



International Affairs Office

Educational Guideline for International Students

Tabriz University of Medical Sciences

Approved in the 454th session of the Educational Council

Date: 20/01/1403 (April 8, 2024)

Educational System

Article 1. Courses at Tabriz University of Medical Sciences are delivered in Persian.

Article 2. The International Students Office must assess the Persian language proficiency of applicants through a written test and interview before admission and registration.

Note 1. If there are at least 30 first-year international students proficient in English, first-year courses may be offered in English. With faculty approval, second-year classes may be offered in English. Persian-language instruction must be provided throughout the first year.

Note 2. Clinical assistants must prove sufficient Persian proficiency before beginning clinical rotations and in any setting involving patient interaction.

Article 3. Examinations in the first years (2 years) will be held bilingually.

Article 4. International students are allowed 25% extra time compared to Iranian students for answering exam questions in Persian (up to clerkship (Karamouzi) step).

Article 5. Education is credit-based. Each academic year consists of two semesters. The first semester starts in late September or early October, and the second semester starts in February. A summer semester may also be offered.

Note 1. If separate English-medium classes are formed, the first semester of the first year begins on November 1 and the second semester on April 1.

Note 2. For Persian-medium classes in the second or third year, the first semester begins on October 1, and the second semester on February 1.

Article 6. The value of each course is measured in credits, and student progress is evaluated accordingly.

Article 7. Each theoretical course unit consists of 16 hours of instruction plus one session for student evaluation, totaling 17 hours. Practical (or laboratory) courses include 32 hours; clerkship (Karamouzi) courses 51 hours; and internship (Karvarzi) courses 68 hours.

Note 1. For foreign students in English-taught theoretical courses (first and second year), the faculty may increase contact hours up to 1.5× the standard to ensure mastery; the faculty may also run Persian reinforcement classes.

Note 2. Part of the instruction may be electronic (assignments with feedback; Q&A/office hours), but e-learning must not exceed 40% of the approved course content.

Note 3. Up to one week before finals, a student may request emergency withdrawal from a course if the total credits in the semester are not fewer than 10.

Article 8. The curriculum of each program follows the officially approved national curriculum.

Article 9. Faculties must implement the curriculum and syllabi approved by the Supreme Council for Medical Education Planning or the University Education Council.

Note 1. According to the resolution of the 12th session of the Supreme Council for Medical Education Planning (May 2020), in total, students are required to complete at least 6 credits from the general courses.

If these courses are passed in an elective form, they will still be counted as part of the general credits. In such cases, participation in the exam and achieving a passing grade is required, and the credits earned will also be included in the Grade Point Average (GPA).

Note 2. Faculty may intends to introduce new courses or make content adjustments to existing courses. The references for Comprehensive Basic Sciences Exam and Comprehensive Pre-internship Exam introduced by Supreme Council for Medical Education Planning and the relevant specialized committees.

Examinations and Evaluations

Article 10. At the end of the first stage, the Comprehensive Basic Sciences Examination will be held. Passing this exam is required to continue studies in Medicine and Dentistry. For Pharmacy students, the General Pharm.D. final exam is required.

Note 1. Eligibility: passing at least 46.5 credits from basic sciences and introductory/early clinical courses; passing at least 8 credits of general courses; and meeting the minimum cumulative GPA (11). Floating courses between basic and early clinical stages are excluded from the 46.5-credit count.

Note 2. If some grades are not yet posted at referral time, the student may sit the exam conditionally. If later found ineligible (due to a fail or other shortfall), the result is void and the attempt is not counted; the student may not sit the next exam— even conditionally— until fully eligible.

Article 11. Students may attempt the Comprehensive Basic Sciences Exam up to three times. Failure results in dismissal from the program.

Note 1. An unexcused absence from the Basic Sciences Comprehensive counts as an attempt.

Note 2. A student dismissed from Medicine for failing the Basic Sciences Comprehensive may transfer to another field at the associate or bachelor's level according to the relevant regulation (22nd session, 28 July 2003).

Note 3. While waiting for the Basic Sciences Comprehensive, the student may take academic leave that does not count toward the maximum duration, upon payment of 20% of the fixed tuition.

Article 12. Passing at least 46.5 credits from Basic Sciences and obtaining the minimum GPA (12) is required to sit for the exam.

Article 13. Clinical clerkships include outpatient care, inpatient care, and public health training.

Article 14. At the end of the clerkship stage, the Comprehensive Pre-internship Exam will be held. Passing is required to start the internship.

Note 1. Eligibility: passing internship-specific theoretical courses (~31 credits); passing clerkship rotations (~63 credits ≈ 21 months); passing floating theoretical courses between early clinical and clerkship (~7 credits); and meeting the required cumulative GPA (12).

Note 2. If some grades/rotation results are pending at referral time, the student may sit the exam conditionally. If later found ineligible, the result is void and the attempt is not counted; the student may not sit the next exam— even conditionally—until fully eligible.

Note 3. For international students in the M.D. (MBBS) track, a thesis is optional. The topic should be registered during clerkship after preliminary data gathering in the pre-clinical stage; defense occurs after the pre-internship exam. Passing the Comprehensive Pre-internship Exam and Clinical Competency Exam is required for graduation.

Note 4. The minimum passing mark in national centralized comprehensive exams is as announced by the Ministry of Health.

Article 15. Students may attempt the Pre-internship Exam up to four times.

Article 16. The internship (MD program) lasts 18 months. Passing the Clinical Competency Exam is required for graduation.

Note 1. The minimum cumulative GPA required during the internship stage is 12/20.

Credits and duration of study

Article 17. The minimum number of credits required for graduation is defined in the approved national curriculum of each program.

Article 18. Students must choose a minimum of 12 and a maximum of 20 credits in each semester.

Note 1. In the final semester, the 12-credit minimum does not apply.

Note 2. If a student's semester GPA is at least 15, with faculty approval they may register up to 24 credits in the next semester.

Note 3. In the summer term, a student may register up to 6 credits.

Article 19. The maximum period of study for each program is equal to one and a half times the standard duration defined in the approved curriculum.

For associate programs: up to 3 years.

For bachelor's programs: up to 6 years.

For Pharmacy and Dentistry: up to 9 years.

For Medicine (general M.D.): up to 10 years (5 years for stages I & II, and 5 years for stages III & IV).

Note 1. A student who cannot pass the Basic Sciences Comprehensive within 4 years from the start of study, or complete Stages I–II within 5 years, will be dismissed from Medicine. If their cumulative GPA of passed courses is at least 10/20, they may request a program change to an associate or bachelor's degree as per the regulation cited in Article 11, Note 2.

Note 2. A student who cannot enter internship within 3 years from the start of the clinical stage, or complete Stages III–IV within 5 years (including passing the Clinical Competency Exam), may request up to 12 months of extension upon approval of the University Education Council.

Note 3. MBBS students who cannot pass the Clinical Competency Exam within 3 years after starting the clinical stage may be granted up to 6 months' extension by the University Education Council.

Attendance and Absence

Article 20. Attendance is mandatory for all classes, clerkships, and internships.

Article 21. The number of excused absence hours for a student in each course must not exceed the following limits, relative to the total hours of that course or section:

- 4 out of 17 hours for theoretical courses,
- 2 out of 17 hours for practical and laboratory courses,
- 1 out of 17 hours for clerkship and internship programs.

If the student's absence exceeds these limits, the course will be removed from their academic record.

Note 1. Within the permitted ceiling, an absence may be accepted as excused if properly documented; the determination and treatment is by the instructor with faculty approval.

Note 2. If absence exceeds the ceiling and is recognized as excused by the Faculty Education Council, the course/rotation will be dropped. In this case, observing the 12-credit minimum is not required; the semester counts toward total semesters.

Article 22. An unexcused absence from an exam will result in a score of zero for that course or section. An excused absence from an exam will result in the removal of that course or section from the academic record. Determining whether an absence is excused is the responsibility of the university's Educational Council.

Note 1. In case of illness, upon submission of a medical certificate and confirmation by the university's trusted physician, and subject to non-attendance at the exam, the course/rotation will be dropped.

Excused absence must be supported by valid documentation and approved by the faculty.

Academic Progress and Grading

Article 23. Student progress is evaluated based on attendance, assignments, and exam results.

Article 24. In the clerkship and internship stages, the student's academic performance is assessed based on the following criteria:

- Full-time, regular attendance at assigned locations.
- Commitment to Islamic and professional ethics in all activities.
- Proper interaction and communication with patients, clients, and staff.
- Timely participation in all assigned tasks, duties, and shifts.
- Accuracy, responsibility, and diligence in carrying out required educational and clinical tasks (for example: preparing and completing patient medical records, attending to assigned patients, etc.).
- Demonstrated progress in skills and learning outcomes during training.
- Active participation in end-of-rotation examinations and achieving a passing grade in them.

Article 25. At the end of each course, a written exam is held.

Article 26. Grades are given on a 0–20 scale.

Note 1. The evaluation result in the Medical Ethics & Professionalism course is qualitative and included in GPA.

Article 27. The minimum passing grade is 10 for undergraduate students.

Note 1. For postgraduate students, the minimum passing grade is 14/20.

Note 2. To improve GPA, students may re-take any passed course. If the new grade is higher, it is recorded alongside the previous grade. In undergraduate/general-doctoral programs, if the repeated course is passed with a grade higher than 15/20, the student may once request deletion of the earlier attempt from the transcript.

Article 28. Instructors must submit final grades within 10 days of the exam.

Note 1. After grades are posted, a student has three days to submit a written appeal to the Faculty Education Office for review.

Article 29. Final grades are recorded officially and cannot be changed, except by approval of the University Examination Committee.

Note 1. Changing an official recorded grade requires review and approval by the Faculty Exam Oversight Committee and the University Education Council.

Article 30. Semester GPA and cumulative GPA are calculated at the end of each semester.

Note 1. For GPA calculation, each course/rotation grade is multiplied by its credits; the sum is divided by the total number of passed/failed credits.

Note 2. The summer term is not considered a semester; summer grades count only in the cumulative GPA of the relevant stage.

Article 31. A student's GPA in any semester of the first or second stage of the medical education program must not fall below 11. Otherwise, their enrollment in the following semester will be conditional.

Note 1. If, due to course offerings, fewer than 12 credits are available in a semester, that semester will not count in the total number of semesters; however, a below-minimum GPA still counts as a probationary semester.

Note 2. The university is obligated to inform the student in writing each time they are registered on a probationary basis, and a copy of this notification must be placed in the student's file. However, the university's failure to provide such notice, or the student's claim of being unaware of it, shall not prevent the enforcement of the regulation

Article 32. Even in the last semester of Stages I–II, a probationary student may not register for more than 14 credits.

Note 1. In exceptional cases, during the final academic year of the first and second stages of medical education, and with consideration of the student's prior academic record and remaining credits, the university may allow the student to register for up to 14 credits more than the standard maximum limit. In such cases, the total number of registered credits must not exceed 20 credits above the standard ceiling, subject to approval by the Faculty Education Council.

Article 33. If a student is barred from continuing their studies after five consecutive or four non-consecutive semesters of academic probation, they will be dismissed. However, if the cumulative GPA of all completed courses is at least 10 out of 20 (as specified in Article 13, Note 2), the student may be allowed to change their field of study to another program at the level of associate degree, bachelor's degree (continuous), or bachelor's degree (non-continuous).

Leave of Absence and Withdrawal

Article 34. Students may take up to two semesters of academic leave in bachelor/master's programs and up to four in doctoral programs, without counting toward study duration.

Note 1. During academic leave, the student pays 20% of the fixed tuition as a retaining fee.

Article 35. Requests for leave must be submitted at least two weeks before the start of the semester.

Note 1. If a leave request is submitted after the deadline, the decision rests with the University Education Council.

Note 2. After consulting the faculty, the Education Office must notify the student in writing—before the end of registration—of approval or denial.

Note 3. All academic/administrative consequences of taking leave are the student's responsibility.

Article 36. Female students may take maternity leave (up to 2 semesters) without it being counted in their study period.

Article 37. Students who have justified medical reasons, confirmed by the University Medical Committee and approved by the Faculty/University Education Council, may take additional semesters of academic leave. These semesters do not count toward the maximum permitted duration of study.

Article 38. Students who wish to withdraw must submit a written request. They may retract the request once within the same semester.

The semester in which the withdrawal request is submitted will be counted as academic leave. The student will not have the right to continue studies during that semester.

After the withdrawal ruling is officially issued, the student will no longer have the right to continue the program in subsequent semesters.

Article 39. Students may take all remaining courses in one semester with faculty approval if they have no more than 24 credits left.

Note 1. In the summer term, undergraduates may take up to 8 credits; postgraduates up to 6 credits.

Article 40. Within two weeks from the start of the semester, students may drop at most two registered courses, add at most two new courses, or replace at most two courses — provided the total registered credits remain within the limits specified in Article 9.

Article 41. Up to three weeks before the end of the semester, and in emergencies, students may drop up to two courses (theoretical or practical) with the approval of the faculty's educational group — provided the remaining credits are not less than 12.

Article 42. Dropping all courses in a semester is permitted only if, according to the Faculty Education Council, the student is genuinely unable to continue. In this case, the semester is considered academic leave, and whether it counts toward the maximum study duration is decided by the Faculty Education Council.

Note 1. Dropping all courses in the summer term is permitted up to the start of summer finals with Faculty Education Council approval.

Note 2. To improve service to international students, the International Education Officer is granted extended system access for making academic changes up to one month beyond the window for Iranian students.

Article 43. Dismissal rules:

- General doctoral programs (Medicine, Dentistry, Pharmacy): dismissal occurs if a student is on probation for 4 consecutive semesters or 5 alternating semesters.
- Bachelor's programs: dismissal occurs after 3 consecutive probationary semesters.
- Associate programs: dismissal occurs after 2 consecutive probationary semesters.

Article 44. Examinations must be held only in the languages announced on the university's admission portal.

Article 45. If an exam is offered in both Persian and English, students may choose their exam language.

Article 46. Comprehensive national or regional exams organized by the Ministry of Health may also be administered in English. Where available, the student may choose their exam language.

Note 1. The exam secretariat must inform students in advance about choosing the exam language.

Article 47. For non-Iranian students, the maximum number of attempts for each of the Basic Sciences Comprehensive and Pre-Internship Comprehensive exams is four.

Directed study

Article 48. In the general doctoral programs (Medicine, Dentistry, Pharmacy), in emergency cases students may request to repeat up to three previously failed credits (one course) with an appointed instructor (directed study), provided:

They had attended classes in the previous semester (class participation is not necessary in this condition);

The faculty's educational council approves the coverage and mastery before the exam.

Note 1. Emergency cases include: change of program level, participation in comprehensive exams, and imminent graduation.

Note 2. Directed study with an instructor applies only to theoretical courses; it does not apply to clerkship/internship rotations.

Note 3. Approval to use directed study for up to two courses in final semester requires the Education Group Council, Faculty Education Council, and University Education Council approvals.

Note 4. The student may register the credits for directed-study courses provided the total semester load does not exceed the allowed maximum.

Note 5. If the student fails the course again, they may not repeat it via directed study and must retake it in a regular class.

Transfers and Guest Students

Article 49. Transfer means changing a student's place of study from one university to another in the same program/level.

Article 50. Transfers within Iran are prohibited; students must withdraw and reapply.

Article 51. Transfers from foreign universities into Iranian universities are also prohibited.

Note 1. If later admitted as a new applicant in Iran, the student may request recognition/transfer of previously passed credits per Article 16.

Article 52. Transfer of a student from one campus of a university to another campus of the same university is permissible, provided that it is carried out in accordance with the financial regulations established by that university and all other relevant internal university regulations.

Article 53. Students may study as guest students (up to one semester) in other universities, subject to consular approval and payment of 20% tuition fees.

Article 54. Students from other public universities under the Ministry of Health may be admitted as guest students at Tabriz University of Medical Sciences — either for individual course(s) or for a full semester — subject to the approval of the Faculty Education Council. The student shall pay 10% of one semester's tuition per credit for each guest credit. If the total number of guest credits exceeds 10 credits, the guesting will be treated as a full semester.

Article 55. Students must have completed at least one semester at their home university to be eligible for guest status.

Article 56. All educational and financial expenses during the guest study period at the host university are the responsibility of the student.

Article 57. Before starting guest study, the student must settle all financial obligations with their home university for the period of guest study.

Article 58. Guest credits must not exceed 40% of the total program credits.

Article 59. The student's request for guest study shall be reviewed by the Faculty Education Council. The educational process and the student's progress will remain under the supervision and evaluation of the University Education Council.

Article 60. When a student studies as a guest at another university, the grades and credits obtained there are officially recorded and transferred to the student's home university. These transferred credits are included in the calculation of the semester and cumulative GPA.

Article 61. In guest study arrangements, the minimum acceptable passing grade for each course shall be the same as the minimum passing grade for non-guest (regular) students at the host university.

Article 62. A student who intends to study as a guest must submit a written request to their home university's Education Office no later than one month before the start of the semester. This request must include: The name of the university where the student wishes to study as a guest, and the student's personal and academic details.

If the home university approves the request, it must formally notify the Consular Affairs Office to complete the required procedures.

Article 63. The degree is always issued by the home university, even for guest students.

International students who are admitted to programs established under a memorandum of understanding (MoU) between two universities — whether domestic or international — are exempt from the guest-student regulations and shall be governed by the terms and conditions stipulated in the respective MoU.

Change of Major and Course Equivalency

Article 64. Students may change their major within the same university if conditions are met.

Note 1. Continuing study in the current field must not be prohibited by regulations.

Note 2. There must be capacity in the requested field.

Note 3. The student must have no financial delinquency or ethical misconduct record in the previous field.

Article 65. Requests must be submitted at least eight weeks before the semester.

Article 66. If a student's request to change program (major) is approved, they must register and select courses in the new program in the first semester following the approval.

Note 1. Until registration in the new field, the student remains subject to the regulations of the previous field.

Article 67. Courses taken in the previous program may be transferred if approved.

Article 68. Recognition of credits earned in another university depends on the receiving university's regulations and evaluation of course syllabi. The university may accept only a portion of previously earned credits.

Article 69. Transfer of credits from other universities is allowed if courses have at least 80% similarity and a grade above 12/20.

Note 1. The previous university/degree and the applicant's program must be approved by the Ministry of Health and, as applicable, by the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology.

Note 2. There must be at least 80% overlap of educational content between the passed and the corresponding course(s), and each transferred course must have a minimum grade of 12/20.

Note 3. The student must submit official transcripts and course syllabi approved by the previous university.

Note 4. No more than five years may have elapsed since completion of the program in which the credits were earned.

Note 5. Equivalency of specialized courses is allowed only at the same level or from a higher to a lower level.

Note 6. Recognition/equivalency is performed by the receiving university's education groups with the International Campus education officer present.

Article 70. After evaluation, recognized courses fall into one of three categories:

- Accepted without need for re-enrollment.
- Accepted but requiring a confirmation exam.
- Rejected.

Article 71. Accepted credits appear in the transcript and are included in GPA.

Article 72. For every 20 accepted credits, one semester will be deducted from the maximum study period.

Graduation and Certificates

Article 73. A student's study ends with graduation, withdrawal, or dismissal (academic/disciplinary). After full financial clearance, the student can request their transcript.

Note 1. Issuing the official transcript requires full financial clearance. If clearance is not possible, the university may issue a certified statement of passed credits proportional to the paid tuition.

Article 74. A student is considered a graduate upon completing all courses as per the national curriculum.

Article 75. The degree will reflect the program and field of study at the time of admission and approval.

Article 76. Equivalent titles may be included in parentheses beside the main title.

Note 1. If the commonly used English title of a field differs from the program title, the university may include one of the equivalent titles in parentheses, subject to University Education Council approval.

Article 77. If the title or academic level of a program changes while the student is enrolled, the university is obligated to issue the student's degree according to the title and academic level stated in the admission letter and/or the level approved at the time of admission.

Article 78. Certificates are issued bilingually (Persian and English) and must be validated by the Ministry of Health.

Article 79. The degree is valid for professional work in Iran only after obtaining the required professional licenses.

Withdrawal from education

Article 80. Students who wish to withdraw must submit a written request to the International Campus Education Office. They may cancel their withdrawal request once, up to one month before the end of the semester. In such case, the semester counts as academic leave, and they cannot continue studies during that semester

Article 81. Students who have submitted a withdrawal and later request to return to the same field may be re-admitted once, subject to:

Note 1. No more than one year has elapsed during the interruption.

Note 2. Full financial clearance for the prior period of study has been completed.

Note 3. Payment of 20% of one year's tuition upon return.

Note 4. Non-Iranian scholarship students who withdraw may return only as self-funded students.

Note 5. If withdrawal was due to financial delinquency, all outstanding tuition must be paid before returning.

Note 6. Final approval by the University Education Council is required.

Dismissed academically

Article 82. A student dismissed academically may request re-enrollment once. The case will be reviewed by the University Education Council and, by the Special Cases Committee.

Article 83. Special academic cases are handled according to the Executive Bylaw of the Special Cases Committee (Resolution of the 28th Session of the Supreme Council for Medical Education Planning, 2005). For international campus cases, the Director (or representative) is a voting member.

Reapplication to other Iranian universities

Article 84. Students who have withdrawn or dismissed academically may apply to other Iranian universities as new applicants, provided they complete consular procedures and obtain a new visa.

Article 85. Students who have been academically dismissed may not be re-admitted to the same field and level at another Iranian university. They may only apply for a different field/level, provided they disclose their dismissal and the previous university confirms it.

Article 86. Applicants must truthfully disclose their prior status (withdrawal or dismissal). If later found to have concealed it, their enrollment will be terminated.

Article 87. Students dismissed for disciplinary reasons cannot be admitted to another Iranian university.

Article 88. When admitting students who have withdrawn or been dismissed from another university, the receiving university must verify their academic and financial status. If there are unpaid debts or unresolved disciplinary issues, registration must be denied or made conditional on settlement and consent of the previous university.

Disciplinary Rules

Article 89. Disciplinary issues of foreign students will be handled according to the national disciplinary regulations for students, with representatives from the International Campus present.

Change of nationality

Article 90. A student's nationality is considered based on the status at the time of admission. Change of nationality during studies does not affect the current program, but new admissions will follow the new status.

Article 91. All cases not mentioned in this guideline will follow the general educational regulations for Iranian students.

Article 92. Educational affairs of international students are managed by a committee consisting of the Vice-Chancellor for Education, the Director of International Relations, and the Faculty Educational Deputy.