



Protocols and Standards for Assessments in the Preclerkship and Clerkship Phases

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Summary

This policy establishes the protocols and standards for students in the Preclerkship Phase who will use the ExamSoft examination system for graded and non-graded assessments, and for students in the Clerkship Phase who will use the online National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME) shelf examination system and the ExamSoft examination system (during Intersessions) for graded and non-graded assessments. This policy is in place to ensure that students have efficient, fair, and positive experiences on assessment days.

Applicability & Scope

This policy applies to all medical students in the Preclerkship and Clerkship Phases of the medical education program leading to the MD degree.

Definitions

ExamSoft – The electronic exam system used by the College of Medicine – Tucson (COM-T)

Exemplify – The software provided by ExamSoft that is loaded onto student devices

Shelf Exam – End of core clerkship examination

Policy Statement

I. Preclerkship Phase

A. Applicable to All Activities

- 1) Electronic testing software must be pre-loaded and registered on the student's preferred testing device (iPad or laptop).
- 2) The student must come prepared *with session files already downloaded* on their preferred testing device. *The student must download all available session files.*

- 3) The testing device must be fully charged before activity. The student must bring the device charger.
- 4) Coats, large/oversize/bulky jackets, and hats must be removed before entering the assessment room. Headgear will only be allowed for religious purposes.
- 5) Glasses that obscure the eyes are not permitted to be worn in the assessment room.

B. Exams, Midterms, and Quizzes

- 1) If the student's testing device is not working, the student will need to go to the COM-ITS Service Desk located in the Health Sciences Library prior to the assessment activity to get it fixed or to receive a loaner laptop for the assessment (first-come, first-served basis).
- 2) Assessments must be taken in the assigned room unless, at least 2 weeks before, approval is obtained and arrangements are made with the block director.
- 3) The student must be in their seat, with the testing device turned on, set up, and ready to start by the designated assessment time. As soon as the student is seated in the assessment room, they must launch the assessment, navigate to the "Begin Screen," and wait for instruction from the proctor indicating that it is okay to begin.
- 4) Student identities will be verified via CatCard before the assessment begins.
- 5) Students arriving 30 minutes or later from the start time of an assessment will not be granted entrance to the assessment and will be required to submit an absence request through the process identified in the [Attendance and Absence Policy](#).
- 6) Late arrivals will result in a Professionalism grade reduction, at the discretion of the block director. No additional time to complete the assessment will be provided to students arriving prior to 30 minutes late.
- 7) The student may only have their CatCard, approved assessment-taking device, device charger, ear plugs, pen/pencil, and a water-tight beverage container. The student must leave bags, electronic devices, purses, backpacks, notes, paper, and other belongings in lockers.
- 8) **Electronic devices are strictly prohibited.** If a student is discovered with an electronic device with recording, filming, or memory capabilities, the student will be escorted out of the room and receive a zero for that assessment. Should the student require an exception for emergency purposes, the student should speak directly with the block director prior to the day of the assessment.
- 9) Scratch Paper will be distributed by the proctors. The student is not permitted to have scratch paper in their possession until it is provided by the proctor. All scratch paper must be returned to the proctor at the end of the assessment for secure disposal.
- 10) No talking is allowed during the assessment. No questions will be allowed during assessments unless there is an electronic malfunction or a defect in the assessment itself.
- 11) Students are permitted to use the restroom during the assessment and will be escorted one at a time to the restroom. The student will sign out of the assessment room. All materials must be left at the student's seat. The student will need to bring their CatCard for assessment-room reentry.
- 12) **The student must upload the assessment file prior to leaving the assessment room.** The student must keep their device out to show the upload confirmation screen to the

proctor in the hallway. If a student leaves the assessment room without uploading their assessment file for any reason, the student will receive a zero for the assessment.

13) The student may not reenter the assessment room after finishing the assessment.

C. Team Learning (TL) Sessions

- 1) The student must be in their seat, with the testing device turned on, set up, and ready to start by the designated session time.
- 2) All personal belongings should be removed from the table. Electronic devices must be put away.
- 3) After the gRAT has been completed by all students, students are permitted to open their note-taking electronic devices or use notebook paper and take notes for the rest of the session. Students are not permitted to use these devices to record the gRAT questions. Any student recording gRAT questions, whether for their own use or with the intent to share with other students, will be in violation of the honor code and may be dismissed from their medical education program.
- 4) If a student arrives late to a graded activity, the student may lose credit in both Professionalism and Medical Knowledge grades.
- 5) Individual Readiness Assurance Test (iRAT)
 - a) Students complete the iRAT as homework. The answer file must be uploaded before the start of the session for the student to receive their grade.
 1. If a student does not upload their iRAT before the start of a session, they will receive a grade of zero.
 2. If a student has an excused absence, they receive a “null” grade and the MK points denominator is reduced equivalently.
 3. If a student has an unexcused absence, they will receive a grade of zero.
- 6) Group Readiness Assurance Test (gRAT)
 - a) If a student does not participate in the gRAT (i.e., due to late arrival or unexcused absence), they will receive a zero on that assessment.
 - b) The group must elect ONE group member who will complete and upload the activity on behalf of the group that day. The designated group member will be responsible for saving and uploading the gRAT results file. It is the responsibility of the group to see the upload confirmation screen and ensure that the results file has been uploaded. Under no circumstances should more than one group member submit a results set. Doing so will result in a score of zero for the activity for all members of the TL group.

D. Self-Assessments and Practice Exams

- 1) Self-assessments and practice exams are provided on a varied schedule, at the discretion of the block director. These assessments are optional and do not affect the final grade.
- 2) Self-assessments and practice exams are unsecured and may vary in the number of times students can access them for retakes, at the discretion of the block director.

II. Clerkship Phase

A. NBME Shelf Exam

- 1) All clerkships, except for the Ambulatory Medicine clerkship, administer the NBME Shelf Exam (electronic) on the last day of each rotation to all students as a group to ensure uniform testing procedures and conditions.
- 2) Clerkship coordinators and/or Curricular Affairs personnel will proctor exams.
- 3) The time allotted for the exam is 2 hours and 45 minutes.
- 4) Each student will take the exam using their laptop. It must be fully charged before activity and the student must bring the device charger.
- 5) No programs or software can be opened or accessed during the exam period.
- 6) Prior to exam day an email will be sent to students with instructions to run an exam compatibility check (<http://wbt.nbme.org/exam>). Please see the [Clerkship Student Manual](#) for details regarding the procedure.
- 7) Students should consult with the COM-ITS Help Desk (520-626-8721 or <https://comhelp.arizona.edu/>) if they require technical assistance.
- 8) If a student requires a restroom break during the examination, they must click the Pause button at the bottom of their screen. A screen saver will appear. However, this pause does not stop the timer for the exam.
- 9) If their screen freezes, a student should notify the proctor for assistance.
- 10) Students are permitted to use blank scratch paper to make notes or calculations once the exam begins. Scratch paper must be disposed of at the end of the examination session.
- 11) Before the exam begins, students should be sure no unauthorized personal items and/or devices are in the testing room. These items include but are not limited to the following:
 - a) Cell/smart phones
 - b) iPads/tablets
 - c) Watches with alarms, computer, or memory capability
 - d) Calculators
 - e) Paging devices
 - f) Recording/filming devices
 - g) Reference materials (book, notes, papers)
 - h) Backpacks, briefcases, or luggage
 - i) Beverages or food of any type
 - j) Coats, outer jackets, or headwear

B. System Requirements for Laptops

- 1) For the most current guidelines, refer to the NBME Examinee Instructions manual. The manual is distributed to students by their clerkship coordinator.

C. Exams and Quizzes

- 1) If the student's testing device is not working, the student will need to go to the COM-ITS Help Desk located in the Health Sciences Library prior to the assessment activity to get it fixed or to receive a loaner laptop for the assessment (first-come, first-served basis).
- 2) Assessments must be taken in the assigned room or will be administered remotely.
- 3) Late arrivals may result in a Professionalism grade reduction, at the discretion of the clerkship director. No additional time to complete the assessment will be allotted. Late

arrivals will be granted entrance until 50% of the allotted assessment administration time has elapsed. Absences are dealt with as described in the [Attendance and Absence Policy](#).

- 4) For exams administered in-person, refer to the NBME exam instructions.
- 5) Instructions for web-based exams are sent to students by the clerkship coordinator the week of the exam.

Procedures

None

Related Information

Policies

- [Attendance and Absence Policy](#)

Resources

- [Curriculum Resources \(includes Student Manuals\)](#)
- [COM-ITS Help Desk](#)

Revision History

10/09/2024: The Tucson Educational Policy Committee approved revision to clarify and align the policy with current practice.

9/25/2024: The Tucson Educational Policy Committee approved moving the Protocols and Standards for Preclerkship Electronic Exams and Delivery of Clerkship Exams to standalone policy document.

3/22/2023: Protocols and Standards for Preclerkship Electronic Exams and Delivery of Clerkship Exams revised.

10/13/2021: Protocols and Standards for Preclerkship Electronic Exams revised.

2/21/2018: Protocols and Standards for Preclerkship Electronic Exams revised.

12/3/2014: Protocols and Standards for Delivery of Clerkship Exams approved.

7/2/2014: Protocols and Standards for Preclerkship Electronic Exams approved.