

STATEMENT 3.5.0 – Transfer into the MD/PhD Program for students in Year 1 or 2 Studies in Undergraduate Medical Education

Approved by:	Curriculum Committee
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I. PURPOSE

The Medical Doctor/Doctor of Philosophy (MD/PhD) Program is a joint degree sponsored at Western University by the Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry and the School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies. The MD/PhD program enables students to complete both an MD and PhD degrees within a seven-year timeframe of studies upon entry.

The standard means of entry into the MD/PhD Program is during application for entry into the MD Program. Under exceptional circumstances, the Western University MD Program at the Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry and the School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies will review requests from MD Program students to enter the joint degree stream after enrollment when program capacity exists and academic standards are satisfied.

A maximum of three MD/PhD students is permitted in each MD Program class. Entry into the MD/PhD Program is based on a defined process to ensure that students have the necessary pre-requisite skills and education and able to succeed to meet the academic and clinical objectives of the program.

This document governs transfers into the MD/PhD Program and guides decision-making for student requests and decanal decisions.

II. STATEMENT

- a. Students enrolled in Year 1 or Year 2 of the MD Program may request transfer to the MD/PhD Program upon a formal written request to the Associate Dean, Undergraduate Medical Education (AD UME).
 - i. Students in Year 1 must do so before completing Year 1 of the MD Program.
 - ii. Students in Year 2 must do so no later than October 1 of Year 2 of the MD Program.
- b. Each student must have identified a PhD supervisor and have determined a research project that is tailored to their academic career interests. Candidates will have undertaken discussion with prospective supervisors.
- c. Review of the transfer will only occur if capacity exists within the MD/PhD Program, as verified by the Manager, Undergraduate Medical Education.
- d. All PhD studies in the MD/PhD Program must be registered at and completed through Western University.
- e. Transfer to the MD/PhD Program will only occur in exceptional circumstances and a declined request is not subject to appeal.

III. PROCESS FOR TRANSFER

- a. A student wishing to transfer into this program must write to the Associate Dean, Undergraduate Medicine with a request to transfer.
 - i. After the Manager, UME confirms that there is capacity within the program to accommodate the transfer, the Associate Dean, UME will meet with the student.
- b. If the Associate Dean, UME supports the transfer, the student shall:
 - i. Prepare a formal application to the Associate Dean of Undergraduate Medicine and the Director of the MD/PhD program.
- c. This formal request must include:
 - i. An official copy of the student's transcript
 - ii. The letter of request, including:
 - i. Evidence of advanced knowledge of the area of research, laboratory and graduate program where the learner wishes to pursue their PhD at Western University.
 - ii. Evidence of prior research excellence, experience and a reasonable indication that the candidate comprehends the demands of the joint program and is fully committed to the pursuit of becoming an academic clinician scientist.
 - iii. A current Curriculum Vitae
 - iv. A written statement from the applicant describing:
 - a. interest and commitment to the MD/PhD Program
 - b. area of research interest and accomplishments
 - c. the area of PhD study agreed to in II. b above
 - v. Two letters of reference emphasizing the student's aptitude for research (forms will be provided to assist the referees):
http://www.schulich.uwo.ca/medicine/md_phd/future_students/application_process.html
 - vi. A letter of support from the proposed faculty supervisor in the School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.
- d. If the student application is approved by Associate Dean, UME, the student shall:
 - i. Complete the normal graduate studies application process as outlined by both the School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (SGPS) and Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry Graduate Studies.
 - ii. Meet with the MD/PhD Committee as required.

IV. DECISION

- a. Once all the requirements above have been met, the MD/PhD Committee of the Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry will render the final decision. The recommendation for acceptance to the School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies is the responsibility of the Associate Dean Research (Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies).
- b. Decisions will be rendered and communicated to the applicant, decanal leaders, and staff by the MD/PhD Program before the start of the upcoming academic year.