MD Program Assessment Rules and Regulations

Approval body: MD Program Curriculum Committee
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Note: This MD Program Assessment Rules and Regulations policy document includes information previously included in the following two policy documents: MD Program Examination and Mastery Exercise Rules and Regulations and MD Program Standards for Student Review and Challenge of Examination and Assessment Outcomes.

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A. General regulations on taking assessments as scheduled
Students are required to be present at the assessment room for in person invigilation or virtually for electronically proctored assessments as scheduled. However, illness or personal circumstances may interfere with a student’s ability to adequately prepare for or complete an assessment as scheduled. In these circumstances, students should contact the appropriate course director as soon as the problem becomes apparent. In the case of an absence from an assessment due to illness, students should obtain a completed U of T Verification of Illness (VOI) Form. Further details about how to submit notification and any required supporting documentation for an unplanned absence can be found on the MD program’s school absences webpage. It is the responsibility of the relevant course and/or curriculum director to determine whether the circumstances warrant a deferral.

Students who cannot complete an assessment as scheduled due to a religious obligation should submit a planned absence request in accordance with the procedures and deadlines included in the MD Program Regulations for student attendance and guidelines for absences from mandatory activities. According to those Regulations, religious observance planned absence requests from assessments are normally approved, while other types of planned absence requests from assessment are normally not approved.

B. Rules for the conduct of written assessments
1. Arrive on time: For assessments completed through in person invigilation at designated locations and electronically proctored (e-proctored), students must be present at the assessment and download the assessment at least fifteen (15) minutes before the scheduled start time of the assessment. Students may be directed to be present earlier than fifteen (15) minutes for some assessments.
2. Late arrival procedures: For in person invigilated assessments completed at designated locations, students who arrive late will be permitted to enter the room and complete the assessment, but will not be allowed additional time. Students who are ten (10) or more minutes late for a Foundations mastery exercise will be directed to a separate back-up room to complete the exercise. Students who are late for a Clerkship mastery exercise will complete the mastery exercise in the assessment room. Students who...
are repeatedly late are responsible for contacting the Foundations or Clerkship Director to discuss their circumstances. For e-proctored assessments, students who attempt to log into the assessment late and find that their assessment download has been deleted will not be allowed additional time. In such instances, students will need to contact the administrator who will provide them with a new assessment download for the remaining duration of the assessment.

3. What to bring to assessments completed through in person invigilation at designated locations: Students should bring photo identification (T-card) and are required to display it at the request of the invigilator/examiner. For computer-based assessments, students are responsible for bringing their own device (computer or tablet). For paper-based assessments, students are responsible for bringing their own pens and pencils. Students are responsible for bringing a watch to monitor the time throughout the assessment, which must be placed on their desk during the assessment. Students are not permitted to use cell phones or smart watches as timekeeping devices during an assessment.

4. Scent- and nut-free area: For assessments completed through in person invigilation at designated locations, students should refrain from wearing scent (i.e. perfume, cologne) and from bringing food items containing nuts or traces of nuts to the assessment. Students who arrive wearing scent may not be permitted into the assessment location. Students who arrive with a food item that contains nuts or traces of nuts will not be permitted to bring it into the assessment location.

5. What not to bring to the assessment desk/table: No materials or aids should be brought to the assessment desk/table unless explicitly authorized by the program/invigilator/examiner. This includes but is not limited to paper and pen for notetaking, cell phones, textbooks, electronic earphones and headphones, and other devices (e.g., iPad, tablet, smart watch) which are strictly prohibited. For e-proctored assessments, the use of non-electronic ear plugs to cancel noise are permitted. If using such ear plugs, the student must show them to the camera one at time before inserting them into their ears at the start of the assessment. For assessments completed through in person invigilation, bags and books are to be deposited in areas designated by the invigilator/examiner and are not to be taken to the assessment desk/table. For e-proctored assessments, the assessment desk/table must be free of any unauthorized materials or aids for the duration of the assessment. All electronic devices are to be turned off and must remain in the designated area or away from the desk/table for e-proctored assessments. Under the terms of the University of Toronto Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters, possession by a student of unauthorized materials/aids during their assessment is a breach of academic integrity, with the potential for academic penalty. This includes cell phones, smart watches or other electronic devices, even if they are turned off. The University is not responsible for personal property left at the assessment location.

6. Assigned seating for assessments completed through in person invigilation at designated locations: The invigilator/examiner has the authority to assign seats to students in the assessment room. No person will be allowed in an assessment room during an assessment except the students completing the assessment and those supervising the assessment.

7. Behaviour during assessments: No materials or aids should be used during any assessment unless explicitly authorized by the program/invigilator/examiner. This includes but is not limited to paper and pen for notetaking, cell phones, textbooks, electronic earphones and headphones, and other devices (e.g., iPad, tablet, smart watch) which are strictly prohibited. For e-proctored assessments, the use of non-electronic ear plugs to cancel noise are permitted. If using such ear plugs, the student must show them to the camera one at time before inserting them into their ears at the start of the assessment. Students who use or view any unauthorized materials or aids while their assessment is in progress, who assist or obtain assistance from other candidates or from any unauthorized source, or who communicate with one another in any manner whatsoever during the assessment are liable for academic penalties under the terms of the University of Toronto Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters.

8. Irregularities/errors/ambiguities in assessment materials: Irregularities/errors/ambiguities relating to wording, spelling, punctuation, numbers or notations will normally be referred to the course director in writing within 24 hours of the assessment.
9. Leaving the room during the assessment: For assessments completed through in person invigilation at designated locations, students may leave the assessment room no earlier than thirty (30) minutes after the start of the assessment, and under supervision. Candidates shall remain seated at their desks during the final ten (10) minutes of each assessment, even if they have completed the assessment. For e-proctored assessments, students are encouraged to use the washroom before the assessment. A short washroom break may be unavoidable and is thus allowed. The videos will be flagged for review when this occurs.

10. At the conclusion of assessments: At the conclusion of an assessment, all writing shall cease. For paper-based assessments, the invigilator/examiner may seize the papers of students who fail to observe this requirement. For computer-based assessments, the invigilator/examiner will make a note of students who fail to observe this requirement. Failure to observe this requirement may result in a penalty imposed under the terms of the University of Toronto Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters. For computer-based in person invigilated assessments, students may leave the assessment room only after an invigilator/examiner has ensured that the assessment has been uploaded.

11. After the assessment: For assessments completed through in person invigilation at designated locations, assessment books and other material issued for the assessment shall not be removed from the assessment room except by authority of the invigilator/examiner. For all assessments, the sharing of assessment questions in any format or by any means is considered a breach of academic integrity under the terms of the University of Toronto Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters.

C. Rules for the conduct of OSCEs

1. Arrive on time: Students must normally arrive at the in person examination site or virtual site at least thirty (30) minutes before the scheduled starting time of the examination. Students may be directed to arrive earlier than thirty (30) minutes for some examinations.

2. Late arrival procedures: It is at the discretion of the examiner whether a student who arrives late will be allowed to participate in the examination and whether additional time beyond the scheduled examination time will be allowed.

3. What to bring to the in person examination: Students should bring photo identification, lab coat, stethoscope, watch with a second hand, clipboard, and pens and pencils. Failure to do so may prevent the student from completing the examination. If additional equipment is required, this will be communicated to students before the OSCE.

4. What to bring to the virtual examination: Students should bring photo identification, blank paper, and a pen or pencil. Students should wear proper attire (e.g. business casual attire).

5. Scent- and nut-free area: At the in person examination site, students should refrain from wearing scent (i.e. perfume, cologne) and from bringing food items containing nuts or traces of nuts to the examination. Students who arrive wearing scent may not be permitted into the examination location. Students who arrive with a food item that contains nuts or traces of nuts will not be permitted to bring it into the examination location.

6. What not to bring to the in person examination: No materials or aids should be brought to the examination location unless explicitly authorized by the examiner. Bags and books are to be deposited in areas designated by the examiner. All electronic devices are to be turned off and must remain in the designated area. Under the terms of the University of Toronto Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters, possession by a student of unauthorized materials/aids during their assessment is a breach of academic integrity, with the potential for academic penalty. This includes cell phones or other electronic devices, even if they are turned off. The University is not responsible for personal property left at the examination location.

7. What not to bring to the virtual examination: No additional electronic devices aside from the device being used to access the virtual platform. Electronic note taking or the recording of the examination is strictly prohibited.
8. Behaviour during the examination: Each student will proceed through the sequence of stations as assigned by the examiner. Students are responsible for ensuring that all information is written legibly for in person examinations.

9. Professionalism: Where standardized patients are used in the course of an examination, students will extend the same respect and professional courtesy as that which is appropriate for any clinical interaction. Students shall not otherwise engage in behaviour that is disruptive to the examination process. Characterization of behaviour as disruptive and expulsion of a disruptive student from the examination site will be at the discretion of the examiner. Students are expected to behave in compliance with and are subject to penalties under the terms of the MD Program Guidelines for the Assessment of Student Professionalism.

10. Conflict of interest: In cases where there is a conflict of interest (including a conflict of clinical and educational roles) during an examination, either the student or examiner may stop the station and notify staff immediately. The student will be reassigned to a different examiner/standardized patient when time allows.

11. Irregularities: If a student feels that their performance has been compromised as a result of an irregularity in the conduct of the examination, they must report the irregularity to the examiner prior to leaving the examination site.

12. During and after the examination period: Students shall not discuss any part of the examination with another student for the duration of the exam period. The administration period of the examination includes all sessions of the examination that are conducted for separate groups of candidates and that may occur on separate days. No portion of the examination shall be retained by a student after the conclusion of the examination unless explicitly authorized by the examiner. Students are expected to behave in compliance with and are subject to penalties under the terms of the University of Toronto Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters.

13. During virtual examinations: Students must ensure that their video remains on and that their audio is unmuted. Students are not permitted to record the examination or use virtual backgrounds.

D. Calculation re-check of an assessment or course

If a student is concerned that the calculation of a mark or grade for an assessment or course was incorrect, they may request a calculation re-check, which will focus solely on the addition of marks or grades within an assessment or course. Such requests must be submitted in writing to the relevant course director, copied to the Student Progress Analyst (md.progress@utoronto.ca) for Foundations courses or course administrator for Clerkship courses, no later than five business days after a mark or grade for an assessment or course was made available to the student. If possible, the student should indicate the location of the possible miscalculation.

The course director will ensure that a calculation re-check is completed and the outcome communicated to the student in a timely manner, normally within two weeks from receipt of the written request. Completion of the re-check may take longer depending upon the availability of relevant faculty members and administrative staff.

A calculation re-check may result in a raised mark, lowered mark, or no change. By requesting a calculation re-check, a student agrees to accept the outcome of the re-check. Appeals to the outcome of a calculation re-check are governed by the Faculty of Medicine Appeal Guidelines, including acceptable grounds for appeals.

E. Re-mark of a written assessment

The option to request a re-mark applies only to written assessments that include short answer questions (SAQs) and/or other narrative components. Multiple choice questions (MCQs) are not eligible for re-mark requests since computerized testing is used to administer and mark MCQs; further, there is a systematic post-test analysis of performance of each item that identifies any problematic questions.

A student may request a re-mark for a written assessment that they believe has been incorrectly marked in its
substance. In the event that a student needs to view their completed assessment in order to determine the location and nature of the suspected substantive mis-mark and provide an informed statement in support of a re-mark request, they may request to view the completed assessment. Section F includes information regarding access to past and completed assessments.

- Re-mark request procedures:
  o Students must submit in writing a re-mark request to the relevant course director (copied to the course administrator) no later than four weeks after the assessment mark has been made available to the student.
  o The request must identify the written assessment and portion(s) of the written assessment that the student would like re-remarked.
  o The request must include a statement in support of the re-mark. This statement should demonstrate that the answers provided in the assessment are substantially correct by citing specific instances of disagreement, supported by documentary evidence from course materials. The student must do more than simply assert that they disagree with the marking or that they deserve more marks.

- Re-mark rules and regulations:
  o The course director will ensure that the assessment is re-marked, normally by the individual initially responsible for marking, the individual who has academic oversight of the marking of the assessment in question, or a course-specific assessment subcommittee.
  o The re-mark will be informed by the statement of support provided by the student. It will also be re-marked in a manner consistent with the rest of the class and, if applicable, the assessment rubric.
  o The course director will ensure that the outcome of the re-mark is communicated to the student, normally within four weeks from receipt of the re-mark request. Completion of the re-mark may take longer depending upon the availability of relevant faculty members.
  o A re-mark may result in a raised mark, lowered mark, or no change. By requesting a re-mark, a student agrees to accept the outcome of the re-mark.
  o Appeals to the outcome of a re-mark are governed by the Faculty of Medicine Appeal Guidelines, including acceptable grounds for appeals articulated in those guidelines.
  o If, as a result of a re-mark, an answer key, scoring system, or other aspect of an assessment are found to require alteration, all affected students will be promptly notified, as appropriate.

F. Access to completed assessments

Access to all MD Program assessments is restricted, meaning that medical students may not request or obtain copies of completed assessments. The following procedures, rules and regulations for viewing completed written assessments are intended to maintain the integrity of the MD Program’s question banks.

Medical students may request a supervised viewing of a written assessment that they have completed in order to determine the location and nature of a suspected mis-mark and provide an informed statement in support of a request for a re-mark.

- Procedures to request a supervised viewing of a completed written assessment:
  o Students must submit in writing a request to the relevant course director (copied to the course administrator) no later than two weeks after the assessment mark has been made available to the student. The timing of the viewing will be informed by adherence the rules articulated below.

- Viewing rule and regulations:
  1. The viewing will take place in a location determined by the course director or delegate.
  2. The viewing must be supervised by the course director or delegate.
  3. The student will bring their signed photo identification and provide it to the supervisor, if requested.
  4. If a student is reviewing multiple written assessments, they must be reviewed one at a time.
5. The viewing of a single written assessment will not exceed 30 minutes.
6. The student may not be accompanied by anyone else during the viewing.
7. All belongings must be placed at the side of the room or under the table. Nothing, including writing/notetaking implements or cell phones, is allowed on the viewing table.
8. Students may not consult books or notes, nor take notes or photographs, during the viewing.
9. Answer keys and/or marking rubrics will not be provided to the student.
10. The course director or delegate is under no obligation to provide feedback to the student during or in response to the viewing, except in the context of a request for a re-mark.