

POLICIES, GUIDELINES & PROCEDURES
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Guidelines for Fellowships

Office of Accountability:	Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry
Office of Administrative Responsibility:	Postgraduate Medical Education
Approver:	Deans' Executive Committee
Scope:	Fellows (Clinical, AFC Diploma, Clinical Research, Research) (Non-sponsored)
Classification:	Fellowship Training

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1. Introduction

All trainees in postgraduate medical fellowships offered by the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry (Faculty), at the University of Alberta (the University) are registered by the Postgraduate Medical Education Office (PME).

The PME has developed these guidelines to govern fellowships. The goal is to ensure that fellows can access appropriate educational experiences in a positive learning environment where they are treated fairly and with respect.

These guidelines apply to the following categories of fellows as further described in Section 2 below: Clinical Fellow, Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPSC) Area of Focused Competence (AFC) Diploma Fellow, Clinical Research Fellow, and Research Fellow.

These guidelines are not applicable to sponsored trainees in postgraduate medical training. Please refer to Guidelines for Postgraduate Medical Training for Sponsored Trainees.

These guidelines are also not applicable to postgraduate training overseen by Dentistry departments.

2. Categories of Fellows

2.1. Clinical Fellow

- 2.1.1. A trainee who has completed Canadian specialty training requirements and is pursuing clinical training within the specialty beyond the requirements for specialty or subspecialty certification, or
- 2.1.2. A trainee who is enrolled in an accredited RCPSC subspecialty program, but who is ineligible for RCPSC certification because the previous specialty training is not accredited by RCPSC, or
- 2.1.3. A trainee who is registered for the purpose of obtaining specific experience in a specialty or subspecialty which is not currently recognized by the RCPSC, or for which there is no accredited program at the University, or
- 2.1.4. A trainee with a PhD degree

2.2. AFC Diploma Fellow

- 2.2.1. A trainee who is registered in an accredited AFC Diploma program at the University of Alberta.

2.3. Clinical Research Fellow

- 2.3.1. A trainee whose training primarily consists of clinical research which may involve interactions with patients.

2.4. Research Fellow

- 2.4.1. A trainee who is only doing research that does not involve any interactions with patients or patient-related data.

3. Program Organization and Oversight

- 3.1. A fellowship program must be overseen by a Division or a Department within the Faculty.
- 3.2. There must be a fellowship director to oversee the organization, administration, and operation of the fellowship training.
 - 3.2.1. The fellowship director must have an official appointment within the Department.
 - 3.2.2. The fellowship director may be the same person as the training supervisor.

4. Salary Funding and Benefits

- 4.1. Fellowships with no salary or that are self-funded by the fellow are not permitted.
- 4.2. The PME Office does not provide salary, administrative or operational funding for fellowship programs.
- 4.3. All fellowships must include salary sufficient to cover the estimated basic cost of living in Edmonton and benefits.
- 4.4. Fellowships may be funded from a variety of sources including agencies and societies pertaining to the area of training.
- 4.5. Fellows are not included in the collective agreement with the Professional Association of Resident Physicians of Alberta (PARA).
 - 4.5.1. Maternity/parental leaves during fellowship are not funded.
 - 4.5.2. Fellows are not entitled to personal days.
 - 4.5.3. While fellows are not part of the PARA agreement, PME recommends that programs provide allowance for sick leave and vacation similar to the PARA agreement.

5. Program Information and Application Process

- 5.1. The program must clearly outline requirements and deadlines for fellowship application on the program website.
- 5.2. For international applicants, the program must indicate that a Work Permit is required before the fellowship can begin, and provide the link to the Canada Immigration website.
- 5.3. For Clinical, Clinical Research and AFC Diploma fellows (with the exception of Clinical Fellows with a PhD degree), the program must indicate that provincial licensure with the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta (CPSA) is required before fellowship can begin, and provide information on licensure requirement and the link to the CPSA.
- 5.4. The PME requirement for English language proficiency must be clearly specified on the website, and provide the link to the relevant website.
- 5.5. The program should have a formalized and structured application process.
 - 5.5.1. All correspondence between the program and the applicant should be in writing.

6. Fellow Selection

- 6.1. The program should have a formalized, structured and transparent selection process.
- 6.2. Detailed criteria for fellowship selection (file review, interview requirements and format) should be posted on the program website.

7. Fellow Offer Process

- 7.1. After the program has completed the selection process, a Letter of Offer can be sent by the Division/Department to the selected candidate.
 - 7.1.1. The Letter of Offer is not an official contract or letter of employment, and is contingent upon review and approval of the Associate Dean, PME.

- 7.1.2. The Letter of Offer must be prepared on the Division/Department letterhead, using the “Letter of Offer” template provided by the PME Office.
 - 7.1.2.1. It must include the category of fellowship being offered.
 - 7.1.2.2. It must include the name of the supervisor.
 - 7.1.2.3. It must include the description of training.
 - 7.1.2.3.1. It must aim to meet the educational needs of the fellow, and should define the competencies to be achieved.
 - 7.1.2.3.2. It must indicate the training experiences needed for the attainment of the stated competencies, the expectations regarding academic productivity, call duties and service requirements.
 - 7.1.2.4. It must indicate if participation in Pre-entry Assessment Program (PEAP) is mandatory. See Section 8.2 below.
 - 7.1.2.5. If PEAP participation is not required, the Letter of Offer must indicate that the first three (3) months of training are on a probation basis, with a summative assessment at the end of the three months.
 - 7.1.2.5.1. The fellowship may be terminated by either party at any time until the end of the probation period in the event of unsatisfactory performance or if the fellow feels that the program is a poor fit for his/her learning needs.
- 7.1.3. The Associate Dean, PME must be copied on the Letter of Offer.
- 7.1.4. The Letter of Offer must be signed by the fellowship director, the supervisor, the divisional director/chair, and the fellow.
- 7.2. The proposed fellowship as set out in the Letter of Offer is subject to review and approval of the Associate Dean, PME.
 - 7.2.1. The signed (by fellowship director, supervisor, divisional director/department chair and fellow) Letter of Offer must be sent to the PME office, along with a Fellow Registration Form completed by the Program.
 - 7.2.2. On receipt of the signed Letter of Offer by the PME, and PME approval, a PME Registration Form and a Letter of Engagement and will be sent to the selected candidate.
 - 7.2.2.1. The PME Registration Form must be completed by the fellow and returned to the PME Office to start the registration process.
 - 7.2.2.2. The Letter of Engagement from the PME Office is the official contract.

8. Fellow Orientation

- 8.1. The program must have an orientation process for fellows.
 - 8.1.1. This should include components specific to the clinical and/or research training environment of the area of training.
 - 8.1.2. For international fellows, the orientation should include an introduction to the Canadian medical system.

- 8.1.3. All fellows with clinical interaction as part of the training should be oriented to the local medical system. I.e. Medical charts/ Medical Records/ Electronic Medical Records/Netcare/Clinical training sites.
- 8.1.4. Fellows should be provided information on, and how to access guidelines and policies applicable to them.
- 8.2. Pre-entry Assessment Program (PEAP)
 - 8.2.1. This is an annual PME program that operates in spring for all new international trainees who have been offered positions and have no experience in the Canadian medical system.
 - 8.2.2. It includes didactic and interactive sessions to orient fellows to the Canadian and local medical systems.
 - 8.2.2.1. For programs which stipulate mandatory PEAP participation, this is an assessment program to determine if fellows can successfully complete the probationary period and remain in the training program.
 - 8.2.3. Participation in PEAP is highly encouraged.
 - 8.2.3.1. Program can enroll fellows by contacting the PME Office.

9. Assessment and Appeals

- 9.1. The program must conduct regular in training assessments (e.g. at the end of the 3 month probationary period, at the end of each rotation or training experience, every six months and at the completion of training).
- 9.2. Assessment of AFC Diploma fellows must adhere to the standards set out by the RCPSC.
- 9.3. The program should establish and maintain a process to notify fellows of identified deficiencies in a timely fashion.
- 9.4. The program must have a mechanism for appeal, and adhere to the PME Academic Appeals Policy.
- 9.5. The program must promptly inform the PME Office in writing of any decision for remediation or termination of fellowship training.

10. Harassment and intimidation

- 10.1. The program must foster a positive learning environment in which the fellows are treated fairly with respect, in accordance with the University's Discrimination, Harassment and Duty to Accommodate Policy.

11. Change in Training Category

- 11.1. In the event that the category of fellowship changes during the course of training, the PME office must be promptly notified in writing.

12. Training Extension

- 12.1. Clinical fellowships are time-defined training programs with the usual length of time ranging from 3 months to 1 year.

- 12.2. For clinical fellowships that are not intended for meeting the requirements of RCPSC subspecialty training, a one-year extension for completion of educational requirements or attainment of competencies is allowed, provided that total duration of fellowship training does not exceed two (2) years.
- 12.3. Request for extension of training must be in writing, from the fellowship director in consultation with the supervisor, and sent to the PME office at least three (3) months prior to the proposed extension date.
 - 12.3.1. Late request may not be processed in time, and may be denied.
- 12.4. Written requests for training extension must include the following:
 - 12.4.1. A description of the specific competencies to be attained during the training extension and the duration of the proposed extension.
 - 12.4.2. The fellow's assessment to date to reflect his/ her progress.
 - 12.4.3. The named supervisor for the extended period of training.
 - 12.4.4. A letter indicating the source of salary and benefits.

13. Certificate of Completion of Training

- 13.1. The PME Office will issue certificates for fellows, signed by the Associate Dean, PME and co-signed by the supervisor, following satisfactory completion of the fellowship program.
- 13.2. Prior to issuance of the certificate, the program must submit a summary of the fellow's assessment to the PME office.
 - 13.2.1. Summary submission should be at least four (4) weeks before the completion of training.
 - 13.2.1.1. Summary submission received less than four (4) weeks before the end of training may result in delayed issuance of certificate.
- 13.3. The certificate will be issued for the fellowship category as indicated in the Letter of Engagement, unless there has been a formal written notification of change in category of fellowship. (See Section 11).