

Student Assessment Subcommittee (SAS)

Terms of Reference

Preamble

The Committee on Accreditation of Canadian Medical Schools (CACMS) requires all medical schools in Canada to operate in compliance with the following Standards Elements:

Standard 9: Teaching, Supervision, Assessment, and Student and Patient Safety

A medical school ensures that its medical education program includes a comprehensive, fair, and uniform system of formative and summative medical student assessment and protects medical students' and patients' safety by ensuring that all persons who teach, supervise, and/or assess medical students are adequately prepared for those responsibilities.

9.4 Assessment System

A medical school ensures that, throughout its medical education program, there is a centralized system in place that employs a variety of measures (including direct observation) for the assessment of student achievement, including students' acquisition of the knowledge, core clinical skills (e.g., medical history-taking, physical examination), behaviors, and attitudes specified in medical education program objectives, and that ensures that all medical students achieve the same medical education program objectives.

9.5 Narrative Assessment

A medical school ensures that a narrative description of a medical student's performance, including his or her non-cognitive achievement, is included as a component of the assessment in each required learning experience in the medical education program whenever teacher-student interaction permits this form of assessment.

9.7 Timely Formative Assessment and Feedback

A medical school ensures that the medical education program provides timely formative assessment consisting of appropriate measures by which a medical student can measure his or her progress in learning. Each medical student is assessed and provided with formal formative feedback early enough during each required learning experience four or more weeks in length to allow sufficient time for remediation. Formal feedback occurs at least at the midpoint of the learning experience. In medical education programs with longer educational experiences (e.g., longitudinal integrated clerkship, year-long courses) formal feedback occurs approximately every six weeks. For required learning experiences less than four weeks in length alternate means are provided by which a medical student can measure his or her progress in learning.

9.8 Fair and Timely Summative Assessment

A medical school has in place a system of fair and timely summative assessment of medical student achievement in each required learning experience of the medical education program. Final grades are available within six weeks after the end of a required learning experience.

Purpose

The Student Assessment Subcommittee (SAS) is a standing committee of the Undergraduate Medical Studies Committee (UGMS) and responsible for addressing the CACMS elements 9.4, 9.5, 9.7 and 9.8.

Membership

The UGMS Committee will appoint the voting faculty Subcommittee members and Chair. The Medical Students Society will appoint the undergraduate medical learner members. Each campus will have two undergraduate medical learner representatives (one learner from year 1 or 2, one learner from year 3 or 4) who will share one voting position on the committee. The undergraduate medical learner representatives must indicate to the chair prior to each meeting which representative will assume voting rights. This will be noted in the meeting minutes. PARNL will appoint the resident member. Persons selected will have expertise or an interest in medical education and/or assessment.

Voting members:

- Student Assessment Subcommittee Chair (faculty member at large)
- One faculty member appointed from each of the Phase Management Teams for Phases 1-4. Normally, this will be the Assessment Lead.
- One undergraduate medical learner from Newfoundland and Labrador campus
- One undergraduate medical learner from Prince Edward Island campus
- One PGY1 or PGY2 resident, normally a graduate of Memorial University
- One faculty member representing Prince Edward Island campus
- Two faculty members at large who have a special interest in medical education and/or assessment.

Ex-officio members (non-voting):

- Associate Dean, Undergraduate Medical Education
- One representative from Program Evaluation Subcommittee (PESC)
- Educational Specialist (Assessment)
- Manager of Health Education and Technology
- Academic Program Assistant (Assessment)
- Support staff, as deemed necessary by the SAS Chair

The Committee must include a minimum of two faculty members who are clinicians and two who are non-clinicians.

Committee Member Expectations

- Attendance at 75% of monthly meetings.
- Meeting preparation.
- Timely completion of assigned tasks.
- Participation on working groups, as requested by the Chair.
- Pursuit of professional development related to assessment and/or undergraduate education.
- Solicitation of collegial input, when requested.

Operations

- The Subcommittee will meet monthly from September to June and at the call of the Chair.
- The quorum for meetings is 50% plus one of voting members and must include at least one learner (either undergraduate medical learner or resident).
- For voting members only, a delegate may attend with prior notification to, and approval by, the Chair. The delegate will assume voting rights.
- Meeting minutes that reflect the activity of the committee shall be recorded.
- Motions may be circulated and approved by e-mail vote for time-sensitive matters.
- The Subcommittee may assign duties to working groups.
- Key stakeholders from faculty, staff, and learners will be consulted and invited to attend meetings on an as-needed basis when additional content expertise is required for decision-making related to the planning and administration of assessments or monitoring of assessment-related accreditation elements.
- The term for members will be three years, renewable in three-year intervals by mutual agreement of the individual, subcommittee members, and the UGMS.
- The Chair will serve for a three-year term renewable in three-year intervals by mutual agreement of the individual, the subcommittee, and UGMS.
- The Chair or delegate will represent SAS on the UGMS Committee.
- Review the terms of reference on a yearly basis or as needed.

Responsibilities

The Subcommittee:

- Advises on and monitors opportunities for professional development for faculty members in the area of student learner assessment.
- Reviews and develops an overall strategy for learner assessment for the curriculum leading to the M.D. degree.
- Advises the UGMS Committee on learner assessment policy and its implementation.
- Evaluates all aspects of the assessment of learner achievement in the curriculum.
- Recommends *methods of assessment* that are appropriate to learning outcomes
- Recommends *systems of assessment* that:
 - foster self-directed learning in learners
 - test problem solving, clinical reasoning and communication skills
 - are criteria-based, on specified curricular learning objectives
- Advises on and monitors appropriate *volume of assessment*, both formative and summative.
- Advises on and monitors procedures for analyzing *validity and reliability of assessment* methods
- Advises on and monitors procedures for *non-cognitive achievement*
- Collects and monitors data/metrics pertinent to accreditation standards on assessment.

Approved by the UGMS Committee on June 18, 2025