

Competence Committees –Guidelines for the Terms of Reference

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General Considerations

Competence Committees are critical components of Competency Based Medical Education that allow for robust and transparent resident performance review. Their goal is to ensure all learners achieve the requirements of the discipline through synthesis and review of qualitative and quantitative assessment data at each stage of training, and to provide recommendations on future learning activities. This document provides the Postgraduate Dean, Program Director, Clinical Faculty, Competency Committee member Program Administrator as well as the Resident with information on the structure and function of Competence Committees.

Note: this document is *not intended as a prescriptive template*. Instead, it outlines a set of guiding principles, processes and procedures that can be used as a resource.

This document is intended to support residency programs transitioning to Competency Based Medical Education by providing a *framework* to Program Directors and Competence Committee Chairs. Alternate approaches have merit when planned and implemented thoughtfully. The Royal College's goal is for programs to use this material in their unique contexts to promote the principles of Competence by Design, as outlined.

Role

A Competence Committee reviews and makes decisions related to the progress of residents enrolled in a competency-based residency program, in achieving the national standards established by each Royal College discipline.

Responsibility and Authority

The Residency Competence Committee reports to the Residency Training Committee and will be responsible for:

- Monitoring the progress of each resident in demonstrating achievement of the EPAs or independent milestones within each stage of a competency-based residency training program.
- Synthesizing the results from multiple assessments and observations to make decisions related to:
 - The promotion of residents to the next stage of training;
 - The review and approval of individual learning plans developed to address areas for improvement;
 - Determining readiness to challenge the Royal College examinations
 - Determining readiness to enter independent practice on completion of the transition to practice stage;
 - Determining that a trainee is failing to progress within the program.
 - Monitoring the outcome of any learning or improvement plan established for an individual resident.

- Maintaining confidentiality and promoting trust by sharing information only with individuals directly involved in the development or implementation of learning or improvement plans.

Composition

The Competence Committee will ordinarily be chaired by a member of the clinical teaching faculty affiliated with a Royal College accredited residency program. Ideally the Competence Committee will not be chaired by the Program Director. However, the Program Director should serve as a Committee member. The size of the Committee should reflect the number of residents in the program with a minimum size of three members for smaller programs. Members of the Committee are normally from either the Residency Training/Program Committee or clinical supervisors associated with the program. Including a member that is 'external' to the teaching faculty can be helpful. This individual may be faculty or a program director from other residency programs at the university or from the same discipline at another university, other healthcare professional, or a public member.

The use of an Academic Advisor to mentor residents in their learning and development is a good idea, but not required. For programs that use this approach these individuals may be used to summarize resident progress for the Competence Committee.

Key Competencies and Characteristics

The Competence Committee will be composed of individuals with interest, experience and expertise in assessment and medical education relevant to the discipline. The Competence Committee members must be able to interpret multiple sources of qualitative and quantitative observation data to achieve consensus, where possible, in order to make judgments on outcomes.

Reporting

The Competence Committee will report outcomes of discussions and decisions to the Residency Training Committee.

Term of Office

The selection of members of the Competence Committee will be based on established university policies. Ordinarily, members should be appointed by the Program Director to serve a defined term with an appropriate process for renewals.

Meetings

The Competence Committee will meet at least twice per year, though more frequent meetings may be required in many programs particularly for larger programs and to support the transition between stages. This may be reflected in the Terms of Reference of the Committee or be called on an ad hoc basis by the Chair. Meetings may be either virtual, face to face or some combination of the two.