research, best practice and the CaCMS Accreditation standards relevant to assessment.

2.4 Assessment must include elements specifically designed to assess all competencies outlined in the "Queen's MD Program Competency Framework" Document. The provision for ongoing observation and assessment of clinical skills, appropriate behaviours and attitudes must be included in the assessment strategy of every course where these opportunities exist.

2.5 Assessment plans for all curricular units are reviewed centrally by the Curriculum Committee, through delegation to the Assessment and Evaluation consultant who ensures that sound assessment practices are used in the assessment of students across the MD Program.

2.6 Completed assessments will be reviewed by the Curricular Quality Assurance Team (CQuART) to ensure that assessments are implemented in accordance with the accreditation standards and student assessment policy.

2.7 Methods of assessment introduced as part of the course assessment plan that are novel or courses that are new to the MD program must be reviewed and approved by Curriculum Committee prior to implementation. This is to ensure that they conform to best practices and are in line with other assessment practices.

2.8 Within comparable curricular units across locations (units with comparable learning objectives), equivalent methods of assessment will take place to ensure that all medical students achieve the same learning objectives.

2.9 Narrative description of student performance must be included as part of the assessment in all courses where student-teacher interaction permits.

2.10 An assessment plan for each course must be posted on the course page prior to the start of the course and this will be considered the official assessment plan for the course. This will include assessment dates for formative and summative assessments and weighting of all assessments. The acceptable use of Artificial Intelligence must be indicated. Mandatory assessments will be clearly noted.

3.0 Assessment in Pre-clerkship and Clerkship Curricular Units – General Consideration

3.1 All statements regarding pre-clerkship courses will apply to clerkship curricular units unless otherwise noted.

3.2 Assessment plans will be reviewed on an annual basis by CQuART to ensure sound assessment practices that are in line with accreditation standards. They will evaluate whether assigned objectives are appropriately assessed.

3.3 Each course will offer formative assessment designed to provide feedback to students that will enable them to assess their level of achievement and ongoing learning needs. Each course must provide at least one opportunity for formative assessment that does not contribute to the final grade.

3.4 Documented formative feedback is provided to each student at least at the midpoint of any required curricular unit of four to six week-week duration. In curricular units of longer duration,

documented feedback is provided at least every six weeks. In curricular units less than four-week duration, alternate means are provided by which medical students can measure their progress in learning.

3.5 All summative assessments are available within six weeks after the end of each required curricular unit.

3.6 All course requirements must be met by the last day of the term in which that course is scheduled. If there are deferred or supplemental examinations, or if there are any course requirements where an extension was granted, it is required that all course requirements be completed by July 30th of that academic year.

3.7 Any student who does not successfully pass the unit test, midterm or final evaluation will be invited to meet with the Course Director to identify additional supports that might be required. The student's performance may be reviewed by the APAG. Students may also be asked to attend meetings with Student Affairs staff, as appropriate.

4.0 Principles governing unit tests, midterm and final examinations and Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) – Pre-clerkship and Clerkship Curricular Units

4.1 A unit test/midterm examination is required for each course or curricular unit with a duration greater than four weeks. If a Course Director wishes to use alternate forms of assessment to achieve the goals of unit tests or midterms, they will need to have their assessment plan approved by the Curriculum Committee.

4.2 Unit tests/midterm exams should provide students with guidance as to the expected level of knowledge and comprehension required to pass the course and familiarize students with the final examination format.

4.3 Unit tests or midterms shall not represent the only opportunities for formative assessment in a course.

4.4 Questions on a midterm or unit test must not test new content presented in the 48 hours prior to the midterm or unit test.

4.5 All courses will have, where appropriate, a separate final examination/assignment that provides sufficient data to make an informed judgment about student achievement of the learning objectives. A maximum weighting of 70% for these final examinations/assignments is recommended to reduce the percentage of the final grade that is dependent on a single assessment.

4.6 For Clerkship curricular units, which vary in length, a final assessment is needed only if the unit is greater than four weeks of curricular content. Clerkship curricular units longer than 4 weeks also require a midterm evaluation.

4.7 All written final examinations must use more than one type of question, typically multiple choice and short answer to vary the assessment methods used to assess performance. Other formats of questions such as matching or key features must be in consultation with the Assessment and Evaluation consultant.

4.8 The examination schedule is determined by the MD Program. Final examinations will occur no later than the end of the term in which the course is completed.

4.9 There must be an appropriate interval of time between the end of classes for a given course and the final examination of no less than 48 hours. Review sessions may be scheduled in the 48-hour examination preparation period for a course, but these must not contain any new material.

4.10 Final Examinations (including OSCEs) will be prepared by the Course Director or designate. All items will be reviewed by the Course Director, Assessment and Evaluations consultant and Year Director for quality, accuracy of the answer key, and alignment with course learning objectives and assigned Medical Council of Canada presentations, where appropriate.

4.11 For multiple choice questions (MCQs), technical analysis of the examination will consist of: descriptive statistics (Mean, Standard Deviation, Range) and estimates of reliability. Item analysis will consist of item difficulty and biserial correlation.

4.12 For OSCEs, a standard technical analysis of the pre-clerkship OSCE will consist of: descriptive statistics by station (Mean, Standard Deviation, Range), a repeated measures analysis of the variance (ANOVA), and an item analysis of checklist items to identify those posing challenges at the station level (frequency tables). The OSCE may also consist of descriptive statistics by examiner group and Welch's t-tests.

Where possible, examination difficulty will be reviewed for all final examinations, by comparing the class average to that of previous years, and by any other methods possible. In cases where the examination is significantly difficult, consideration will be given to scaling the results.

5.0 Exam Integrity

5.1 All questions submitted for inclusion in a unit test, midterm or final examination will be newly created or drawn from the question bank.

5.2 Unit tests/midterm examinations and final examinations must have at least 25% new content.

5.3 Supplemental final examinations may only have at most 50% content in common with the unit test, midterm or final examination used that academic year.

5.4 Items that are identified as flawed after item analysis will be removed from the bank until edited.

5.5 Students will have an opportunity to review unit tests, midterms, and final examinations, governed by the MD Program's exam review session procedure and in keeping with Queen's Academic Integrity policy.

5.6 The MD Program exempts all its final exams from release for student reference purposes in accordance with clause one of the Senate Policy on Confidential Exams, May 21, 2008.

6.0 Student Grading – Pre-clerkship and Clerkship Curricular Units

6.1 The final mark for each course will be a composite of the various assessment methods used throughout the course.

6.2 Course Directors may determine that any component of the course must be completed satisfactorily to achieve standing in the course. This must be made clear to all students via the course page at the beginning of the term.

6.3 In courses that use numeric marks, the student must achieve all the following to receive a pass standing in the course:

6.3.1 A composite course mark of 65% or greater and

6.3.2 A mark of 65% on the final examination and

6.3.3 Satisfactory completion on all units or assessments that have been identified by the Course Director as mandatory.

6.4 In courses that use summative OSCEs, students must achieve all the following in order to receive a pass standing:

6.4.1 A mark of 65% overall on the OSCE and

6.4.2 No more than one station with a mark of less than 65% for OSCEs with 6 stations and

6.4.3 Satisfactory completion on all assessments that have been identified by the Course Director as mandatory.

6.5 If a student scores less than 65% on any final examination, their examination will be automatically remarked (i.e. short answer questions will be remarked, OSCE videos will be reviewed). The mark obtained after remarking is final.

6.6 Students who have passed but have achieved a course mark of between 65-70% and/or final exam mark of less than the class mean minus 1.5 standard deviations will have their performance in the course reviewed by the Course Director. The Course Director may request further review and advice from the Year Director and the APAG.

6.7 For courses where assessment plans are not based on numeric marks, students must achieve satisfactory completion according to the assessment plan outlined on the course page as determined by the Course Director.

6.8 Students who achieve satisfactory marks, but who are identified by the Course Director or Year Director as having deficiencies in any area (e.g. professional or ethical behaviour, areas of academic concern, tutor or peer assessment concerns, or challenges in any competency) will be referred to the APAG and/or the Associate Dean, MD Program in the case of professionalism concerns.

6.9 The Course Director will determine the student's status (Pass/Fail/Incomplete) in the course based on the published assessment plan in accordance with MD Program policies and procedures.

6.10 If a student does not meet the pass standing in a course, the Course Director may recommend to the Director of Academic Progress that the student undertake additional assignments and/or assessments, and/or reschedule certain requirements to allow the student to meet the pass standing. The Director of Academic Progress then may approve the recommendation or bring forward to the APAG for further review, taking into account the student's complete academic record.

7.0 Assessment in Clerkship Clinical Courses – General Considerations

7.1 All students must receive a mid-rotation assessment.

7.2 Any marginal notations will mandate a meeting with the Course Director or faculty delegate.

7.3 End of Block Assessment of student's competence will be based on the collation of assessment information from different sources at the discretion of the Course Director.

7.4 All students will participate in an exit meeting in person or remotely with the Course Director or faculty delegate, where they will learn of their status in the course.

7.5 The Course Director will determine the student's status (Pass/Fail/Incomplete) in the course based on the published assessment plan in accordance with MD Program policies and procedures.

8.0 Principles of Final Examinations – Clerkship Clinical Courses

8.1 Examinations are to be scheduled by the MD Program.

8.2 Written clerkship examinations will undergo the same technical analysis described above in section 4.0.

8.3 Students will be released from their clinical duties by 6 pm the night prior to any written examination or OSCE with no evening/overnight call assigned.

8.4 Review of clinical clerkship examinations will be at the discretion of the MD program. The MD Program exempts all its clinical clerkship final exams from release for student reference purposes in accordance with clause one of the Senate Policy on Confidential Exams, May 21, 2008. Upon failure, appeal and request, students may meet with the Course Director to review their exam performance and obtain feedback.

9.0 Student Grading – Clerkship Clinical Courses

9.1 To achieve standing in a clerkship course, the student must achieve all the following:

9.1.1 A mark of 65% on the final examination and

9.1.2 Satisfactory assessment on the End of Block Assessment form and

9.1.3 Logging of 100% of mandatory clinical encounters/procedures for the course and

9.1.4 Achievement of the required standard on all other mandatory assessment tasks such as examinations or course-designated assignments.

9.2 If a student does not meet the pass standing in a course, the student's performance will be reviewed at APAG. The Clerkship Director will make recommendations to the Director of Academic Progress what additional assessments the student must satisfy to meet the pass standing. The Director of Academic Progress may approve the recommendation or bring forward to the APAG for further review, taking into account the student's complete academic record.

10.0 Clerkship Electives

10.1 Assessment of clerkship electives fall under Clerkship Electives Policy.