

Pre-Entry Assessment Program (PEAP) Definition, Guidelines & Process

Preamble

Pre-Entry Assessment Program (PEAP) is a period of clinical assessment for International Medical Graduates (IMGs), mandated by the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario (CPSO) to ensure the appropriate level of competency to continue with residency or fellowship training. Postgraduate trainees must be registered with the PGME office and issued an educational license by the CPSO before starting the PEAP. IMGs must successfully complete the PEAP to proceed with residency or fellowship training.

The PEAP is required for all IMGs who:

- Enter a residency program within Ontario outside of the Canadian Resident Matching Service (CaRMS).
- Enter a fellowship program within Ontario after completing residency training outside Canada or the United States.
- Enter a postgraduate elective if the home residency program is outside Canada or the United States.

Please note that there are exemptions for the PEAP for trainees who have completed a portion of their training in Canada or United States. See the [CPSO PEAP Exemption Policy](#).

Please note that for the purpose of this document, the word trainee refers to both residents and fellows.

Definition

1. The PEAP is an assessment period requiring successful completion before continuing in an Ontario postgraduate education training program. The PEAP allows for appropriate, supervised clinical activity in a multi-disciplinary environment. The PEAP must assess the trainee's foundational clinical, technical and communication skills, knowledge, and judgment in the discipline the trainee is seeking postgraduate training.
2. The PEAP must meet the following criteria:
 - 2.1. Minimum of four (4) weeks to a maximum of twelve (12) weeks
 - 2.2. Two (2) weeks for elective placements
 - 2.3. Provide assessment of the trainee's general knowledge and competency at the entry level for the specialty, sub-specialty, or fellowship program to which they are appointed. The PEAP must assess if the trainee:
 - 2.3.1. Has the appropriate foundational competencies to practice safely as a postgraduate trainee in the program to which they have been appointed.
 - 2.3.2. Has sufficient knowledge, skills, and judgment to engage in residency or fellowship training as authorized by the CPSO.
 - 2.3.3. Can communicate effectively with peers, staff, and patients.
 - 2.3.4. Can display appropriately professional attitudes and behaviours, in accordance with University and the CPSO's policies and procedures, as applicable.

3. Successful completion of the residency PEAP determines eligibility to enter residency training and, therefore, cannot be counted towards certification by the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPSC) or the College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC), if applicable.
4. Successful completion of the clinical fellowship PEAP can be counted toward the fulfillment of the educational goals and objectives of the clinical fellowship program.

PEAP Registration

5. The PGME office issues a Letter of Appointment (LoA) appointing the trainee to the PEAP period and the remainder of the academic training session conditional on the successful completion of the PEAP. Once signed by the trainee, the LoA is submitted to the CPSO.
6. Upon completion of PGME's registration requirements, PGME will inform the program and the trainee that the trainee is ready to start the PEAP. The PGME office will email the PEAP's *Detailed Assessment form* and the *PEAP Final Assessment Form* to the program (see workflow for submission guidelines).

PEAP Assessment

7. The PEAP assessment aims to ensure that the trainee is progressing at the appropriate level of training based on their appointment and to identify any areas of concern.
 - 7.1. To ensure transparency in the PEAP assessment process, programs must regularly document meetings (formal and informal) and provide the trainee with verbal and written feedback.
 - 7.2. Assessments must occur at designated times throughout the trainee's PEAP (see PEAP workflow).
 - 7.3. Programs must use the *Detailed Assessment Form* but can also use other program assessment forms (e.g., ITERs, EPA's and/or other work-based assessment forms).
 - 7.4. During orientation, the trainee must be informed about the assessment process and the shared responsibility of ensuring timely completion of assessments and regular feedback.
8. Four (4) weeks into the PEAP, a formal summative assessment must be completed, and the program director (or delegate) must complete the *Detailed Assessment Form*.
 - 8.1. If the trainee is progressing as expected, the program director (or delegate) must provide feedback and complete the *Detailed Assessment Form*. The trainee must sign the *Detailed Assessment Form*.
 - 8.2. If the trainee is having difficulties, the program director (or delegate) must:
 - 8.2.1. Provide feedback to the trainee, and the *Detailed Assessment Form* must outline the learning deficiencies and areas for improvement.
 - 8.2.2. Modify the education plan (goals and objectives) as necessary. The trainee must sign the *Detailed Assessment Form* and the modified education plan, if applicable. A modified education plan may include enhanced opportunities to demonstrate competencies, coaching, and/or increased assessment and feedback.
 - 8.2.3. Communicate the performance concerns that may result in an unsuccessful PEAP to the trainee with a written acknowledgement that the trainee has received this information and understands that it may result in an unsuccessful PEAP if not corrected.
 - 8.2.4. Ensure trainees with identified performance concerns have written assessments every

two (2) weeks. These can be program-specific assessment forms including but not limited to In-Training Evaluation Reports (ITERs) and Workplace Based Assessment (WBA).

9. The program director can complete and sign a *Final PEAP Assessment Form* at any time between four (4) and twelve (12) weeks of the PEAP assessment period, and it must be submitted to the appropriate PGME administrator (Resident – pgmeres@mcmaster.ca, Fellow – pgmefell@mcmaster.ca).
10. Eight (8) weeks into the PEAP, a second formal summative assessment must be completed, and the program director (or delegate) must complete the *Detailed Assessment Form*:
 - 10.1. If the trainee is progressing as expected, the program director (or delegate) must provide feedback and a written assessment. The trainee must sign the *Detailed Assessment Form*.
 - 10.2. If the trainee is having difficulties, the program director (or delegate) must:
 - 10.2.1. Provide the trainee with feedback and a written assessment outlining the learning deficiencies and areas for improvement. The education plan (goals and objectives) should be modified as necessary.
 - 10.2.2. Contact the Associate Dean, PGME, to identify the trainee as a possible unsuccessful PEAP candidate and specifically discuss if the learner can overcome deficiencies and achieve a successful PEAP in the remaining four (4) weeks.
 - 10.3. Discussion may occur with the trainee about resigning from the program under appropriate circumstances. This discussion is at the program director's discretion after consultation with the Associate Dean PGME.
 - 10.4. The trainee must sign the *Detailed Assessment Form* and the modified education plan, if applicable.
11. Twelve (12) weeks into the PEAP, a formal assessment must be completed:
 - 11.1. If the trainee successfully completes the PEAP, the program director signs the *Final PEAP Assessment Form*, and the learner continues training.
 - 11.2. If the trainee **does not successfully complete** the PEAP, the program director signs the *Final PEAP Assessment Form*, and the trainee **does not** continue training.
 - 11.2.1. Trainees must be informed about their right to appeal the decision and timelines for appeal at the time of an unsuccessful final PEAP assessment by the program director.
12. A PEAP cannot be extended for remedial training. Extensions of up to four (4) weeks of training time are acceptable only in circumstances (e.g., leaves of absence; temporary unavailability of supervisor) that prevented a complete assessment of the trainee. Extensions must be approved by the CPSO.

Unsuccessful PEAP

13. If the trainee fails to meet expectations in any of the five areas of observed assessment (i.e., clinical, technical, and communication skills, knowledge and judgment, and professional attitudes), the PEAP will be considered unsuccessful.
 - 13.1. More specifically, a trainee has not successfully completed the PEAP if the *Final Assessment Form* does not contain a "yes" response to all yes/no questions that follow the cumulative summary observed assessments on page 2 of the *Final Assessment Form*.

14. A trainee can appeal a failed PEAP on process issues only; refer to [COU PEAP Assessment Policy & PGME Assessment of Learners and PGME Appeals](#) found on the PGME policies and guidelines page.
 - 14.1. If the trainee chooses to appeal an unsuccessful PEAP, they are placed on an unpaid leave of absence pending investigation until a decision is determined.
 - 14.2. If the unsuccessful PEAP is upheld, the trainee's appointment is terminated with PGME, effective from the PEAP end date. The CPSO is notified and provided with a copy of the unsuccessful PEAP.
 - 14.3. The trainee is prohibited from applying to another PEAP at an Ontario university with the same appointment level in the same specialty, sub-specialty, or fellowship.
 - 14.4. If an appeals decision overturns an unsuccessful PEAP:
 - 14.4.1. The program director will determine the number of weeks for extension of the PEAP (4-12 weeks) with discussion with the Associate Dean, PGME.
 - 14.4.2. The Associate Dean, PGME, will send a written request for the extension of the PEAP to the CPSO.
 - 14.4.3. The CPSO must approve the request using their internal processes, including but not limited to review at the Registration Committee.
 - 14.4.4. If the PEAP extension is unsuccessful, no further appeals will be granted.

PGY1 Residents completing a PEAP – Time Off Consideration

15. Based on the overall duration of the PEAP and performance of the resident, residency programs will shorten the PEAP assessment period (4 to 5 days) at the end of PEAP period to allow residents time off before officially starting residency training (without having to request vacation).

IMG Residents Registered in a Residency Elective PEAP

16. IMGs currently enrolled in residency training outside of Canada, or the United States who wish to come to Ontario to complete an elective rotation must successfully complete a two (2) week PEAP.
17. The PGME office issues a Letter of Appointment (LoA) appointing the resident to the PEAP period. The remainder of the elective rotation is conditional based on the successful completion of the PEAP. Once signed by the resident, the LoA is submitted to the CPSO.
18. Upon completion of the PGME registration requirements, PGME will inform the program and the resident that the resident is ready to start the PEAP. The PEAP *Final Assessment Form* will be emailed to the program.
19. The PEAP assessment must:
 - 19.1. Be two weeks in duration.
 - 19.2. Be concurrent with the elective rotation.
 - 19.3. Assess the resident's clinical skills, technical skills, communication skills, knowledge and judgment in the designated specialty and level of training.
 - 19.4. Be completed before the end of the two (2)-week period.
20. If the resident successfully completes their PEAP, the program director signs the *Final PEAP Assessment Form*, sends the signed form to pgmeve@mcmaster.ca, and the resident continues training.

21. If the resident **does not successfully complete** their PEAP, the program director signs the *Final PEAP Assessment Form*, sends the signed form to pgmeve@mcmaster.ca, and the resident **does not** continue training. The resident's appointment is terminated with PGME, effective from the PEAP end date, and the CPSO is notified and provided with a copy of the unsuccessful PEAP.