Technical Standards for the MD Program

Policy Statement and Purpose

The Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) has established standards regarding the requirement of medical schools to develop and publish technical standards for the admission, retention, and graduation of applicants or medical students in accordance with legal requirements and applicable laws.

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

VCU SOM: Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine.

CC: Curriculum Council.

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.

SADMESA: Senior Associate Dean for Medical Education and Student Affairs.

Dean: Chief Academic Officer for the VCU SOM.

DAS: Division for Academic Success.

Admissions Committee: The Admissions Selection Committee is the group of faculty, retired faculty, alumni, and M4 students tasked with reviewing applications and interviewing students for the MD program at the VCU SOM.

Accepted Students: Applicants who have been offered, and accepted, admission to the VCU SOM.

Active Students: Accepted applicants who are currently matriculating through the curriculum at the VCU SOM.

Responsibilities

CC: The Curriculum Council is responsible for reviewing the established technical standards on an annual basis and ensuring any suggested revisions to the standards are approved by the CC prior to implementation.

Accepted Students: Accepted students are responsible for reviewing the technical standards prior to entry into the program, confirming their ability to meet the published standards, either with or without accommodations.

Active Students: Active students are responsible for reviewing the technical standards every year, confirming their continued ability to meet the published standards, either with or without accommodations.

Procedures

Development, Review, and Revision of Technical Standards

The technical standards were initially drafted by the SADMESA, the Dean, and the DAS, and approved by the CC.

In order to ensure that the established technical standards remain relevant with current practices, national trends, and accreditation requirements, they will be reviewed on an annual basis. Review of the approved standards will occur as follows:
- Curriculum Council
    - Technical Standards will be reviewed and approved annually by the CC in January.
    - The CC has final responsibility for the approval of the Technical Standards.
- Admissions Committee
    - The CC approved Technical Standards will be reviewed at the annual Admissions Committee Retreat in the Spring.

Dissemination of Technical Standards

The technical standards for admission, retention, and graduation are available to all prospective students, enrolled students, faculty, and staff. The technical standards are disseminated through a variety of avenues, including:
- Posting on the VCU SOM website where they are publicly accessible.
- Inclusion in the VCU SOM student handbook.
- Distribution to all applicants accepted into the VCU SOM
    - Accepted applicants must return a signed copy of the technical standards indicating their ability to meet the standards, either with or without accommodations, prior to matriculation into the program.
- Distribution to all active students at the VCU SOM
    - Current students must review the technical standards on an annual basis, indicating their continued ability to meet the standards, either with or without accommodations, by confirming they have completed a yearly review of the student handbook.

VCU School of Medicine

Currently Approved Technical Standards

- **Observational Skills**
  Candidates must acquire information as presented through demonstrations and experiences in the foundational sciences. In addition, candidates must be able to evaluate patients accurately and assess their relevant health, behavioral, and medical information. Candidates must be able to obtain and interpret information through a comprehensive assessment of patients, correctly interpret diagnostic representations of patients' physiologic data, and accurately evaluate patients' conditions and responses.

- **Communication Skills**
  Candidates must exhibit interpersonal skills to enable effective caregiving of patients, including the ability to communicate effectively, with all members of a multidisciplinary health care team, patients, and those supporting patients, in person and in writing. Candidates must be able to clearly and accurately record information and accurately interpret verbal and nonverbal communication.

- **Clinical Skills**
  Candidates must perform routine physical examination and diagnostic maneuvers. Candidates must be able to provide or direct general care and emergency treatment for patients and respond to emergency situations in a timely manner. Candidates must meet applicable safety standards for the environment and follow universal precaution procedures.

- **Intellectual-Conceptual, Integrative, and Cognitive Skills**
  Candidates must effectively interpret, assimilate, and understand the complex information required to function within the medical school curriculum, including, but not limited to, the ability to comprehend three-dimensional relationships and understand the spatial relationships of structures; effectively participate in individual, small-group, and lecture learning modalities in the classroom, clinical, and community settings; learn, participate, collaborate, and contribute as a part of a team; synthesize information both in person and via remote technology; interpret causal connections and make accurate, fact-based conclusions based on available data and information; formulate a hypothesis and investigate potential answers and outcomes; and reach appropriate and accurate conclusions.

- **Behavioral Attributes, Social Skills, and Professional Expectations**
  Candidates must exercise good judgment; promptly complete all responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients; and develop mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with patients. The skills required to do so include the ability to effectively handle and manage heavy workloads, function effectively under stress, adapt to changing environments, display flexibility, and learn to function in the face of the uncertainties inherent in the clinical problems of patients. Candidates are expected to exhibit professionalism, personal accountability, compassion, integrity, concern for others, and interpersonal skills including the ability to accept and apply feedback and to respect boundaries and care for all individuals in a respectful and effective manner regardless of gender identity, age, race, sexual orientation, religion, disability, or any other protected status. Candidates should understand, and function within, the legal and ethical aspects of the practice of medicine and maintain and display ethical and moral behaviors commensurate with the role of a

physician in all interactions with patients, faculty, staff, students, and the public. Interest and motivation throughout the educational processes are expected of all candidates.

Meeting of Technical Standards

The VCU SOM intends for its graduates to become competent and compassionate physicians who are capable of entering residency training (graduate medical education) and meeting all requirements for medical licensure. The established Technical Standards represent the minimum physical, emotional, cognitive, and social capabilities required for completion of the undergraduate medical education curriculum. The continued ability to meet these standards—either with, or without reasonable accommodation(s)—is a requirement of all students.

Requesting Reasonable Accommodations

The University is not required to significantly alter academic requirements imposed by the curriculum nor is it considered reasonable to make accommodations that significantly lower the Technical Standards of the VCU SOM.

Students requesting accommodations must reach out to the Division of Academic Success by visiting https://das.vcu.edu/students/.

Related Policies

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.

Current Revision Approved: 03.24.2022

Applicable Laws, Regulations & Standards
LCME Standards for Accreditation of Medical Education Programs Leading to the MD Degree:
- LCME Standard 10, Element 5