

UNDERGRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION
SCHULICH SCHOOL OF MEDICINE & DENTISTRY

ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCE STATEMENT

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BACKGROUND

Participation as a student, in the Doctor of Medicine program (MD Program), Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry, Western University, is an expectation and requires active engagement in all educational learning and assessment activities. Students are required to attend all scheduled educational activities, including assessments. The MD Program curriculum is cumulative over the four years - no one course stands alone, and students may not progress from one year to the next if there is significant absence.

Punctual attendance demonstrates professionalism and respect for peers, faculty, staff, and the MD Program. This statement outlines information related to attendance in the MD Program.

PURPOSE

Timely attendance at all scheduled learning and assessment is an expectation. Medicine is a profession in service to the public and is regulated by peers. Each class is responsible for the professionalism of their peers and ensuring that trust, honesty, respect, and integrity of individuals are upheld. Schedules for courses will be uploaded to the learning management system (LMS) prior to the start of a course. It is the student's responsibility to check the schedule for date, time and location and attend promptly. Additional or supplemental information may be provided by email or LMS messaging.

It is the student's responsibility to make up any missed educational activities and assessments. The course syllabi contain necessary contact information and other essential information. The [Attendance and Absence Procedures](#) indicates the process and guidelines by which absences can be requested within MD Program.

DEFINITIONS

Academic Leave

Academic Leave is defined as an approved absence from the MD Program for further academic enrichment. Approvals are decided by the Undergraduate Medical Education (UME) Office and/or the UME Dean (or delegate).

Examples of Academic Leave during the academic year include:

- Participating in an official administrative session as a representative of the student body
- Presenting a scholarly or research project at a national or international meeting or conference
- Representing the School in an official capacity at a provincial, national, or international meeting or conference relating to medical education

Non-Academic Leave

Non-Academic Leave is defined as an approved absence from the MD Program for reasons not officially related to a student's medical education and/or academic career. Approvals are decided by the Learner Experience Office (LEO) and/or the Undergraduate Medical Education (UME) office in accordance with the [MD Program Assessment and Appeals](#) policy and [Rights and Responsibilities - University Secretariat - Western University \(uwo.ca\)](#)

Examples of Non-Academic Leave during the academic year include:

- Personal health reasons, including health related appointments
- Religious holidays
- Unplanned personal and family emergencies
- Flex days
- Personal / Professional Development
- Performance at selected approved arts, political, or sporting events
- Writing a required exam for an external program
- UME approved workshop, seminar, or another educational event
- Planned personal / family events and/or celebrations e.g., wedding, convocation

Flex Day

Flex days are a form of non-academic leave that does not require any explanation for the absence. Flex days do require the student to submit the request to UME as Flex days must still be approved by UME and may not be taken during specified grey days as noted in the course syllabus.

Deferral

Formal notification that an assessment has been temporarily delayed or rescheduled. Any student requesting more than two deferrals in an academic year will meet with the UME Dean to ensure that they are supported academically for success and connected with LEO.

MONITORING OF ATTENDANCE

- The UME Program monitors attendance.
- Professionalism is a term of progression for all MD Program courses. Unapproved absences from required educational sessions may be considered a breach of professionalism.

ABSENCE LIMITATIONS

Annually, a student may be approved for no more than 3 Flex, 3 Non-Academic and 5 Academic days (that is, a maximum of 11 days per year). Absences due to illness do not count towards the 11 days, however, will count towards total time missed.

A student may be required to remediate or repeat a course or year if the Competence Committee determines there has been insufficient educational time spent to achieve course and MD Program competencies. As a guideline, the course syllabus outlines the maximum time a student may be absent before being referred directly to the Competence Committee. However, the UME Dean may determine that insufficient educational time has been spent to achieve the course and MD Program competencies and refer the student to the Competence Committee.

LEAVE FOR ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT

A term of up to two (2) years may be granted providing the MD Program is completed within a six-year window from enrolment.

The leave must be requested in writing and approved by the UME Dean. Supporting documentation from the planned learning program must accompany this request. Monitoring the conditions of the leave will be completed by the UME Office.

Return to the Program will be at the end of the academic leave; the timing is at the discretion of the UME Dean. Most students will return at the start of a new academic year.