

Parent Policy: Electives Policy

Quality Review of Electives Procedure

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

Overview

Electives are an important and mandatory component of the MD Program. They provide opportunities for medical students to explore medical domains in a more in-depth fashion than may be permitted in the core clerkship. Medical electives allow students to develop their own specific interests and expertise, complete personal learning objectives, as well as sample disciplines for possible career choices and postgraduate training programs.

Purpose

To ensure the MD Program meets or exceeds the **Committee on Accreditation of Canadian Medical Schools (CACMS)** accreditation standards (element 11.3).

ELEMENT 11.3 OVERSIGHT OF EXTRAMURAL ELECTIVES *If a medical student at a medical school is permitted to take an elective under the auspices of another medical school, institution, or organization, a centralized system exists in the dean's office at the home school to review the proposed extramural elective prior to approval and to ensure the return of a performance assessment of the student and an evaluation of the elective by the student. Information about such issues as the following are available, as appropriate, to the student and the medical school in order to inform the student's and the school's review of the experience prior to its approval:*

- a. *potential risks to the health and safety of patients, students, and the community;*
- b. *the availability of emergency care;*
- c. *the possibility of natural disasters, political instability, and exposure to disease;*
- d. *the need for additional preparation prior to, support during, and follow-up after the elective;*
- e. *the level and quality of supervision;*
- f. *potential challenges to the code of medical ethics adopted by the home school.*

This procedure exists to evaluate the quality of



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- newly proposed electives prior to being added to the University of Alberta electives catalogue;
- electives currently listed in the University of Alberta electives catalogue;
- electives outside of University of Alberta.

PROCEDURE

1. EVALUATING QUALITY OF NEWLY PROPOSED ELECTIVES

- a. Proposals for new electives must be submitted to the Electives and Selectives Coordinator in the MD Program.
- b. The proposal must include:
 - i. the elective's learning objectives
 - ii. methods of teaching
 - iii. level of supervision
 - iv. predicted number of patients seen
 - v. type of illnesses seen
 - vi. working conditions
- c. The Electives and Selectives Coordinator may request additional information from the elective site, if necessary.
- d. When the above points are considered satisfactory, the elective is added to the University of Alberta electives catalogue by the administrator, electives..

2. EVALUATING QUALITY OF CURRENT ELECTIVES

- a. Students complete an elective evaluation form via the MD program's learning management system (currently Cally) within 21 days of the end of their elective.
- b. If an elective is rated poorly in any category, the Electives and Selectives Coordinator is automatically notified via Cally.
- c. The Electives and Selectives Coordinator follows-up with the student and/or elective site, if necessary.
- d. The elective will be removed from the electives catalogue if there are chronic problems that cannot be fixed.

3. EVALUATING QUALITY OF ELECTIVES NOT IN THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA ELECTIVES CATALOGUE

- a. CACMS and/or LCME Accredited Schools
 - i. The quality of electives at LCME accredited schools is considered satisfactory if approved by the school's electives coordinator for its own students.
 - ii. University of Alberta students will complete the same evaluation form that they do for University of Alberta electives.



- iii. If an elective is rated poorly in any category, the Electives and Selectives Coordinator is automatically notified via Cally.
 - iv. The Electives and Selectives Coordinator will then decide on the appropriate course of action (e.g. notify the other school or do not allow University of Alberta students to do that elective in the future).
- b. International Electives
- i. All International Electives (including electives in at sites with which the University of Alberta has a formal agreement, electives in low or middle income countries, and any other elective outside of Canada) are added to the student's schedule in Cally and an evaluation form is sent at the end of the experience.
 - ii. If an elective is rated poorly, the Electives and Selectives Coordinator is automatically notified via Cally.
 - iii. In discussion with the Director of Global Health, the Electives and Selectives Coordinator will then decide on the appropriate course of action (notify the other school or do not allow University of Alberta students to do that elective in the future).
- c. For all other electives, including electives in Canada that are not in an electives catalogue:
- i. The student will provide the following information to the Electives and Selectives Coordinator, prior to the elective's approval:
 - What do you know about the content and quality of this elective?
 - What do you know about the preceptor(s)?
 - Why did you choose this elective rather than one that is in an electives catalogue?
 - What accommodation do you expect to be staying in?
 - Are you aware of any safety concerns related to you doing this elective? If so, please explain.
 - ii. For international electives, students may be asked to submit information specific to the country they are entering, including
 - potential risks to the health and safety of patients, students and the community
 - the availability of emergency care
 - the possibility of natural disasters, political instability and exposure to disease
 - the need for additional preparation prior to, support during and follow-up after the elective
 - the level and quality of supervision



- any potential challenges to the code of medical ethics adopted by the home institution
- iii. If necessary, the Electives and Selectives Coordinator may request additional information in order to evaluate the quality of the elective before granting approval.

DEFINITIONS

Cally	MD Program’s program delivery system used by staff, faculty and students.
Committee on Accreditation of Canadian Medical Schools (CACMS)	The Committee on Accreditation of Canadian Medical Schools (CACMS) ensures that Canadian medical faculties’ MD programs meet the quality expected when producing tomorrow’s doctors. Medical schools demonstrating compliance are afforded accreditation, a necessary condition for a program’s graduates to be licensed as physicians.

RELATED POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Electives Diversification Policy
Booking and Confirming Electives Procedure
Electives Policy
International Electives Policy

RELATED LINKS

Code of Student Behaviour
College of Physicians & Surgeons of Alberta Code of Conduct
Electives Catalogue (Years 1 & 2)
Electives Catalogue (Years 3 & 4)
Professionalism Standards

APPROVAL HISTORY

APPROVER	STATUS	DATE
Kent Stobart, Associate Dean	Approved	11 February 2014
MD Curriculum and Program Committee	Approved	18 July 2018



Dr. Tracey Hillier, Associate Dean	Revisions made: Electives Coordinator updated to Director, Electives. LCME removed from policy.	12 June 2020
MD Curriculum and Program Committee	Approved Revisions include wording and title changes, as well as updates to procedure to ensure policy is aligned with current practice.	16 September 2021
MD Curriculum & Program Committee	Approved Revisions to update language and practice	16 November 2023
Associate Dean, MD Program	Minor editorial change to replace the word MedSIS with Cally in the policy to reflect the new program delivery system.	8 July 2024