

Departmental Policy Title	Eligibility Requirements Policy - GME	Policy ID	11294
Keywords	eligibility, recruitment, appointment, LCME, AOA, Fifth, Pathway, USMLE, Visa, Canada, CanMEDS, ECFMG, CACMS		
Department	Graduate Medical Education (GME)		

I. Purpose of Policy

This policy defines the eligibility requirements for an Applicant applying to an Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME)-accredited graduate medical education (GME) program at Dartmouth Hitchcock (DH).

II. Policy Scope

This policy applies to all Applicants applying to ACGME-accredited GME programs at DH.

III. Definitions

Applicant: Any eligible Medical Doctor (MD) or Doctor of Osteopathy (DO) invited to interview with a GME program.

CanMEDS: A medical education framework developed by the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada that emphasizes the essential competencies of a physician.

COMLEX: Comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Licensing Exam.

Committee on Accreditation of Canadian Medical Schools (CACMS): Independent accrediting body for undergraduate medical education programs in Canada.

MCCQE: Medical Council of Canada Qualifying Examination.

NBOE: National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners.

Post Graduate Year (PGY): Refers to a Resident's current year of accredited GME training. This designation may or may not correspond to the Resident's training year in a program. For example, a Resident in a Cardiology fellowship could be in their first year of training in the fellowship but in their fourth graduate year of GME (includes the 3 prior years of internal medicine residency).

IV. Policy Statement

A. General Eligibility: An Applicant must meet one of the following qualifications to be eligible for appointment to ACGME-accredited residency or fellowship program at DH:

- Graduate of a medical school in the United States and Canada accredited by the

LCME or CACMS and successful completion of any pre-requisite accredited training specified by the appropriate ACGME Review Committee.

- Graduate of a college of osteopathic medicine in the United States accredited by the American Osteopathic Association (AOA) and successful completion of any pre-requisite accredited training specified by the appropriate ACGME Review Committee.
- Graduate of a medical school outside the United States and Canada who meets one of the following qualifications:
 - Holds a currently valid certificate from the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG) prior to appointment; or,
 - Holds a full and unrestricted license to practice medicine in a US licensing jurisdiction in which they are training; and
 - Successfully completed any pre-requisite accredited training specified by the appropriate ACGME Review Committee.
- For an individual who is not US citizen or permanent resident, J-1, F-1 OPT, or H-1B transfer are the sponsored Visa categories.

B. Fellowship Eligibility: An Applicant must meet the following qualifications to be eligible for appointment to ACGME-accredited fellowship program at DH:

- All required clinical education for entry into ACGME-accredited fellowship program must be completed in an ACGME-accredited core residency program, or in a Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPSC)-accredited or College of Family Physicians Canada (CFPC)-accredited core residency program located in Canada.
- The fellowship program must receive verification of the entering Fellow's level of competency in the required field using ACGME or CanMEDS Milestones assessment from the core residency program.
- With the approval of the Associate Dean for Graduate Medical Education, an ACGME-accredited fellowship program may accept an exceptionally qualified Applicant, who does not satisfy the eligibility requirements listed above, but who does meet all the following additional qualifications and conditions:
 - Assessment by the Program Director and fellowship selection committee of the Applicant's suitability to enter the program, based on prior training and review of the summative evaluations of training in the core specialty.
 - Review and approval of the Applicant's exceptional qualifications by the GMEC.
 - Satisfactory completion of the United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE) Steps 1, 2, and 3 or COMLEX Levels 1, 2, and 3.
 - For an international graduate, verification of ECFMG certification; and
 - An Applicant accepted by this exception must complete fellowship Milestones evaluation (for the purposes of establishment of baseline performance by the Clinical Competency Committee), conducted by the receiving fellowship program within six (6) weeks of matriculation.

Note: Approval of fellowship Applicant who do not meet normal eligibility requirements will be rare.

C. Requirements After Match/Offer: Upon matching with or when signing an offer letter for an external-to-Match transfer to a DH program, an Applicant must meet all the following requirements:

- Consent to a criminal background check.
- Pass a pre-employment drug screening.
- Meet eligibility requirements to obtain and maintain a training license in the State of New Hampshire.
- A foreign medical graduate must supply proof of an Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG) certification.
- An incoming PGY-3 or higher Applicant must demonstrate a passing score on USMLE Step 3 or COMLEX Level 3 prior to the scheduled start of their residency or fellowship. Canadian nationals may substitute documentation of successful passing scores on LMCC/MCCQE examinations in lieu of USMLE Step 3 or COMLEX Level 3.
- Non-citizen must have Permanent Resident Status, current Employment Authorization Card or obtain the appropriate Visa as outlined in the DH Graduate Medical Education Visa Policy no later than the date of hire.
- An Applicant must be fully competent in written and oral English.

V. References

ACGME Institutional Requirements

ACGME Common Program Requirements

New Hampshire Board of Medicine (physician licensure requirements:

<https://www.oplc.nh.gov/board-medicine>

Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada:

<http://www.royalcollege.ca/portal/page/portal/rc/public>

Responsible Owner:	Graduate Medical Education (GME)	Contact(s):	Karen Miller
Approved By:	GMEC Approver Group; Office of Policy Support - All Other Documents	Version #	6
Current Approval Date:	08/28/2026	Old Document ID:	
Date Policy to go into Effect:	08/28/2026		
Related Polices & Procedures:	Visa Policy - GME Selection Policy - GME		
Related Job Aids:			