

**Academic Policies and Procedures for the Doctor of Medicine Program of the
autonomous organization of education Nazarbayev University**

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Section 1. Purpose and Application

1.1. The Academic Policies and Procedures for the Doctor of Medicine Program (hereinafter – Policies and Procedures) of the autonomous organization of education Nazarbayev University (hereinafter – University) contain academic policies and procedures, and apply to all students enrolled in the Doctor of Medicine program of the School of Medicine (hereinafter – MD program).

These Policies and Procedures set the minimum standards for MD program that may be more stringent or otherwise differ from the University policies. In case of conflicts, the provisions of these Policies and Procedures take precedence over previous rules.

Section 2. Terms / Definitions

2.1. Basic definitions and abbreviations used in these Policies and Procedures are:

- 2.1.1. AC – Academic Council;
- 2.1.2. MD – Doctor of Medicine;
- 2.1.3. SoM – Nazarbayev University School of Medicine;
- 2.1.4. OR – Office of the Registrar;
- 2.1.5. TLC – Teaching and Learning Committee of the School of Medicine;
- 2.1.6. CSP – Committee for Student Promotion of the School of Medicine;
- 2.1.7. LoA – Leave of Absence;
- 2.1.8. OSCE – Objective Structured Clinical Examination.

Section 3. Main Provisions

3.1 Admissions and Transfer

3.1.1. The admissions process is convened in accordance with the relevant University internal regulations relating to the admissions to the MD program.

3.1.2. The transfer applicants should be the same academic quality as currently enrolled students. The applicants should provide all academic transcripts, personal statement and a list of extracurricular activities. Only applicants within the same academic credential range of the current applicant pool and who are currently enrolled in SoM are qualified for transfer consideration. The Committee appointed by the Dean interviews the applicant and recommends whether or not to admit the applicant. The Committee evaluates the credits earned at the external institution to recommend which ones should be transferred to the SoM transcript. The MD Curriculum Committee makes a final decision on student transfer.

3.2. The academic year calendar

3.2.1. The MD program will, as far as possible, use the template of the academic calendar of the University, as posted on the website of the OR. Academic calendars for the MD program, prepared and approved by the MD Curriculum Committee each year will be submitted for approval by the AC and be posted on the OR's website after approval.

3.3. Registration

3.3.1. Students matriculated into the MD program at SoM do not need to register through the standard University graduate registration processes because all courses at SoM are compulsory. They are registered through a process specific to SoM coordinated between the OR and SoM.

3.4. Requirements for program completion and program overview

3.4.1. To remain in good academic standing, MD students must achieve a passing mark in each curriculum block and have acceptable performance with regard to professional behavior in each course/clerkship. Student performance and standing are reviewed at the completion of each curriculum block, and promotion to the next academic year is granted after Course Committee review and approval of a student's full year performance by the CSP, the TLC and final approval by the Dean of SoM.

3.4.2. Satisfactory completion of the MD program requires that the student progress through a number of distinct stages, each of which is characterized by a key evaluation point. The necessary stages are:

- 1) satisfactory application to the program;
- 2) completing all required coursework in the program;
- 3) satisfactory performance in the qualifying examinations.

3.4.3. To complete the MD program, students are required to pass the set courses and clerkships for all four years.

3.4.4. The MD is a very intense academic program which is not compatible with any paid or unpaid part-time or full-time internal or external work. It is, therefore, forbidden to engage in any work during the studies.

3.5. Grading system

3.5.1. General remarks: SoM uses a pass/fail and honors grading system as described below. A grade of "P" (Pass) or "F" (Fail) will be reported for students enrolled in SoM courses that are offered only as P/F course; a grade of "PH" (Pass with Honors) will be reported for students awarded with honor. Such courses are identified as such in the Catalog. Grades of "P" are required for normal progression in the MD program. A grade of "P" requires work comparable to that expected for a grade of "C" in a regularly graded course. The cut-off for passing mark is determined

based on a standardized established method adopted by SoM for all courses, clerkships and internships.

3.5.2. Courses (MD Year 1 and Year 2):

1) Pass/Fail and Remediation:

The passing mark for exams is determined using the Ebel Standard Setting, which is defined by designated committees, according to Ebel standard setting standards. Students failing within 5% of the passing mark for the exam require compulsory remediation. For example, if the passing mark for the exam is 60%, then 5% of the passing mark will be 3%. Students failing below 5% of the passing mark for the exam must re-sit the exam, regardless whether they scored above the overall passing mark for the course.

Students failing within 5% of the overall passing mark for the course require compulsory remediation. Students failing by more than 5% of the overall passing mark for the course require compulsory remediation and must re-sit the exam.

For the Block grade:

Student who accumulates more than one failure within the same block but less than 50% of the courses of the block will be allowed to remediate and/or resit the exam(s) of the failed courses. The block grade is considered “Incomplete” until remediation is completed;

Student who fails in more than 50% of the courses of one block will not be allowed to progress to the next block or the following academic year and will be required to repeat the same year. If the number of courses in a block is 3, or 5 or 7, the lengths of the failed courses shall be taken into account in roughly determining the percentage of failed courses. This may also apply to even number of courses as the case may be. Students are not allowed to fail more than one block per year. Otherwise, the student will have to repeat the year.

Student who fails more than one course of the different blocks but less than 50% of the courses within the block will be allowed to remediate and/or resit the exam(s) of the failed courses.

2) Awarding Honor:

Honor for a course: Students are eligible to be awarded Honor for a course at scores 80% and above, or 85% and above for exams where the borderline passing mark was set, respectively, between 50% and 60% or between 61% and 70%. However, students who (1) are retaking the specific course, or (2) accumulate unexcused absences that are more than 10% of lessons covered in the course, shall not be awarded Honor.

Honor for a block: Students will be awarded Honor for a block when more than or equal to 50% of the block components are awarded with Honor. Different components of the block will be weighted according to their duration. Additionally, all other components of the block should be at least 70%. Exceptions to this rule are possible with specific recommendation of course leads and the TLC. Students who have been retaking an exam in the block are not eligible.

Honor for longitudinal courses: Generally, the expectation that students will pass these blocks is very high. Therefore, the Honor threshold is $\geq 90\%$. If below 90%, an explicit reasoning in writing must be submitted by the course lead.

3.5.3. Clinical clerkships (Year 3 and Year 4):

1) Pass/Fail and Remediation:

In order to pass the clerkship, the student has to achieve the passing mark (in brackets) for each component of the clerkship assessment: Clinical Competence (65%), Professionalism (80%), Active Learning (65%), Final Exam (established by Ebel Standard Setting).

The passing mark for final exams is determined using the Ebel Standard Setting procedure, which is defined by designated committees. Students scoring lower than the Pass mark, but within 2% of the passing mark for the final exam, can pass the final exam. For example, if the passing mark for the final exam is 60%, then 2% of the Pass mark will be 1.2%. As a result, scores of at least 58.8% are accepted and students can pass the final exam. Students scoring below this 2% tolerance of the passing mark for the final exam, must successfully complete a summative remediation of the final exam.

The same approach is used for the assessment of all other components of the clerkship (Professionalism, Active Learning, Clinical Competence). Students scoring below 2% of the passing mark for a specific component, must have a summative remediation for this specific component, as defined by the designated committee.

The Overall Score of the individual clerkship will result from the weighted average of the individual scores received in each of four assessment components (weight of each component: Clinical Competence, 50%; Professionalism, 10%; Active Learning, 20%; Final Exam, 20%). The Overall Score is only considered among the criteria to be fulfilled for awarding honor.

In case a student having one (or more) summative remediation(s) also fails it (or one of them), he/she fails the clerkship without possibility of any additional session of internal remediation, but he/she must repeat the clerkship, according to the modalities established by the designated committee.

2) Honor for a clerkship: students are eligible to be awarded Honor for a course if all the following scores (in brackets) are fulfilled: Clinical Competence (80%); Professionalism (90%); Active Learning (90%); Final Exam (75%); Overall Score (80%).

3.5.4. Clinical internships (Year 4):

1) Pass/Fail and Remediation:

In order to pass, the student has to achieve the passing mark (in brackets) for each component of the clerkship assessment: Clinical Competence (65%) and Professionalism (80%).

Students scoring less than the passing mark, but within 2% of the passing mark for the component (as explained for clerkships), can pass the internship. Students scoring below 2% of the passing mark must successfully complete a summative remediation of the failed component, as defined by the designated committee.

In case a student having one (or more) summative remediation(s) also fails it (or one of them), he/she fails the internship without possibility of any additional session of internal remediation, but he/she must repeat the internship, according to the modalities established by the designated committee.

2) Awarding Honor: no honor is awarded for the internships.

3.5.5. Objective structured clinical examination (OSCE): At the end of each block of MD year 3 and MD year 4 clerkships, students undergo OSCEs. Student performance during the OSCEs will be evaluated according to an overall passing mark which is established through Angoff standard setting. OSCEs are currently used as formative assessment.

3.6. Administrative grades

3.6.1. At the University level, a number of special administrative notations are used on transcripts. These administrative notations apply to all University programs. Some University administrative notations that apply to the SoM MD program are listed in Table 1.

Table 1: Administrative Grades and Notations

Grades	Comments	Points
I	Incomplete	N/A
IP	In Progress	N/A
W	Withdrawal	N/A
TC	Transfer Credit	N/A
AW	Administrative Withdrawal	N/A

3.6.2. Incomplete - When a student has completed a substantial portion of the requirements for a course, but due to extenuating circumstances is unable to complete all requirements, the Course Lead may assign a temporary grade of “Incomplete” (I). An “I” grade can be given only on the basis of a written prior agreement between the student and the Course Lead, approved by the Dean of SoM that sets forth the additional work that is expected and the terms under which it is to be completed:

1) When the work that is required under an “Incomplete” agreement is completed, the Course Lead shall request a change of the “I” grade to the appropriate grade for the course. The Course Lead will inform the OR, which will record the new grade.

2) An “I” grade must be made up by the end of the semester. If the student does not complete the work required for the “I” grade by the time required, the “I” grade will automatically become an “F”. The original “I” grade will be removed from

the student's transcript upon submission of a new grade by the Course Lead, or by the conversion of the "I" grade to an "F".

3) In no case shall a student be granted a degree while there are unresolved "Incompletes" on her or his record.

3.6.3. In Progress – This grade is assigned at the end of a course in which assignments are not due until a point in time beyond that of the end of the academic year. "In progress" (IP) can be used in any post-graduate course in which it is appropriate.

3.6.4. Withdrawal – The grade "W" denotes a student who has withdrawn from the course and who has not completed the course requirements. The grade "W" is automatic. In a context in which a grade of "W" is appropriate, the Course Lead may not assign any other grade.

3.6.5. Administrative Withdrawal - This grade indicates that a student has been required to withdraw from a course based on:

- 1) disciplinary grounds, following the procedures and standards specified in the internal regulations of the University;
- 2) non-attendance of classes; or
- 3) non-payment of tuition where appropriate following the procedures and standards specified in the internal regulations of University.

3.7. Assigning grades

3.7.1. Final Grades: Final grades are awarded to each student, in each course, at the end of the designated evaluation period (block). All students taking a SoM MD course will be assigned PH/P/F grades.

3.8. Grade submission

3.8.1. Block/Year Leads will submit all final grades no later than the date of official grades submission indicated in the Academic Calendar posted on the website of the OR. The School will enter all grades into the Student Information System by the date indicated in the Academic Calendar. Communication of grades for individual courses is dealt with by Course/Clerkship/Internship Leads (see clause 3.13.4).

3.9. Academic Standing/Status

3.9.1. SoM expects students to maintain satisfactory academic progress toward degree completion (as described in preceding sections).

3.9.2. Academic Probation: SoM does not place students on academic probation but rather, progresses a student through a student promotion process as described in clause 3.12.1.

3.10. Grade appeal

3.10.1. If a student believes that she or he has received an unfair or erroneous grade, the student may appeal. There are three reasons for a grade appeal:

- 1) incorrect calculation;
- 2) incorrect entry of the grade into the database;
- 3) misapplication of the course grading scale as published in the course syllabus;
- 4) incomplete marking of an assessment.

3.10.2. The following are cases for appeal:

1) In the case of an examination: The student must first consult with the Course Lead within 5 working days of her or his receipt of the contested grade (this time may be extended in the event that the Course Lead can be shown to have been unavailable during the period following the student's receipt of the grade in question). The Course Lead must respond within the next 5 working days. In the event that the student is still dissatisfied, or the Course Lead has not replied within 5 working days, she or he may appeal to the SoM Dean within 5 working days. The SoM Dean (or her or his designee) shall consult with the Course Lead before making any decision. The decision of the Dean (or of her or his designee) shall be final;

2) In the case of a Final Block Grade: The student must first consult with the Block Lead within 5 working days of her or his receipt of the contested grade (this time may be extended in the event that the Block Lead can be shown to have been unavailable during the period following the student's receipt of the grade in question). The date to be used for appeals of Final Block Grades is the date published in the SoM Academic Calendar. The Block Lead must respond within the next 5 working days. In the event that the student still believes that the grade is incorrect, or the Block Lead has not replied within 5 working days, the student may appeal to the SoM Dean (or the Dean's designee) within 5 working days. The SoM Dean (or her or his designee) shall consult with the Block Lead before making any decision. The decision of the SoM Dean (or her or his designee) shall be final.

3.11. Retaking and repeating courses

3.11.1. Medical students in Years 1 and 2 who fail a course must remediate and re-sit the final exam. Medical students in Years 1 and 2 who fail one block must repeat the year.

3.11.2. Medical students in Years 3 and 4 who fail one clerkship/internship during the academic year can be allowed to repeat it according to the academic calendar and/or during the summer break following the conclusion of the respective academic year, after approval of the relevant CSP and TLC. The maximum duration of clerkship/internship is up to 4 weeks. If a student fails more than one clerkship/internship during one academic year, he/she cannot progress to the following curricular year and must repeat the academic year.

3.12. Assessment

3.12.1. Guidelines for student promotion:

Fairness of grading and smooth students' promotion are ensured by SoM grading policy. Each course committee, based on the approved assessment methodology, makes recommendations about P/F/PH to the CSP. CSP is established for each curricular year and is comprised of one Chair and all Course Leads of that curricular year. The CSP makes a decision about grades and submits that for approval to the TLC. MD Curriculum committee is informed about the student progression. The block grades are approved within the MD Curriculum committee and ratified by the TLC.

All remediation activities must take place before the end of the block/academic year in which the course(s) is offered. The course/clerkship/internship repeat, if needed and approved, must take place before the beginning of the following academic and year.

A student who repeats one academic year of study and is still unsuccessful shall be dismissed from the MD program.

If MD Year 4 student fails one clerkship/internship, he/she will have to successfully repeat the clerkship/internship before the graduation. If MD Year 4 student fails more than one clerkship/internship, he/she will have to successfully repeat the whole curricular year in the next academic year in order to graduate.

3.13. Final examination

3.13.1. All rules concerning the administration of examinations will be explained to students before the administration of the examination.

3.13.2. Any student shall be permitted to have feedback on his/her performance with the Course/Clerkship/Internship Lead.

3.13.3. The language of examinations shall be English, except in the specific case of courses designed to teach another language, or in courses specifically designed to provide interpretation into Kazakh or Russian.

3.13.4. The communication of results from individual courses after discussion and approval by the CSP and TLC will be done from the corresponding course/clerkship/internship Leads.

3.13.5. Students absenting themselves from an examination or other form of academic assessment without prior approval will be marked as absent and deemed to have made an attempt at the examination. Students absent from an examination without permission will be awarded a mark of 0 (zero) for the examination. Students who are absent without permission from other forms of assessment or who do not submit coursework for assessment within the stipulated deadline will be awarded a mark of 0 (zero) for that assessment.

3.13.6. A student who through appropriately documented illness, or other cause acceptable to the School, is prevented from attending any examination may apply to the SoM to defer assessment. Deferral of assessment must normally be requested within 48 hours of the examination. Administration of deferred assessment shall be agreed to by the Course Lead. The student will be assigned a grade of “Incomplete” managers for academic and student affairs by completing the leave of absence request form with the approval of the course lead and SoM Dean. Violation of the Course Lead’s attendance policy may result in lowered grades or a Course Lead initiated withdrawal from the course. In the event of a dispute, the matter must be reported to the SoM Dean, who will make the final decision regarding resolution of the dispute.

3.15.4. Students are not permitted to engage in classroom behavior that interferes with the Course Lead’s ability to conduct the class or with the ability of other students to profit from the instruction. Course Lead may devise and implement such rules as they deem appropriate to deal with disruptive classroom behavior.

3.15.5. University has very strict policies on plagiarism and other kinds of academic dishonesty. Plagiarism is a violation of academic integrity in any university setting, but this is especially true in the case of post-graduate programs. Any sort of plagiarism or academic misconduct will be severely penalized.

3.15.6. SoM students are expected to honor the SoM Code of Student Professionalism in accordance with Annex.

3.14. Medical student dress code

3.16.1. Health Sciences students, staff, and practitioners are required to place a high value on personal appearance, including attire. The reasons are rooted in concerns for infection control, communication and cultural sensitivity. This document sets forth standards for dress and appearance necessary to meet the service and safety objectives of placing patient welfare first and the educational objectives of preparing the student to assume the role of a professional healthcare worker. Patient trust and confidence in the health care provider are essential to successful treatment experiences and outcomes. The message communicated by the caregiver by his/her dress and appearance plays a fundamental role in establishing this trust and confidence. Students should consider the cultural sensitivities of their most conservative potential patients and present themselves in a manner that will earn their respect, ensure their trust, and make them feel comfortable. Recent trends in clothing, body art, and body piercing may not be generally accepted by patients, and should not be worn by medical students.

3.16.2. Name badges identifying a person as a medical student must be worn at all times and clearly visible to those with whom the student is interacting. There is research that suggests wearing the name badge on the right side allows the other person to read the name as the person extends his/her right hand for a handshake.

3.16.3. Good personal hygiene is to be maintained at all times. This includes regular bathing, use of deodorants/antiperspirants, and regular dental hygiene.

3.16.4. Students should avoid distracting perfumes or colognes (may precipitate allergies or sensitivities).

3.16.5. Cosmetics should be used in moderation.

3.16.6. Piercing and tattoos should not be visible.

3.16.7. Hair Maintenance:

1) Hair should be neat, clean.

2) Hair color should be natural shade (no green, purple, blue, pink, etc).

Students contravening that may be requested to change immediately hair color.

3) Hair should be styled off the face and out of the eyes.

4) Shoulder length hair must be secured to avoid interference with patients and work.

5) Students should avoid scarves or ribbons (unless culturally appropriate).

6) Male students should style short hair (not long, not tied).

7) Beards/mustaches must be neatly trimmed.

3.16.8. Jewelry:

1) Students should keep jewelry at a minimum (represents potential for cross-infection).

2) The following are permitted: a watch, up to four rings, small earrings (large earrings are distracting and may be pulled through the ear), academic pin/s, other pins, badges, or insignias which represent an award, modest bracelets/s and necklace chains.

3.16.9. Dress, Shoes, and Hand Care:

1) Clothing should be clean, professionally styled and in good repair.

2) Men: tailored slacks, dress shirt and necktie are appropriate attire.

3) Women: Dresses, skirts of medium length, tailored slacks, shirt or blouse is the appropriate attire.

4) Shoes must be comfortable, clean and in good repair.

5) A shirt may be left untucked if it has a straight hemline (tunic).

6) Fingernails should be clean and short length. Muted tones of nail polish are appropriate for women. No artificial nails.

3.16.10. White Coats:

1) The School will provide a white coat with logo at the beginning of Year 1 and at the beginning of Year 3.

2) The white coat should be clean and pressed.

3) It should be worn appropriately when requested (lab sessions, SPs and patient encounters, simulation).

4) Each student should have a second coat of the same style and length of the original one, with no logo.

3.16.11. Scrub Suits:

1) These are to be worn in specific patient care areas only (not in the medical school).

2) If a scrub suit must be worn outside these areas, it must be clean and then covered with a clean, white lab coat. Shoe covers, masks, and hair covers must be removed before leaving the clinical area.

3) Stained or soiled scrub suits must be changed as soon as possible (source of contamination).

3.16.12. The following items are specifically prohibited in the hospital or clinic situations:

1) Sandals or open toed shoes, high-heeled or canvas shoes (blood or needles may penetrate the fabric).

2) Midriff tops, tee shirts, halter, translucent or transparent tops, shorts or tops with plunging necklines, tank tops or sweatshirts.

3) Buttons or large pin (could interfere with function, transmit disease or be grabbed by the patient).

4) Extremes in neckline (cleavage) or hemlines (crop tops) are inappropriate. Dress sweaters may be worn.

5) Leggings, jeans style or colored denim pants, shorts, Bermudas, stretch tights or athletic clothing (sweats or jogging outfits) are not appropriate.

Section 4. Waiver

4.1. Only the Managing Council is eligible to grant a Waiver from a certain provision of these Policies and Procedures.

Section 5. Temporary Provision

5.1. Not applicable.

Section 6. Revision

6.1. These Policies and Procedures shall be revised once every three years or upon the need.

Section 7. Related Documents

7.1. Regulations on Leave of Absence, Dismissal and Voluntary Withdrawal; Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures.

7.2. Admission Policies and Procedures to the Doctor of Medicine Program.

Appendix to Academic Policies and Procedures for the Doctor of Medicine Program

SoM Code of Student Professionalism

1. Preamble

1. As SoM students, we recognize that personal and professional integrity are vital both to the practice of medicine and to the conduct of our everyday lives. We also understand that personal and professional issues may challenge our integrity at various times throughout our careers. To help confront these challenges, we have created the SoM Code of Student Professionalism that makes explicit the values of this community and our responsibilities within it. These core values are simple: trust, integrity, and respect. We accept the responsibility of upholding the standards and ideals of the Code of Professionalism, which seeks to support and reflect our respect for each other and for our patients.

2. To maintain an atmosphere of trust, integrity, and respect, we must be willing to face situations that may be uncomfortable. Part of our training must be to learn to confront those who violate our principles and compromise the integrity of our community. Even if difficult, we must embrace this responsibility or be ourselves in violation of the Code of Professionalism because of our failure to act.

3. We realize that, as part of the SoM community, our actions affect those around us and influence the quality of the institution. We understand that membership in this community is contingent upon our commitment to the Code of Professionalism and its principles of professional behavior and academic integrity. We illustrate this by signing the Code of SoM Student Professionalism pledge card.

2. General Principles of Professional Conduct

4. Our professional relationships should be based on mutual respect and concern. We must strive to maintain, to the greatest degree possible, an atmosphere of intellectual openness, honesty, and sincerity, recognizing that differences will inevitably exist. Everyone we encounter, whether that person is a fellow student, faculty member, staff member, or patient, must be treated with the same level of respect, regardless of belief, practices, or identity. We must consider how our words and actions affect both our patients and peers.

5. The spirit of cooperation is integral to the medical profession and the foundation of our educational experience. We must promote an atmosphere of cooperation that reflects our core values in the classroom and on the wards in order to optimize both our collective learning and the delivery of patient care. As medical professionals in training, we must strive to uphold the highest standards of the medical profession. These include, but are not limited to, student responsibilities in

the areas of honesty, cooperative and respectful collegial relationships, nondiscrimination, confidentiality, appropriate consultation and representation, proper sexual conduct, recognition and appropriate handling of issues of impairment, research integrity, and avoidance of conflicts of interest.