

Boston University School of Medicine
Division of Graduate Medical Sciences
Technical Standards

It is essential that all students enrolled in the Division of Graduate Medical Sciences (“GMS”) at the Boston University School of Medicine have a predictably high level of competence across the range of knowledge, critical judgement and technical skills generally expected of scientists and health-related professionals. These skills encompass academic and non-academic technical standards essential to all GMS and Boston University educational programs. Awarding a GMS degree or certificate implies that the recipient has demonstrated a foundation of knowledge in his or her field and the ability to independently apply and communicate that knowledge.

All students are expected to carry out the tasks, both intellectual and physical, of the foundational science, laboratory and/or clinical curricula either without accommodation(s) or with those accommodation(s) that are reasonable in the range of settings and circumstances in which the educational program is based.

The following technical standards have been formally adopted by the Division of Graduate Medical Sciences at the Boston University School of Medicine. In addition, some GMS programs may have more specific technical standards. A student enrolled in a GMS degree or certificate program must have sufficient abilities and skills relevant to her or his field of study in the areas of observation; communication; sensory and motor coordination and function; intellectual-conceptual, integrative, and quantitative abilities; and behavioral and social attributes, as described below. The use of a human intermediary may be permitted provided that the student’s judgment will not be influenced by someone else’s power of selection and observation.

Observation

Students must be able to observe, participate in, and conduct experiments in the basic sciences or clinical sciences within the laboratory and instructional setting, as required by the program.

Communication

Students must be able to communicate effectively and efficiently in both oral and written English, either independently or through the use of a human intermediary. If a student uses an intermediary, the intermediary is permitted to function only as an information conduit and may not serve in an integrative or evaluative role.

Students must be able to communicate experimental or clinical findings as required by the program with faculty, peers, or patients and families. This communication may also be in the context of presentations to the scientific community, professional journals, with laboratory personnel, or as a member of a clinical team.

Students must possess communication skills at a level sufficient to accomplish, in a timely manner, all administrative requirements and to meet the performance expectations of the faculty in all areas of the curriculum.

Sensory and Motor Coordination and Function

Students must possess motor and sensory capacity to perform activities required for the chosen discipline. Depending on the program, such actions may require coordination of gross and fine movements and equilibrium. Students may be required to perform such actions rapidly and under challenging circumstances. For example, students must be able to manipulate the equipment, instruments, apparatus or tools required to collect and interpret data appropriate to the area of study, practice or research.

Intellectual-conceptual, Integrative and Quantitative Abilities

Students must be able to measure, calculate, reason, analyze, hypothesize, and synthesize ideas. It is also essential that students are able to absorb and process information from faculty, peers, patients, supervisors, and/or from the scientific literature, as components of problem solving and critical thinking. Students must be able to acquire information from experiences and demonstrations conveyed through coursework, lecture, group seminar, small group activities and other.

When appropriate to the field of study, students must have the ability to follow universal precautions against contamination and cross-contamination with infectious agents, toxins, chemicals and/or other physical hazards. Students must be able to work in a manner that is safe for themselves and others, and respond appropriately to emergencies and urgent situations.

Behavioral and Social Attributes

Students must have the emotional and mental health required to demonstrate maturity, respect, and tolerance in their professional relationships under all circumstances. Students must have the ability to understand and comply with ethical standards for the conduct of research. They must be able to use their intellectual capacity, to exercise sound judgment, and to complete all responsibilities in a timely and professional manner. They must be able to demonstrate emotional stability to function effectively under stress and to adapt to changing environments.