

Guidelines for Maintaining Active and Permanent Individual Student Records in the Registrar's Office

AAMC Group on Student Affairs Committee on Student Records (2021)

The Guidelines for Maintaining Active and Permanent Individual Student Records, originally approved in February 2005 by the AAMC Executive Council, was written by the Committee on Student Records to assist medical school records officers in developing and implementing medical school policies relating to the maintenance and disposition of academic records for enrolled students, former students, and graduates.

This list below is not intended to be exhaustive; rather, it is designed to reference records that are most commonly maintained by the medical school records officer. These records are often necessary to reflect a complete, unabridged account of a student's academic progress at an institution. Furthermore, they are frequently referenced during the licensing and credentialing processes.

The American Association of College Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO) Student Records Management, Retention, Disposal, and Archive of Student Records was referenced while creating this document. Record custodians are encouraged to review the AACRAO's publication in full (www.aacrao.org). Additionally, records officers are well advised to consult (1) their institutional general counsel's office regarding institution-specific record-keeping requirements, (2) their state's Division of Archive and/or Department of Higher Education regarding student record-keeping laws.

An education record is any record which contains information that is personally identifiable to a student, and is maintained by the university or by a party or organization acting on behalf of the school. Education records may include: written and printed documents; electronic media; magnetic tape (microfilm and microfiche); film; diskette or CDs; video or audio tapes. This includes transcripts or other records obtained from a school in which a student was previously enrolled.

Resources

[The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#)

[The American Association of College Registrars and Admissions Officers \(AACRAO\) Student Records Management Retention, Disposal, and Archive of Student Records](#)

[Federation of State Medical Boards](#)

[Liaison Committee on Medical Education \(LCME\)](#)

Effective Practices for Maintaining Active and Permanent Individual Student Records Checklist: [Group on Student Affairs Handbook](#)

**Records officer's should be familiar with their individual state Department of Education records retention guidelines.

State Department of Education Website: _____

Type/Description of Record	Active Record		Permanent Record		Location of Record	Custodian of Record	Minimum Retention	Notes
	Yes	No	Yes	No				
AMCAS application, Medical College Admission Test (MCAT) scores, GPAs, grade point averages, etc.; student demographic information	√		√*					*Maintain AMCAS application for 5 years after graduation or separation. American Medical College Application Service (AMCAS) data is maintained in electronic format for 5 years after the year of application.
Transcript(s) for coursework completed at another educational institution.	√		√*					*Transcripts from previously attended institutions may be necessary for credentialing purposes. These transcripts are the property of the issuing institution and should not be distributed to other institutions on behalf of the student.
Transcript(s) of all medical school coursework.	√		√					
Dates of enrollment in medical school, including matriculation date, start and end dates of each academic year, dates of leaves of absence, withdrawal, dismissal and/or graduation date.	√		√					
Enrollment verifications and letters of good standing.	√			√				
United States Medical Licensing (USMLE) score(s), exam date and notation of pass/fail.	√		√*					*Scores should be maintained if passing the exam(s) is required for promotion and/or graduation. These scores are the property of the National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME). Scores may not be distributed to other agencies or institutions on behalf of the student.
Students final course performance evaluations	√		√*					*Maintain for 5 years after graduation or separation.
Medical Student Performance Evaluation (MSPE, formerly Dean's Letter), including appendices.	√		√					
Documentation of grade changes.	√		√*					*Maintain for 5 years after graduation or separation.
Documentation of grade appeals.	√		√*					*Maintain for 1 year after the final appeal decision is rendered.
Change of status forms and letters related to leaves of absence, extended academic schedule, academic remediation, name change, etc., as well as documentation of dismissal or withdrawal.	√		√*					*Optional in the permanent record if the change is documented in the database, on the transcript, or in the MSPE. Also available in AAMC Student Records System (SRS).
Final disposition of disciplinary action records (with or without sanctions).	√		√					
Documents signed by the student, such as those related to universal precautions training, BLS training, MSPE release waiver, and any other documentation of training in specific areas.	√			√				
Institutional technical standard forms for admission and graduation.	√		√					

Personal identification, such as the student's photograph and the student's signature.	√		√					*At least one document should be maintained to serve as an example of student signature, which could include: Certification of ID for USMLE, admissions documents, residency classification form, etc.
Copy of medical school diploma.	N/A		√					
Student record request forms	√			√				*Examples include requests for transcripts, licensure, credentialing, etc.

Depending on the structure of the medical school, in addition to the paper and/or electronic records maintained in the medical school Registrar's Office, other school offices may maintain records that may or may not be considered permanent student records. It is recommended that institutions, in consultation with their general counsel, devise their own policies and procedures regarding the maintenance of these types of records, which may include, but are not limited to:

- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) documents and accommodation statements;
- Copies of class grade sheets held by departmental offices, copies of students' clinical clerkship performance evaluations written by faculty members, and narrative summaries held by clinical clerkship departmental offices;
- Criminal background checks or toxicology screenings conducted at admission and/or during periods of matriculation;
- Disciplinary action records (with or without sanctions);
- Financial Aid records;
- International student documentation (including I-20 forms);
- Letters of recommendation (LOR) for admission to medical school, residency application letters of application and other types of letters of recommendation;
- Minutes and other documentation from Promotion Committee meetings;
- Notes from Student Affairs Deans, Minority Affairs Officers, ADA Officers, Faculty Advisors;
- Notice of awards, research abstracts, publications, curriculum vitae (CV), Letters of appreciation from patients, commendation letters from faculty, etc.;
- Student health and immunization records.

Should you have any questions about the aforementioned guidelines, please contact the AAMC Committee on Student Records at cosr@aamc.org.

Approved by the GSA Steering Committee on 11/10/2015
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