

Dear Program Directors and VSLO Administrators, Student Affairs Deans, and Advisors:

As we enter the 2026 Visiting Student Cycle, we wanted to share a set of best practices when processing visiting student applications. Please take note of the following key recommendations:

1. **Publish** visiting student application timelines on application and website.
2. **Utilize** the [AAMC Uniform Affiliation Agreement](#) to streamline the process for students and reduce the workload for home and host institutions completing these forms.
3. **Utilize** the [AAMC Standardized Immunization Form](#) to streamline process for students and reduce the workload for home and host institutions completing these forms.
4. **Avoid requesting duplicate documentation** for information that has already been collected in the application (e.g. letters of good standing or documentation of liability coverage).
5. **Notify** visiting students of an elective offer or denial at least 30 days in advance of the clerkship.
6. **Provide** sufficient time (at least 2 weeks) for visiting students to accept or decline offers.
7. **Do not charge** any institutional fees until the student accepts the offer.
8. **Complete** visiting student evaluation and return it to the home institution no later than 30 days after the completion of the elective.

Thank you for considering these recommendations. You can find additional GSA guidance regarding rotations below. We wish you a very successful visiting student season.

If you have questions or feedback, please reach out to your Regional Rep:

- **Central Region:** Sarah Zander (sarah.zander@wisc.edu)
- **Northern Region:** Stanley Kania III, PhD, MBA (sjk353@drexel.edu)
- **Southern Region:** Wandy Cruz-Velázquez, J.D., M.A. (wandy.cruzvelazquez@utrgv.edu)
- **Western Region:** Christina Granillo, Ph.D. (christina.granillo@medsch.ucr.edu)

**Request for Distribution:**

1. Please share this message as appropriate with VSLO administrators and program directors at your institution.
2. Please share the attached letter with students applying to away rotations this cycle.

**Best regards,**

**Carol J. McGhie, Ed.D., M.S.Ed.**

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## **\* AAMC GSA Committee on Student Records Guidelines Regarding Visiting Medical Students**

**Introduction:** During the final year of medical school, it is common for medical students to seek elective rotations at other medical institutions, such as schools of medicine and academic medical centers. In fact, survey data of medical students and residency program directors strongly indicate that the visiting student process is a pathway to a successful residency match.

No medical institution is required to host visiting students. Each institution must establish its own policies and procedures with respect to ensuring quality education for students and appropriate care of patients. These guidelines are designed to assist institutions in optimizing the process for the benefit of both students and institutions. The term home institution denotes where the medical student is enrolled. The term host institution denotes where the student is taking an elective as a visiting student.

### **Applicant/Host Communication**

- Students should adhere to the communication guidelines outlined by each host institution while their application is being processed.
- Each institution should publish their application processing timeline on their visiting student application platform.
- Students may request an update on their completed application only after the host institution's published application processing timeline has concluded.
- It is recommended that host institutions post an FAQ on their visiting student website.

### **Away Elective Notification**

- Students with a completed elective application should be notified of an elective offer or denial at least 30 days in advance of the start of the elective, so that they have ample time to manage their schedule. Students may be offered an elective on shorter notice in the event that space becomes available.
- Students should be provided with at least two weeks to accept or decline an elective.
- Host institutions should allow a student to drop an elective up to 30 days before the start date.
- Students should only cancel an elective with less than 30 days' notice due to extenuating circumstances.

### **Application and Processing Fees**

- Fees and refund policies should be well publicized on the host institution visiting student platform.
- Students should not be charged any fees until they have accepted an elective.
- Visiting students continue to pay tuition at their home institution while on a visiting elective. Thus, fees established by host institutions for visiting students, if any, should be minimal. Fees should be refundable only in the event that the elective requested by the student is no longer available.
- Please note: Host institutions that are using VSLO are not permitted to charge an application fee.

### **AAMC Standardized Immunization Form**

- It is recommended that host institutions utilize the AAMC Standardized Immunization Form. Utilizing the AAMC form streamlines the process for students, reduces the workload for home institution immunization offices completing these forms, and provides comparable data for host institutions to review.

### **Affiliation Agreements**

- If an affiliation agreement is required, it is recommended that host institutions utilize the AAMC Uniform Clinical Training Agreement. Utilizing the AAMC form streamlines the process for students, reduces the workload for home and host institutions completing these forms.
- Affiliation agreements should only be initiated after the student has accepted an elective.
- Requiring an affiliation agreement before the application is reviewed presents an unnecessary barrier for students.

### **Duplicate Documentation (VSLO users)**

- Host institutions should not request duplicate documentation (e.g., letters of good standing, documentation of liability coverage, etc.) for information that is already verified or uploaded to VSLO.
- Institutions should not require a “pre-application” outside of VSLO before permitting the student to then submit their application in VSLO.
- Please note: There are no Joint Commission standards that require a “Letter of Good (Academic) Standing” or other document that includes a school insignia or official’s signature be provided to a host institution by a visiting student or their home institution.
- Documentation requested by a Host institution beyond the information provided in the VSLO application would be determined solely between the home and host institutions and not driven by any Joint Commission standards or requirements. For further clarification, please contact the Standards Interpretation Group of the Joint Commission.

### **Liability Coverage**

- Policies regarding host institution medical liability and/or medical malpractice coverage requirements should be clearly articulated on the host institution visiting student application platform.
- Proof of sufficient liability coverage for the host institution should only be required post-acceptance. Students should not be required to purchase additional coverage prior to being accepted for an elective.

### **Host Responsibilities during Visiting Rotation**

- Once a visiting student has started an elective, that individual should have access to those student services at the host institution that are important to the educational purpose of the elective such as the library, personal protective equipment (PPE), student learning management systems, mistreatment reporting, and electronic health record systems.
- Host institutions should inform visiting students of their student exposure policies and procedures and other relevant emergency protocols.
- When a visiting student fails to appear on the first day of the elective or demonstrates an egregious lapse in professionalism, the host institution must notify the student’s home institution.

### **Performance Evaluation**

- Host institutions must complete an evaluation and return it to the home institution no later than 30 days after the completion of the elective. Students and home institutions must receive timely assessment of the students’ performance.
- Host institutions should use the student’s home institution elective evaluation. If this is not feasible, it is recommended that home institutions accept host institution evaluations.
- Home institutions should make a copy of their evaluation form available to the host institution.