

## USMLE Policy

### Roles and Responsibilities

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|-------------------|--|
| Policy Contact(s) | Assistant Dean for Assessment  |
| Responsible       | Office of Medical Education  |
| Accountable       | Office of Medical Education, Office of Student Affairs, and Medical Students |
| Consulted         | MEAC, CCC  |
| Informed          | Office of Medical Education, Office of Student Affairs, and Medical Students |

### LCME Standards

#### 8.4 Evaluation of Educational Program Outcomes

A medical school collects and uses a variety of outcome data, including national norms of accomplishment, to demonstrate the extent to which medical students are achieving medical education program objectives and to enhance the quality of the medical education program as a whole. These data are collected during program enrollment and after program completion.

#### 9.9 Student Advancement and Appeal Process

A medical school ensures that the medical education program has a single set of core standards for the advancement and graduation of all medical students across all locations. A subset of medical students may have academic requirements in addition to the core standards if they are enrolled in a parallel curriculum. A medical school ensures that there is a fair and formal process for taking any action that may affect the status of a medical student, including timely notice of the impending action, disclosure of the evidence on which the action would be based, an opportunity for the medical student to respond, and an opportunity to appeal any adverse decision related to advancement, graduation, or dismissal.

### Purpose and Scope

The USMLE Step Examinations serve as a critical evaluation tool that ensures medical graduates possess the necessary knowledge, skills, and competence to provide high-quality patient care and embark on successful careers in medicine. This policy is designed to identify the requirements regarding the expectations for taking and passing the USMLE Step 1 and USMLE Step 2 CK examinations while enrolled in the MD program.

The policy applies to all medical students enrolled in the MD program at the University of Maryland School of Medicine.

## **Policy**

The University of Maryland School of Medicine requires students to pass USMLE Step 1 and take USMLE Step 2 CK exam in order to graduate from the Doctor of Medicine program.

The sections below outline the requirements for student completion of USMLE exams while enrolled in the MD program.

### **USMLE Step 1**

Students must take USMLE Step 1 prior to beginning clerkships. The standard entry date for clerkships is determined by the School and displayed on the official Office of Medical Education (OME) calendar. Any requests to take Step 1 and enter clerkships earlier or later must be approved by the Office of Student Affairs (OSA) and OME. Upon approval from OSA and OME, students may choose to take USMLE Step 1 up to 4 weeks after the standard entry date for clerkships without penalty. To be approved to sit for Step 1, students must achieve a passing score on two NBME practice exams, which may include a combination of CBSE and/or CBSSA forms. A student may submit a request to OSA and OME to extend Step 1 preparation up to an additional 4 weeks. The student's adjusted start date for clinical rotations will be determined by OSA and OME. Students who are granted an extension must participate in regularly scheduled Practice of Medicine 3 activities. A delay in taking Step 1 beyond 4 weeks after the standard entry date for clerkships must be noted in the MSPE as a gap in medical education. A delay in taking Step 1 beyond 8 weeks after the standard entry date for clerkships will require a Leave of Absence (LOA).

Students who delay Step 1 without approval will have an adjusted start date for clinical rotations determined by OSA and OME. An unapproved delay in taking Step 1 will be noted in the MSPE as a professionalism concern.

A student who is required to remediate one or more pre-clerkship courses or the second pre-clerkship year must do so prior to taking USMLE Step 1. The student must meet with OSA and OME to determine the timing of Step 1 and start of clinical rotations.

In the event of any USMLE Step 1 examination failures, a remediation plan including the re-examination date must be approved by OSA and OME. An extended remediation plan may require an LOA. [See the policy on Advancement, Graduation & Dismissal.] A student must achieve a passing score to resume clerkships.

Dual-degree students must pass Step 1 prior to transitioning into their graduate program. Progression for students who delay or do not pass Step 1 is determined by the graduate program administration, OSA, and OME.

### **USMLE Step 2**

Students must take USMLE Step 2CK before graduation. Students cannot take Step 2 before completing all core clerkships (excluding Emergency Medicine) without approval from OSA and OME.

### Exceptions

Any exceptions to this policy must be approved by the Advancement Committee.

The Class of 2027 will be offered two options related to the timing of taking and passing the USMLE Step 1 examination. 1) Students in that class may opt to follow the timing requirements and other procedures delineated in this medical school policy. 2) Students in the Class of 2027 can also opt to take the USMLE Step 1 examination after completing their clerkship year. Students who choose to defer the examination until after their clerkship year will not be able to progress to coursework in the advanced clinical phase (Year 4). Students who defer Step 1 can choose to take the USMLE Step 2 CK examination prior to Step 1. Advanced clinical phase coursework cannot be started until the Step 1 examination has been passed. Any delays resulting from not passing Step 1 may affect a student's preparedness for, and competitiveness in the residency match process, as well as their expected date of graduation.

### Sanctions

Failure of the USMLE Step 1 examination can delay progression or continuation in the MD program. Failing Step 1 for a second time may require a Leave of Absence from the program and/or delays for the start of the clerkship phase. Failing Step 1 for a third time will result in dismissal from the program.

### Forms

Leave of Absence Checklist

### Related Policies/Procedures

Advancement, Graduation & Dismissal

Leave of Absence

### History

Revised: 6/2024, 10/2024, 1/2025

Approved: CCC, 2/2022; 11/2024, 1/2025