

General  
Medical  
Council

# Applied Knowledge Test:

Additional information and guidance on creating  
and preparing a submission for the Medical  
Licensing Assessment

Medical Licensing Assessment  
[gmc-uk.org/mla](https://gmc-uk.org/mla)



# Applied knowledge test: additional information and guidance on creating and preparing a submission for the Medical Licensing Assessment

## Introduction

This information and guidance accompanies the Medical Licensing Assessment (MLA) [Applied knowledge test](#) (AKT) requirements. It outlines our processes for deciding whether an AKT meets the requirements and sets out how assessment providers\* should complete their submissions.

## The Medical Licensing Assessment

The purpose of the MLA is to demonstrate that an individual has the professional skills, knowledge and behaviours to function safely as they enter clinical practice in the UK. This guidance relates to the AKT component of the MLA. There's separate guidance for the [Clinical and professional skills assessment](#) (CPSA) requirements submission.

The AKT is a written assessment of applied clinical knowledge. It's set and delivered by:

- UK medical schools<sup>†</sup> through a centralised collaboration for medical students graduating from a UK medical school in the academic year 2024–25 onwards (the 'MS AKT'), and
- the GMC for international medical graduates who would have sat our [Professional and Linguistic Assessments Board](#) (PLAB) test if they're applying for registration with a licence to practise in the UK.

Each assessment provider's AKT will need to comply with the [AKT requirements](#), which were published in 2021 as part of [Assuring readiness for practice: a framework for the MLA](#).

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\* This document refers to all medical schools and the GMC (in relation to setting and delivering the MLA for international medical graduates) as 'assessment providers' and all test-takers as 'candidates'.

<sup>†</sup> In June 2021, in accordance with their powers under section 4(4) of the Medical Act 1983, GMC Council approved a proposal from the UK's medical schools to collaborate together, and with the Medical Schools Council (MSC), to deliver an AKT, regulated and overseen by the GMC, that would be embedded within finals exams for students graduating from the academic year 2024/5 onwards. GMC Council's approval was subject to medical schools fulfilling the commitments set out in the proposal and compliance with a number of directions – details of those have been shared with medical schools and the MSC and can be found [here](#).

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## Purpose of the guidance

This guidance sets out the GMC's compliance and submission processes, and outlines what to include in your submission, including examples of supporting evidence, to demonstrate that your AKT meets the AKT requirements.

## How we will assess your submission

We'll assess your submission against the AKT requirements. There are 22 requirements in total.

## The UK medical school AKT (MS AKT)

The proposal for the collaboration between UK medical schools and the Medical Schools Council (MSC) for the MS AKT included a table setting out the AKT requirements and who could provide evidence in support of each requirement being met. It showed the requirements that can met through the centralised coordination of the MS AKT, for which the MSC will provide a collective response on medical schools' behalf, and the requirements where you – as a UK medical school – will provide all or part of the response given that there is an individual and local aspect needed for a complete response. An updated, colour-coded version of the table is provided below.

### Requirement 1

You'll provide an individual response with no input from the MSC.

### Requirements 2-8, 18-19 and 21-22

The MSC will provide collective responses on all schools' behalf – you do not need to provide additional material.

### Requirements 9-17 and 20

These need a joint response: the MSC will provide collective responses on all schools' behalf, which you'll supplement with individual responses for your school.

**Table of AKT requirements setting out MSC and medical school collaboration to provide narratives and evidence for medical schools' requirements submissions**

AKT requirements		MSC	Schools
<b>Design</b>			
1	Assessment strategy		✓
2	AKT design	✓	
3	Scoring	✓	
4	Standard setting	✓	
5	Standard setting	✓	
<b>Content</b>			
6	Sampling	✓	
7	Quality management	✓	
8	Quality management	✓	
<b>Support for candidates</b>			
9	Familiarisation	✓	✓
10	Results and feedback	✓	✓
<b>Policies and resources</b>			
11	Policies and procedures	✓	✓
12	Resources and space	✓	✓
13	Security	✓	✓
14	Security	✓	✓
15	Security	✓	✓
16	Security	✓	✓
<b>Data management</b>			
17	Data acquisition	✓	✓
18	Production of results	✓	
<b>Evaluation and quality assurance</b>			
19	Psychometric analysis	✓	
20	Governance and fairness	✓	✓
21	Governance and fairness	✓	
22	Governance and fairness	✓	

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## Compliance process

### Meeting the requirements

Your AKT needs to be compliant with the requirements before 1 January 2024 so that it can count towards the MLA for students graduating in academic year 2024–25 and beyond. You'll need to make your first submission, covering all the 22 AKT requirements, well in advance of this date so that it can be reviewed and approved by the GMC in line with the compliance process.

Once the MLA is introduced, there'll be a lighter touch annual submission process aligned with the GMC's other quality assurance mechanisms. We'll publish new guidance about this nearer the time.

For each of the 22 requirements, your submission will need to include a narrative and supporting evidence to show how your AKT meets it\*. For you – as a UK medical school – this will include narratives and evidence submitted on your behalf by the MSC, as described above.

**You're ultimately responsible for the whole of the submission for your medical school. This includes the collective responses provided by MSC on your behalf, as well as your individual responses. This is because the GMC's regulatory relationship is with individual medical schools and their parent university†. Although – as set out in the proposal – you're collaborating with the other UK medical schools, and with the MSC, to deliver the MS AKT as a way to meet the AKT requirements the complete submission needs to come from you.**

Following receipt of your submission, it'll be reviewed, initially by GMC staff and then with the help of independent assessment experts known as our AKT advisers‡. If we need to see more evidence following the review, we'll contact you. If we need more information about one of the requirements where a collective response is being provided by the MSC, we'll also contact them.

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\* While we expect all AKT providers to provide evidence against all requirements, there may be instances – for example the AKT for IMGs and overseas AKTs – where some of the suggested evidence is not relevant. The narrative should explain why such evidence is not required.

† The awarding body included in the list maintained by the GMC of bodies [entitled to award a Primary Medical Qualification](#).

‡ The AKT advisers have assessment experience and expertise. They were appointed through open recruitment.

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## Outcomes and feedback report on your AKT

After the review of your submission is complete, we'll provide you with an individual feedback report. The report will contain a recommendation on whether your AKT meets each requirement, and an overall judgement. You'll have an opportunity to respond to the report and tell us about any factual inaccuracies before the GMC makes its final decision about whether your AKT is compliant.

The final compliance decision will be made by the GMC in line with our legal responsibilities and public sector equality duty\*. We'll share our decision with you.

Your individual report will be published on our website in line with our wider quality assurance processes.

The report will contain subheadings, including:

### Requirements met

We'll provide feedback on the requirements you have met, including where we have identified effective practice.

### Mandatory changes

We'll set mandatory changes where we have found that the AKT requirement is not being met. Each change will:

- be targeted
- outline which part of the AKT requirements is not being met
- be mapped to the narrative and evidence from your submission.

### Recommended changes

We'll set recommendations where we have found areas for improvement or development related to the AKT requirements. The recommended changes will highlight areas you should seek to address, in line with effective practice.

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\* The public sector equality duty is outlined in the Equality Act 2010. We'll use the guiding principles of fairness in [Promoting excellence: standards for medical education and training](#) and [Promoting excellence: equality and diversity considerations](#) when assessing compliance.

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## Actions

Where we set mandatory or recommended changes, we'll put a plan in place. The plan will set out when interim updates are required, to show that progress is being made towards addressing or completing the changes.

You must make mandatory changes in the timeframe we specify. Depending on the nature of the change required, this will be by the time of the next year's submission or sooner (for example before the next test occasion). There's a risk that your AKT will not be compliant with the requirements if you don't make the mandatory changes in the specified timeframe.

Recommended changes may be made over a longer timeframe. In your next submission, you'll need to demonstrate that progress has been made. Repeated non-engagement, or lack of satisfactory progress with a recommended change, may result in it becoming mandatory.

We'll also identify any areas we want to follow up in the next submission cycle. For example, if you told us that you intend to make a change to the AKT, or where we need to see the impact of current development work.

## Identifying effective practice for our annual MLA report

As we review your submission, we'll look to identify effective practice. The submission template (a copy of which is at the end of this document) contains a section for you to identify areas of practice you want to highlight to us.

Where it would be valuable to share this effective practice with other assessment providers, we'll ask your permission to include it in our annual MLA report, which will be published on our website. Publishing the report has several purposes: to show that quality management processes are in place, that assessment providers are meeting our requirements for the MLA, and to help foster collaboration between assessment providers.

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## Completing your submission

### Submission template and GMC Connect

The template at the end of this document replicates the fields where you'll submit your responses in GMC Connect\*, our secure portal. You can prepare your narratives and list of supporting documents using this template, then copy your responses into the corresponding fields in GMC Connect when we open it for submissions.

### Overview of your AKT

The table at the beginning of the submission template captures the key features of your AKT (such as the number of students, testing time, number of sites and standard setting method) for reference as we review the individual requirements.

### What to include in the narratives

We'll ensure that the AKT advisers who assess your submission have no conflict of interest with your medical school. You should therefore draft your narratives and prepare your evidence on the basis that those reviewing your submission will not have any detailed knowledge of your AKT. Please be as clear as you can to ensure they understand your approach.

When asked to describe something, you should provide sufficient detail for an assessment expert to make a judgement about how well that aspect of your AKT meets the requirement. It should be written in a way that is easy for those reviewing the submission to digest and understand, including spelling out any acronyms, with clear references to your supporting evidence.

Your submission should incorporate how you build quality improvement into your processes. Often, the most helpful way to demonstrate this will be to give a concrete example of when you've put a process into action. In your narrative, you should consider highlighting any areas where you're trying out a new approach, where you feel your current practice needs improvement, or where you may have gaps in your evidence, together with any steps you intend to take to remedy these areas. We'll check on your progress through future submissions.

We'll look for evidence that equality, diversity and fairness have been properly considered. You should explain how you've applied these considerations across the submission under each of the relevant requirements.

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\* Introductory training to GMC Connect will be available. If you have any difficulties using GMC Connect or need help setting up an account, please contact us at [mla@gmc-uk.org](mailto:mla@gmc-uk.org).

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## What to include in the supporting evidence

Where a requirement asks you to demonstrate something, you should include evidence that supports your narrative. Typically, this should be by giving an example of the process in action that shows the outcome you've described in your narrative.

All your evidence should support the narrative. This means each piece of evidence must be referenced in the narrative – please include page numbers for longer documents. Where possible, give concrete examples in your evidence. We've listed suggestions for each requirement to give an indication of the kind of evidence that assessment providers might typically use to support their narrative. It's not intended to be an exhaustive or prescriptive list. You may feel that another piece of evidence that we've not listed will better support your narrative.

If you're uncertain about whether to submit a piece of evidence, consider whether it outlines or supports the process through giving an example of the process in action. Where you're submitting evidence from a previous year you should ensure that it remains relevant.

We cannot advise you as to whether what you submit will meet a requirement before the formal compliance decision process has been completed, however we can help guide you on the kind of information that should be in the submission and give practical advice about the process. If you have questions about completing your submission, please contact us at [mla@gmc-uk.org](mailto:mla@gmc-uk.org).

## What to include for AKTs at overseas sites

If you also run an AKT overseas you'll need to describe any variation, and any other differences, in candidates' experience of your AKT at the overseas site compared with those who take it in the UK. The narrative will need to set out any steps you've taken to ensure consistency and fairness. You'll need to explain the rationale for the variation and the mitigation and provide supporting evidence. You don't need to complete a separate submission for overseas sites.

## Making changes to your AKT

Where you're considering making imminent changes to your AKT, you should describe these in your submission. If the changes are longer term, and will not affect the coming year's AKT, your submission should not include them.

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## Sending us your completed submission

Once you've completed the narrative and gathered the supporting evidence, you should submit it using GMC Connect. Please use the submission checklist below.

Please upload your supporting evidence (and a list of the documents) in a zip folder, with suitable filenames and references to the relevant requirements.

## Submission checklist

**Before you send us your submission using GMC Connect, you must ensure that it meets the following criteria:**

- You've submitted a narrative for each requirement (including those provided by the MSC on medical schools' behalf).
- You've supplied evidence in support of the narrative for all relevant requirements (including those provided by the MSC on medical schools' behalf).
- The narrative explains any relevant abbreviations or acronyms in full including any used in the evidence.
- Any piece of evidence that relates to more than one requirement has been referenced in each of the relevant requirements, with page numbering as appropriate, for larger documents such as your assessment strategy.
- All documents included have been referred to in the narrative.
- You've completed a document list specifying all the evidence included with the submission and identifying the requirements to which each document relates.
- Each document has an appropriate filename and can be clearly identified from the description within the narrative.
- All external hyperlinks are to publicly accessible documents.
- Documents are not password-protected: GMC Connect is a secure portal so documents don't need to be password-protected.
- In general, documents shouldn't include identifiable data of candidates, stakeholders, or anyone involved in the development or delivery of the AKT. You don't need to redact published documents.
- Pictures haven't been embedded in the narrative. All supporting evidence should be submitted as separate documents.

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# Guidance by requirement

## Design

### Assessment strategy

The AKT is one of the elements through which passing candidates demonstrate to the GMC their eligibility to join the medical register.

#### 1 Describe and demonstrate how the AKT sits within the overall assessment strategy.

**Medical schools should provide individual responses.**

##### Guidance

To meet this requirement, you should show how the AKT fits in with the suite of assessments for your programme(s), including other applied knowledge tests, if any, that you set.

There's an equivalent requirement for the MLA CPSA so you may be able to use some of the same material.

##### Suggested evidence

- Assessment strategy or programme assessment map. This should outline the progression points in the programme and any eligibility criteria for the AKT.
- Evidence that individual candidate performance has been reviewed and progression decisions are made in line with procedures (eg minutes from exam boards/ progress panels showing that only candidates eligible to progress enter the AKT).

### AKT design

**The design of the AKT must enable effective assessment of the learning outcomes required to demonstrate professional medical knowledge as applied to the care of patients, at the level expected of a doctor ready for safe practice at the relevant point of registration.**

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## 2 Describe the rationale for the design of the AKT.

The MSC will provide a collective response on medical schools' behalf for you to include in your submission.

### Guidance

To meet this requirement, you should detail all the design features of your AKT including the format – what does each candidate need to do to complete the AKT? You should also provide a rationale for the design, including reference to any evidence that was used to inform the design.

### Suggested evidence

Description of the format of the AKT, mode of delivery (paper or digital), item type, time per item/paper, number of items and papers and total testing time, and an explanation of the rationale underpinning the design of the AKT.

- Reasons for having multiple papers and any order or timeframe within which they need to be taken.
- Schedule of tests across the year, including how retakes are scheduled and any difference in approach to the design of retake papers.
- Distribution of candidates across different test occasions.

## Scoring

The scoring approach must enable fair and consistent pass/fail decisions on candidate performance.

## 3 Describe the approach to scoring candidate performance at item level and overall, including any score conversions and rounding protocols.

The MSC will provide a collective response on medical schools' behalf for you to include in your submission.

### Guidance

To meet this requirement, you should describe how correct and incorrect item responses are scored and how the overall AKT score is calculated. This should include a description of any scaling adjustments, conversions or equating processes that are used.

### Suggested evidence

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- Description of how each item is scored and how these are aggregated to provide a total score for the entire AKT (including rounding protocols), including the process for combining or calculating scores if your AKT comprises more than one question paper.

## Standard setting

The AKT must be set at a standard that is appropriate to the point of registration for which it is designed (a national standard for provisional registration for all UK students, or a national standard for full registration for IMGs). The standard for the AKT must be created through the use of a recognised methodology and procedures. The standard setting processes must include a mechanism for maintaining a consistent level of challenge for each administration within a single year and over time.

**4 Describe and demonstrate how the national standard is determined, including input from stakeholders, piloting and review of outcomes.**

**5 Describe and demonstrate the underlying rationale for the chosen method and how the national standard is set and maintained, including any conjunctive standards.**

**The MSC will provide a collective response on medical schools' behalf for you to include in your submission.**

### Guidance

To meet this requirement, you should document how you defined the standard required for the AKT. This should include the anchor statement that underpins the standard, how you assured it was correct and appropriate to the relevant point of registration, and all the pre- and post-assessment processes used to arrive at a final pass mark.

You should also describe your standard setting method and how you apply it to each AKT to produce a passing score. If you have a process for making post-test modifications to the passing score (eg by removing a poorly performing item and recalculating the total score), you should cover that under this requirement and provide examples of decisions you have made.

You should describe how the standard is maintained over different test administrations, in a single year and over time, and any analyses you conduct to assure yourself that the standard is consistent and consistently applied.

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If you use a different method to set the standard in a retake AKT, you should describe the rationale and method, and how you assure yourself that the standard is maintained from the first take.

### **Suggested evidence**

- Description of how the anchor statement was developed. This should include how you initially established the standard and tested it with stakeholders to ensure its appropriateness for the expected level of performance of passing candidates.
- Detailed description of the method and procedures for standard setting AKT items (eg modified Angoff), including protocols (eg how you reach consensus during the process).
- Description of how you assure yourself that you are maintaining a consistent standard for each administration within a single year and over time.
- Description of how standard setters are appointed and trained, including ED&I considerations, the range of participants and administrative management.
- Description and rationale for any additional standard setting criteria, eg the use of one or more standard errors of measurement or the use of any other conjunctive standard.
- Examples of any changes the exam board can make during the review of the AKT (such as allowing a second answer or eliminating an item from the calculation of results) that produces a change to the passing score, and any associated protocols (eg considerations if an item has been used in a previous exam with a different cohort).
- Protocol for reviewing and refreshing item standards.
- Standard operating procedures relating to standard setting the AKT.

## **Content**

### **Sampling**

The [MLA content map](#) is informed by Outcomes for graduates, the Foundation Programme training outcomes, the Generic professional capabilities framework and Good medical practice. All AKT content must be derived from the MLA content map, and the sampling criteria (the sampling grid and any further dimensions) must demonstrate how this is achieved and applied consistently in each test administration. The sampling criteria must be approved by the GMC.

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## 6 Describe and demonstrate how the sampling approach aligns with the MLA content map, including the extent to which the sampling criteria reflect the three overarching themes and the individual domains of the content map.

- Describe the rationale for the themes/categories of the sampling grid, including the weightings/proportions and any other factors that are applied to enable effective test construction and reporting.
- Describe the sampling criteria and demonstrate how these are used to create a technical algorithm for item selection that produces consistent and comparable tests.
- Describe how the sampling approach is reviewed and kept up to date to reflect updates to the MLA content map.

**The MSC will provide a collective response on medical schools' behalf for you to include in your submission.**

### Guidance

To meet this requirement, you should describe the method used for selecting the content for the AKT using your sampling grid and demonstrate how the content for each test administration is comparable and appropriate.

You should also demonstrate how you use the MLA content map, and its three overarching themes, to create your sampling criteria.

### Suggested evidence

- Explanation and rationale for how you developed your sampling criteria to align with the MLA content map and/or strategy and how you assure yourself that the AKT content reflects the knowledge requirements set out in the MLA content map as expected of doctors at the relevant point of registration.
- Your sampling strategy with a narrative explaining how your sampling grid was produced, who was involved, how it was tested with stakeholders (including those outside of undergraduate education with input into the Foundation programme and training of new doctors), how it was trialled/piloted as a tool for consistent and effective test construction, and how it will be reviewed to ensure it remains current and relevant (for example to reflect changes to the MLA content map or research about new doctors' readiness for practice).
- Explanation of how the AKT content selection is all determined by the MLA content map, including a mapping exercise to demonstrate that the AKT sampling grid relates to the

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domains of the content map and the three overarching themes, and that the AKT content for first take and retake requires passing candidates to demonstrate the required level of applied knowledge across the content map.

- Description and demonstration of your tagging methodology and how you ensure this is applied consistently to items so that items selected through any technical algorithm to produce the AKT cover a consistent spread of skills and topics in comparable proportions.
- Standard operating procedures relating to sampling.

## Quality management

**The AKT question bank must be secure, current, of high quality and its content must be derived from the MLA content map. Test items must be developed, managed and reviewed through fair and effective processes.**

### **7 Describe and demonstrate how items are created, reviewed and quality assured in a consistent and timely manner.**

**The MSC will provide a collective response on medical schools' behalf for you to include in your submission.**

#### **Guidance**

To meet this requirement, you should describe the measures and processes you have in place to produce quality assessment materials mapped against the MLA content map. This should include:

- How you assure yourself that the level of challenge is appropriate and that the scenarios are authentic and reflect diverse patient communities across the UK.
- The life cycle of an item, showing how you make changes following feedback from standard setters, test construction panels, exam boards or candidates, and performance data.
- Your approach to identifying gaps in your question bank and how you review and refresh it.

#### **Suggested evidence**

- Case study showing the lifecycle of an item from creation to post-exam review, showing how you consider feedback from writers, reviewers, standard setters and others (with examples), and post-exam item metrics (with examples), and the subsequent revisions made to items and how these feed into the item writing process.

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- Details of the recruitment, training (including ED&I), and materials for item writers and reviewers, including how you ensure these skills remain current.
  - Your item writing guidance, demonstrating that it promotes good practice including ensuring items are clear and unbiased, and any further QA processes, including how the item writing guidance is kept up to date.
  - Description of the processes for ensuring that items are set at the appropriate level for entering clinical practice in the UK and reflect what doctors might encounter in the workplace.
  - A summary of the composition of your question bank including coverage of the content map themes and how you monitor and analyse it to refresh content and target item writing in underrepresented areas.
  - Your policy for reusing, resting and retiring items.
  - Standard operating procedures relating to item development and question bank management.

## Quality management

**Each test must be created through operationally effective test construction methodology supported by expert review and quality checking processes to ensure consistent application of the sampling criteria.**

### **8 Describe and demonstrate how tests are created, reviewed and quality assured in a consistent and timely manner.**

**The MSC will provide a collective response on medical schools' behalf for you to include in your submission.**

#### **Guidance**

To meet this requirement, you should describe the processes you have in place to produce comparable versions of the AKT and demonstrate the achievement of this with examples. This should include:

- The annual timetable for producing AKT papers, including contingency papers in case of security breaches and other unexpected events.

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- The procedures and checks in place to ensure different versions of the AKT are consistent in terms of content coverage and level of difficulty.
  - An explanation of who is involved at each stage of exam construction and their responsibilities.

### **Suggested evidence**

Description of each stage of test construction and review processes to produce the AKT to:

- ensure a consistent level of challenge across different versions of the AKT
- ensure consistent sampling of content domains and application of knowledge
- ensure the AKT is high quality and error free.
- Example AKT paper/s accompanied by a mapping exercise to demonstrate how all the content is derived from and covers the themes and domains of the MLA content map.
- Description of how the exam construction panel is appointed and trained, including ED&I considerations, the range of participants and administrative management.
- Standard operating procedures relating to exam construction.

## **Support for candidates**

### **Familiarisation**

**Candidates must be given appropriate and timely information about the AKT, including: the test format, mode, testing time and sample content; arrangements for running the test on the day; and relevant local regulations.**

### **9 Describe and demonstrate how candidates have been familiarised with the AKT and how the AKT will be run on the day.**

**The MSC will provide a collective response on medical schools' behalf for you to include in your submission, setting out the measures in place to familiarise students with the AKT on a national level, for example through sample question papers and an opportunity to use the exam delivery platform.**

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**Medical schools should supplement the information with the steps you take to familiarise students with local arrangements for the AKT, for example how you convey information to students about the practical aspects of what to expect on the day and any local regulations or procedures.**

### **Guidance**

To meet this requirement, you should demonstrate how you prepare candidates to take the AKT and what information you give them about the day of the exam. This means ensuring that they're familiar with the format and the expectations (criteria for achieving a pass and expected standard of performance), for example through exemplar materials, which should be well matched to 'live' materials, and information made available to candidates. If you release any information about AKT content prior to the assessment (for example, topic areas), you should explain what information is given, and the reasons for this approach.

### **Suggested evidence**

- Evidence of timing and methods of communication, eg talks (slides and/or video recording), virtual learning environment (VLE) announcements, e-bulletins, webinars, handbooks, formative/mock AKTs or other exemplar materials, opportunities for familiarisation with exam software, if used, including adaptations for reasonable adjustments.
- Guidance for candidates about the AKT and description of how this can be accessed by all candidates including those with reasonable adjustments.
- Information and guidance to candidates about local venue arrangements including when to arrive and what to bring; how candidates are informed about local procedures and policies, applying for reasonable adjustments and retakes.

## **Results and feedback**

**Timely and appropriately detailed feedback must be provided to individuals with their AKT results to enable unsuccessful candidates to identify and target specific areas of development prior to their next attempt or to enable successful candidates to reflect on their performance.**

### **10 Demonstrate what results and feedback are given to candidates, as well as what support is available to unsuccessful candidates.**

**The MSC will provide a collective response on medical schools' behalf for you to include in your submission, setting out the measures in place to provide results and feedback to students about their performance on the AKT on a national level.**

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## Medical schools should supplement the information with the steps you take to provide results, feedback and support to students about their performance on the AKT on a local level.

### Guidance

To meet this requirement, you should describe the information you give to candidates about their results and performance, including information about when they can expect to receive their results and feedback to enable them to prepare for retake, where necessary, and information given to support failing candidates.

### Suggested evidence

- Description of processes for preparing and providing results and feedback to candidates, including checks for accuracy and completeness, in line with the published schedule for receiving these.
- Examples of information provided to candidates, including results and feedback, such as how they performed in different skill domains, individually and/or in relation to the performance of their cohort.
- Description of the remediation support for unsuccessful candidates (eg opportunities to discuss feedback with academic tutors, availability of revision sessions).

## Policies and resources

### Policies and procedures

The AKT must be supported by policies and procedures for conduct and administration embedding fairness and ED&I principles for reasonable adjustments, mitigating circumstances, number of attempts or resits, exam misconduct, complaints and appeals. The policies and procedures must be approved by the GMC.

### 11 Demonstrate and describe that there are policies and procedures in place to ensure a fair and comparable test experience for candidates.

The MSC will provide a collective response on medical schools' behalf for you to include in your submission, giving details about how the policy framework and procedures for the AKT are being applied across the UK to ensure a fair and

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comparable test experience for candidates annually and to drive consistency over time, and how ED&I principles have been considered.

**Medical schools should supplement the information with further details about how you apply the policy framework and procedures within your own organisation, and how ED&I considerations have informed your actions such as making reasonable adjustments or decisions on mitigating circumstances applications.**

### **Guidance**

To meet this requirement, you should show how the AKT operates in the context of a robust policy framework, which makes it clear to staff and candidates what should be delivered, and what is and isn't permissible.

### **Suggested evidence**

- The policy framework, standard operating procedures and guidelines for administrators.
- Other written policies and procedures for the AKT (eg roles and responsibilities of key staff, mitigating circumstances, reasonable adjustments, illness on the day, appeals process and unexpected incidents around the time of the AKT).
- Description of how the principles in [Welcomed and valued](#) are applied when determining the necessary level of support for candidates, including the provision of reasonable adjustments for candidates with disabilities.
- Case studies showing how policies and procedures have been implemented, for example how reasonable adjustments are applied, or how candidate queries or problems are dealt with on the day.

## **Resources and space**

**The AKT must be delivered in a suitable environment for a high stakes assessment for all candidates.**

## **12 Demonstrate that the AKT takes place in a space appropriate for a high stakes assessment with suitable provision for the delivery method.**

**The MSC will provide a collective response on medical schools' behalf for you to include in your submission, in respect of generic digital and other resources.**

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## Medical schools should supplement the information with details about your local venue(s) and resources to deliver the AKT.

### Guidance

To meet this requirement, you should show how you ensure the provision of a quality assessment through securing a safe, appropriate, accessible venue, or venues, with the necessary digital or other resources.

### Suggested evidence

- Description of the local test venue(s) and how it meets environmental requirements for high stakes testing.
- For AKTs run in multiple venues (including overseas venues), description of how you identify and manage any resource or environmental variation to ensure consistency and fairness.
- Description of how you ensure you are sufficiently resourced for the number of candidates taking the test, including resourcing reasonable adjustments, in terms of space and invigilation.
- Description of the digital platform used to deliver the AKT, including adaptations for candidates requiring reasonable adjustments.
- Description of the local devices (eg desktop computer, laptop) on which candidates take the AKT, including alternatives for candidates requiring reasonable adjustments.

## Security

**The AKT must be developed and delivered within secure environments with appropriate measures in place across systems, venues and processes to prevent security breaches including leakage of test material and access to assessment content by unauthorised individuals.**

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**13 Describe and demonstrate how the security of the question bank and test papers is maintained.**

**14 Describe and demonstrate how exam materials (digital and/or paper) are prepared, stored and delivered.**

The MSC will provide a collective response on medical schools' behalf for you to include in your submission, about how security of the AKT is managed and monitored at a national level.

**Medical schools should supplement the information with details about your local arrangements and measures for the security of the AKT.**

**Guidance**

To meet this requirement, you should show how you ensure the security of AKT materials. This could include a description of how test content is stored, and how you share materials with those involved in test development and delivery.

You should also describe what steps you take to avoid security incidents and monitor your security arrangements.

**Suggested evidence**

- Narrative describing how security is maintained for the item bank and all protocols for access, permission levels, and sharing and how the arrangements are monitored and checked.
- Description of how you ensure your exam management systems and infrastructure are secure.
- Description of local security measures for test delivery (digital or paper).
- Procedures for monitoring and dealing with security breaches before, during or after the exam, at national and local level.

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## 15 Describe and demonstrate the arrangements for AKTs delivered in multiple venues or over multiple sittings.

The MSC will provide a collective response on medical schools' behalf for you to include in your submission, in terms of the delivery and monitoring of AKTs from a security perspective at a national level.

**Medical schools should supplement the information with details about local arrangements where you run the AKT in multiple sittings or at multiple venues, including overseas centres.**

### Guidance

To meet this requirement, you should describe the measures you use to ensure the security of AKT materials if you run the AKT at multiple sites (including overseas centres) and/or across days.

You should also show what steps you take to monitor results across sittings and venues and how this informs your approach to security.

### Suggested evidence

- Description of your arrangements for delivering consecutive papers, including the length of gap between sessions, and the reasons for this.
- Description of the procedures in place to ensure the security of exam materials used at different sessions and across different sites.
- Description of your arrangements for the quarantining of candidates and/or other measures to prevent misconduct or other security breaches.
- Description of post-test analyses and any other activities to identify evidence of misconduct or security breaches indicating leakage of exam content.
- Case study showing how these have been used to inform your approach to security of the AKT.

## 16 Describe and demonstrate how invigilators are trained and briefed.

The MSC will provide a collective response on medical schools' behalf for you to include in your submission, in terms of national training materials and standardised briefings for invigilators.

---

## Medical schools should supplement the information with details about local training and briefings for invigilators.

### Guidance

To meet this requirement, you should show how you train and prepare invigilators (including ED&I training) and how they are equipped to deal with all aspects of running the AKT and issues arising on the day.

### Suggested evidence

- Narrative detailing how you ensure there are sufficient invigilators for the number of candidates, and how invigilators are appointed, trained and prepared for their role, including ED&I training.
- Standardised invigilator training and guidance including how to use any digital resources before, during and after the exam.
- Local invigilator briefings for candidates, identity checking procedures, procedures for clerical checks at the end of the test, post-exam reports including details of any incidents and absences.
- Procedures to deal with incidents, irregularities or disruptions during test administration or identified subsequently through post-test analyses, including example reports of any events requiring corrective action.

## Data management

### Data acquisition

**There must be secure and robust processes in place to capture and check assessment data.**

### **17 Describe and demonstrate the approach to collecting or uploading candidates' responses on the day and dealing with missing data identified at the end of the test.**

**The MSC will provide a collective response on medical schools' behalf for you to include in your submission.**

---

## Medical schools should supplement the information with any processes for dealing with local issues arising on the day.

### Guidance

To meet this requirement, you should show how you capture scores on completion of the AKT. This may include your processes for gathering and collating data, checking for completeness, and, where relevant, your process for dealing with missing marks; or the processes for validating marks if you are using digital resources. You should describe who is involved in this work and their responsibilities.

### Suggested evidence

- Description of how scores are captured (paper or digital) including where there is more than one session.
- Standard operating procedure or description of the processes in place to ensure scores are accurate and complete (eg checks at the end of each session).
- Description of your process for dealing with incomplete, or missing, assessment data.

## Production of results

Performance metrics must be used to support decision-making and ensure the standard of proficiency is being met.

### 18 Demonstrate how results data are processed, checked and analysed after the AKT, including criteria for making post-test adjustments, to produce test outcomes for ratification by the relevant exam board.

The MSC will provide a collective response on medical schools' behalf for you to include in your submission.

### Guidance

To meet this requirement, you should show how the AKT score data are processed to create total scores and outcomes (eg pass, fail, borderline) that are presented to your exam board. If you allow post-hoc changes to the pass mark, for example, to adjust for a poor performing item, you should document your criteria and processes for making changes, including any rules applied, and how you monitor the effect of the post-hoc changes.

### Suggested evidence

- 
- Description of the data processing that occurs between the completion of the AKT and the exam board, including who's involved, what their responsibilities are, and what checks are in place to ensure accurate handling of data and calculation and release of results, including cross-checking.
  - Procedures for making decisions about item performance and any post-hoc adjustments to the pass mark.
  - Description of how candidate outcomes are monitored, including the impact on scores of any post-test adjustments.

## Evaluation and quality assurance

### Psychometric analysis

Assessment providers must demonstrate that the AKT is operating as intended. This includes evaluation of test performance and outcomes. Reports, data and information must be provided to the GMC for quality assurance purposes.

### 19 Describe and demonstrate how the post-test analyses feed into decision-making and quality improvement.

The MSC will provide a collective response on medical schools' behalf for you to include in your submission.

#### Guidance

To meet this requirement, you should show the psychometric analyses you conduct to assure yourself that the various elements of the AKT are operating appropriately and as intended, eg by monitoring candidate outcomes and item performance over time, and demonstrating that the assessment produces reliable outcomes and is fit for purpose.

#### Suggested evidence

- Narrative detailing the analyses that are carried out, their purpose and how they are applied to evaluate, monitor and improve the AKT.
- Example report of psychometric analysis and supporting narrative to outline the main findings, your interpretation and conclusions, and any actions taken as a result, to demonstrate your approach to achieving an effective quality management loop.

- 
- Description of who's involved, what their responsibilities are, and what checks are in place to ensure accurate and secure handling of data.
  - Any analyses undertaken to identify and monitor performance trends in and across cohorts to support fairness and understand impacts on candidates.

## **Governance and fairness**

**The AKT must be set and delivered through governance structures approved by the GMC. The AKT must embed legal requirements, principles and good practice of equality, diversity and inclusion in its development, delivery, monitoring and review, to ensure a fair and comparable test experience for all candidates.**

### **20 Describe the boards and operational groups involved in the governance of the AKT.**

### **21 Describe and demonstrate how ED&I considerations are applied across processes and decision-making.**

### **22 Describe and demonstrate how stakeholders are involved across the AKT's governance.**

**The MSC will provide a collective response on medical schools' behalf for you to include in your submission.**

**Medical schools should supplement requirement 20 with details of how you interact with and contribute to AKT governance structures.**

#### **Guidance**

To meet these requirements, you should describe the people involved in the development, delivery and evaluation of the AKT, in order to demonstrate collaboration to deliver a fair and consistent AKT for candidates annually and over time. This should include how they're organised, how you involve stakeholders, and how the operational groups interact. You should also describe how decision-making by these groups feeds into the quality improvement cycle.

#### **Suggested evidence**

- 
- The terms of reference, job descriptions, criteria for appointment, appointments process and ED&I considerations for each level of AKT governance, and how you ensure continuous development, delivery, validation and long-term evaluation of the AKT.
  - Description of the engagement activities and involvement and contributions of different stakeholder groups in the AKT and how the views of stakeholders and ED&I considerations have been taken into account and informed the AKT.
  - Equality analysis or ED&I action plan for the AKT.
  - Description of the AKT governance structure, including how different operational groups interact and the processes in place to coordinate decision making.

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# Requirements for the Medical Licensing Assessment Applied knowledge test – Submission template

## Assessment provider details

Assessment provider	
Contact name(s)	
Contact telephone	
Contact email	

## Contents

- Summary of your AKT
- AKT requirements
- Areas of effective practice
- Document list

## Summary of your AKT

Area	First take	Resit
<b>Cohort</b>		
Programme type (eg Foundation/ graduate entry/ standard/ overseas) *		
Year of AKT delivery: final or penultimate		
Average size of cohort for the AKT		
% international candidates taking AKT		
<b>Sites</b>		
Details of sites and locations		
Usual number of sittings within sites		
Number of sittings per day		
<b>AKT design</b>		
Format of AKT (eg single best answer)		
Number of papers per AKT		
Total number of items per AKT		
Testing time per paper		
Total testing time		
Duration of break between papers (if applicable)		
<b>Standard setting</b>		
Main method (eg modified Angoff)		
Conjunctive standards (eg SEM)		

\* List all that apply if more than one.

---

# AKT requirements

## Design

### Assessment strategy

**1 Describe and demonstrate how the AKT sits within the overall assessment strategy.**

**Medical schools should provide individual responses.**

<b>Narrative (Requirement 1)</b>

<b>Supporting evidence (Requirement 1)</b>

## AKT design

**2 Describe the rationale for the design of the AKT.**

**The MSC will provide a collective response on medical schools' behalf for you to include in your submission.**

<b>Narrative (Requirement 2)</b>

<b>Supporting evidence (Requirement 2)</b>

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## Scoring

**3 Describe the approach to scoring candidate performance at item level and overall, including any score conversions and rounding protocols.**

The MSC will provide a collective response on medical schools' behalf for you to include in your submission.

<b>Narrative (Requirement 3)</b>

<b>Supporting evidence (Requirement 3)</b>

## Standard setting

**4 Describe and demonstrate how the national standard is determined, including input from stakeholders, piloting and review of outcomes.**

**5 Describe and demonstrate the underlying rationale for the chosen method and how the national standard is set and maintained, including any conjunctive standards.**

The MSC will provide a collective response on medical schools' behalf for you to include in your submission.

<b>Narrative (Requirement 4)</b>

<b>Supporting evidence (Requirement 4)</b>

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<b>Narrative (Requirement 5)</b>

<b>Supporting evidence (Requirement 5)</b>

## Content

### Sampling

**6 Describe and demonstrate how the sampling approach aligns with the MLA content map, including the extent to which the sampling criteria reflect the three overarching themes and the individual domains of the content map.**

The MSC will provide a collective response on medical schools' behalf for you to include in your submission.

<b>Narrative (Requirement 6)</b>

<b>Supporting evidence (Requirement 6)</b>

---

## Quality management

### **7 Describe and demonstrate how items are created, reviewed and quality assured in a consistent and timely manner.**

The MSC will provide a collective response on medical schools' behalf for you to include in your submission.

<b>Narrative (Requirement 7)</b>

<b>Supporting evidence (Requirement 7)</b>

### **8 Describe and demonstrate how tests are created, reviewed and quality assured in a consistent and timely manner.**

The MSC will provide a collective response on medical schools' behalf for you to include in your submission.

<b>Narrative (Requirement 8)</b>

<b>Supporting evidence (Requirement 8)</b>

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## Support for candidates

### Familiarisation

**9 Describe and demonstrate how candidates have been familiarised with the AKT and how the AKT will be run on the day.**

The MSC will provide a collective response on medical schools' behalf for you to include in your submission, setting out the measures in place to familiarise students with the AKT on a national level, for example through sample question papers and an opportunity to use the exam delivery platform.

<b>Narrative (Requirement 9)</b>

<b>Supporting evidence (Requirement 9)</b>

**Medical schools should supplement the information with the steps you take to familiarise students with local arrangements for the AKT, for example how you convey information to students about the practical aspects of what to expect on the day and any local regulations or procedures.**

<b>Narrative (Requirement 9)</b>

<b>Supporting evidence (Requirement 9)</b>

---

## Results and feedback

**10 Demonstrate what results and feedback are given to candidates, as well as what support is available to unsuccessful candidates.**

The MSC will provide a collective response on medical schools' behalf for you to include in your submission, setting out the measures in place to provide results and feedback to students about their performance on the AKT on a national level.

<b>Narrative (Requirement 10)</b>

<b>Supporting evidence (Requirement 10)</b>

**Medical schools should supplement the information with the steps you take to provide results, feedback and support to students about their performance on the AKT on a local level.**

<b>Narrative (Requirement 10)</b>

<b>Supporting evidence (Requirement 10)</b>

---

## Policies and resources

### Policies and procedures

#### 11 Demonstrate and describe that there are policies and procedures in place to ensure a fair and comparable test experience for candidates.

The MSC will provide a collective response on medical schools' behalf for you to include in your submission, giving details about how the policy framework and procedures for the AKT are being applied across the UK to ensure a fair and comparable test experience for candidates annually and to drive consistency over time, and how ED&I principles have been considered.

<b>Narrative (Requirement 11)</b>

<b>Supporting evidence (Requirement 11)</b>

**Medical schools should supplement the information with further details about how you apply the policy framework and procedures within your own organisation, and how ED&I considerations have informed your actions such as making reasonable adjustments or decisions on mitigating circumstances applications.**

<b>Narrative (Requirement 11)</b>

<b>Supporting evidence (Requirement 11)</b>

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## Resources and space

**12 Demonstrate that the AKT takes place in a space appropriate for a high stakes assessment with suitable provision for the delivery method.**

The MSC will provide a collective response on medical schools' behalf for you to include in your submission, in respect of generic digital and other resources.

<b>Narrative (Requirement 12)</b>

<b>Supporting evidence (Requirement 12)</b>

**Medical schools should supplement the information with details about your local venue(s) and resources to deliver the AKT.**

<b>Narrative (Requirement 12)</b>

<b>Supporting evidence (Requirement 12)</b>

---

## Security

**13 Describe and demonstrate how the security of the question bank and test papers is maintained.**

**14 Describe and demonstrate how exam materials (digital and/or paper) are prepared, stored and delivered.**

The MSC will provide a collective response on medical schools' behalf for you to include in your submission, about how security of the AKT is managed and monitored at a national level.

<b>Narrative (Requirement 13)</b>

<b>Supporting evidence (Requirement 13)</b>

<b>Narrative (Requirement 14)</b>

<b>Supporting evidence (Requirement 14)</b>

**Medical schools should supplement the information with details about your local arrangements and measures for the security of the AKT.**

<b>Narrative (Requirement 13)</b>

<b>Supporting evidence (Requirement 13)</b>

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<b>Narrative (Requirement 14)</b>

<b>Supporting evidence (Requirement 14)</b>

## **15 Describe and demonstrate the arrangements for AKTs delivered in multiple venues or over multiple sittings.**

The MSC will provide a collective response on medical schools' behalf for you to include in your submission, in terms of the delivery and monitoring of AKTs from a security perspective at a national level.

<b>Narrative (Requirement 15)</b>

<b>Supporting evidence (Requirement 15)</b>

**Medical schools should supplement the information with details about local arrangements where you run the AKT in multiple sittings or at multiple venues, including overseas centres.**

<b>Narrative (Requirement 15)</b>

<b>Supporting evidence (Requirement 15)</b>

---

**16 Describe and demonstrate how invigilators are trained and briefed.**

The MSC will provide a collective response on medical schools' behalf for you to include in your submission, in terms of national training materials and standardised briefings for invigilators.

<b>Narrative (Requirement 16)</b>

<b>Supporting evidence (Requirement 16)</b>

**Medical schools should supplement the information with details about local training and briefings for invigilators.**

<b>Narrative (Requirement 16)</b>

<b>Supporting evidence (Requirement 16)</b>

## **Data management**

### **Data acquisition**

**17 Describe and demonstrate the approach to collecting or uploading candidates' responses on the day and dealing with missing data identified at the end of the test.**

The MSC will provide a collective response on medical schools' behalf for you to include in your submission.

---

<b>Narrative (Requirement 17)</b>

<b>Supporting evidence (Requirement 17)</b>

**Medical schools should supplement the information with any processes for dealing with local issues arising on the day.**

<b>Narrative (Requirement 17)</b>

<b>Supporting evidence (Requirement 17)</b>

## **Production of results**

**18 Demonstrate how results data are processed, checked and analysed after the AKT, including criteria for making post-test adjustments, to produce test outcomes for ratification by the relevant exam board.**

**The MSC will provide a collective response on medical schools' behalf for you to include in your submission.**

<b>Narrative (Requirement 18)</b>

<b>Supporting evidence (Requirement 18)</b>

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## Evaluation and quality assurance

### Psychometric analysis

**19 Describe and demonstrate how the post-test analyses feed into decision-making and quality improvement.**

The MSC will provide a collective response on medical schools' behalf for you to include in your submission.

<b>Narrative (Requirement 19)</b>

<b>Supporting evidence (Requirement 19)</b>

### Governance and fairness

**20 Describe the boards and operational groups involved in the governance of the AKT.**

**21 Describe and demonstrate how ED&I considerations are applied across processes and decision-making.**

**22 Describe and demonstrate how stakeholders are involved across the AKT's governance.**

The MSC will provide a collective response on medical schools' behalf for you to include in your submission.

<b>Narrative (Requirement 20)</b>

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**Supporting evidence (Requirement 20)**

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**Narrative (Requirement 21)**

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**Supporting evidence (Requirement 21)**

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**Narrative (Requirement 22)**

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**Supporting evidence (Requirement 22)**

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**Medical schools should supplement requirement 20 with details of how you interact with and contribute to AKT governance structures.**

**Narrative (Requirement 20)**

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**Supporting evidence (Requirement 20)**

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## Areas of effective practice

Requirement	Area of effective assessment practice



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