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) and Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) accreditation standards.

MS-20. If a medical student at a medical education program is permitted to take an elective under the auspices of another medical education program, institution, or organization, there should be a centralized system in the dean’s office at the home program 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.

This procedure exists to assess the quality of
- newly proposed electives prior to being added to the UAlberta electives catalogue;
- electives currently listed in the UAlberta electives catalogue;
- electives outside of UAlberta.

PROCEDURE

1. ASSESSING QUALITY OF NEWLY PROPOSED ELECTIVES
   a. Proposals for new electives must be submitted to the electives coordinator and/or assistant dean, academic, 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 coordinator and/or assistant dean, academic, may request additional information from the elective site, if necessary.
   d. When the above points are considered satisfactory, the elective is added to the UAlberta electives catalogue by the administrator, academic.

2. ASSESSING QUALITY OF CURRENT ELECTIVES
a. Students complete an elective evaluation form via the MD program’s learning management system (currently MedSIS) within 21 days of the end of their elective.

b. If an elective is rated poorly in any category, the electives coordinator is automatically notified via MedSIS.

c. The electives 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. ASSESSING QUALITY OF ELECTIVES NOT IN THE UALBERTA 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. UAlberta students will complete the same evaluation form that they do for UAlberta electives.
   iii. If an elective is rated poorly in any category, the electives coordinator is automatically notified via MedSIS.
   iv. The electives coordinator will then decide on the appropriate course of action (notify the other school or do not allow UAlberta students to do that elective in the future).

b. International Exchanges
   i. The quality of electives at schools chosen for exchanges is considered satisfactory.
   ii. UAlberta students will complete the same evaluation form that they do for UAlberta electives.
   iii. If an elective is rated poorly, the electives coordinator is automatically notified via MedSIS.
   iv. The electives coordinator will then decide on the appropriate course of action (notify the other school or do not allow UAlberta students to do that elective in the future).

c. International/Global Health Electives
   i. All global health electives (defined as an elective in a resource-poor country) must be approved by the director of global health.
   ii. If an elective is rated poorly, the electives coordinator is automatically notified via MedSIS.
   iii. In discussion with the director of global health, the electives coordinator will then decide on the appropriate course of action (notify the other school or do not allow UAlberta students to do that elective in the future).

d. 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 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 coordinator may request additional information in order to assess the quality of the elective before granting approval.

**DEFINITIONS**

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<tr>
<th>Committee on Accreditation of Canadian Medical Schools (CACMS)</th>
<th>The Committee on Accreditation of Canadian Medical Schools (CACMS), working with the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) in the United States, 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.</th>
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<td>Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME)</td>
<td>The Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) is the nationally recognized accrediting authority for medical education programs leading to the M.D. degree in U.S. and Canadian medical schools. The LCME is sponsored by the Association of American Medical Colleges and the American Medical Association.</td>
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**FORMS**

- Elective Application Form (Years 1 & 2)
- Elective Application Form (Years 3 & 4)

**RELATED LINKS**

- Booking and Confirming Electives Procedure
- Code of Student Behaviour
- College of Physicians & Surgeons of Alberta Code of Conduct
- Electives Catalogue (Years 1 & 2)
- Electives Catalogue (Years 3 & 4)
- Electives Policy
- Professionalism Standards

**APPROVER STATUS DATE**

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<th>APPROVER</th>
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<td>Kent Stobart, Associate Dean</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>11 February 2014</td>
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