Dartmouth
GEISEL SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE) Step 2 Policy

Summary of Purpose

This policy outlines the Geisel School of Medicine's graduation requirements regarding the timing and number of attempts to pass the National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME) United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE) Step 2 Clinical Knowledge (CK) examination.

Beginning with the Class of 2030, passing Step 2 is a graduation requirement.

Scope and Applicability

This policy applies to all Geisel medical students.

Definitions

None.

Policy Statement

1. Students in the graduating class of 2029 and earlier are required to take, but not pass, Step 2 CK. Students are advised of the limitations to future graduate medical education training and licensure who graduate without a passing Step 2 CK score.

2. Effective in the academic year 2026-2027, students must take Step 2 CK by **January 31** of their final year of Geisel training. Note: for students participating in early match systems (e.g. Military, SF and AUA), students are advised to take Step 2 CK in accordance with their application timelines.

3. Students without a passing Step 2 CK score by **February 25** will not be verified to participate in the National Resident Matching Program (NRMP) Match, making the student ineligible for both Match and Supplemental Offer and Acceptance Program (SOAP) processes.

4. Extensions to the deadline are reviewed and approved by the Associate Dean for Student Life.

5. Students who fail Step 2 CK are required to work with Office of Student Life Academic Advising to create and participate in a study plan. Failure to adhere to the plan may result in a referral to the Academic Progress Committee (APC).

LCME Standard

None.

Related Information: Documents, Policies, Links, Etc.

None.

Policy Administration

Policy Number	UME-CNTRL-0002		
Reviewed By	Associate Dean for Medical Education, Associate Dean for Student Life	**Effective**	September 18, 2018
Approved By	Medical Education Committee	**Last Date Approved**	March 18, 2026

Policy Contact Information

Associate Dean for Medical Education
Julie S. Taylor, MD, MSc
Julie.S.Taylor@Dartmouth.edu

History

Date	History
March 17, 2018	Revisions were made after several students made requests to waive the Step 2 requirement. Policy was revised and approved by the Medical Education Committee.
September 18, 2018	Policy was reviewed and approved by the Medical Education Committee.
April 21, 2020	Revisions were made to add, “the Senior Associate Dean for Medical Education can allow individual extensions based on unique contexts such as residency application requirements or other emergent situations.” Policy was revised and approved by the Medical Education Committee.
February 16, 2021	Revisions were made which included deleting “Step 2 Clinical Skills,” from the 1st policy statement, as well as deleting “Either” and “or Step 2 Clinical Skills,” from the 7th policy statement.
April 15, 2025	Updated to new policy template and to reflect current administrative positions.
March 18, 2026	Policy was reviewed and approved by the Medical Education Committee. Passing USMLE Step 2 becomes a graduation requirement for future cohorts, beginning with Class of 2030. Waiver option is sunset, job titles updated, processes streamlined

Background

None.