
Policy Title: Passage of Medical Licensing Examinations



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Original Date: March 2010
GMEC Endorsed: January 2016
Next Revision Date: January 2018

PURPOSE: To ensure that residents and fellows complete the necessary steps required for licensure by the Texas Medical Board (TMB)*. It is beneficial to complete the US Medical Licensing Exam (USMLE) or the Comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Licensing Examination of the United States (COMLEX-USA) within the first year of postgraduate training.

DEFINITIONS:

Program: A structured educational experience in graduate medical education designed to conform to the Program Requirements of a particular specialty/subspecialty, the satisfactory completion of which may result in eligibility for board certification.

Program Director: The one physician designated with authority and accountability for the operation of the residency/fellowship program.

Program Year (PGY): Refers to the current year of education within a specific program; this designation may or may not correspond to the resident's graduate year level.

Resident: Any physician in an accredited graduate medical education program, including interns, residents, and fellows.

Residency: A program accredited to provide a structured educational experience designed to conform to the Program Requirements of a particular specialty.

PROCEDURE:

Program Directors must ensure all residents comply with this policy. Therefore, a plan for effective communication of this policy to trainees must be developed and implemented.

1. **Program Acceptance:** Prior to acceptance into a residency program at UT Southwestern the Program Director should make certain the applicants have passed either the USMLE Step 1 (within the number of attempts allowed by the TMB) and has taken USMLE Step 2 Clinical Knowledge (CK) and Clinical Skills examinations (CS) OR the COMLEX- USA level 1 and 2-CE and 2-PE.
2. **Examination Requirements:**
 - a. Prior to commencing training in a UT Southwestern GME program, matched applicants must provide proof of passing USMLE Step 2 CK and Step 2 CS OR the COMLEX- USA level 2-CE and 2-PE.
 - b. All residents will be encouraged to sit for the USMLE Step 3 examination OR the COMLEX- USA level three (3) early in the PGY1 year and certainly by January 1 of PGY2 year. All residents are required to show proof of passage of Step 3 or Level 3 by March 1 of the PGY2 year.

- c. Any trainee entering an ACGME-accredited program at the PGY 3 level or above must demonstrate completion of USMLE step 3 OR the COMLEX- USA level 3 prior to matriculating on the program.
3. **Failure to Complete USMLE Step 3 OR the COMLEX- USA level 3:** Residents who do not complete the USMLE Steps (or its equivalent) in accordance with the above requirements will not be allowed to commence training or advance to the next level and are subject to corrective action.
 4. **Exceptions:** Exceptions due to extenuating circumstances may be made at the discretion of the Program Director with approval of the UTSW GME office.
 5. **Graduation Requirement:** Passage of all medical licensing examinations required for licensure in Texas (not including the Texas Medical Jurisprudence Examination) is a requirement for graduation from each of UT Southwestern's ACGME-accredited graduate medical education programs.
 6. **Right to Appeal:** A decision not to promote a resident is subject to the Due Process and Appeal procedures set forth in UT Southwestern GME policies. A resident may choose to implement the Grievance and Due Process procedure upon written notice of intent not to promote to next level of training. (See GME Grievance and Due process policy available at http://www.utsouthwestern.edu/edumedia/edufiles/education_training/gme/policies/grievance-due-process.pdf).

* The Texas Medical Board accepts passage of a variety of examinations and/or combinations of examinations in its licensure requirements. (See Texas Administrative Code, Title 22, Part 9, §163.6 at <http://www.tmb.state.tx.us/idl/36978563-5411-C9E2-616B-9A13943C6202> for specific information). The vast majority of our residents will meet this requirement by taking and passing USMLE Steps 1, 2, and 3 or COMLEX Steps 1, 2, and 3. Any resident pursuing an alternative path to meeting licensure examination requirements may seek a waiver from the *Passage of Medical Licensing Examinations* policy's passage date requirement from the GME Office. For the purpose of this policy, 'Step 3' refers to the final licensure examination required for full medical licensure in this state.