



MALAYSIAN MEDICAL COUNCIL

MALAYSIAN STANDARDS FOR MEDICAL SPECIALIST TRAINING

Prepared By:

Specialty Education Committee

of the Medical Education Committee, Malaysian Medical Council

Approved by the Malaysian Medical Council:

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Preamble

- The Malaysian Standards for Specialist Medical Training are developed in compliance to the requirements of the Medical (Amendment) Act 2012 and its regulations. These standards govern medical specialist training in both clinical and non-clinical disciplines. These standards are general in nature and each discipline will develop discipline-specific standards in conformity with these general standards. These standards will be reviewed periodically as determined by the Malaysian Medical Council.

Purpose

- These standards are to govern the quality of training, supervision and assessment of medical specialists in Malaysia.

Scope

- These standards are applicable to all training programmes for medical practitioners to enable them to be registered in the Specialist Register of the Malaysian Medical Council.

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AREA 1: PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT AND DELIVERY

1.1 Statement of Educational Objectives of Academic Programme and Learning Outcomes

- 1.1.1 The programme must state its **educational objectives** which include standards of training, assessment and professionalism consistent with and supportive of the needs of the nation.
- 1.1.2 The curriculum must demonstrate its relevance and applicability in meeting the changing **healthcare needs of the Malaysian population**.
- 1.1.3 The programme must state its **programme learning outcomes, teaching-learning and assessment strategies** and ensure constructive alignment between them.
- 1.1.4 The programme learning outcomes must **support the development of relevant competencies** which can be mapped to Malaysian Qualification Framework (MQF) learning domains as below:
1. Knowledge and understanding
 2. Cognitive skills
 3. Functional work skills with focus on:
 - a) Practical skills
 - b) Interpersonal skills
 - c) Communication skills
 - d) Digital skills
 - e) Numeracy skills
 - f) Leadership, autonomy and responsibility
 4. Personal and entrepreneurial skills
 5. Ethics and professionalism

These outcomes and skills must address many **interdependent areas**, such as patient safety, patient-centredness, principles of equality and diversity, healthcare economics, operational perspectives and workforce safety.

- 1.1.5 The programme must state the required **breadth and depth of experience** to enable graduates to function as competent medical specialists and enable them to further sub-specialise.

1.2 Programme Development: Process, Content, Structure and Teaching-Learning Methods

- 1.2.1 The programme must state the **resource requirements and governance structures** to implement and sustain delivery of the curriculum.
- 1.2.2 The curriculum must be developed using **appropriate experts and processes**, leading to approval by the Malaysian Medical Council.
- 1.2.3 The programme must **consult stakeholders** (including educational experts, where appropriate) in the development of the curriculum.
- 1.2.4 The curriculum must show that the training covers **all aspects of professional development** including:
- i. the acquisition of relevant competencies
 - ii. opportunities for trainer-trainee interactions for the application of principles of scientific method, analytical and critical thinking and value-based medicine
 - iii. aspects of behavioral sciences, social sciences, medical ethics and medical law that are relevant to the practice of the specialty
 - iv. training in patient safety and patient-centeredness
 - v. planned contact with patients and communities in relevant healthcare settings
 - vi. participation in health promotion and preventive medicine activities
 - vii. healthcare economics including funding frameworks, cost of care and clinical decision-making
- 1.2.5 The curriculum must detail appropriate and current **teaching and learning methods** relevant to the programme educational objectives and learning outcomes.

1.3 Programme Delivery

- 1.3.1 The educational training provider must take responsibility to ensure the **effective delivery** of programme learning outcomes. This includes specifying the amount of time spent in training and ensuring sufficient range of cases.
- 1.3.2 Trainees must be **provided with and briefed** on current information about the objectives, structure, outline, schedule, learning outcomes and methods of assessment of the programme at the commencement of their studies.
- 1.3.3 The programme must have a **programme committee** with adequate authority for the effective delivery of the programme.
- 1.3.4 The educational training provider must provide trainees with a conducive **learning environment and mentoring system**.
- 1.3.5 The educational training provider must encourage **innovations** in teaching, learning and assessment.
- 1.3.6 The educational training provider must obtain **feedback** from stakeholders to improve the delivery of the programme outcomes.

AREA 2: ASSESSMENT OF TRAINEE LEARNING

2.1 Relationship between Assessment and Learning Outcomes

- 2.1.1 **Assessment principles, methods and practices** must be aligned to the learning outcomes and curriculum of the programme, to enable progressive judgements to be made about trainees' preparedness for independent specialist practice.
- 2.1.2 The **alignment between assessment and the learning outcomes** of the programme must be systematically and regularly reviewed to ensure its effectiveness.
- 2.1.3 The **assessment requirements for progress and completion** must be clearly documented. These documents must be accessible to all staff, supervisors and trainees.

2.2 Assessment Methods

- 2.2.1 There must be a **variety of methods and tools** that are appropriate for the assessment of learning outcomes, competencies and entrustable professional activities.
- 2.2.2 The programme must have a **blueprint** to guide assessment through each stage of the specialty medical programme.
- 2.2.3 **Formative and summative** assessment methods must be employed.
- 2.2.4 Assessment methods must be **reliable, valid, current and fair**.
- 2.2.5 The **frequency, methods, and criteria of trainee assessment** - including the grading system and appeal policies - must be documented and communicated to trainees on the commencement of the programme.
- 2.2.6 **Changes to assessment** methods must follow established procedures and regulations and be communicated to trainees prior to their implementation.

2.3 Management of Trainee Assessment

- 2.3.1 The educational training provider must have an **adequate level of autonomy in making decisions** pertaining to trainee assessments within the context of the approved curriculum.
- 2.3.2 The educational training provider must facilitate regular and timely **feedback** to trainees on performance to guide learning.
- 2.3.3 The educational training provider must have processes for **early identification** of trainees who are underperforming and implements appropriate remediation measures in response.
- 2.3.4 There must be mechanisms in place to ensure the **security** of assessment documents and records.
- 2.3.5 The **assessment results** must be communicated in a timely manner to trainees to facilitate progression decision.
- 2.3.6 The educational training provider must have appropriate guidelines and mechanisms for trainees to **appeal** their results.
- 2.3.7 There must be mechanisms to ensure **periodic review** of the validity, reliability, integrity, currency and fairness of the assessment methods. These mechanisms must take into account feedback from stakeholders and external assessors / examiners. Findings of these reviews must be acted upon accordingly.

AREA 3: TRAINEE SELECTION AND SUPPORT SERVICES

3.1 Trainee Selection

- 3.1.1 The programme must have clear **criteria and processes** for trainee selection (including that of transfer trainees).
- 3.1.2 The criteria and processes of trainee selection must be **transparent, objective, equitable, diverse, non-discriminatory and comply with regulatory requirements**.
- 3.1.3 The **number of trainees** selected must be within the capacity of the educational training provider and training centres to effectively deliver the programme.
- 3.1.4 The programme must:
- state the **relationship between selection criteria and objectives** of the programme and the desired qualities of graduates.
 - **periodically review** the selection policy.
 - have a system for **appeal of admission** decisions.

3.2 Articulation and Transfer

- 3.2.1 The programme must have well-defined **policies and mechanisms** to facilitate trainee mobility, which may include trainee transfer within and between institutions, between programmes, nationally and internationally.
- 3.2.2 The educational training provider must ensure that incoming transfer trainees have the **capacity to successfully follow** the programme and comply with relevant regulations.

3.3 Trainee Support Services

- 3.3.1 An **induction to the programme** must be available to all new trainees with due attention to those with special needs.
- 3.3.2 The programme must define the appropriate **administrative structure and appropriate resources** to provide trainee support services.
- 3.3.3 There must be **mechanisms** to identify and facilitate trainees with academic, behavioural, psychological and social issues requiring support.
- 3.3.4 Trainees must have access to **academic and non-academic counselling** provided by qualified staff.

- 3.3.5 The educational training provider must have clearly defined and documented processes and procedures in handling of **disciplinary** cases in trainees.
- 3.3.6 The educational training provider must have an effective mechanism for trainees to **voice their grievances** and seek resolution on academic and non-academic matters and ensure **confidentiality** in relation to counselling and support.

3.4 Trainee Representation and Participation

- 3.4.1 Policies and processes for **trainee engagement** especially in areas that affect their interest and welfare must be made known to the trainees.
- 3.4.2 There must be adequate **trainee representation** at the institutional and departmental levels.

3.5 Professional Bodies and Societies

- 3.5.1 The educational training provider must **foster active linkages** with professional bodies and societies to develop, review and continuously improve the programme.

AREA 4: TRAINERS

4.1 Recruitment and Management

- 4.1.1 The educational training provider must have a clearly **defined plan for its manpower needs** consistent with institutional policies and programme requirements.
- 4.1.2 The educational training provider must have a clear and documented **trainer recruitment policy** where the criteria for selection are based primarily on academic merit and relevant experience. The trainer must be registrable with appropriate regulatory bodies.
- 4.1.3 The **trainer-trainee ratio** for the programme must be appropriate to the teaching-learning methods and comply with the programme standards for the discipline.
- 4.1.4 The policy of the educational training provider must reflect an **equitable distribution of responsibilities** among the trainers to allow effective training.
- 4.1.5 The recruitment policy for a particular programme must seek **diversity** among the trainers in terms of experience, approaches and backgrounds.
- 4.1.6 The policy for promotion, recognition and other benefits of its trainers must be **transparent**.
- 4.1.7 The educational training provider must pursue **national and international linkages** to provide for the involvement of experienced professionals, academics and practitioners in order to enhance teaching and learning in the programme.

4.2 Service and Development

- 4.2.1 The educational training provider must have **policies** addressing matters related to **service, development, welfare and appraisal** of the trainers.
- 4.2.2 The educational training provider must have clear **policies on conflict of interest and professional conduct**, including procedures for handling disciplinary cases among trainers.
- 4.2.3 The educational training provider must have mechanisms and processes for **periodic trainer evaluation** by trainees for quality improvement.
- 4.2.4 The educational training provider must have a **development programme** for new and existing trainers to enhance their roles as educators.

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- 4.2.5 The educational training provider must encourage and facilitate its trainers to play an active role in **community and professional engagement** to enhance the programme.

AREA 5: EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

5.1 Physical Facilities

- 5.1.1 The programme must have access to **sufficient and appropriate healthcare-related facilities** to ensure its effective delivery, including facilities for practical and skill-based activities. The programme must have access to facilities that can cater for trainees with special needs.
- 5.1.2 The physical facilities must comply with the **relevant laws and regulations**.
- 5.1.3 The educational training provider must provide access to a **resource centre** with adequate and current references and learning materials including e-learning resources that meet the needs of the programme.
- 5.1.4 The educational resources, services and facilities must be **well-maintained and periodically upgraded**.

5.2 Research and Development

- 5.2.1 The **interaction between research and learning** must be reflected in the curriculum, influence current teaching and prepare trainees for engagement in research, development and scholarship.
- 5.2.2 The educational training provider must have a **policy on research** with access to adequate facilities and resources to sustain them.
- 5.2.3 The educational training provider must **periodically review** its research resources and facilities to promote a conducive research environment.

5.3 Financial Resources

- 5.3.1 The educational training provider must demonstrate **financial viability and sustainability** for the programme.
- 5.3.2 The educational training provider must have a **clear line of responsibility, authority and processes** for budgeting and resource allocation that takes into account the specific needs of the programme.

AREA 6: PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

6.1 Programme Management

- 6.1.1 The educational training provider must clarify its **management structure and function, and the relationships** between them. These must be communicated to all parties involved based on the principles of accountability and transparency.
- 6.1.2 The educational training provider must provide accurate, relevant and timely **information about the programme** which are easily and publicly accessible, especially to prospective trainees.
- 6.1.3 The educational training provider must have policies, procedures and mechanisms for **regular review and updating** of its structures, functions, strategies and core activities to ensure continuous quality improvement.
- 6.1.4 The educational training provider must establish a committee or board for management of the programme that must be an effective **decision-making body** with an adequate degree of autonomy.
- 6.1.5 The educational training provider must establish mechanisms to ensure **comparability of educational quality** for programmes conducted in different training sites or partner institutions.
- 6.1.6 The educational training provider must have **constructive interaction** with healthcare-related sectors of society and the government to gauge healthcare needs and graduate employability.

6.2 Programme Leadership

- 6.2.1 The Head of Programme, programme lead(s) and programme coordinators must be **appropriately appointed** and their responsibilities clearly stated.
- 6.2.2 The Head of Programme, programme lead(s) and programme coordinators must have appropriate **qualification, knowledge and experience** related to the programme he/she is responsible for.
- 6.2.3 There must be mechanisms and processes for **communication** between the Head of Programme and educational training providers on matters such as staff recruitment and training, trainee admission, allocation of resources and decision-making processes.

6.3 Administrative Staff

- 6.3.1 The educational training provider must have **sufficient number of qualified administrative** staff to support the effective implementation of the programme and related activities.
- 6.3.2 The educational training provider must conduct **regular performance review** of the administrative staff of the programme.
- 6.3.3 The educational training provider must have **appropriate training for the advancement** of the support staff of the programme.

6.4 Academic Records

- 6.4.1 The educational training provider must have **appropriate policies and practices** concerning the nature, content and security of trainee, trainer and other academic records.
- 6.4.2 The educational training provider must **maintain trainee records** relating to their admission, performance, completion and graduation in such form as is practical and preserve these records for future reference.
- 6.4.3 The educational training provider must implement **policies on the rights of individual privacy** and the confidentiality of records in compliance with relevant regulatory requirement
- 6.4.4 Policies pertaining to security of records, including the increased use of electronic technologies and safety systems must be **regularly reviewed** by the educational training provider.

AREA 7: PROGRAMME MONITORING, REVIEW AND CONTINUAL QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

7.1 Mechanisms for Programme Monitoring, Review and Continual Quality Improvement

- 7.1.1 The programme must have quality assurance **processes to monitor and review** the training.
- 7.1.2 There must be a designated **person or unit responsible** for continual quality improvement of the programme.
- 7.1.3 The programme must have **policy, structure and procedures** as well as **implement** the following:
- **monitor, regularly review and update** the process, structure, contents, outcomes/competencies, assessment and learning environment of the programme.
 - **rectify** documented deficiencies
 - allocate **resources** for continuous renewal
 - involve **stakeholders** in continual quality improvement processes
- 7.1.4 The educational training provider must make the **programme review report accessible** to stakeholders.
- 7.1.5 In collaborative arrangements, the partners involved must **share the responsibilities** of programme monitoring and review.

GLOSSARY

1. **Programme**
A planned sequence of educational experiences (aligned rotations or postings) in a specialty with clearly spelt and measurable learning outcomes leading to the conferment of a qualification upon conclusion of training.
2. **Trainee**
Medical doctors (with full registration with the Malaysian Medical Council) formally enrolled in a recognised postgraduate clinical / medical training programme.
3. **Transfer trainee**
Trainees currently enrolled in another structured specialty programme who apply for transfer and recognition of prior training.
4. **Registration**
Formal documentation as proof of pursuing postgraduate clinical / medical training programme.
5. **Educational Training Provider**
An organisation providing postgraduate clinical training and continuing professional development e.g. university, Ministry of Health.
6. **Head of Programme**
A qualified and experienced specialist, within the organization providing the postgraduate clinical training who **oversees** the overall planning, implementation and improvement of a training programme for a particular specialty. (e.g. Head of discipline of KKM, Head of conjoint board)
7. **Programme Lead**
A specialist who **oversees** the implementation, evaluation and improvement of the specialty training programme at state or regional level. The Programme Lead reports to the Programme Head. (e.g. Head of discipline of KKM at state level, head of department at university)
8. **Programme Coordinators**
A specialist who oversees the implementation, evaluation and improvement of the specialty training programme at the training site. (e.g. coordinator at a training site)
9. **Trainer**
A trainer is an appropriately trained and experienced doctor or any person whose professional expertise is needed. The person is responsible for educating, training, supervising and assessing trainees within an environment of medical practice.
10. **Learning environment**
Refers to an educational approach, cultural context, or physical setting in which teaching and learning occur.

11. **Stakeholders**

Includes trainees, trainers, patients, healthcare workforce and institutions, professional bodies, alumni, related industries and non-governmental bodies, funding bodies.

12. **Patient safety**

Systematic care delivery and processes that minimises errors and emphasises prevention of harms.

13. **Patient centredness**

Training that covers the following aspects:

- Competence
- Compassion
- Communication
- Confidentiality
- Cost-consciousness

14. **Entrustable Professional Activity**

Keys tasks of professional practice entrusted to an unsupervised trainee once he or she has attained specific competency level.

15. **Operational perspectives**

Refers to activities that ensure the cost- effective and efficient utilisation of resources in the provision of a service. This includes human resource and financial planning, equipment procurement and maintenance and other related matters

16. **Value-based Medicine**

Related to evidence-based and cost-effective decision-making in healthcare practices which ensures outcomes that matter most to patients

Acknowledgement

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