

Technical Standards Policy

Office of Accountability:	Dean, Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry
Office of Administrative Responsibility:	MD Program
Approver:	MD Curriculum & Program Committee
Scope:	Compliance with this policy extends to all members of the MD Program.

Overview

It is understood that the authority for policy is derived from the Alberta *Post-Secondary Learning Act*.

Purpose

The Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry at the University of Alberta is responsible to society to provide a program of study so that graduates have the knowledge, skills, professional behaviours and attitudes necessary to enter the supervised practice of medicine in Canada.

Graduates must be able to diagnose and manage health problems and provide comprehensive compassionate care to their patients. For this reason, students in the MD Program must possess the skills necessary to interview, examine, and counsel patients, and competently complete certain technical procedures in a reasonable time, all the while ensuring patient safety.

POLICY

1. SKILLS & ABILITIES

An MD Program applicant and a candidate for the MD degree must demonstrate the following skills and abilities independently or with reasonable accommodation.

a. Observation

A student must be able to participate in learning situations that require skills to acquire information through observation and perception by the use of senses and mental abilities. In particular, a student must be able to accurately observe a patient and acquire information through visual, auditory and somatic sensation.

b. Communication

A student must be able to speak, to hear and to observe individuals or groups of individuals in order to effectively and efficiently elicit and clarify information. In the course of study for the MD degree the student must be able to progressively create rapport and develop therapeutic relationships with patients and their families, and establish effective communication with all members of the medical school community and healthcare teams. A student must also be able to progressively acquire the ability to



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coherently summarize and effectively communicate a patient's condition and management plan verbally, and in written and electronic form.

c. Motor and Tactile Function

A student must possess sufficient motor function to develop the skills required to safely perform a physical examination on a patient, including palpation, auscultation, percussion and other diagnostic maneuvers. The examination must be done independently and competently in a timely fashion. A student must possess sufficient motor function and sensory function in order to be able to use common diagnostic aids or instruments (e.g., ophthalmoscope, otoscope, sphygmomanometer, stethoscope), either directly or in an adaptive form. A student must be able to execute motor movements reasonably required to attain the skills necessary to perform diagnostic procedures, and provide general and emergency medical care to patients in outpatient, inpatient and surgical venues.

d. Cognition, Intellectual-Conceptual, Integrative and Qualitative Abilities

A student must demonstrate higher-level cognitive abilities and memory necessary to measure, calculate, and reason in order to conceptualize, analyze, integrate and synthesize information. In addition, the student must be able to comprehend dimensional and visual-spatial relationships. All of these problem-solving activities must be achieved progressively in a timely fashion. These skills must contribute to sound judgment based upon clinical and ethical reasoning.

e. Behavioural and Social Attributes

A student must consistently demonstrate the emotional health required for full utilization of her/his intellectual abilities. A student must take responsibility for herself/himself and their behaviours. The student must promptly complete all assignments and responsibilities attendant not only to the study of medicine, but also to the diagnosis and care of patients. It is essential that a student progressively develop mature, sensitive and effective relationships with patients and their families, all members of the medical school community and healthcare teams. The student must be able to accept the physical, emotional and mental demands of the program, and function effectively under stress. It is necessary to adapt to changing environments and function in the face of uncertainties that are inherent in the care of patients.

F. Individuals with disabilities may be able to meet the standards and successfully complete the program with appropriate accommodation. Successful applicants who anticipate they will require disability-related accommodation should notify the medical school and Accessibility Resources at the University at the earliest opportunity to ensure that the necessary medical documentation is provided and that appropriate steps can be taken to assess the student's accommodation needs prior to the commencement of the academic year.

2. COMMITTEE ON ACCREDITATION OF CANADIAN MEDICAL SCHOOLS (CACMS) STANDARDS

10.5 A medical school develops and publishes technical standards for the admission of applicants and the retention and graduation of medical students.



DEFINITIONS

Any definitions listed in the following table apply to this document only with no implied or intended institution-wide use. [▲Top]	
Technical standard	From CACMS: The underlying cognitive, communication, sensory, motor and social skills necessary to interview; examine; diagnose and provide comprehensive, compassionate care; and competently complete certain technical procedures in a reasonable time while ensuring patient safety.

RELATED LINKS

No related links for this policy.

APPROVAL HISTORY

APPROVER	STATUS	DATE
MD Program Committee	Approved	24 January 2013
Karen Pirie, Executive Secretary, MD Program	Updated CACMS standard: MS-9 to 10.5	02 February 2017
Dr. Tracey Hillier, Associate Dean	Changed name of Program Committee to MD Curriculum & Program Committee and updated CACMS Standard 10.5 wording	01 June 2020
MD Curriculum & Program Committee	Approved	16 September 2021