



**UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO**  
**DIVISION OF GENERAL SURGERY**  
**Competency Committee**  
**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

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**Purpose**

The Competence Committee is a subcommittee that reports to the Residency Program Committee (RPC) It reviews and makes decisions related to the progress of residents in achieving the national standards for General Surgery as set by the Royal College of Physician of Canada. The Competence Committee will be responsible for reviewing residents' readiness for increasing professional responsibility, promotion, and transition to practice by:

- Working within the processes outlined in "Guidelines for the Assessment of Postgraduate Residents of the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Toronto" (PGME Assessment Guidelines).
- Using data to make judgements about a resident's progression through residency. This includes judgements about progression through competence stages, promotion of post-graduate years, readiness for certification examination, identification of needed improvement or remediation, and/or identification of needed enhancement or enrichment.
- Reviewing assessment and performance data patterns and trends (e.g. across residents, stages, sites, rotations, or assessment tools/approaches) to identify areas of excellence and areas needing improvement.

**Composition/Membership**

The Competence Committee will be composed of individuals with interest, experience and expertise in assessment and medical education relevant to general surgery. Members of diverse job profiles and career stage will be sought to provide differing perspectives. 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

The Chair will be selected by the RPC.

The Program Director will be on the Competence Committee

Eight to ten (8-10) Faculty will serve as reviewing members.

Administrative support will be aligned with the RPC.

Residents will not be members of the Competence Committee.

The RPC will confirm membership.

### **Conflicts of Interest**

Members must declare any conflicts of interest and may not be present for review or progression decision where there is a conflict of interest (e.g. parent/partner of an active resident).

### **Term of Office**

The selection of members of the Competence Committee will be based on established university policies. Members will be appointed by the Program Director and the Chair of the Competency committee to serve a 3-year term with an opportunity for renewal.

The Residency Program Committee will confirm membership.

### **Reporting**

The Competence Committee will provide a written summary of de-identified outcomes of decisions and processes to the Residency Program Committee.

### **Meetings**

The Competence Committee will meet at least 4 (four) times per year, though more frequent meetings may be required to support the transition between stages.

Meetings will be face to face with options to teleconference in.

There should be at least 50% attendance from members of the Competence Committee to achieve Quorum. The Program Director (or delegate) is present for all discussions.

## Competence Committee Guidelines:

1. All committee discussions are strictly confidential. Sharing information is only permitted with individuals directly involved in the development or implementation of learning, remediation, or enrichment plans.
2. Committee decisions will be based on the assessment information and documentation available for each resident at the time of the committee meeting.
3. Individual committee member experience regarding resident performance is to be included if there is a request to clarify the available assessment documentation.
4. Committee decisions will be timely to support fairness and appropriate sequencing of training experiences.
5. Competence Committees will make decisions taking into consideration:
  - a. Resident recent performance
  - b. Resident pattern of performance over time
  - c. Patient safety needs
  - d. Service needs of rotations
  - e. The need for different approaches to resident supervision
6. Residents may be selected for Competence Committee review based on any one of the following criteria:
  - a. A regularly timed review
  - b. A concern has been flagged on one or more recent completed assessments
  - c. A concern has been flagged to the Program Director
  - d. Completion of stage requirements and eligibility for promotion or completion of training
  - e. Requirement to determine readiness for the Royal College exam
  - f. Where there appears to be a significant delay in the resident's progress or academic performance
  - g. Where there appears to be a significant acceleration in the resident's progress
  - h. Monitoring the outcome of any learning or improvement plan established for an individual resident.
7. Competence Committee members will share leading the review of resident files (i.e. being a primary reviewer). The primary reviewer is responsible to complete a detailed review of the progress of all assigned residents to:
  - a. Consider each resident's recent performance as per the assessments/ performance data
  - b. Identify patterns of performance
  - c. Provide a succinct synthesis of the resident's performance, and
  - d. Recommend a decision.

8. Types of decisions available to Competence Committees are:
  - a. Confirmation of competence continuum:
    - Confirmation of completion of Transition to Discipline
    - Confirmation of completion of Foundations of Discipline
    - Confirmation of completion of Core of Discipline
    - Confirmation of completion of Transition to Practice
    - Residency training program completion
  - b. Promotion to next residency year.
  - c. Readiness for certification examination.
  - d. Readiness to enter independent practice
  - e. Recommendations for:
    - Program based remedial support ((i.e. where there are focused educational needs/gaps)
    - Formal Remediation (i.e. where there are significant or persistent needs/gaps)
    - Access to enrichment opportunities (i.e. focused educational opportunities)
    - An accelerated educational pathway
9. Decisions will generally be made by consensus but a formal vote of approval will also be taken for each resident. In the event of a tie, the Chair will cast the deciding vote.
10. Decisions need to be documented to meet:
  - a. University of Toronto documentation requirements
  - b. Royal College of Canada documentation requirements
11. The Program Director will meet with each resident to discuss the decision of the Competence Committee and to discuss needed adjustments to the educational program, assessments, or rotation schedule.