Background

Visa trainees represent a special training category for entrance to postgraduate medical training. Visa trainee applicants, who have passed required examinations, must be sponsored by an agency which has entered into a contract with the University of Manitoba for postgraduate medical training. All Visa trainees must receive remuneration from an institution recognized by the Government of Manitoba while registered in a training program in PGME.

Under agreements between the University of Manitoba and the sponsors of non-North American physician postgraduate trainees, certain administrative fees are paid to the University by the sponsors, related to the clinical and academic training of the individuals sponsored. Portions of these fees are transferred each year by the University to the Office of Postgraduate Medical Education (PGME) in the College of Medicine and from the PGME Office to the Departments responsible for the training programs of the individual sponsored trainees.

The College of Medicine accepts between 45 and 60 sponsored Visa Sponsored Trainees every year. The College receives approximately $100,000 for each Visa sponsored trainee from Saudi Arabia and approximately $75,000 for all others (Libya, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates, Oman) to cover overhead costs.

Definitions

CMPA - Canadian Medical Protective Association

PARIM – Professional Association of Residents and Interns of Manitoba

PGME – Postgraduate Medical Education

WRHA – Winnipeg Regional Health Authority

Visa Sponsored Trainees - A Visa Sponsored Trainee is a medical graduate who is not a Canadian Citizen or does not have Permanent Resident status in Canada. Because postgraduate
medical trainees are considered to have an employment and educational relationship with the University, they require a Work Permit for the duration of their training.

**Work permit** – this is a temporary resident visa issued by Citizenship and Immigration Canada to grant permission to foreign workers seeking to engage in employment in Canada. Work permits are commonly issued for one year, however this can vary depending on the type of permit and the duration of the work, assignment, or project in Canada, as well as the passport validity of the foreign national. *(from government website)*

1. **PURPOSE**

1.1 Provide specific guidelines re: receipt and allocation of fees recovered from Visa-sponsored trainees enrolled in PGME Programs at the University of Manitoba, as well as the required fund management and approved expenditures of such funds.

2. **STATEMENT OF POLICY**

2.1 Consideration of acceptance of Visa trainees must be approved by the PGME Associate Dean. Applications that have not been routed through the PGME Office will not be considered since candidate credibility and/or sponsorship cannot be guaranteed.

2.2 In no circumstance will the Trainee be entitled to the salary and benefit provisions of the PARIM collective agreement. Any trainee salaries and benefits will be self-funded, and are costs borne by governments/sponsors

2.2.1 For Saudi Arabian residents/fellows only, in addition to the salary, a stipend allowance will be provided by the sponsor, which is processed through the University of Manitoba as a foreign trustee payment, currently in the amount of $18,000.00 per annum.

2.2.2 Trainees are responsible for obtaining and paying for their own CMPA membership fees in full.

2.3 Once Overhead is recovered by the University and the Visa Trainee salary budget (foreign trustee payment) is established, the remaining funds are split 50/50 with the departments who have Visa Trainees.

2.4 In the event of termination of an agreement, this action will not affect the ability of Trainees already accepted into the Training Program, to continue in and complete the Training Program on the terms set out in the agreement.

2.5 All Visa funds received by the College of Medicine must be held in University of Manitoba funds and adhere to all financial policies and procedures on administration and control of funds.

2.5.1 The funds received are to support expenses related to resident education including Mandatory Course (ATLS, ACLS) and Mandatory Out of Province Rotations. Exception- University of Manitoba registration fees and applicable Graduate Studies registration fees i.e. Biostats and Epidemiology.
2.5.2 During the training period and subsequent 6 months, the sponsors are responsible for funding the following expenses of the Trainees and therefore departmental funds should not be used for:

- Reasonable living expenses including accommodations, food allowance and personal expenses
- Medical insurance (either through the University or an acceptable external plan)
- Ancillary education expenses such as textbooks, conference fees and mandatory courses
- Professional fees
- Professional liability insurance

2.5.3 Department Heads receiving Visa trainee funds must submit annual reports by June 30th for the previous fiscal year to the PGME Office on the specific manner in which the funds received by their Departments were utilized during the preceding fiscal year. These reports can be comprised of FAST reports with explanations on the expenditures incurred.

2.5.4 In consultation with Finance, the PGME Office will review the annual reports and provide the Department Heads with a formal response by August 31st. Any surplus funds from the previous fiscal year may also be pulled back centrally to be utilized by the Dean’s Office.

3. PROCEDURES (Please refer to the Sponsored Trainees Guideline- Appendix 1)

POLICY CONTACT: PGME Administrative Program Lead or PGME Business Manager

REFERENCES
PGME, Sponsored Trainees Guidelines
Appendix 1

Sponsored Trainees Guidelines

POSTGRADUATE TRAINING AGREEMENTS

Postgraduate Medical Education current holds eight legally contracted training agreements in place between the University of Manitoba, Faculty of Medicine and sponsoring agencies from the following countries:

- Saudi Arabian Cultural Bureau
- Kuwait Embassy
- Saudi Aramco
- Oman
- Canadian Bureau of International Education
- United Arab Emirates
- State of Qatar

ELIGIBILITY OF TRAINEES

In order to be eligible to enroll in the Training Program, Trainees must provide evidence that they:

- are eligible and registered with the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Manitoba for the purposes of the Training Program;
- have obtained appropriate immigration status;
- are sponsored by the Bureau/Agency;
- meet all other qualifications and requirements of the Training Program established by the University;
- meet all the qualifications and requirements of the specific program of study;
- meet all the qualifications and requirements of the health authority, hospital, clinic or placement site(s) in which clinical training will occur (the “Placement Site”);
- consent to the sharing of his/her personal information related to his/her participation in the Training Program with and between the University, the Placement Site and the Bureau;
- execute an undertaking to return to their Home Country upon completion of the Training Program and subsequent certification by the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada or the College of Family Physicians of Canada;
- agree and acknowledge that his/her participation in the Training Program is subject to the terms of the Agreement with the University of Manitoba College of Medicine.

RIGHTS & OBLIGATIONS OF TRAINEES
The Trainees shall be considered students of the University, and have all the same rights, privileges and obligations as any other student enrolled in postgraduate medical education (residency) at the University, subject to the qualifications set out in the agreement with the University of Manitoba, College of Medicine. The University represents that its Training Program is accredited by the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada and the College of Family Physicians of Canada. Upon successful completion of the Training Program, Trainees will be eligible to apply for certification by the appropriate body. Trainees will be entitled to all the rights, privileges and obligations of members of the Professional Association of Residents and Interns of Manitoba (“PARIM”), with respect to their relationship with the University. They will not necessarily be entitled to such rights and obligations with respect to the Placement Site, except to the extent that the Placement Site is willing or obligated to treat them as such. In no circumstance will Trainees be entitled to the salary and benefit provisions of the PARIM collective agreement.

**REPORTING**

Each Trainee and the Bureau shall receive, at least twice each year, a report on the status and performance of the Trainee. The reports shall be in a form similar to that used by the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada and the College of Family Physicians of Canada. The University shall notify the Bureau, in a timely manner, if it becomes aware of any matters of serious concern, including academic, professional or personal issues, which may impact the success of a Trainee in the Training Program. Where appropriate, the University will use reasonable efforts to work with the Trainee and the Bureau to resolve any difficulties.

**SPONSORSHIP**

The Bureau, during the period of the Trainee’s enrollment in the Training Program, and for a period of six (6) months thereafter, will provide financial support (the “Financial Support”) directly to the Trainee adequate to cover:

a. reasonable living expenses, including accommodation, food allowance, and personal expenses;  
b. medical insurance (external plan);  
c. reasonable ancillary educational expenses, such as textbooks, conference fees  
d. professional fees; and  
e. professional liability insurance.

The Financial Support is provided to trainees, in part, through a stipend as follows:

a. The Bureau will pay each trainee a monthly stipend directly from the embassy for all sponsored trainees with the exception of the Saudi Arabian trainees who pay the University the annual amount of $18,000 for each Saudi Arabian Trainee participating in the Training Program.

For clarity, the sponsorship of the Bureau is intended to cover the direct and indirect costs of the Trainee’s participation in the Training Program. Trainees will not be eligible for employment as residents by the University or Placement Sites, under the PARIM collective agreement or otherwise.

**DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS WITH PROGRAM**

Once overhead is recovered by the University and the Visa Trainee salary budget (foreign trustee payment) is established, the remaining funds are split 50/50 with the departments who have Visa Trainees.

Estimated sponsored trainee invoicing and allocation will be provided to the College of Medicine Finance Department and the Programs accepting trainee by August 1st annually.
The PGME office will complete sponsored trainee invoicing and arrange for allocation to Departments by September 30th annually

Funding must be used to support resident education and resident research. Such expenses could include but not limited to resident travel, in-training examinations, special equipment, for teaching and learning purposes, education sessions such as visiting professors, Rounds, electronic equipment.

- If the resident is on a LOA, probation or requires an extension of training the FPGME will contact the sponsor to ensure the financial support is place.
- Residents/fellows abide by the by-laws, rules, regulations, policies, procedures, and practices of the University of Manitoba and the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority

APPLICATION AND SELECTION

Programs are required to notify the PGME office of their interest in accepting residency and fellowship applications by March 31st, including opening and closing dates for applications. Commencing around June of every year, application packages start arriving in the PGME office from the sponsoring agencies for consideration of training spots for the following academic year. Applications are then collated and distributed to the programs by the first week of September. Any application received after this distribution date is not guaranteed to be forwarded to the program unless specifically requested. Consideration of acceptance of VISA residents must be approved by the PGME Associate Dean & ARETS Committee (Resident Trainees Only). Programs should not consider applications that have not routed through the PGME Dean’s Office, or outside of this process, as candidate credibility and/or sponsorship cannot be guaranteed.

Application packages sent by the sponsoring agency to the PGME Office include the following:

1. A letter from the sponsoring agency which confirms full financial support for the duration of the fellowship program
2. An up-to-date curriculum vitae which includes the applicant’s date of birth, citizenship and e-mail address
3. A copy of the medical degree (with English translation, where applicable)
4. A copy of the specialty certification (with English translation, where applicable)
5. Three letters of reference on letterhead, signed and dated within two years of the date of application
6. Medical Council of Canada Evaluation Examination
7. English is the language of study at the Faculty of Medicine, University of Manitoba. All applicants whose first language is not English must submit proof of proficiency. You must have achieved the required proficiency in one of the following English language tests:

   Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL):
   TOEFL iBT®, with a total score of 96 and a score of 24 on each of the four sections. TOEFL iBT® score will be considered valid for 2 years from the date taken; or,

   Academic Version of International English Language Testing System (IELTS)
   Academic IELTS with a minimum score of 7 in each component with an overall band score of no less than 7. IELTS scores will be considered valid for 2 years from the date taken.

   Notarized/certified documents must be submitted; photocopies are acceptable.
   Language Proficiency Attestations will not be accepted from the candidate or a third party.

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Interview Process

After the program has reviewed the applications and selected suitable candidates for interview programs are responsible for contacting the embassy (with copy to sponsoredpgme@umanitoba.ca) in writing two letters (copies of example letters attached).

1. Advising the Embassy of the selected applicants for interviews and;

2. Advising the Embassy of the residents not selected for interviews.

Selection criteria for interview at the program level should involve the program director, selected faculty (which should include members of the Resident Training Committee), senior/chief resident/s, and section head/department head. A formal evaluative ranking system should be used in the screening process, and ultimately reviewed at a Residency Training Committee meeting prior to making a final selection.

Post-Interview Process

After the interviews, the Residency Program Director may elect to offer a position(s) to the suitable candidate(s). The Residency Program is responsible for sending a letter offering the position to the selected candidate(s) and Sponsor. (Example attached).

Once the candidate has accepted the offer, the Residency Program is responsible for notifying the PGME Office (sponsoredpgme@umanitoba.ca) with the name, copies of the Acceptance Letter, and any updated application materials for final review and approval by the ARETS Committee and Associate Dean, PGME.

Please note that Visa Sponsored Trainee’s require approximately 6 months to obtain appropriate Work Permit documentation, therefore please notify the PGME Office with the above information no later than December 1 for timely processing of documents.

Successful Candidate

The PGME Office will proceed with:

- Confirming sponsorship coverage with the Embassy/Bureau.
- Once confirmation of sponsorship coverage has been received from the Embassy/Bureau, the PGME Office will:
  - Extend a formal Letter of Offer to the successful candidate and the sponsor.
  - Provide successful applicants with immigration documentation to enable them to apply for the appropriate work permit from Citizenship and Immigration Canada.
  Please note: Any written documentation to Canada Immigration or other Governing Bodies requesting changes to this information must be corresponded by the Postgraduate Medical Education Office.
  - Alert the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Manitoba, who will mail out the appropriate international licensure application to the trainee. It is imperative to note that the trainee should complete the licensure application and return it as quickly as possible to CPSM so that they can confirm eligibility for licensure and forward the release letter for immigration purposes.
Send the resident registration documentation and track the resident process until they arrive for the mandatory orientation which typically starts the beginning of June.

Sponsored Trainees:

- **Must** participate in the mandatory month-long IMG Orientation for New Residents, which runs in June. This must be cited in the letter of acceptance so that both the resident and the sponsor are aware of this expectation of attendance prior to the commencement of residency training. BLS and ACLS will be run as part of the orientation month.
  
  **IMPORTANT NOTE:** All sessions in the orientation are mandatory; there are specific protected times allotted in the schedule (as well as evenings and weekends) for individuals to take care of personal affairs (i.e., visits to your financial institution, furniture delivery, etc.).

- Foreign residents are responsible for obtaining and paying for their own CMPA membership fees in full. The PGME Dean’s Office confirms resident training status directly with CMPA so that their names are included in our University of Manitoba resident listing, but does not authorize supplemental payment by the WRHA for any portion of membership fees for foreign sponsored residents.

- It is the responsibility of the resident to ensure his/her work permit is current and the FPGME office is provided with renewed work permits.

Programs are required to follow the annual renewal of trainees and completion of training.

Please refer to [http://umanitoba.ca/faculties/medicine/education/pgme/adminprocesses.html](http://umanitoba.ca/faculties/medicine/education/pgme/adminprocesses.html)

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