

 DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY FACULTY OF MEDICINE Electives, Non-Tertiary/ Community, and Interprofessional Rotations Guideline	Policy sponsor: Associate Dean, UGME	Approval date: September 2020
	Responsible unit: Undergraduate Medical Education Office	Amendments: September 2024, August 2025, March 2026 Review: March 26, 2026

A. Background & Purpose

As part of their training, students are required to participate in electives, which allow them to select clinical or other experiences within their own specific fields of interest. National and local policies allow for optimal capacity and exposure for all students, as well as providing for a well-rounded and balanced portfolio of experiences.

B. Application

This policy applies to all students in the Med 4 clerkship stage of medical training, and Clerkship extension (Med 5) students.

C. Definitions

CaRMS: Canadian Residency Matching Service

Community/Non-tertiary Elective: Occurring in a setting which is not a major academic or teaching centre.

General Electives: Includes clinical, research, medical education, and leadership electives.

International: Not within Canada (USA is considered International for the purpose of electives).

IPE: Interprofessional Education

Learning Management System: The learning management system is an online space for all curriculum-related content requiring a Dal Net ID and password.

D. Guideline

Each Med 4 student must complete eighteen (18) weeks of elective rotations, made up of twelve (12) weeks of general electives and six (6) weeks of Non-Tertiary/Community and Interprofessional rotations. For Clerkship extension (Med 5) students: There is no minimum number of weeks of elective rotations and criteria #2 and #7 do not apply.

CRITERIA FOR ELECTIVES:

1. Electives should be two (2) consecutive weeks in one specialty with the same preceptor(s). One-week electives are not permitted.
2. Students must complete twelve (12) weeks of general electives, with a minimum of three (3) different specialties (defined as CaRMS PGY1 entry disciplines). In addition, students must complete six (6) weeks of IPE/Non-Tertiary electives, for an overall total of eighteen (18) weeks. Additional time in electives is not permitted.
3. No more than eight (8) weeks is permitted in any one CaRMS PGY1 direct-entry discipline.
4. For Canadian sites, each proposal must be submitted at least four (4) weeks prior to the start of the rotation.
5. For International sites, each proposal must be submitted at least eight (8) weeks prior to the start of the elective.
6. The Formative Assessment ITER must be completed by the preceptor through one45 within one (1) week of completion of the rotation.
7. Students must complete a total of six (6) weeks of electives in IPE and Community/Non-tertiary categories; these may be two (2) weeks in IPE and four (4) weeks in Community/Non-tertiary, or four (4) weeks in IPE and two (2) weeks in Community/Non-tertiary.
8. When cancelling a home elective, students must do so a minimum of four (4) weeks prior to the start date.
 - 1) To cancel a Nova Scotia or a PEI elective, students must email the Placement Contact about the cancellation and withdraw the elective on the AFMC portal.
 - 2) To cancel a New Brunswick elective, students must email NBElectives@horizonNB.ca.
9. When extenuating circumstances arise, and a home elective is required to be cancelled less than four (4) weeks prior to the start date:

Please Note: Students are not permitted to cancel home electives less than four (4) weeks before the elective starts unless there are extenuating circumstances.

If they must cancel due to extenuating circumstances, students must complete the Home Elective Cancellation Form. The form will be submitted to Student Affairs and reviewed by the student's home campus-specific Student Affairs Assistant Dean and/or Director.

If the cancellation is supported by Student Affairs, they will update the student's campus-specific Assistant Dean Clerkship, who will then determine if the cancellation is approved and will notify the province specific elective coordinator where the elective is booked:

- For New Brunswick, DMNB.Clerkship@dal.ca will be notified. The DMNB Clerkship Coordinator will withdraw the elective (for electives in New Brunswick) and contact the site placement contact;
- For Nova Scotia and PEI, medelect@dal.ca will be notified. The UGME elective coordinator will withdraw the elective on the AFMC portal (for NS and PEI electives) and contact the placement site administrator.

If the cancellation is not approved, students are required to continue with the existing elective placement.

10. For domestic visiting electives, students are not permitted to cancel the visiting elective unless there are significant extenuating circumstances. Please review the policy in [AFMC Student User Guide](#).

Interprofessional (IPE) Electives

IPE electives must have a component of outpatient ambulatory clinical care, with planned care delivered via appointments. Settings which rely on episodic care, such as Emergency Medicine or Intensive Care, are not suitable. Clinical disciplines that do not utilize planned outpatient care, such as Radiology, Pathology, or Anesthesia, are similarly unsuitable. Certain inpatient experiences may be suitable such as Physical Medicine & Rehab electives particularly if there is also an outpatient care component.

E. Procedures

Students must refer to the Clerkship Attendance and Absence Policy for details on when time off can be requested which can be found on the UGME Policy page.

<https://medicine.dal.ca/departments/core-units/undergraduate/current-students/policies-regulations.html>

Leave of absence requests are not required for self-scheduled vacation during Med 4 or clerkship extension (Med 5) if they do not affect scheduled electives or scheduled curriculum such as PIER 3 and 4.

Students may contact Student Affairs for examples of prior electives.

Steps outlining the electives application process and other supporting documents are available to students in the Learning Management System.