

Faculty of Medicine Policy

Policy Name:	Essential Skills and Abilities (Technical Standards) for Admission, Promotion and Graduation in the MD Program
Application/ Scope:	Candidates for Admission, Promotion or Graduation in the MD Program
Approved (Date):	April 2009
Review Date:	June 2014
Revised (Date):	September 12
Approved By:	Faculty Executive Council

1. **PURPOSE**

1.1 The Faculty of Medicine at the University of Manitoba 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 regulated practice of medicine in Canada. Graduates must be able to diagnose and manage health problems, and provide comprehensive, compassionate care to patients across the spectrum of the health care system. Accordingly, students in the MD program must interface with patients regardless of the patient's age, gender, race, culture, and other personal life circumstances. Students must also possess the cognitive, communication, sensory, motor, and social skills necessary to interview, examine, and counsel patients, and competently complete certain technical procedures in a reasonable time, all the while ensuring patient safety.

1.2 In addition to obtaining an MD degree and completing an accredited residency training program, an individual must pass the examinations of the Medical Council of Canada in order to be eligible for licensure to practice medicine. Prospective candidates should be aware that cognitive, physical examination, management skills, communication skills, and professional behaviours are all evaluated in timed simulations of patient encounters.

2. **POLICY STATEMENTS**

2.1 All students must have the required Skills and Abilities (Technical Standards). The skills and abilities are grouped in five broad areas:

- Observation/Perception

A student must be able to participate in learning situations and acquire information through Observation and Perception by the use of senses and mental abilities. In particular, a student must participate progressively in patient encounters and acquire information through visual, auditory and somatic sensation.

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

- Motor/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.

- Cognition

A student must demonstrate higher-level cognitive abilities 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.

- Professionalism

A student must consistently display integrity, honesty, empathy, compassion, fairness, respect for others, and dedication. A student must take responsibility for himself/herself 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 tolerate 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.

- 2.2 Some skills may be achieved with reasonable accommodation. Where necessary, reference should be made to the Faculty's [Accommodation for Undergraduate Medical Students with Disabilities](#) policy.
- 2.3 All applicants to the undergraduate program of the Faculty of Medicine are expected to review this document to assess their ability to meet these standards. All applicants offered admission will be required to acknowledge such review and assessment.
- 2.4 Any candidate for the MD degree who cannot attain the required skills and abilities through their course of study may be requested to withdraw from the program.
- 2.5 Students who anticipate requiring disability-related accommodation are responsible for notifying the Faculty of Medicine in a timely and proactive fashion at the time of application, or at any time throughout their undergraduate education program.

- 2.6 Students are expected to complete the MD degree within four years. Students with a disability may request an extension of time within which to complete the MD program; such requests are considered on a case-by-case basis.
- 2.7 Regulations are issued from time to time by the Medical Council of Canada regarding the accommodation of candidates undertaking examinations as a component of eligibility for licensure: such regulations are supplemental to general information available to all candidates. Accordingly students are encouraged to contact the Medical Council of Canada regarding accommodations for disability.

3. **REFERENCE**

- 3.1 This policy document is guided by the 1979 AAMC report entitled [*Special Advisory Panel on Technical Standards for Medical School Admission*](#), and adapted from the 2003 policy document of the Council of Ontario Faculties of Medicine entitled [*Essential Skills and Abilities Required for the Study of Medicine*](#).
- 3.2 [Medical Council of Canada](#)
- 3.3 [UGME Policy & Procedures - Accommodation for Undergraduate Medical Students with Disabilities](#)

4. **POLICY CONTACT**

Associate Dean, Students