

Frequently Asked Questions about Assessment in Years 4 and 5

Updated April 2023



ADELAIDE MEDICAL
STUDENTS' SOCIETY
EST 1889

This document has been updated for 2023 by Scott Chandrasiri (Vice President Education) in collaboration with Professor Danny Liew (Dean of Medicine), Professor Ben Canny (Director, Medical Education, Acting Chair, Medical Programs Assessments Committee). This document was originally compiled by Victoria Langton (2019 VPE) and at that time was reviewed by Professor Ian Symonds (Dean of Medicine) and Associate Professor Marc Gladman (Program Coordinator).

Please email any questions regarding the content of this document to the AMSS Vice President (Education) at vpe@amss.org.au.

DISCLAIMER: This document is based on documents available on the University of Adelaide's website that can be accessed by all students. Its aim is to help students understand the policies and procedures that govern assessment at the Adelaide Medical School. The information contained in this document is subject to change. While every effort has been made to provide accurate and up-to-date information, neither the compilers of this document nor the Adelaide Medical Students' Society accept any liability for the inclusion of incorrect information or the absence of relevant information from this document. Furthermore, it is important to note that if any statement in this document contradicts those in official university documents (e.g. Course Outlines, etc.), the latter takes precedence. Accordingly, while compiled with care, it does not have official status, and will not be relied upon in the event of dispute.

CONTENTS

Introduction	2
Overview of Assessment	
Relevance for Year 4 and Year 5 students	
Assessment Documents and Code of Conduct	
End of Year Examinations	3
Standard Setting	
• Written MCQ Examinations	
• OSCEs	
Additional Assessment and Replacement Assessments	
• What are additional and replacement assessments?	
• How do I apply for a Replacement Assessment?	
• What happens if I'm sick for my first examination, and then just fail (45-49%) my Replacement Assessment? Do I get an Additional Assessment?	
• What happens if just fail (45-49%) my first examination, and then I'm sick for my Replacement Assessment? Do I get another Additional Assessment?	
Progression rules: How do I progress from Year 4 to Year 5	5
Progression rules: How do I progress from Year 5 to Year 6	7

Introduction

Overview of Assessment

The purpose of this document is to help students understand the policies and procedures that govern assessment at the Adelaide Medical School. The MBBS program is an **integrated program**, with some forms of assessment spanning a whole academic year. Accordingly, each year's learning comprises a series of course components (e.g. Year 3 Scientific Basis of Medicine or Year 4 Medical Home Unit) **AND** an examination course component. **BOTH** of these requirements need to be successfully completed.

Assessment can be broadly divided into three components:

1. **Program rules** – the requirements that need to be met in order to successfully graduate with an MBBS degree
2. **Progression rules** – the requirements that need to be met in order to successfully transition from one year of the program to the next (e.g. move from Year 2 to Year 3, or move from Year 5 to Year 6)
3. **Course component rules** – the requirements that need to be met in order to successfully complete a component (course) a student has enrolled in, which sits within their integrated year of learning (e.g. Year 2 Scientific Basis of Medicine or Year 4 Medical Home Unit)
 - a. All 24 units that make up one year of learning need to be satisfactorily completed to fulfil the requirements. *(In the event of not all 24 units being successfully completed in one year, the student will receive a Fail on their transcript against **ALL** course components enrolled in for that year, irrespective of the marks achieved in individual course components, reflecting the nature of the integrated learning in the medical program).*

Relevance for Year 4 and Year 5 students

This document focuses on Year 4 and Year 5 students, who frequently have the most questions regarding assessment (compared to pre-clinical students). Most students are confident they understand the **course component rules**, as these are set out in the respective **Course Outlines** for each course component, but students' have many questions about the **progression rules**, especially in relation to the **end-of-year examinations**. **This is the focus of this document**. The **program rules** governing Years 1-6 are beyond the scope of this document.

Assessment Documents and the Code of Conduct

Where do I find the Assessment Documents and the Code of Conduct?

The Assessment Documents are available via the respective year level examination course component (MEDIC ST X000AHO/BHO) Course Outlines. These are no longer downloadable documents – the information is contained within the following webpages:

- Year 4: <https://www.adelaide.edu.au/course-outlines/101565/1/sem-1/>
- Year 5: <https://www.adelaide.edu.au/course-outlines/102386/1/sem-1/>

The Code of Conduct can be accessed via CANVAS.

Am I still required to sign each year to say that I have read and understood the Assessment Documents and the Code of Conduct?

The Assessment Documents do not require your signature. It is your responsibility to find and read the information yourself.

The Code of Conduct does require your signature. You are required to tick the button on CANVAS to confirm that you have read the Code of Conduct.

End-of-year Examinations

Standard Setting

What is the process of standard setting MCQ examinations and what does this mean?

The accreditation standards of the Australian Medical Council require medical schools to use validated methods of standard setting (AMC 5.2.3). Standard setting is a process to ensure that students achieve an appropriate standard of performance in an assessment and makes allowances for differences in difficulty between questions and exams. A number of different validated standard setting methods exist, and these are used by the Adelaide Medical School in different circumstances. For the Year 4 and 5 MCQ exams, the Cohen Standard setting method¹ will be used. In this method, the standard is set by the performance of the best performing students, rather than by academic staff judging a “borderline” student. Cohen’s method generates more stable standards over time, and is more easily applied.

Other validated standard setting methods are used for different examinations during the medical program. The choice of method depends on a number of matters, including feasibility and the relative importance of the test.

1. Cohen-Schotanus, J and van der Vlueten CPM (2010) A standard setting method with the best performing students as point of reference: Practical and affordable *Medical Teacher*, **32**: 154-160.

What is the process of standard setting OSCEs and what does this mean?

The Adelaide Medical School uses a borderline regression process of standard setting to determine the cut-off score for each OSCE station. In this method, examiners award both a numerical mark (for specified areas of performance) and a global rating of performance. It is a robust and commonly used statistical method in OSCEs and allows for reliable standard setting in an examinee-centred way to ensure no disadvantage (or advantage) caused by inter-examiner variability.

Reference: Kramer, A, Muijtjens, A, Jansen, K, Dusman, H, Tan, L, Van Der Vleuten, C 2003, ‘Comparison of a rational and an empirical standard setting procedure for an OSCE’, *Medical Education*, vol. 37, no. 2, pp. 132–139.

Reference: McKinley, D, & Norcini, J 2014, ‘How to set standards on performance-based examinations: AMEE Guide No. 85’, *Medical Teacher*, vol. 36, no. 2, pp. 97-110.

What happens once a standard is set

For the Year 4 and 5 MCQ exams, derived “Cohen score (see above)” is defined as the pass score and given an arbitrary value of 50%. All student scores are scaled to this score. For the Year 4 and 5 OSCE, once standard setting has occurred, the examiners end up with an estimate of the combined score of a “borderline” student. Using reliability statistics from the examination, a range of uncertainty for that score is determined, and the upper end of the range is defined as the pass score.

For both the MCQs and OSCEs the pass score is assigned a value of 50%, and after scaling relative to this score, students who fall in the range of 45-50% are offered Additional Assessment, consistent with University Policy and relevant Adelaide Medical School rules regarding assessment.

Additional Assessment and Replacement Assessments

What are additional and replacement assessments?

An Additional Assessment is required where a student received a mark within 5% of a passing grade (45-49% after standard setting and scaling adjustments) in an examination.

A Replacement Assessment is required when a student was unable to attend an examination for medical or compassionate reasons.

Replacement Assessment:

As per section 4a) of the Modified Arrangement for Coursework Assessment Policy “A student may apply for a Replacement Examination in accordance with clause 7 if, as a result of their Circumstances they were, are, or will be unable to demonstrate their true level of competence in a Primary Examination”. In such a case, the Replacement Examination becomes the student’s Primary Assessment. The replacement examination generally takes place during the first two weeks of December.

Important points:

- *Students cannot be granted a replacement examination if they attended the original examination.*
- . A Replacement Examination will be equivalent, though not identical to the Primary Examination. It may, or may not, have an identical format to the Primary Examination

Additional Assessment:

As per section 5b) of the Modified Arrangement for Coursework Assessment Policy, “A student will be offered an Additional Assessment if they receive a Fail grade for a course with an underlying mark within 5% of a passing grade (normally 45-49%)”. The intention of an ‘Additional Assessment’ is to “*provide(s) an additional opportunity for a student who has narrowly failed to achieve a passing grade in a course to demonstrate that they have achieved the required skills, knowledge and learning outcomes of that course by completing an additional assessment task*”. The additional assessment generally takes place during the first two weeks of December.

Important points:

- The maximum mark that can be achieved for an additional assessment is 50%.
- The additional assessment is not always the same style of examination as the original examination (i.e. other formats of assessment may be used) though the additional assessment should be related to the learning objectives that have not been achieved. The nature of additional assessment will be determined by the Course Coordinator.

How do I apply for a Replacement Assessment?

There are specific procedures that must be followed when applying for a Replacement Assessment. These application forms are available online at <https://www.adelaide.edu.au/student/exams/modified-arrangements-for-coursework-assessment/replacement-examinations-and-additional-assessment>. It is important to note that other forms cannot be used for these applications (such as Leave of Absence form, Non-Attendance form, Short Term Leave form, or normal medical certificates). Please note that strict timelines are in place when applying for a Replacement Assessment. These may only be overridden in exceptional circumstances (see clause 6 of the MACA policy).

What happens if I’m sick for my first examination, and then just fail (45-49%) my Replacement Assessment? Do I get an Additional Assessment?

The University Policy does not automatically entitle a student in this situation to an additional assessment under the Modified Arrangements for Coursework Assessment policy, stating that additional assessment in this circumstance is at the discretion of the Course Coordinator (clause 4c). However, the Dean of Medicine has agreed in principle to consider any extenuating circumstances relevant to individual students who find

themselves in this situation. Any such student who wishes to do so should log an appeal through the Student Grievance Policy. If a student takes this action, they will then be assessed on a case-by-case basis by the Dean of Medicine and may be granted an additional assessment, if the mark that they received in their Replacement Examination was 45-49%. See the “Modified Arrangements for Coursework Assessment Policy” for more details.

What happens if just fail (45-49%) my first examination, and then I’m sick for my Additional Assessment?
Do I get a ‘replacement’ Additional Assessment?

The University policy does not automatically entitle a student in this situation to a ‘replacement’ Additional assessment. However, the MACA policy indicates that a student may apply to defer a modified assessment “if their capacity to demonstrate their true level of competence in the Modified Arrangement was, is or will be significantly impaired as a result of Medical, Compassionate or Extenuating Circumstances”. Please See the “Modified Arrangements for Coursework Assessment Policy” (clause 5) for more details.

Progression rules: How do I progress from Year 4 to Year 5?

In order to progress from Year 4 to Year 5, students must successfully complete all the Year 4 course components **AND** successfully complete the Year 4 end-of-year examinations.

Successfully completing Year 4 Course Components – students must achieve NGP in the following course components (must achieve 24 units)

Course Components (Clinical attachments)	Unit value of the course
MEDIC ST 4013 AHO/BHO Medical & Scientific Attachment I	2
MEDIC ST 4014 AHO/BHO Medical & Scientific Attachment II	2
MEDIC ST 4015 AHO/BHO Medical Home Unit	6
MEDIC ST 4016 AHO/BHO Surgical Home Unit	6
MEDIC ST 4017 AHO/BHO Psychiatry	4
MEDIC ST 4018 AHO/BHO Musculoskeletal Medicine	4
Total	24

- **What happens if I do not successfully complete one course component?**

- If you do not successfully complete one course component during the year (e.g. Year 4 Psychiatry), you are still able to sit the end-of-year examinations. However, you will be required to undertake a remedial placement (summer course) in the SAME academic calendar year. This **MUST** occur even if you successfully complete the end-of-year examinations. If, however, you do not successfully complete the end-of-year examinations, you will not be offered a remedial placement.

- You are NOT required to undertake a remedial placement (summer course) if the course component is a 2 unit Medical and Scientific Attachment (instead specific tasks/assignments will be provided as a way to remediate).

- **What happens if I do not successfully complete more than one course component?**

- If you do not successfully complete more than one course component during the year (*and/or do not successfully complete the end-of-year examinations*), you will NOT be able to progress to the next year in the program and will be required to repeat all the Year 4 course components (*irrespective of whether you successfully completed them previously*) **and** the Year 4 end-of-year examinations in the following academic year. You are required to repeat Year 4 even if you successfully complete the end-of-year examinations. **This means enrolling in the course components again, as well as in the examination course component, and paying for these course components again.**

- **What are the remedial placements (summer courses)?**
 - The remedial placements (summer courses) **MUST** occur in the SAME academic calendar year, and generally take 4-5 weeks and usually occur in the period from November until Christmas Eve. **Accordingly, please do NOT make plans to be away from Adelaide during the summer break until you have successfully completed all course components**
 - Details regarding each of the remedial placements (summer courses) are accessible via: <https://www.adelaide.edu.au/course-outlines/ug/medic-st/>
 - If you did not successfully complete a 4-unit course component (Psychiatry/Musculoskeletal Medicine) you will be required to enrol in and complete the MBBS Year 4 Summer Course 4 Units
 - If you did not successfully complete a 6-unit course component (Medical Home Unit/Surgical Home Unit) you will be required to enrol in and complete the MBBS Year 4 Summer Course 6 Units
 - **Undertaking a remedial placement (summer course) does engender a cost.**
- **What happens if I'm unable to attend a remedial placement (summer course)?**
 - The remedial placement (summer course) **MUST** occur within the SAME academic calendar year in the period from November until Christmas Eve. Students are unable to defer remedial placements (summer courses) to the following year and thus students will not be able to progress to the next year without satisfying these requirements. **Accordingly, please do NOT make plans to be away from Adelaide during the summer break until you have successfully completed all course components**

Successfully completing Year 4 end-of-year examinations – students must achieve NGP in the MEDIC ST 4000 AHO/BHO course component

Requirements to achieve NGP* in MEDIC ST 4000 AHO/BHO means successfully completing end of semester summative assessments for both Semester 1 and 2:

Assessment Task	Task Type	Weighting (%)
MCQ Paper 1	Summative	50%
OSCE Semester 1	Summative	50%
OSCE Semester 2	Summative	
Code of Conduct Quiz	Hurdle	0%

The combined score of the two end of semester OSCEs and the two end of year MCQ papers must be at least 50% (after standard setting adjustments).

The Code of conduct quiz has to be completed as a hurdle requirement.

- **What happens if I do not successfully complete the end-of-year examinations?**
 - A student must achieve **at least** 45% in both components to pass a given year.
 - Additional assessment will be offered to students who score a combined 45%-49% (after standard setting adjustments) in the MCQ paper, provided that the effect of a pass in the additional assessment would result in an overall pass. Additional assessment will also be offered to students who score 45%-49% (after standard setting adjustments) for their combined OSCE mark, provided that the effect of a pass in the additional assessment would result in an overall pass.
 - Additional assessment will also be offered to students who score at least 50% overall but **do not** achieve at least 45% in a core assessment component (MCQ or OSCE).
 - If you do not successfully achieve at least 45% in both components (*and/or do not successfully complete more than one course component during the year*), you will NOT be able to progress

to the next year in the program and will be required to repeat all the Year 4 end-of-year examinations **and** all the Year 4 course components (**irrespective of whether you successfully completed them previously**) in the following academic year. **This means enrolling in the course components again, as well as in the examination course component, and paying for these course components again.**

- The advice above should be read in conjunction with the Course Outline for MEDIC ST 4000 AHO/BH0 (<https://www.adelaide.edu.au/course-outlines/101566/1/sem-2/>)

Progression rules: How do I progress from Year 5 to Year 6?

In order to progress from Year 5 to Year 6, students must successfully complete all the Year 5 course components **AND** successfully complete the Year 5 end-of-year examinations.

Successfully completing Year 5 Course Components – students must achieve NGP in the following course components (must achieve 24 units)

Course Components (Clinical attachments)	Unit value of the course
5005 AHO/BHO ARU/BRU Medical & Scientific Attachment III	2
5006 AHO/BHO ARU/BRU Medical & Scientific Attachment IV	2
5007 AHO/BHO ARU/BRU Medical & Scientific Attachment V	2
5009 AHO/BHO ARU/BRU Geriatrics and General Practice	4
5014 AHO/BHO ARU/BRU Anaesthesia, Pain Medicine & Intensive Care V	2
5015 AHO/BHO ARU/BRU Paediatrics and Child Health	6
5016 AHO/BHO ARU/BRU Human Reproductive Health	6
Total	24

NOTE for 5th year students in the rural clinical school program:

- The 3 MSA courses are not applicable. However, you will undertake a rural medicine course equivalent in units to the three combined MSAs (6 units for the course)

- **What happens if I do not successfully complete one course component?**

- If you do not successfully complete one course component during the year (e.g. Year 5 Paediatrics), you are still able to sit the end-of-year examinations. However, you will be required to undertake a remedial placement (summer course) in the SAME academic calendar year. This MUST occur even if you successfully complete the end-of-year examinations. If, however, you do not successfully complete the end-of-year examinations, you will not be offered a remedial placement.
 - You are NOT required to undertake a remedial placement (summer course) if the course component is a 2 unit Medical and Scientific Attachment (instead specific tasks/assignments will be provided as a way to remediate).

- **What happens if I do not successfully complete more than one course component?**

- If you do not successfully complete more than one course component during the year (*and/or do not successfully complete the end-of-year examinations*), you will NOT be able to progress to the next year in the program and will be required to repeat all the Year 5 course components (irrespective of whether you successfully completed them previously) **and** the Year 5 end-of-year examinations in the following academic year. You are required to repeat Year 5 even if you successfully complete the end-of-year examinations. **This means enrolling in the course components again, as well as in the examination course component, and paying for these course components again.**

- **What are the remedial placements (summer courses)?**

- The remedial placements (summer courses) MUST occur in the SAME academic calendar year, and generally take 4-5 weeks and usually occur in the period from November until Christmas Eve. **Accordingly, please do NOT make plans to be away from Adelaide during the summer break until you have successfully completed all course components.**
- Details regarding each of the remedial placements (summer courses) are accessible via: <https://www.adelaide.edu.au/course-outlines/ug/medic-st/>
 - If you did not successfully complete a 4 or 2 unit course component (Geriatrics and General Practice/Anaesthesia Pain Medicine and Intensive Care) you will be required to enrol in and complete the MBBS Year 5 Summer Course 4 Units

- If you did not successfully complete a 6-unit course component (Human Reproductive Health/Paediatrics and Child Health) you will be required to enrol in and complete the MBBS Year 5 Summer Course 6 Units
- **Undertaking a remedial placement (summer course) does engender a cost.**
- **What happens if I'm unable to attend a remedial placement (summer course)?**
 - The remedial placement (summer course) MUST occur within the SAME academic calendar year in the period from November until Christmas Eve. Students are unable to defer remedial placements (summer courses) to the following year and thus students will not be able to progress to the next year without satisfying these requirements. **Accordingly, please do NOT make plans to be away from Adelaide during the summer break until you have successfully completed all course components**

Successfully completing Year 5 end-of-year examinations – students must achieve NGP in the MEDIC ST 5000 AHO/BHO course component

Requirements to achieve NGP in MEDIC ST 5000AHO/BHO means successfully completing the end of Semester 2 summative assessments:

Assessment Task	Task Type	Weighting (%)
MCQ Paper	Summative	50%
OSCE Semester 1	Summative	50%
OSCE Semester 2	Summative	

The combined score of the two end of semester OSCEs and the two end of year MCQ papers must be at least 50% (after standard setting adjustments).

- **What happens if I do not successfully complete the end-of-year examinations?**
 - A student must achieve **at least** 45% in both components to pass a given year.
 - Additional assessment will be offered to students who score a combined 45%-49% (after standard setting adjustments) in the MCQ paper, provided that the effect of a pass in the additional assessment would result in an overall pass. Additional assessment will also be offered to students who score 45%-49% (after standard setting adjustments) for their combined OSCE mark, provided that the effect of a pass in the additional assessment would result in an overall pass.
 - Additional assessment will also be offered to students who score at least 50% overall but **do not** achieve at least 45% in a core assessment component (MCQ or OSCE).
 - If you do not successfully achieve at least 45% in both components (*and/or do not successfully complete more than one course component during the year*), you will NOT be able to progress to the next year in the program and will be required to repeat all the Year 4 end-of-year examinations **and** all the Year 4 course components (irrespective of whether you successfully completed them previously) in the following academic year. **This means enrolling in the course components again, as well as in the examination course component, and paying for these course components again.**
 - The advice above should be read in conjunction with the Course Outline for MEDIC ST 5000 AHO/BHO (<https://www.adelaide.edu.au/course-outlines/003192/1/sem-2/>)

	MCQ paper	OSCE	Average	Result	Comment/Explanation
Example student 1	50	50	50	Pass	This student passed both exams, so their average mark was a pass. They pass without needing an additional assessment.
Example student 2	48	52	50	Pass	This student only passed one exam but their average mark was a pass. They pass without needing an additional assessment as the score in both components was greater than 45
Example student 3	36	52	44	Fail	This student's average mark was an outright fail (<45%). They fail without being offered an additional assessment.
Example student 4	52	46	49	Additional Assessments Offered	This student narrowly failed (45-49%) the average mark needed to pass. Because their combined score is less than 50, this student is required to sit an additional assessment in both components. This student must achieve a combined score >50 in the additional assessments, with neither individual score being less than 45 to progress.
Example student 5	48	48	48	Additional Assessments Offered	This student narrowly failed (45-49%) both requirements. This student is required to sit an OSCE additional assessment for narrowly failing the OSCE, and an additional assessment for narrowly failing the MCQ paper. This student must achieve a combined score of at least 50, with neither individual score less than 45 to progress.
Example student 6	40	48	44	Fail	This student's average mark was an outright fail (<45%) <i>They are not offered an additional assessment for the narrowly failed (48%) OSCE, because a score of 50 in an additional assessment would still give an average mark of a fail.</i>
Example student 7	40	62	51	Additional Assessment	This student's combined score was greater than 50, though their MCQ score was less than 45 <i>They will be offered an additional assessment for the MCQ. To progress, they need to achieve a score of at least 45.</i>
Example student 8	62	40	51	Additional Assessment	This student's combined score was greater than 50, though their OSCE score was less than 45 <i>They will be offered an additional assessment for the OSCE. To progress, they need to achieve a score of at least 45.</i>