

I. POLICY

Narrative Assessment

II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to define the expectations for providing narrative assessment to students.

III. RESPONSIBLE PARTY AND REVIEW CYCLE

The Director of Assessment will review this document annually. The Medical Education Committee shall review this document as needed, with input from the Curriculum Policy Subcommittee.

IV. ACCREDITATION REFERENCES

LCME 9.5 Narrative Assessment
SACSCOC 12.3 Student Rights
SACSCOC 12.3 Student Complaints

V. DEFINITION(S)

Narrative Assessment: “Written comments from faculty that assess student performance and achievement in meeting specific objectives of a course or clerkship, such as professionalism, clinical reasoning” (2020-21 LCME Data Collection Instrument for Full Accreditation Surveys, p. 147).

Formative Narrative Assessment: Written comments from faculty about student performance intended to modify the student’s thinking or behavior in order to improve his or her subsequent learning and performance in the medical curriculum. These comments are typically associated with low-stakes assessments (e.g., completion based assignments) designated as “formative” in the syllabus or on the specific evaluation form.

Summative Narrative Assessment: Written comments from faculty about student performance designed to summarize achievement relative to the learning objectives. These comments are typically associated with scored assessments required for promotion and advancement in the curriculum (as defined in the grading policies).

VI. DESCRIPTION

Each medical student will receive written feedback on their performance, including their non-cognitive achievement during the pre-clerkship and clerkship curriculum. Written feedback will be a component of assessment in each required course, clerkship, and thread whenever faculty-student interaction permits.

Pre-clerkship Phase

Written feedback on an individual student's performance is required for modules and courses that are 4 weeks or longer and where the intent is that all students will be involved in small group (≤ 12 people) interaction with one, consistent faculty facilitator for each group (who will provide the feedback) for at least 5 academic sessions.

Clerkship Phase

Written feedback is required as a component of the summative assessment for M3 clerkships and courses that are 4 weeks or longer.

Threads

Written feedback on an individual student's performance is required for threads that incorporate individual or small group (≤ 12 people) interaction with the same faculty facilitator (who will provide the feedback) for at least 5 academic sessions during the academic year. Thread directors are responsible for monitoring written feedback and ensuring faculty facilitators comply with feedback requirements.

Characteristics of Written Feedback

Written feedback should be individualized to the student and detail the behaviors, knowledge, and/or skills they demonstrated specific to the learning objectives. While there is no minimum or maximum amount of comments required, 3-5 sentences is an approximate length.

Written feedback will be based on explicit criteria aligned to the learning objectives. The criteria will address cognitive and/or non-cognitive aspects of the student's performance.

Appropriate Use of Written Feedback

Written feedback, whether Formative Narrative Assessment or Summative Narrative Assessment, is considered part of a student's record and may be used in conjunction with other data, to monitor student progress. Formative feedback from any aspect of the curriculum may not be included in the Medical Student Performance Evaluation (MSPE) without explicit permission of the student; however, written feedback for summative purposes (e.g., grading) during the clerkship year may be used. Clerkship directors will make the final determination on which comments are included in the MSPE.

Appeal Process

If a student has a concern about Narrative Assessment provided to them, they must submit an appeal within two weeks of receipt per the Appeal and Complaint Procedures Policy.

VII. RELATED DOCUMENTS

Appeal and Complaint Procedures Policy

Clerkship Phase Assessment and Grading Policy

Formative Feedback Policy

M4 Elective Phase Assessment and Grading Policy

Pre-clerkship Phase Assessment and Grading Policy

Professionalism and Expectations for Students' Professional Behavior Policy

VIII. HISTORY OF APPROVALS AND UPDATES

The following list documents policy approvals and updates by oversight authority, date, and summary of changes. This policy is housed on the MD Student Handbook webpage.

- On August 14, 2019, the Medical Education Committee approved the policy.
- On May 13, 2020, the Medical Education Committee approved the update to separate the policy from the MD Student Handbook; to remove requirement that feedback labeled as "formative" occur two weeks before the module ends; and to move verbiage about syllabus template to the Addendum section.
- On May 25, 2021, the Medical Education Committee approved the update to the definitions and clarification of Pre-clerkship Phase written feedback requirements.