



**MEDICAL & DENTAL COUNCIL, GHANA**

*“Guiding the professions, protecting the Public”*

# **POLICY ON THE TRAINING OF GHANAIAN MEDICAL AND DENTAL STUDENTS IN OTHER JURISDICTIONS**

**APRIL, 2019**

## **First Edition**

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You can find the latest version of this guidance on  
our website: **[www.mdcghana.org](http://www.mdcghana.org)**.

## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Medical and Dental Council is the Statutory Agency under the Ministry of Health responsible for the regulation of the training and practice of medicine and dentistry in Ghana. The main object of the Council is to *secure in the public interest the highest standards in the training and practice of medicine and dentistry for the public good.*

Accordingly, the Council is mandated by law, to assess facilities and contents of training programmes, ensure that pre-registration training of practitioners meet the required professional standards and conduct examinations for the registration of practitioners among others.

Council acting in accordance with its mandate and best regulatory practice, instituted registration examination for foreign trained practitioners sometime in 2000 and has thus far conducted fifty-one (51) such examinations. However, while the number of Ghanaians receiving training in medicine and dentistry outside the country has been on the ascendency, the standards and performance of candidates at these examinations have been worryingly poor and of grave concern to the Council.

## 1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The Council has high expectation of its professionals and so is the public. In keeping with the high regards that society accords to healthcare professionals, the society rightly expects a correspondingly high standard of competence, professionalism and conduct.

There is an increasing number of Ghanaians receiving medical and dental training outside the country. Expectedly, an increasing number of foreign trained practitioners are returning from other jurisdictions and taking Council's Registration Examinations. However, the performance of these candidates over the years at Council's registration examinations continue to worry key stakeholders including the Ministry of Health, Parliamentary Select Committee on Health, the Council, supervisors and trainers in the various health institutions.

As a result of these concerns, Council undertook a review of its regulatory strategies to improve the situation.

### **1.3 KEY FINDINGS**

The key findings of Council in respect of the review of the poor performance of candidates as reflected in reports over the years relate to:

- i. poor knowledge base in the basic sciences,
- ii. sub-standard capability in clinical examination/inadequate exposure to practical or hands-on skills acquisition,
- iii. significant challenges with the clinical clerkship component:
  - o *communication and language problems*
  - o *lack of a formal, structured process to facilitate practical skills acquisition by Ghanaians students at home*
- iv. inadequate knowledge in tropical medicine,
- v. grossly inadequate postgraduate training,
- vi. some institutions admitting students with poor

- grades and or without the requisite background in science. In other words, entry into a medical school was open to all irrespective of their basic qualification,
- vii. lack of independent process for the verification and authentication of the results and certificates of prospective students to the various universities,
  - viii. commercialisation of admissions into the various medical universities mainly through recruitment agencies for a fee, and
  - ix. graduates from some of these foreign training institutions are not licensed to practise in the country of training after their basic qualification and those wishing to do so undergo additional years of training before they take the registration examination of the host countries.

## **1.4 POLICY RATIONALE**

After extensive consultative engagements and in fulfilment of its object of securing in the public interest the highest standards in the training and practice of medicine and dentistry in Ghana, the Council is undertaking this policy reform to ensure that basic-and pre-registration training of medical and dental practitioners are in accordance with international regulatory best practice.

## 1.5 THE GUIDANCE

### 1.5.1 Candidates

- i. Effective February, 2022, only candidates from institutions recognised by Council would be admitted to Council's Registration Examination. *Refer to Council's list of recognised medical and dental training institutions.*
- ii. Effective 2024, only candidates with a science background with a minimum of a credit in all subjects from SSSCE/WASSCE or equivalent would be eligible for admission to Council's examinations. In the case of applicants with non-science background, such applicants must have undergone a preliminary course in biology, physics, chemistry, mathematics or related subjects for a period of 2 – 3 years before being admitted to a medical university to pursue medicine or dentistry after successfully completing this course with a minimum grade of credit in all the subjects.
- iii. Candidates not licensed in their country of training before sitting and passing Council's registration examination must complete mandatory two-year housemanship before undertaking specialist training in any discipline of their choice. *Refer to Policy on Specialist Register.*
- iv. Effective October, 2022, all candidates seeking to register for Council's registration examination would be required to submit for verification original or certified true copies of

their academic certificates including SSSCE/WASSCE or equivalent. Only candidates whose certificates have been verified are eligible for admission to take the registration examination.

- v. Effective February, 2022, the registration examinations would consist of two stages:
  - Step 1 Theory (*Multiple-Choice Questions*)
  - Step 2 Clinical (*Objective Structured Clinical Examination/Objective Structured Practical Examination*)

*Refer to the Revised Registration Examination Policy*

- vi. Duly certified registration examination results of candidates will be published on the Council's website and noticeboards. The Council will also communicate the results of each examination to individual candidates.
- vii. Candidates have a maximum of five (5) attempts **ONLY** to pass both steps 1 and 2 of the Council's Registration Examinations.
- viii. Effective February 2025, there shall be a common registration examination for both local and foreign trained practitioners.

### **1.5.2 Training Institutions**

All foreign medical and dental training institutions are encouraged to ensure that their graduates meet the conditions contained herein in order not to hamper their eligibility for the Council's registration examination.

- i. Effective 2022, only graduates from training institutions that are recognised by Council are eligible to apply for the registration examination. *Refer to the list of medical and dental training institutions recognised by Council.*
- ii. Training institutions should ensure that entry certificates of students in training are verified or authenticated before completion of the programme.
- iii. Training institutions whose graduates do not have the requisite science background with a minimum grade of a credit in each of the subjects are ineligible to apply for Council's registration examination. Where this requirement is not met, especially in the case of applicants with a non-science background, such students shall undergo a preliminary course in biology, physics, chemistry, mathematics or related subjects for a period of 2 – 3 years before being admitted to a medical university to pursue medicine or dentistry after successfully completing this course with a minimum grade of credit in all the subjects. *Refer to the grading system of Ghana.*
- iv. Council strongly recommends to all medical universities training doctors and dentists to allow students in the 5<sup>th</sup> year of their studies to undergo a 6-month to a 12-month practical clinical clerkship/ attachment in Ghana.
- v. The Council recommends that recognised foreign training institutions should enter into formal arrangements with various medical



training institutions in Ghana to afford their trainees the opportunity to do the 6-to 12-month structured and well-coordinated clinical clerkship/attachment with logbooks in Ghana. The logbooks used during the period of clerkship/attachment shall be signed by an authorised representative of a local partner medical or dental training institution before being returned to the respective foreign medical universities/faculties. A comprehensive report from the structured clerkship/attachment programme should be accepted as part of the training of the student by the partner foreign medical university/faculty.

- vi. Council also encourages parties to institute an exchange programme for faculty to ensure effective monitoring and supervision of the students doing their clinical clerkship/attachment as well as sharing of experience and best practice.
- vii. All foreign training institutions should note that recognition by Council is subject to review annually or any period determined by the Board.
- viii. Recognised foreign medical and dental institutions who fail, or are unable, or no longer meet any of the criteria set by Council including those contained herein may be de-recognised.

A feedback on the performance of graduates from the various foreign training institutions may be given on demand.

You may contact Council for further information or clarification in relation to any part of this Policy.

Institutions interested in Council's recognition for the training of Ghanaian Medical/Dental students should download Council's **RFTI FORM I**, complete and forward same to the address below:

**The Registrar,**  
Medical and Dental Council, Ghana,

P. O. Box AN 10586,  
Accra, Ghana.

**Tel.:** +233 302 661 620  
+233 302 661 606

**Email:** registrar@mdcghana.org  
**Website:** www.mdcghana.org





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