



**POLICIES**

Effective Date: April 26, 2021

Retired:

Revised:

Approved by: Digna S. Forbes, M.D., FASCP  
Interim Dean, School of Medicine

**Subject: United States Medical Licensing Examinations Requirements for Step 2 Clinical Knowledge (CK)**

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this policy is to be congruent with the National Board of Medical Examiners USMLE policy regarding the number of retakes permissible for USMLE Step 2CK

**POLICY STATEMENT:** All students are required to sign an acknowledgment for USMLE Step 2 in order for the Office of Student Academic Affairs to verify the student for registration to sit for the USMLE Step 2 examinations. All students planning to participate in the NRMP must sit for the **USMLE Step 2 CK** at least once by **December 31<sup>st</sup>** of their MS4 year. Students who are on yearlong research or gone for an additional graduate degree at another institution may be provided a waiver to delay taking USMLE Step 2CK until the Fall Semester prior to the MD graduation year. These students are still encouraged to take it as soon as possible after Step 1, i.e. "strike while the iron is hot"; however, it is understood that there may be the need for flexibility for some students who will be fully engaged in their research projects or enhancement degree on Day 1.

Only those students who have completed all required MS3 clerkships are eligible to take **USMLE Step 2 CK**. **Any student who sits for USMLE Step 2 without fulfilling the preceding requirements will be referred for lack of integrity to the SOM Disciplinary Committee to be sanctioned, which could include dismissal from Meharry Medical College or if the student is in poor academic progress, the student will be referred to the SEPC for dismissal from the School of Medicine.**

It is expected that students take USMLE Step 2 during the semester that he/she first becomes eligible and then each subsequent semester thereafter up to a total of 4 attempts each until passage. Therefore, successful negotiation of Step 2 **within two years of first being eligible** is required for graduation and receipt of the M.D. degree **regardless if the student took advantage of the four (4) allowed attempts**. **Any unused attempts are forfeited.** Failure to take USMLE Step 2 when eligible to do so each semester is considered failure to academically progress and will be subject to dismissal. If a student is unsuccessful in passing USMLE Step 2 after the first two attempts during their fourth year, he/she will be placed on an ***administrative extension of matriculation***, for a maximum period of one (1) year, by being enrolled in the ASMD 620 Board Review course. **This extension is only provided if the 6 year maximum will not be exceeded.**



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**EXHIBITS:**

**USMLE Bulletin: Change to the USMLE Attempt Limit Policy**

The USMLE program is changing the limit on the total number of times an examinee may take the same Step or Step Component. After this policy is implemented, an examinee will be ineligible to take a Step or Step Component if the examinee has made four (4) or more prior attempts on that Step or Step Component, including incomplete attempts. This policy change will reduce the total number of attempts an examinee may take per Step or Step Component from six (6) to four (4). The new policy will be implemented no earlier than July 1, 2021.

The USMLE Composite Committee, the governing body of USMLE comprised of medical educators, regulators and members of the public, considers all aspects of the examination as they seek to ensure that the program fulfills its mission to protect the public by providing meaningful information to licensing authorities in the United States. The committee voted to change the number of allowed attempts to protect the integrity of the exam and more closely match the USMLE attempt limits imposed by state medical boards in the majority of states. As part of the review, the committee reviewed information showing that it is uncommon for individuals with multiple repeated attempts on USMLE examination Steps or Components to complete the examination sequence successfully, gain access to postgraduate training and, ultimately, receive a license to practice medicine in the United States.