Degree Requirements for the Doctor of Medicine (MD) Program

Policy Statement and Purpose

The Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) has established standards that require medical education programs to ensure a single standard is used for the advancement and graduation of medical students. The VCU School of Medicine has established this policy to outline the requirements students must satisfy in order to complete the Doctor of Medicine (MD) program.

Stakeholders

The faculty, staff, and students of the VCU School of Medicine are responsible for knowing this standard operating procedure, its contents, and provisions.

Definitions

CBG: Competency Based Graduation Track.

CC: Curriculum Council.

CSE: Clinical Skills Examination.

LCME: Liaison Committee on Medical Education. The group with authority to accredit medical education programs leading to the MD degree in the United States and Canada.

LOA: Leave of Absence.

OME: Office of Medical Education.

PAC: Promotion and Advancement Committee.

USMLE: United States Medical Licensing Examination.

VCU SOM: Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine.

Responsibilities

Students: Students are responsible for scheduling USMLE Step Examinations in accordance with the USMLE Step Examinations Policy, and in a manner that allows for timely completion of these requirements within the specified timeline of the curriculum. Students are also responsible for knowing

VCU School of Medicine

the Technical Standards for the MD Program, acknowledging receipt of these standards and their ability to meet them, with or without reasonable accommodation(s) as outlined in the associated policy.

Promotion and Advancement Committee: The PAC is responsible for advancing students who demonstrate they have met established requirements for promotion and graduation.

Procedures ⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯ ⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯

Advancement to the Clinical Curriculum

To progress to the Core Clerkships and Electives in the M3 year, students must:
- Pass all courses in the M1 and M2 years of the curriculum
- Pass all longitudinal courses in the M1 and M2 years of the curriculum
- Pass the USMLE Step 1 Exam

Advancement to Graduation for the MD program

Candidates for graduation from the four (4) year curriculum must:
- Pass all required and elective coursework in the four (4) year curriculum
- Complete and log all Required Clinical Experiences (RCEs)
  - Specific requirements regarding the required clinical experiences that must be logged prior to graduation can be found in the Completion of Required Clinical Experiences Policy
- Be in good academic standing
- Pass specified qualifying examinations including USMLE Step 1 and Step 2 CK
- Satisfactorily complete VCU CSE
- Satisfactorily complete required curricular experiences
- Demonstrate satisfactory compliance with the Technical Standards for Medical Students, including exhibiting the professional characteristics expected of a physician
  - Specific requirements regarding Technical Standards can be found in the Technical Standards for the MD Program Policy
- Adhere to all VCU SOM and University policies.

Competency Based Graduation Track

Candidates for graduation from the three (3) year CBG curriculum must:
- Pass all required and elective coursework in the three (3) year CBG curriculum
- Complete and log all Required Clinical Experiences (RCEs)
  - Specific requirements regarding the required clinical experiences that must be logged prior to graduation can be found in the Completion of Required Clinical Experiences Policy
- Be in good academic standing

- Pass specified qualifying examinations including USMLE Step 1 and Step 2 CK
- Satisfactorily complete VCU CSE
- Satisfactorily complete required curricular experiences
- Demonstrate satisfactory compliance with the Technical Standards for Medical Students, including exhibiting the professional characteristics expected of a physician
  - Specific requirements regarding Technical Standards can be found in the Technical Standards for the MD Program Policy
- Adhere to all VCU SOM and University policies.

VCU's Clinical Skills Examination

All students are required to take and pass a CSE at the beginning of the fourth year of medical school to assess the core clinical skills of communication, data collection (history and physical exam), clinical reasoning (differential diagnosis, diagnostic therapeutic plan), and other institutional learning objectives. A passing score on this exam is required for graduation, and failure of this exam requires remediation, which may include retaking the exam.

Time to Completion of Requirements

Students must complete all required components to advance to graduation within six (6) years of initial matriculation, including any academic leaves of absence (LOAs).

Related Policies

USMLE Step Examinations Policy
Competency Based Graduation Program Procedures
Technical Standards for the MD Program Policy
Student Promotion and Advancement Committee Policy
Completion of Required Clinical Experiences Policy

Review Cycle and Revision History

The policy is reviewed and may be revised by the Curriculum Council as necessary, but at least every three years.

Currently Approved Version: 03.12.2026

Previously Approved Versions: 03.09.2023

Applicable Laws, Regulations & Standards

LCME Standards for Accreditation of Medical Education Programs Leading to the MD Degree:
- LCME Standard 9, Element 6
- LCME Standard 9, Element 9
- LCME Standard 10, Element 3