



## **Policy Title**

United States Medical Licensing Examination

## **Identifier**

USCSOMG – ACAF – 3.05

<b>Prepared by:</b> Office for Academic Affairs	
<b>Reviewed by:</b> Curriculum Committee	<b>Review Date:</b> 12/11/2025
<b>Approved by:</b> USCSOMG Policy Committee	<b>Approval Date:</b> 12/15/2025
	<b>Effective Date:</b> 12/17/2025

## **LCME Standards**

10.3- Policies Regarding Student Selection/Progress and Their Dissemination

## **Scope**

University of South Carolina (USC) School of Medicine Greenville students

## **Policy Statement**

Students in the USC School of Medicine Greenville are required to pass the United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE) Step 1, Step 2 Clinical Knowledge (CK), and USC School of Medicine Greenville CPX exams prior to graduation. Students are required to pass Step 1 to officially be promoted to the third year. Students are permitted a maximum of three attempts at Step 1 and three attempts at Step 2CK. Failure on the third attempt at Step 1 or Step 2 are reviewed by SEPC and will result in dismissal from the USC School of Medicine Greenville.

## **Reason for Policy**

USC School of Medicine Greenville students must adhere to established USMLE application procedures and timelines to allow sufficient time for score reporting before promotion deadlines.

LCME requires that the faculty of a medical school establish criteria for student selection and develop and implement effective policies and procedures regarding, and make decisions about, medical student application, selection, admission, assessment, promotion, graduation, and any disciplinary action. The medical school makes available to all interested parties its criteria, standards, policies, and procedures regarding these matters.

## **Procedures**

### **Standard 4-year curriculum**

#### **USMLE Step 1**

Students are required to complete applications for Step 1 in sufficient time to ensure a test date prior to the start of clerkships. All students must earn a school-defined passing score on at least one Comprehensive Basic Science Exam (CBSE) as outlined in the academic calendar during their M2 Year to determine readiness prior

to sitting for Step 1. See the M2 [academic calendar](#) for CBSE test dates and Step 1 deadlines. Students, including those on a Leave of Absence, must receive approval to sit for USMLE Step 1 from the Associate Dean for Medical Education or their designee prior to taking the exam. Approval is based on the following criteria:

1. Completion of M2 Coursework
  - a. All M2 courses, including all remediation requirements, must be successfully completed.
2. Practice Exam Performance
  - a. Students must achieve at least the school-defined “percentage chance of passing within a week” score on a minimum of two school-approved practice exams (e.g., CBSE and CBSSA), as communicated during the mandatory M2 Step 1 meeting.
3. UWorld Percentage Completion
  - a. Students must complete the school-defined percentage of UWorld questions, as specified during the mandatory M2 Step 1 meeting.
4. Study Plan Creation and Approval
  - a. Students who do not achieve the school-defined “percentage chance of passing within a week” score on the Fall CBSE must submit a Step 1 study plan that gains approval, following the guidelines provided during the mandatory M2 Step 1 meeting.

Students must take Step 1 prior to beginning clerkship phase coursework, although they are allowed to begin clerkships while awaiting a score unless the student is on a leave of absence. Students will not be officially promoted to the clerkship phase until they achieve a passing score on Step 1.

Students that do not meet criteria to take USMLE Step 1 prior to M3 orientation dates in March or May are put on a leave of absence for academic difficulty. Students must adhere to stated deadlines noted within the LOA letter. All students on a leave of absence must receive a passing score on USMLE Step 1 prior to starting M3 clerkships and electives.

A student who is unsuccessful on a first attempt at Step 1 must schedule a meeting with the Associate Dean for Medical Education. The student is reviewed by Student Evaluation and Promotion Committee (SEPC) in accordance with [Student Evaluation, Remediation, Requirements for Promotion, and Appeal](#) policy and placed on LOA for academic difficulty if they are still able to complete all requirements within the six year graduation deadline. Students must adhere to stated deadlines noted within the LOA letter. Students on a leave of absence must receive a passing score prior to starting or re-entering M3 clerkships and electives.

In the rare case that a student has received a failing Step 1 score and has started clerkships the student is given the option to complete the current clerkship before being placed on leave of absence. In this circumstance, the student will receive an Incomplete for the clerkship which will convert to a grade once the student achieves a passing Step 1 score.

A student who is unsuccessful on a second Step 1 attempt is reviewed by Student Evaluation and Promotion Committee (SEPC) in accordance with [Student Evaluation, Remediation, Requirements for Promotion, and Appeal](#) policy and remains on a leave of absence for academic difficulty if they are still able to complete all requirements within the graduation deadline. Students must adhere to stated deadlines noted within the LOA letter. Students on a leave of absence must receive a passing score prior to starting or re-entering M3 clerkships and electives.

A student who is unsuccessful on a third and final attempt at Step 1 is dismissed by the Student Evaluation and Promotion Committee (SEPC) in accordance with [Student Evaluation, Remediation, Requirements for Promotion, and Appeal](#) policy.

#### USMLE Step 2 CK

Rising M4 students are expected to complete applications for USMLE Step 2 Clinical Knowledge (CK) in sufficient time to ensure a score is available by the residency application release date. Recommended dates are communicated in class meetings. Students must complete all M3 coursework prior to taking Step 2 Clinical Knowledge (CK). All students must complete the Comprehensive Clinical Science Exam (CCSE) at the end of the clerkship year to determine readiness before sitting for Step 2CK. Students will be notified of the specific dates available for the CCSE.

Any fourth-year student who is unsuccessful on Step 2 CK must have a passing score to graduate. Please note that residency programs retain the right to rank or not rank students without a Step 2 CK score available when Rank Order Lists are due. Therefore, it is expected that students complete an application for re-examination that will allow a score to be reported prior to Rank Order List submission in February.

#### Clinical Performance Exam (CPX)

Students must pass the Clinical Performance Exam (CPX) prior to being certified for the Match. CPX is administered near the conclusion of clerkships.

### **Primary Care Accelerated Track (PCAT)**

#### USMLE Step 1

PCAT students must take USMLE Step 1 by the March deadline noted in the Academic Calendar. PCAT students that do not take and pass USMLE Step 1 by the stated deadline are reviewed by SEPC for transition to the four-year program.

#### USMLE Step 2 CK

PCAT students must take USMLE Step 2 CK by December of their final year as noted in the Academic Calendar. PCAT students that do not take and pass USMLE Step 2 by the stated deadline are reviewed by SEPC for transition to the four-year program.

#### Clinical Performance Exam (CPX)

PCAT students must pass the Clinical Performance Exam (CPX) prior to being certified for the Match. CPX is administered near the conclusion of clerkships.

### **Sanctions**

Failure to adhere to USMLE application procedures, approval process, and timelines set forth in this policy will result in referral to the Student Evaluation and Promotions Committee (SEPC).

### **Additional Contacts**

Office for Medical Education  
Office for Student Affairs  
Office for Academic Affairs

### **Related Information**

USC School of Medicine Greenville Student Handbook  
USCSOMG – ACAF – 4.00 Student Evaluation, Remediation, Requirements for Promotion and Appeal

**History**

<b>Date of Change</b>	<b>Change</b>
December 2025	Clarified standard approval criteria to sit for USMLE Step 1.
March 2025	Removed specific language regarding CBSE dates and added a link to the academic calendars.
September 2024	Added approval process to sit for USMLE Step 1 exam.
July 2024	Added expectations for PCAT. It was clarified that a student on LOA must receive a passing score to start or re-enter M3 year. Clarified documented reason for LOA to align with LOA policy. Added a third CBSE exam based on feedback from Curriculum Committee. Updated branding and titles.
January 2023	Updated to make CCSE exam mandatory
April 2021	Updated requirements by removing Step 2 CS.
May 2019	Clarified that students must complete M3 coursework prior to taking Step 2, editorial changes made due to branding updates and titles
Dec 2018	Policy formalized into standardized template, LCME CQI