

## MD Program

### Attendance and Absences in MD Program Policy

*Student Assessment Component: Policy #SA-07 v8*

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## 1.0 Principles

- 1.1 Students in the MD Program must participate in learning events to acquire and demonstrate the necessary skills, attitudes and competencies required to enter a residency program and, ultimately, independent practice.
- 1.2 Attendance at **all** learning events and full participation in the curriculum is an explicit expectation for all medical students.
- 1.3 At times, attendance is not possible or leave from medical school may be necessary. This policy sets out the conditions and implications for absence or leaves.

## 2.0 Mandatory Attendance

- 2.1 It is expected that medical students will attend **all** curricular events in pre-clerkship, clerkship curricular units and **all** scheduled dates in a clinical placement.
- 2.2 Specific learning events will be deemed 'mandatory attendance' events in Elentra, and attendance will be taken at these events.
- 2.3 All the following types of learning events will always be considered mandatory:
  - Clinical & Communication Skills sessions
  - Expanded Clinical Skills sessions
  - Small group sessions with tutors (IE FSGL)
  - Wellness sessions
  - Interprofessional Education events
  - Simulation and procedural skills sessions
  - Community and clinical placements
  - Electives placements (Clinical and research)
  - Course related assessments: unit tests, midterms, team assignments, final exams, etc.

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- 2.4 Course Directors may determine that other learning events are mandatory attendance events, and these will be noted in Elentra.
- 2.5 Any mandatory attendance learning event must have a plan for make-up for students who are absent. Course Directors will determine the makeup requirements.
- 2.6 Students will be incomplete in the course until all mandatory attendance learning event make-up requirements are completed in accordance with the Student Assessment Policy.
- 2.7 If a student misses more than 10% of mandatory attendance events, clinical placement days/shifts in a course, or more than 2 mandatory attendance events in any course or unit with 10 or fewer mandatory events either for pre-approved absences or unexpected absences, they will be referred to the Academic Performance Advisory Group, (APAG), for additional review and recommendations.
- 2.8 The MD program will make every effort to avoid scheduling mandatory assessments on significant dates based on the Queen's Multi-faith calendar, but this will not always be possible.
- 3.0 Requests for pre-planned absences**
- 3.1 Students must submit requests for consideration for pre-planned absences from the appropriate Curricular Coordinator who will work with the relevant Course or Year Director to review requests according to this policy.
- 3.2 Students will not be approved for a pre-planned absence from a final examination.
- 3.3 Requests for pre-planned absences that do not include final examinations in pre-clerkship and C curricular units will only be considered if the following conditions are met:
- 3.1.1 Students will not miss more than 10% of mandatory attendance events in a course, or no more than 2 mandatory attendance events in any course or unit with 10 or fewer mandatory events AND
- 3.1.2 Students cannot request to be absent for more than 5 curricular days in a row and no more than once in a year (see Section 7.0) AND
- 3.1.3 The pre-planned absence request is for one of the following reasons:

- a) **Varsity Team or Club Athlete:** meaning a varsity athletics team or club member participating in a sanctioned significant event (e.g. provincial, national, or international competitions) where student participation is essential to the success of the team or individual athletic achievement.
- b) **Non-Varsity Athlete:** meaning a student who is engaged in sport or physical activity but who is not on a varsity team or club but who is participating in a significant event (e.g. provincial, national, or international competitions) where participation is essential to the success of the team or individual athletic achievement.
- c) **Distinguished or Invited Guest:** meaning a student who is invited to showcase an exceptional achievement, talent, or ability on a provincial, national or international stage. Participation in these events would highlight the talent of Queen's students. This includes presentations at provincial, national and international conferences.
- d) **Student Reserve Forces:** meaning students who are active members in the Student Reserve Forces and who encounter a conflict between their duties as a Student Reservists and their academic obligations.
- e) **Religious Observances or Significant Personal Life Event:** meaning a student who experiences a conflict between academic obligations and a sincerely held religious observance, ceremony, or holy day, or a significant personal life event (e.g. personal life event or other exceptional circumstance) where participation is reasonably required and cannot be deferred.

3.4 Absences will not be approved for matters of personal convenience, leisure activities, vacation travel or observerships.

3.5 Appeal of decisions for preplanned absences can be made in writing to the Associate Dean, MD Program.

#### 4.0 Absences in Clerkship Clinical Experiences and Electives (clinical and research)

4.1 To recognize the students' transition to the clinical environment and balance of work and personal commitments, students are permitted to take 10 personal leave days throughout the clerkship clinical rotations (core rotations, clinical components of transition to residency and

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electives, clinical and research). Students are expected to use personal days for all planned absences as outlined in 3.1.3 a-d and 3.4. Religious observances will not count towards personal days, however, days taken for travel that do not fall on the day of the religious observance will require the use of a personal day. This does not include absences of less than 2 hours that can be accommodated by the preceptor/clinical team.

4.2 Course Directors will note on the course page any dates in their course where pre-planned personal days will not be approved.

4.3 Personal days will not require justification; however, approval will be required according to the procedures established by the clerkship committee.

4.4 Students may only be approved for the following maximum number of personal days in any given rotation without the need for make-up time due to absence:

- a) 1 personal day in a 2-week rotation,
- b) Up to 2 personal days in a 4-week rotation,
- c) Up to 3 personal days in a 6-week rotation
- d) Up to 5 personal days in community block. These 5 days may be taken in a row in community block. The 5 days may not be taken as the first 5 days or the last 5 days of community block.

## **5 Unplanned absences**

5.2 Any student who is unable to attend a mandatory event or assessment due to an unplanned absence must inform their curricular coordinator and, if relevant, clinical supervisor, as soon as possible. The process for make-up time/assessments will be determined as laid out for preplanned absences.

## **6 Cumulative absences**

6.2 All absences for mandatory attendance events will be tracked as students must participate in planned learning events and clinical experiences to both acquire and demonstrate the necessary knowledge and skills to successfully meet the requirements of the MD program.

6.3 Students who exceed the thresholds noted in 3.3 or 4.4 will have their performance reviewed at APAG, with a goal to ensure they are meeting the requirements of the curriculum and to determine if make up time is needed.

6.4 Students with other patterns of absences may also be reviewed at the APAG, according to MD Program procedures.

6.5 Students who must attend frequent medical appointments must apply for formal accommodations through Queen's Student Accessibility Services.

## **7 Leaves of absence**

**7.2** A leave of absence is a planned or unplanned event that requires multiple sequential curricular days of leave. Requests for short- and long-term leaves of absence should be made as outlined below:

### **7.1.1 Short-Term Leave**

A short-term leave is defined as an unplanned absence lasting up to 5 sequential curricular days. Short-term leaves are approved by the relevant Year Director, or delegate.

### **7.1.2 Extended Leave**

Extended leave is defined as a planned or unplanned absence lasting greater than 5 curricular days. Extended leaves are approved by the Associate Dean, MD Program or delegate.

## **8 Return from leaves of absence**

8.2 Students who have an approved leave of absence are responsible for all missed curricular content and assessments.

**8.3 Return from Short-Term Leave:** For short-term leaves, how such curricular content is to be made up will be determined by the appropriate Course Director(s), while adhering to relevant MD program policies (e.g. Student Assessment Policy). If a student is not returning within the agreed-upon time, they must inform the Year Director, or delegate immediately.

**8.4 Return from Extended Leave:** Plans for re-entry and reintegration from extended leaves of absence will be determined by APAG. This may include but is not limited

to make-up work, a plan of assessment, remediation, repeat elements of the curriculum or other such means to ensure a successful re-entry to the curriculum. If a student is not returning within the agreed-upon time, they must inform the Associate Dean, or delegate immediately.

8.5 The plan for reviewing students on extended leaves of absence will be determined by APAG and the student will be informed of the necessary timelines through APAG. The student may also be required to check in with Student Affairs as part of the conditions of their leave.

## **9 Length of Program**

9.2 The MD Program will be completed within 7 years from admission to graduation, including all leaves of absence, unless otherwise approved by the Associate Dean, MD Program.