



# ECFMG®

## 2010 Information Booklet

### ECFMG® CERTIFICATION

## News

- Application Process Modified for Medical School Graduates
- ECFMG to Provide USMLE Performance Data to International Medical Schools
- Biometric Identity Management System Implemented for Computer-based USMLE Exams

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*[www.ecfm.org](http://www.ecfm.org)*

**Apply on-line** for Step 1 and Step 2 (Clinical Knowledge and Clinical Skills) of the United States Medical Licensing Examination® (USMLE®) using IWA.

**Subscribe to *The ECFMG® Reporter*** for important updates on ECFMG Certification and entry into graduate medical education in the United States.

**Access your information on-line** using OASIS.

## Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates

3624 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104-2685 USA

[www.ecfm.org](http://www.ecfm.org)

Form 100S, June 2010

## ABOUT THE ECFMG® INFORMATION BOOKLET AND APPLICATION MATERIALS

The ECFMG *Information Booklet* contains detailed information on ECFMG's program of certification and ECFMG's other programs and services for international medical students and graduates. You can access this publication and the on-line application for Step 1 and Step 2 (Clinical Knowledge and Clinical Skills components) of the United States Medical Licensing Examination® (USMLE®) on the ECFMG website at [www.ecfm.org](http://www.ecfm.org).

Applicants for examination must use the applicable edition of the *Information Booklet*. The 2010 *Information Booklet* pertains to eligibility periods in 2010. If your eligibility period extends into 2011 and you test in 2011, you must become familiar with and will be subject to the policies and procedures detailed in the 2011 *Information Booklet*. The 2011 *Information Booklet* and application materials are expected to be available in August 2010. Eligibility periods are explained on pages 29-31.

The USMLE *Bulletin of Information* provides information about the USMLE, the three-step examination program for medical licensure in the United States. The USMLE *Bulletin of Information* is available on the USMLE website at [www.usmle.org](http://www.usmle.org). In the event that information about the USMLE in the ECFMG *Information Booklet* differs from the corresponding information in the USMLE *Bulletin of Information*, the information in the USMLE *Bulletin of Information* shall govern.

**Applicants for examination and ECFMG Certification are required to read both the ECFMG *Information Booklet* and the USMLE *Bulletin of Information*.**

Although current at the time of publication, the information contained in this booklet is subject to change. If changes occur, information will be posted on the ECFMG website. You must obtain the most recent information to ensure an accurate understanding of current policies and procedures.

If you are not able to access publications or updated information on-line, contact ECFMG for assistance. See *General Inquiries* on page *ii*.

The ECFMG® *Reporter*, ECFMG's free e-mail newsletter, provides important updates on ECFMG Certification and entry into graduate medical education in the United States. All applicants for ECFMG Certification should subscribe to *The ECFMG® Reporter*. See *E-Newsletters* on page *vii*.

The *Information Booklet* describes deadlines related to exam applications, scheduling, and other services. Unless otherwise indicated, deadlines are calculated using Eastern Time in the United States.

Please note that ECFMG may share certain information contained in your exam applications and score reports with other organizations under specified circumstances. For further information regarding ECFMG's data collection and privacy practices, please refer to our Privacy Policy available on the ECFMG website at [www.ecfm.org/annc/privacy.html](http://www.ecfm.org/annc/privacy.html).

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## COMMUNICATING WITH ECFMG

Always include your USMLE/ECFMG Identification Number, if one has been assigned, when communicating with ECFMG. If you forget or lose your number, you can obtain it by accessing the Interactive Web Application (IWA) on the ECFMG website.

To protect the privacy of applicants, ECFMG will e-mail applicant-specific information only to the e-mail address in the applicant's ECFMG record. If your e-mail inquiry requires a specific response, you must send your inquiry from the e-mail address in your ECFMG record.

ECFMG will not accept letters or other deliveries that arrive with postage or other fees due.

### Applicant Information

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Use ECFMG's On-line Applicant Status and Information System (OASIS) to check the status of items related to ECFMG Certification, such as your exam applications, score reports, and medical education credentials; general information, such as your name and contact information; and your ECFMG financial account. To access OASIS, visit the ECFMG website at [www.ecfm.org](http://www.ecfm.org).

### General Inquiries & Correspondence — [www.ecfm.org](http://www.ecfm.org)

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Contact Applicant Information Services at:

TEL: (215) 386-5900

ECFMG  
3624 Market Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19104-2685 USA

(Telephone assistance is available between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Eastern Time in the United States, Monday through Friday.)

FAX: (215) 386-9196

**Always include your USMLE/ECFMG Identification Number, if one has been assigned, when communicating with ECFMG.**

E-MAIL

For inquiries on:

Send e-mail to:

Credentials

[credentials@ecfm.org](mailto:credentials@ecfm.org)

Other inquiries

[info@ecfm.org](mailto:info@ecfm.org)

### Registration & Credentials Services — [www.ecfm.org](http://www.ecfm.org)

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**Paper Requests for Services, such as requests for USMLE Transcripts**

**By mail to:**

ECFMG/Registration & Credentials Services  
PO Box 48087  
Newark, NJ 07101-4887 USA

**By courier service to:**

ECFMG  
c/o TD Bank  
Attn: Lockbox  
6000 Atrium Way  
Mount Laurel, NJ 08054 USA

**Certification of Identification Forms (Form 186), Certification Statements (Form 183), and IWA Document Submission Forms (Form 187) for on-line exam applications**

**By mail or courier service to:**

IWA  
ECFMG  
3624 Market Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19104-2685 USA

**Request Forms and Payments**

**By mail to:**  
ECFMG/CVS Department  
PO Box 48083  
Newark, NJ 07101-4883 USA

**By courier service to:**  
ECFMG/CVS Department  
c/o TD Bank  
Attn: Lockbox  
6000 Atrium Way  
Mount Laurel, NJ 08054 USA

**Correspondence and Inquiries to:**

ECFMG/CVS Department  
PO Box 13679  
Philadelphia, PA 19101-3679 USA  
  
TEL: (215) 386-5900

**Supporting Documents for Scanning**

**By mail to:**  
ECFMG/ERAS Program  
PO Box 11746  
Philadelphia, PA 19101-0746 USA

**By courier service to:**  
ERAS  
ECFMG  
3624 Market Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19104-2685 USA

**Correspondence and Inquiries to:**

ERAS  
ECFMG  
3624 Market Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19104-2685 USA  
  
TEL: (215) 386-5900  
  
E-MAIL: [eras-support@ecfm.org](mailto:eras-support@ecfm.org)

**A completed Document Submission Form should accompany any supporting documents you send to ECFMG. This form can be accessed through the ERAS Support Services section of OASIS.**

**Applications and Payments**

**If paying on-line using OASIS**

**By mail or courier service to:**

ECFMG/Exchange Visitor Sponsorship  
Program  
3624 Market Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19104-2685 USA

**Correspondence and Inquiries to:**

ECFMG/Exchange Visitor Sponsorship Program  
3624 Market Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19104-2685 USA

TEL: (215) 823-2121

FAX: (215) 386-9766

**If enclosing a check or money order**

**By mail to:**

ECFMG/Exchange Visitor Sponsorship Program  
PO Box 48087  
Newark, NJ 07101-4887 USA

**By courier service to:**

ECFMG  
c/o TD Bank  
Attn: Lockbox  
6000 Atrium Way  
Mount Laurel, NJ 08054 USA

## ON-LINE SERVICES

Web-based access to services is available on the ECFMG website at [www.ecfm.org](http://www.ecfm.org). Access to ECFMG's on-line services is available 24 hours/day, seven days/week at no cost to users.

### ECFMG Website

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Visit the ECFMG website at [www.ecfm.org](http://www.ecfm.org) for:

- Information on ECFMG's programs,
- Publications and forms,
- On-line services, and
- Important updates.

### OASIS — On-line Applicant Status and Information System

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The On-line Applicant Status and Information System (OASIS) is an on-line service for ECFMG applicants and ECFMG-certified physicians.

You can use OASIS to check the status of:

- Exam applications,
- Medical education credentials,
- USMLE transcript requests (except for electronic transcripts requested through ERAS),
- Standard ECFMG Certificate,
- *Certification of Identification Form* (Form 186), and
- Requests for permanent validation of examination dates listed on the Standard ECFMG Certificate, if applicable.

You can also check:

- Name of record,
- Contact information, and
- Status of ECFMG financial account.

You can use OASIS to:

- Access results of USMLE Step 1, Step 2 CK, and Step 2 CS.
- Make on-line payments to your ECFMG financial account.
- Update your contact information, including your e-mail address, mailing address, and telephone and fax numbers.
- Obtain an ERAS Token.
- Upload a digital photograph for ERAS.
- Track receipt of your supporting documents by ERAS Support Services at ECFMG.
- Complete and print the ERAS Document Submission Form.
- Submit an ERAS Return of Document Service (RODS) request.
- Access the IMG Advisors Network.
- Request a permanent validation sticker for exams listed on your Standard ECFMG Certificate, if applicable.

## IWA — Interactive Web Application

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The Interactive Web Application (IWA) is ECFMG’s web-based application service for ECFMG applicants. You can use IWA to:

- Apply for USMLE Step 1, Step 2 CK, and Step 2 CS.
- Access and print USMLE scheduling permits.
- Request extension of your USMLE Step 1/Step 2 CK eligibility period, if you are registered.
- Access your USMLE/ECFMG Identification Number, if lost or forgotten.
- Access your Step 2 CS visa letter, if requested at the time of application.
- Request to have results of USMLE exam administrations withheld from your medical school.

When applying for examination, applicants use IWA to submit application information, including payment, to ECFMG via the Internet. IWA provides applicants with on-line instructions, the ability to save a partially completed application, and on-line validation that prevents many common errors. ECFMG processes applications typically within three weeks of receipt of the complete application.

## Step 2 CS Calendar and Scheduling

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Step 2 CS Calendar and Scheduling is a web-based service for applicants who plan to take Step 2 CS.

All applicants can use this service to:

- Check the availability of testing appointments at all test centers.

Applicants registered for Step 2 CS can use this service to:

- Schedule, reschedule, and confirm testing appointments.
- Print or reprint their confirmation notice.

## International Medical Education Directory

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The *International Medical Education Directory (IMED)* is a free web-based resource for accurate and up-to-date information about international medical schools that are recognized by the appropriate government agency in the countries in which they are located. *IMED* is maintained by the Foundation for Advancement of International Medical Education and Research (FAIMER®). A medical school is listed in *IMED* after FAIMER receives notification from the ministry of health, ministry of education, or other responsible agency of the country where the medical school is located confirming that the specified medical school is recognized by the government for the award of the Doctor of Medicine (or equivalent) degree.

To be eligible for examination, an international medical school student’s medical school must be listed in *IMED* and the medical school’s “Graduation Years” must be listed as “Current,” both at the time of application and at the time the student takes the exam. To be eligible for examination and for ECFMG Certification, an international medical graduate’s medical school and graduation year must be listed in *IMED*. Applicants can verify that they meet these requirements by accessing *IMED* from the ECFMG website at [www.ecfm.org](http://www.ecfm.org).

## CVS ON-LINE

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CVS ON-LINE provides web-based access to ECFMG's Certification Verification Service (CVS). International medical graduates may use CVS ON-LINE to request confirmation of their ECFMG certification status to be sent to medical licensing authorities in the United States. Authorized contacts for U.S. medical licensing authorities, residency programs, and employers may use CVS ON-LINE to request confirmation of the ECFMG certification status of international medical graduates.

## IAN — IMG Advisors Network

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The IMG Advisors Network (IAN) is a free, web-based service that connects qualified international medical students/graduates who plan to enter U.S. graduate medical education with advisors who can answer questions about living and working in the United States. IAN advisors are volunteers who are certified by ECFMG and have entered a U.S. training program. For detailed information and instructions on how to participate as either an advisor or an advisee, visit the Acculturation Program section of the ECFMG website.

## E-Newsletters

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Subscription to ECFMG's e-newsletters is free, and issues are delivered to subscribers by e-mail.

- ***The ECFMG® Reporter*** – [www.ecfmg.org/reporter](http://www.ecfmg.org/reporter)  
Important, updated information for international medical students and graduates pursuing ECFMG Certification and graduate medical education in the United States.
- ***ECFMG-ERAS News*** – [www.ecfmg.org/eras](http://www.ecfmg.org/eras)  
Important updates for international medical students and graduates using the Electronic Residency Application Service (ERAS) to apply for residency positions in U.S. programs of graduate medical education.
- ***The ECFMG Correspondent*** – [www.ecfmg.org/correspondent](http://www.ecfmg.org/correspondent)  
Issues of interest to ECFMG-certified physicians.

Changing your e-mail address using OASIS or Form 182 does not update your e-mail address in your e-newsletter subscription(s). To ensure that you continue to receive the latest information, update your subscription(s) when your e-mail address changes. If you are subscribed to one or more of ECFMG's e-mail newsletters and your e-mail address changes, you must update your e-mail address for **each** e-newsletter. To update your e-mail address, visit the Publications page of the ECFMG website, click on the newsletter(s) you receive, unsubscribe your old e-mail address, and subscribe your new e-mail address.

## CERTIFICATION NEWS

### Application Process Modified for Medical School Graduates

In May 2009, ECFMG modified the USMLE application process and the process for requesting Step 1/ Step 2 CK eligibility period extensions for international medical **graduates**.

ECFMG will not register an international medical graduate for USMLE, or extend his/her eligibility period, before receiving verification of the applicant's status as a medical school graduate directly from his/her medical school. This status must be verified in one of three ways:

- ECFMG receives primary-source verification of the applicant's medical education credentials; **or**
- The medical school verifies the applicant's graduate status through the ECFMG Medical School Web Portal (EMSWP); **or**
- The medical school verifies the applicant's graduate status through the applicant's *Certification of Identification Form* (Form 186).

If your medical education credentials have been primary-source verified by ECFMG, your medical school typically will not be required to reverify your graduate status in order for you to be registered for examination.

If your medical education credentials have not been primary-source verified by ECFMG, your status as a graduate must be verified before you will be registered for examination. The process by which your medical school will verify your graduate status varies depending on whether the medical school from which you graduated participates in EMSWP.

If the medical school from which you graduated participates in EMSWP, the medical school must verify your status as a graduate through EMSWP. Follow the instructions for applying for examination and submitting supporting documents, including Form 186 if you do not have one on file with ECFMG, in *Applying for Examination* on page 21. ECFMG will make your record available to your medical school and request verification of your graduate status typically within three weeks of receipt of your complete application. The time needed to complete the processing of your application is contingent upon your medical school's response to the EMSWP verification request. You will not be registered for examination until your medical school verifies your status.

If the medical school from which you graduated does not participate in EMSWP, the medical school must verify your status as a graduate through your Form 186. Because of this modification in the application process, you may be required to complete a new Form 186, even if you previously had a valid Form 186 on file with ECFMG. Follow the instructions for applying for examination and submitting supporting documents, including Form 186, if required, in *Applying for Examination* on page 21. Once your new Form 186 is accepted by ECFMG, it will remain valid for five years. During this five-year period, you will be able to complete the exam application process entirely on-line.

You can check the status of your medical education credentials and the validity of your Form 186 via ECFMG's OASIS. When you complete the on-line part of the exam application using ECFMG's Interactive Web Application (IWA), IWA will produce the appropriate versions of Form 186, which you will be able to print.

## ECFMG to Provide USMLE Performance Data to International Medical Schools

In late 2009, ECFMG will begin to provide international medical schools with data on the performance of their students/graduates who take USMLE. These data are made available in electronic format through the ECFMG Medical School Web Portal (EMSWP).

Data are available for USMLE exam administrations for students/graduates registered with ECFMG; this includes administrations of USMLE Step 1, USMLE Step 2 Clinical Knowledge (CK), and USMLE Step 2 Clinical Skills (CS). The data include whether each examinee passed the exam administration, and, for Step 1 and Step 2 CK, the examinee's numerical score on both two-digit and three-digit scales.

Examinees have the option to withhold their exam results from their medical school; data are not made available on examinees who exercise this option. To have the results of an exam administration withheld, you must submit a request through ECFMG's Interactive Web Application (IWA) at least 10 days before your scheduled test date. If you make this request, the score information provided to the medical school for that exam administration will list your name and the notation "record withheld at the request of the examinee." If you want your score for that exam administration reported to your medical school subsequently, you must request and pay for a USMLE transcript (See *USMLE Transcripts* on page 41 and *Official USMLE Transcripts and Providing Scores to Third Parties* in the *USMLE Bulletin of Information*).

Additionally, beginning in early 2010, ECFMG expects to start providing medical schools with aggregate USMLE performance data on their students/graduates. Aggregate data will be provided on an annual basis to medical schools that provide ECFMG with certain information relating to their student body, curriculum, and educational programs. The information provided by schools will be used by ECFMG's foundation, the Foundation for Advancement of International Medical Education and Research (FAIMER), in its ongoing efforts to develop data resources on medical education programs throughout the world.

International medical schools have long expressed interest in obtaining USMLE performance data on their students/graduates, and we expect these opportunities to obtain such data to be mutually beneficial for the medical schools and ECFMG.

## Eligibility for ECFMG's IMG Advisors Network Expanded

The IMG Advisors Network (IAN) is a free service that connects qualified international medical students/graduates who plan to enter U.S. graduate medical education with advisors who can answer questions about living and working in the United States. Among other criteria, these IAN advisors must be certified by ECFMG and have entered an ACGME-accredited graduate medical education program.

Starting with the 2009 Match, the eligibility criteria to participate in IAN as an advisee have been expanded. In addition to applicants for initial J-1 Exchange Visitor visa sponsorship by ECFMG, international medical students/graduates who are participating in the Electronic Residency Application Service (ERAS) **and** who have submitted a rank order list to the National Resident Matching Program (NRMP) are eligible to be advisees. For more information on IAN, visit the Acculturation Program section of the ECFMG website at [www.ecfm.org/acculturation](http://www.ecfm.org/acculturation) or send e-mail to [acculturation@ecfm.org](mailto:acculturation@ecfm.org).

## ECFMG to Pilot Electronic Primary-source Verification of Medical Education Credentials

In early 2010, ECFMG will begin to pilot electronic primary-source verification of medical education credentials through the ECFMG Medical School Web Portal (EMSWP). Monitor the ECFMG website for additional information.

## Biometric Identity Management System Implemented as Part of Test Day Procedures for Computer-based USMLE Examinations

In July 2009, the USMLE program began to adopt new check-in/check-out procedures consistent with Prometric's Biometric Identity Management System (BIMS) in most test centers for computer-based USMLE examinations (Step 1, Step 2 CK, and Step 3). BIMS is designed to improve the security and integrity of the testing process.

These new procedures include electronic capture of your identification, including your fingerprints and photograph, on the test day. These images and the identification document you provide on the test day will be paired with other personal information you have provided as part of the application process, including your name, address, telephone number, and date of birth or age, allowing accurate identification during the testing process. As you move in and out of the test lab at the test center, you will be able to use your finger to authenticate your identity using the scanners located in the test center, limiting or eliminating the need for you to provide additional identification throughout the test day to test center staff. Other standard procedures that are not part of the BIMS program will still apply; for example, you will be required to sign in and out during breaks. For additional information, refer to the USMLE website at [www.usmle.org](http://www.usmle.org) and the USMLE *Bulletin of Information*.

The personal information collected under the BIMS program will be stored in a centralized database for a maximum of 48 hours after your test day. Your biometric information will not be used by Prometric, USMLE, or USMLE program sponsors for purposes other than those stated in the *BIMS Privacy Notice for USMLE Candidates*, available on the USMLE website.

## Comprehensive Review of USMLE

In 2004, the USMLE Composite Committee called for a comprehensive review of the entire USMLE program to determine if the mission and purpose of USMLE are effectively and efficiently supported by the current design, structure, and format of the USMLE. The primary responsibility for this review was given to the Committee to Evaluate the USMLE Program (CEUP), reflecting perspectives of students, residents, fellows, Deans and Associate Deans, basic science and clinical faculty, international medical graduates, state medical boards, practicing physicians, and the public.

The CEUP report and the implications of its recommendations were carefully reviewed by the staff and governing bodies of the Federation of State Medical Boards of the United States, Inc., the National Board of Medical Examiners, and ECFMG. In 2009, the proposal for changes to the USMLE program was approved. Research, planning, and implementation have begun. Up-to-date information on the current status of this process is posted at the USMLE website at [www.usmle.org](http://www.usmle.org).

## The ECFMG® Reporter

Applicants who supply their e-mail addresses as part of the application process will automatically receive our electronic newsletter, *The ECFMG® Reporter*. *The ECFMG® Reporter* provides important information regarding the ECFMG certification process and entry into graduate medical education in the United States. *The ECFMG® Reporter* may also advise you of services and programs offered by other organizations in connection with the certification process or graduate medical education in the United States.

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## ACRONYM KEY

AAMC	Association of American Medical Colleges
ABMS	American Board of Medical Specialties
ACGME	Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education
AMA	American Medical Association
AOA	American Osteopathic Association
BIMS	Biometric Identity Management System
CD	Compact Disc
CIN	Candidate Identification Number
CK	Clinical Knowledge, a component of USMLE Step 2
CS	Clinical Skills, a component of USMLE Step 2
CSA	Clinical Skills Assessment, formerly administered by ECFMG
CSEC	Clinical Skills Evaluation Collaboration
CVS	Certification Verification Service
ECFMG	Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates
EMSWP	ECFMG Medical School Web Portal
ERAS	Electronic Residency Application Service
EVSP	Exchange Visitor Sponsorship Program
FAIMER	Foundation for Advancement of International Medical Education and Research
FLEX	Federation Licensing Examination
FMGEMS	Foreign Medical Graduate Examination in the Medical Sciences
FSMB	Federation of State Medical Boards of the United States, Inc.
GME	Graduate Medical Education
IAN	IMG Advisors Network
IMED	International Medical Education Directory
IMG	International Medical Graduate
IWA	Interactive Web Application
LCME	Liaison Committee on Medical Education
NBME	National Board of Medical Examiners
NRMP	National Resident Matching Program
OASIS	On-line Applicant Status and Information System
RODS	Return of Document Service, a service of ERAS Support Services at ECFMG
SP	Standardized Patient
TOEFL	Test of English as a Foreign Language
USMLE	United States Medical Licensing Examination
VQE	Visa Qualifying Examination

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## ECFMG Certification

### **1. *What is ECFMG Certification?***

Medical schools outside the United States and Canada vary in their educational standards and curricula. The purpose of ECFMG Certification is to assess whether graduates of these schools are ready to enter U.S. residency and fellowship programs that are accredited by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME). To be certified by ECFMG, you must pass a series of exams; you must also fulfill ECFMG's medical education credential requirements. These requirements include providing ECFMG with copies of your medical education credentials, which ECFMG will verify directly with your medical school. See *ECFMG Certification* on page 7.

### **2. *Why would I want to be certified by ECFMG?***

If you are an international medical graduate and wish to enter an ACGME-accredited residency or fellowship program in the United States, you must be certified by ECFMG before you can enter the program. You must be certified by ECFMG if you wish to take Step 3 of the three-step United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE). ECFMG Certification is also one of the requirements to obtain an unrestricted license to practice medicine in the United States. See *ECFMG Certification* on page 7.

### **3. *How can I find out if students/graduates of my medical school are eligible for ECFMG Certification?***

To be eligible for certification by ECFMG, among other requirements, your medical school must be listed in the *International Medical Education Directory (IMED)* of the Foundation for Advancement of International Medical Education and Research (FAIMER). If you are a medical school student and you want to apply for examination, your medical school must be listed in *IMED* and your medical school's "Graduation Years" must be listed as "Current," both at the time you apply for the exam and at the time you take the exam. If you are a medical school graduate, your medical school and graduation year must be listed in *IMED* to be eligible for examination and for ECFMG Certification. To verify that you meet these requirements, access *IMED* from the ECFMG website at [www.ecfm.org](http://www.ecfm.org). See *ECFMG Certification* on page 7.

### **4. *I am applying for an exam for the first time. What documentation do I need to submit?***

**If you are a medical school graduate when you submit your first exam application,** your medical education credentials must be submitted with this initial exam application.

**If you are a medical school student when you submit your first exam application,** you must send your medical education credentials as soon as you graduate and receive them.

If you have transferred credits to the medical school that awarded or will award your medical degree, you must document these credits when you apply for examination, regardless of whether you are a student or a graduate.

For more details on documents required at the time of application, see *Applying for Examination* on page 21 and *Provision of Credentials and Translations* on page 45.

### **5. *Can I send my credentials prior to submitting an exam application in order to determine my eligibility?***

No. You may not submit your credentials to ECFMG until you apply for an exam. If you send credentials to ECFMG before you apply for an exam, they will not be processed. To determine if you are eligible for examination, see *Eligibility for Examination* on page 19.

**6. How do I begin the certification process?**

The certification process begins when you apply to ECFMG for a USMLE/ECFMG Identification Number. The information you provide during the process of obtaining a USMLE/ECFMG Identification Number will become a part of your permanent ECFMG record.

**7. How do I get a USMLE/ECFMG Identification Number?**

Access IWA on the ECFMG website, where you can find instructions for obtaining a number on-line. When your request for a USMLE/ECFMG Identification Number has been processed, ECFMG will send your number to the e-mail address in your ECFMG record. You can then return to IWA and use this number to apply for examination.

**8. How long does the certification process take?**

The time required to complete the certification process is different for each applicant. You may apply for the required exams as soon as you meet the eligibility requirements for examination. All of the exams required for ECFMG Certification are offered continuously throughout the year.

Both medical school students and graduates may begin the certification process. However, since one of the requirements for ECFMG Certification is that your final medical diploma be verified by ECFMG with your medical school, you cannot complete the certification process until you graduate. The time required for some aspects of the certification process, such as the time required by your medical school to verify your medical education credentials, is beyond the control of ECFMG. See *ECFMG Certification* on page 7.

**9. In what order do I take the exams required for ECFMG Certification?**

Once you meet the eligibility requirements for examination, you can take the required exams in any order. See *Eligibility for Examination* on page 19.

**10. Is there an age limit on applying for ECFMG Certification?**

There is neither a minimum nor a maximum age requirement for applying for ECFMG Certification. To be eligible for ECFMG Certification, you must meet ECFMG's examination and medical education credential requirements. See *Requirements for ECFMG Certification* on page 7.

**11. Is there a minimum number of years I must practice medicine before I can apply for ECFMG Certification?**

No. To be eligible for ECFMG Certification, you must meet ECFMG's examination and medical education credential requirements. See *Requirements for ECFMG Certification* on page 7.

**USMLE Step 1 and Step 2 (CK and CS)**

**12. How can I apply for USMLE Step 1 and Step 2 (CK and CS)?**

Apply on-line using ECFMG's Interactive Web Application (IWA). For more information, see *Applying for Examination* on page 21, and visit ECFMG's website at [www.ecfm.org](http://www.ecfm.org).

**13. How can I prepare for the exams?**

Information on preparing for the exams is available in this booklet and in the *USMLE Bulletin of Information*. Orientation and practice materials for all Steps and Step Components, as well as additional information on

examination content and test formats, are available on the USMLE website at [www.usmle.org](http://www.usmle.org). If you are registered for an exam and cannot access the materials on the USMLE website, you may request a CD that contains most of the orientation and practice materials available on the USMLE website. To request a CD, submit a completed *Request for USMLE® Orientation Materials CD* (Form 108) to ECFMG. Form 108 is available on the Publications page of the ECFMG website. The National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME) offers web-based self-assessments to help medical students and graduates evaluate their readiness for Step 1 and Step 2 CK. See *Preparation* on page 35.

#### **14. When and where can I take Step 1 and Step 2?**

Step 1 and Step 2 (CK and CS) are offered continuously throughout the year. Applicants registered for these exams are assigned an eligibility period during which they must take the exam. See *When to Apply* on page 27 and *Eligibility Periods* on page 29.

Step 1 and Step 2 CK are offered worldwide at test centers of Prometric™. For information on Prometric test centers offering USMLE, visit the Prometric website at [www.prometric.com](http://www.prometric.com). Step 2 CS is administered at test centers in Atlanta, Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, and Philadelphia in the United States. For all exams, see *Testing Locations* on page 28.

#### **15. How do I fulfill the clinical skills requirement for ECFMG Certification?**

USMLE Step 2 CS is the exam currently administered that satisfies the clinical skills requirement for ECFMG Certification. If you have passed the former ECFMG Clinical Skills Assessment (CSA®), you will not be required to pass Step 2 CS for ECFMG Certification. See *Clinical Skills Requirement* on page 18.

#### **16. Do I need to graduate from medical school before taking the exams?**

Both students and graduates may take the exams. To take the exams, medical school students must have completed at least two years of medical school. This eligibility requirement means that students must have completed the basic medical science component of the medical school curriculum. Other eligibility requirements apply to both students and graduates. See *Eligibility for Examination* on page 19.

#### **17. What if I cannot take an exam once I have registered? Are my exam fees refundable?**

Once registered, you cannot cancel or postpone your registration (except as described below for Step 1/Step 2 CK). If you do not take the exam, you will not receive a refund or credit of your exam fee(s). For detailed information on ECFMG's payment policy, see *Payment* on page 14.

Although you cannot cancel your registration, there are options that provide flexibility. Registered applicants can change their test date and/or test center, subject to availability. See *Rescheduling* on page 34. If you are unable to take Step 1/Step 2 CK during your assigned eligibility period, you can request an extension of your eligibility period for a fee. See *Eligibility Period Extension* on page 30. If you are unable to obtain the appropriate visa to enter the United States to take Step 2 CS, you may request a full refund of the exam fee. See *Refunds* on page 15.

#### **18. Is there a limit to the number of times I can take an exam?**

**For the purpose of ECFMG Certification**, there is no limit on the number of times you can take a Step or Step Component you have not passed. If you fail or do not complete a Step or Step Component, you may retake it, but you must reapply and pay the appropriate fee(s). Certain restrictions apply when retaking the same Step or Step Component. Once you pass a Step or Step Component, you may not repeat it, and you will have seven years to pass the other Step(s) or Step Component(s) required for ECFMG Certification. See *Time Limit for Completing Examination Requirements* on page 18 and *Reexamination and Reapplication* on page 43.

**For the purpose of medical licensure**, the USMLE program recommends to state medical licensing authorities that they require applicants to pass the full USMLE sequence (including Step 3, which is not required for ECFMG Certification) within a seven-year period. The USMLE program also recommends to state medical licensing authorities a limit on the number of attempts allowed to pass each Step or Step Component. See *Time Limit and Number of Attempts Allowed to Complete All Steps and Retakes* in the *USMLE Bulletin of Information*. Most state medical licensing authorities accept the USMLE-recommended limits, but some do not. You should contact the FSMB for general information and the medical licensing authority of the jurisdiction where you plan to apply for licensure for definitive information, since licensure requirements vary among jurisdictions.

## ECFMG Medical School Web Portal (EMSWP)

### **19. What is EMSWP?**

The ECFMG Medical School Web Portal (EMSWP) is an on-line service for international medical schools. Through EMSWP schools have access to a free, web-based program that enables them to verify the status of their students and graduates who apply to ECFMG for examination. In late 2009, international medical schools will also be able to use EMSWP to obtain data on the performance of their students and graduates who take USMLE. ECFMG is currently working to expand EMSWP to allow for the web-based primary-source verification of medical education credentials and the electronic submission by international medical schools of certain supporting documents for their students and graduates who participate in the Electronic Residency Application Service (ERAS).

Participation in EMSWP is open to all international medical schools; however, participation is voluntary and is at the discretion of the officials of the individual medical schools.

## Interactive Web Application (IWA)

### **20. What is a Certification of Identification Form (Form 186)?**

The *Certification of Identification Form* (Form 186) is the paper certification required by ECFMG for applicants who are medical school graduates or are students enrolled in medical schools that participate in EMSWP. Form 186 requires that an authorized official certify the applicant's identity. Once accepted by ECFMG, Form 186 remains valid for five years. During this five-year period, eligible students and graduates may submit on-line exam applications and requests to extend Step 1 and Step 2 CK eligibility periods without completing another paper certification. See *Applying for Examination* on page 21.

### **21. What is the difference between a Certification Statement (Form 183) and a Certification of Identification Form (Form 186)?**

The *Certification Statement* (Form 183) is the paper certification required by ECFMG for applicants who are students enrolled in medical schools that do not participate in EMSWP. A new Form 183 is generated with each on-line application. See *Applying for Examination* on page 21.

The *Certification of Identification Form* (Form 186) is the paper certification required by ECFMG for applicants who are medical school graduates or are students enrolled in medical schools that participate in EMSWP. Once accepted by ECFMG, Form 186 remains valid for five years. During this five-year period, eligible students and graduates may submit on-line exam applications and requests to extend Step 1 and Step 2 CK eligibility periods without completing another paper certification. See *Applying for Examination* on page 21.

**22. Do I have to complete a new Certification of Identification Form (Form 186) every time I apply for an examination?**

No. Once the *Certification of Identification Form* (Form 186) is accepted by ECFMG, it is valid for five years. Applicants with a valid Form 186 can apply for exams or request Step 1 and Step 2 CK eligibility period extensions using IWA by completing only the on-line part of the application.

**23. What is a clinical clerkship?**

The term *clinical clerkship* refers to that period in your medical education in the clinical disciplines during which, as a medical student, you gain practical experience in hospitals or clinics through rotations, pregraduate internships, etc.

## Medical Education Credentials

**24. What is a final medical school transcript?**

The final medical school transcript is an official document that is the record of the graduate's medical education, issued by the medical school or university, upon or after graduation.

The format of the final medical school transcript may vary among institutions. The final medical school transcript contains the name of the medical school or university and the name of the graduate. Other items that may be contained in the final medical school transcript include, but are not limited to, the dates of attendance, courses taken, credits for each course, grade in each course, summary of transfer credits accepted and the name of the institution from which the credits were accepted, title of the degree awarded, date degree was awarded, program of study (i.e., medicine), and date the transcript was issued.

**25. Do I need to send my final medical school transcript to ECFMG?**

When ECFMG sends your medical diploma to your medical school for verification, ECFMG will request the medical school to include your final medical school transcript when the school returns the verification of your medical diploma to ECFMG. If ECFMG is unable to obtain your final medical school transcript directly from your medical school, ECFMG will contact you and request that you submit to ECFMG two photocopies of your final medical school transcript. You must also send two photocopies of the final medical school transcript to ECFMG if ECFMG has previously verified your medical diploma with your medical school but not the final medical school transcript. In these instances, ECFMG will then send a copy of your final medical school transcript to your medical school for verification. See *Provision of Credentials and Translations* on page 45.

**26. What are transfer credits?**

Transfer credits are credits earned for a course taken at one institution (such as a medical school) that are accepted by another medical school toward meeting its degree requirements. For example, a student attends a medical school for one year and earns credits for 12 courses. The student transfers to another medical school, which accepts the credits for those 12 courses toward meeting its degree requirements. The credits for those 12 courses are then referred to as transfer credits.

**27. I transferred credits from one medical school to the medical school that awarded my medical degree. I earned these credits prior to January 1, 2008. Must I document these credits when I apply to ECFMG for examination?**

Yes. All applicants who have transferred credits to the medical school that awarded or will award their medical degree must document these credits when they apply to ECFMG for examination, regardless of when the credits were earned. To document these credits, you must send to ECFMG two photocopies of an official transcript issued by the medical school or institution at which the course was taken. For instructions, see *Transfer Credits* on page 44 and *Provision of Credentials and Translations* on page 45.

**28. How will I know if ECFMG has received verification of my medical diploma and transcript from my medical school?**

ECFMG will notify you when it sends the request for verification of your medical education credentials to your medical school. After ECFMG receives the verification of your diploma and/or your final medical school transcript from your medical school and evaluates it, ECFMG will send you another notification. You can check the status of your medical education credentials using OASIS (see page v). See *Verification of Credentials* on page 49.

## Fifth Pathway Program

**29. What if I am attending or have completed a Fifth Pathway program?**

If you are attending or have completed a Fifth Pathway program, see *The Fifth Pathway Program* on page 51.

## Payment

**30. What are the exam fees and how do I pay them?**

For all exams, there is an examination fee. For Step 1 and Step 2 CK, there is an additional international test delivery surcharge, if you choose a testing region other than the United States/Canada. For the current exam fees and international test delivery surcharges, refer to the ECFMG website at [www.ecfmg.org/fees.html](http://www.ecfmg.org/fees.html).

If you apply for an exam or request a service on-line, you can pay the required fees **on-line** with a credit card (Visa, MasterCard, or Discover) or with an electronic payment from your U.S. checking account. If you submit a paper request for service and you have a USMLE/ECFMG Identification Number, you can make an advance on-line payment through OASIS using one of the payment methods described above. All applicants submitting paper requests can pay by credit card or check with their paper request forms. Payment for all services is due at the time of application. **If you do not include full payment, your application/request for service will be rejected.** See *Payment* on page 14.

## ECFMG CERTIFICATION

The Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG), through its program of certification, assesses whether international medical graduates are ready to enter residency or fellowship programs in the United States that are accredited by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME). ECFMG Certification is a requirement for international medical graduates who wish to enter such programs.

ECFMG Certification assures directors of ACGME-accredited residency and fellowship programs, and the people of the United States, that international medical graduates have met minimum standards of eligibility to enter such programs. ECFMG Certification does not, however, guarantee that these graduates will be accepted into programs, since the number of applicants typically exceeds the number of available positions.

ECFMG Certification is also one of the eligibility requirements for international medical graduates to take Step 3 of the three-step United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE). Medical licensing authorities in the United States require ECFMG Certification, among other requirements, to obtain an unrestricted license to practice medicine.

ECFMG and its organizational members define an international medical graduate as a physician who received his/her basic medical degree or qualification from a medical school located outside the United States and Canada\*. Citizens of the United States who have completed their medical education in schools outside the United States and Canada are considered international medical graduates; non-U.S. citizens who have graduated from medical schools in the United States and Canada are not considered international medical graduates.

To be eligible for ECFMG Certification, the physician's medical school and graduation year must be listed in the *International Medical Education Directory (IMED)* of the Foundation for Advancement of International Medical Education and Research (FAIMER). To verify that a particular medical school and graduation year are listed, access *IMED* from the ECFMG website at [www.ecfmg.org](http://www.ecfmg.org).

### Requirements for ECFMG Certification

To be eligible for certification by ECFMG, international medical graduates must meet the following examination and medical education credential requirements.

#### Examination Requirements

The examination requirements for ECFMG Certification include passing Step 1 and Step 2 of the USMLE. The Step 2 exam has two separately administered components, the Clinical Knowledge (CK) component and the Clinical Skills (CS) component.

**IMPORTANT NOTE: Passing performance on an English language proficiency test (such as the Test of English as a Foreign Language™ [TOEFL®]) is no longer a requirement for ECFMG Certification.**

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\* The United States and Canada refer to the geographic locations where citizens are issued passports by the governments of either the United States or Canada.

To meet the examination requirements for ECFMG Certification, applicants must:

**1. Satisfy the medical science examination requirement.**

Step 1 and Step 2 CK of the USMLE are the exams currently administered that satisfy this requirement. To meet the medical science examination requirement for ECFMG Certification, applicants must pass both Step 1 and Step 2 CK within a specified period of time.

**2. Satisfy the clinical skills requirement.**

Step 2 CS of the USMLE is the exam currently administered that satisfies this requirement. Specific time limits for passing Step 2 CS for ECFMG Certification may apply.

For detailed information, including information on time limits for completing the examinations for ECFMG Certification and using a passing performance on former exams to satisfy these requirements, see *Examination Requirements* on page 17.

## Medical Education Credential Requirements

The physician's medical school and graduation year must be listed in the *International Medical Education Directory (IMED)*, available from the ECFMG website. International medical graduates must have been awarded credit for at least four credit years (academic years for which credit has been given toward completion of the medical curriculum) by a medical school that is listed in *IMED*. There are restrictions on credits transferred to the medical school that awards an applicant's medical degree that can be used to meet this requirement. See *Transfer Credits* on page 44.

*IMED* is maintained by the Foundation for Advancement of International Medical Education and Research (FAIMER), a nonprofit foundation of ECFMG. *IMED* contains information supplied by countries about their medical schools. FAIMER is not an accrediting agency.

Applicants must document the completion of all requirements for, and receipt of, the **final medical diploma**. ECFMG verifies every applicant's medical school diploma with the appropriate officials of the medical school that issued the diploma and requests that the medical school provide the **final medical school transcript**. Verification by ECFMG with the issuing school may also be required for transcripts that are submitted by applicants to document transferred credits. See *Medical Education Credentials* on page 44.

**IMPORTANT NOTE: Submitting altered or falsified documents to ECFMG may be sufficient cause for ECFMG to bar you from an exam, to terminate your participation in an exam, to withhold and/or invalidate the results of an exam, to withhold a certificate, revoke a certificate, or to take other appropriate action. ECFMG will report findings of irregular behavior to the FSMB Board Action Databank, state medical licensing authorities, and directors of graduate medical education programs, among others. ECFMG may also report such findings to the USMLE Committee on Irregular Behavior and Score Validity and to any other organization or individual who, in the judgment of ECFMG, has a legitimate interest in such information.**

**In all cases when the ECFMG Medical Education Credentials Committee has made a finding of irregular behavior, a permanent annotation will be included in the individual's ECFMG Status Report and ECFMG Certification Verification Service (CVS) Report. If there is a finding of irregular behavior made on or after August 31, 2006, regardless of the date of the conduct or activity that gave rise to the finding, additional information explaining the basis for the finding of irregular behavior and the resulting action will accompany every ECFMG Status Report and CVS Report. This additional information may also be provided to legitimately interested entities. See *Irregular Behavior* on pages 15 and 50.**

## Standard ECFMG Certificate

ECFMG issues the Standard ECFMG Certificate to applicants who meet all of the examination and medical education credential requirements. Applicants must also pay any outstanding charges on their ECFMG financial accounts before their certificates are issued. Standard ECFMG Certificates are sent approximately two weeks after all of these requirements have been met. Currently, ECFMG sends the Standard ECFMG Certificate to the applicant's address of record by Federal Express. If the address in your ECFMG record is a U.S. post office box, the certificate will be sent by certified mail.

The Standard ECFMG Certificate includes:

- The name of the applicant;
- The applicant's USMLE/ECFMG Identification Number;
- The dates that the examination requirements were met; and
- The date that the certificate was issued.

**IMPORTANT NOTE: Prior to June 14, 2004, passing performances on an English language proficiency test and the ECFMG Clinical Skills Assessment (CSA) were requirements for ECFMG Certification. Passing performances on these exams were subject to expiration for the purpose of entering U.S. programs of graduate medical education; Standard ECFMG Certificates based on these exams may list "valid through" dates, the dates through which the passing performances are valid for this purpose. Effective June 14, 2004, some of these examinations are no longer subject to expiration, regardless of whether a "valid through" date is listed on the Standard ECFMG Certificate. See *Validity of Examinations for Entry into Graduate Medical Education*, below.**

Applicants may use the Standard ECFMG Certificate to enter an accredited program of graduate medical education in the United States.

## Validity of Examinations for Entry into Graduate Medical Education

### Clinical Skills Examinations

For applicants who satisfy the clinical skills requirement for ECFMG Certification by passing Step 2 CS, this passing performance is not subject to expiration for the purpose of entering programs of graduate medical education.

For applicants who satisfied the clinical skills requirement for ECFMG Certification by passing the former ECFMG CSA and an English language proficiency test, passing performance on the CSA may be subject to expiration for the purpose of entering graduate medical education, as described below.

- Passing performances on CSA administrations that took place on or after June 14, 2001 are not subject to expiration for the purpose of entering graduate medical education programs. If you are certified by ECFMG and your Standard ECFMG Certificate lists a "valid through" date for an administration of the CSA that took place on or after June 14, 2001, you may request a permanent validation sticker (indicating the CSA passing performance is "valid indefinitely" for entry into graduate medical education) that you can affix to your certificate. To request a sticker, access OASIS on the ECFMG website.
- Passing performances on CSA administrations that took place before June 14, 2001 are valid for three years from the date passed for the purpose of entering graduate medical education programs. The date through which passing performance on the CSA remains valid for entry into graduate medical education (the CSA "valid through" date) will be listed on the applicant's Standard ECFMG Certificate. If the applicant entered a program before expiration of the valid through date, the applicant may request permanent validation. This means that the CSA date is no longer subject to expiration. To request permanent validation, the applicant and an authorized official of the training institution must complete a *Request for Permanent Validation* (Form 246), available on the Publications page of the ECFMG website and from ECFMG, upon request.

On receipt of this form, ECFMG will provide a permanent validation sticker to be affixed to the certificate. If an applicant who passed CSA before June 14, 2001 did not enter a program within three years of the CSA pass date, the applicant's CSA passing performance has expired for the purpose of entering graduate medical education. Before entering a program, these applicants must pass Step 2 CS. Passing performance on Step 2 CS does not expire for the purpose of entry into graduate medical education.

### **English Examinations**

Passing performances on the English language proficiency test formerly required by ECFMG (such as the TOEFL exam or the former ECFMG English Test) are not subject to expiration for the purpose of entering graduate medical education programs, regardless of the date passed. If you are certified by ECFMG and your Standard ECFMG Certificate lists a "valid through" date for an English language proficiency test, you may request a permanent validation sticker that you can affix to your certificate. To request a sticker, access OASIS.

### **Requesting Duplicate Permanent Validation Stickers**

If you lost or did not receive your permanent validation sticker(s), you may request duplicates by completing a *Request for Duplicate Permanent Validation Sticker* (Form 296). Form 296 is available on the Publications page of the ECFMG website and from ECFMG, upon request.

**IMPORTANT NOTE: The preceding discussion of validity and expiration of examinations, and the "valid through" and "valid indefinitely" designations on the Standard ECFMG Certificate (if applicable), are relevant only for the purpose of entry into programs of graduate medical education in the United States. They do not pertain to eligibility for USMLE Step 3 or to any time limits imposed by medical licensing authorities or other entities for the completion of all USMLE Steps.**

### Confirmation of ECFMG Certification Status – ECFMG's Certification Verification Service

ECFMG's Certification Verification Service provides primary-source confirmation of the ECFMG certification status of international medical graduates. The Joint Commission, the organization that evaluates and accredits U.S. health care organizations and programs, has determined that direct verification with ECFMG of a physician's certification status satisfies The Joint Commission's requirement for primary-source verification of medical school completion for graduates of international medical schools.

ECFMG will confirm your certification status when a request is received from a medical licensing authority, residency program director, hospital, or other organization that, in the judgment of ECFMG, has a legitimate interest in such information. For status reports sent to **medical licensing authorities**, the request can also be made by you. Requesting organizations must normally secure and retain your signed authorization to obtain certification information. Please note that there may be a fee for this service.

Requests for confirmation must contain your name, date of birth, USMLE/ECFMG Identification Number, and name and address of the organization to which the confirmation should be sent. To obtain the appropriate request form or to make an on-line request, visit the ECFMG website at [www.ecfm.org/cvs](http://www.ecfm.org/cvs). Confirmations are sent to the requesting organization within approximately two weeks. Confirmations are not sent to applicants directly.

If the requesting organization requests to receive a paper report and does not receive the report, ECFMG will honor requests for duplicate reports at no additional cost up to 90 days after the date that the original report was processed.

If you apply to residency programs through ERAS, ECFMG will send an electronic ECFMG Status Report automatically to all of the programs to which you apply. If your ECFMG certification status changes during the ERAS application season, ECFMG will send an updated status report automatically to all programs to which you have applied.

## GENERAL APPLICANT INFORMATION

Before you apply to ECFMG for examination or other services, please review the following information. The information in this section pertains to all services for which you may apply with ECFMG.

**IMPORTANT NOTE: Application and other requests for services will not be processed if it is determined that doing so would be considered violative of any applicable federal laws or regulations.**

### USMLE/ECFMG Identification Number

Before you apply for the first time to ECFMG for an exam, you must obtain a USMLE/ECFMG Identification Number. You can obtain a USMLE/ECFMG Identification Number by accessing IWA on the ECFMG website.

**The information you provide during the process of obtaining a USMLE/ECFMG Identification Number will become a part of your permanent ECFMG record.** If you fail to provide your correct and current legal name, you will be required to submit acceptable documentation, as described in *Changing or Verifying Your Name* on page 12, to change the name in your ECFMG record. If ECFMG determines that the biographic information you submit is inaccurate, not complete, or insufficient to assign a USMLE/ECFMG Identification Number to you, your request for the USMLE/ECFMG Identification Number will not be processed.

Once ECFMG informs you of your number, you must include it on all communications, applications, medical education credentials, request forms, and payments that you send to ECFMG. You will also need your USMLE/ECFMG Identification Number to use ECFMG's on-line services (see page v).

Your USMLE/ECFMG Identification Number cannot be changed. If you forget or lose your USMLE/ECFMG Identification Number, you can obtain it by accessing IWA on the ECFMG website or by contacting ECFMG. To protect the privacy of applicants, ECFMG will not provide USMLE/ECFMG Identification Numbers by telephone.

**IMPORTANT NOTE: As part of the process of obtaining an Identification Number and/or applying for examination, you will be asked whether you have applied to ECFMG and/or the National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME) previously. If you have submitted a prior exam application to either organization, you must answer "Yes" to the applicable question(s), even if you submitted the prior application under a different name or did not take the exam for which you applied. You must answer "Yes" regardless of whether you submitted an on-line application or a paper application. If you have submitted an application to ECFMG or NBME but indicate subsequently that you have not applied previously, this may result in a finding of irregular behavior. See *Irregular Behavior* on pages 15 and 42.**

### Name of Applicant

You must ensure that the name in your ECFMG record is your correct and current legal name. This name will appear on your Standard ECFMG Certificate once you have met all requirements for certification. You must use this name consistently in all communications you send to ECFMG, including exam applications and requests for other services. Failure to use the name in your ECFMG record consistently in all communications with ECFMG may delay exam registration. It may also prevent you from taking an exam for which you are registered and scheduled.

You can check the name in your ECFMG record on-line using OASIS. If you legally change your name, you must submit acceptable documentation to ECFMG to change the name in your ECFMG record. See *Changing or Verifying Your Name* on page 12.

- The name you submit on your **application** will appear on your exam **scheduling permit**. The name on your scheduling permit, including the spelling, must match **exactly** the name on the form(s) of **identification** you present at the test center. See *Acceptable Identification* on page 38.

If you change the name in your ECFMG record while you are registered for an exam, a new scheduling permit reflecting this change will be issued; you can print the new scheduling permit by accessing IWA on the ECFMG website. You must bring the new scheduling permit to the test center on your exam date. Name changes must be received **and processed** by ECFMG no later than seven business days before your testing appointment, or you will not be able to test.

If you have a valid *Certification of Identification Form* (Form 186) on file with ECFMG, it will be invalidated when the name in your ECFMG record is changed, and you will be required to complete a new *Certification of Identification Form* (Form 186) the next time you apply for examination.

If the name on your **scheduling permit** has been misspelled, contact ECFMG immediately by e-mail at info@ecfm.org or by telephone or fax (see *General Inquiries* on page ii).

- If the name on your **medical diploma, transcript, or other credential** does not match **exactly** the name in your **ECFMG record**, you must submit documentation, as described in *Changing or Verifying Your Name*, below, that **verifies** the name on your medical diploma, transcript, or other credential is (or was) your name. See *Name on Medical Diploma and Transcript(s)* on page 47 for examples of common name discrepancies that require name **verification**.

### Changing or Verifying Your Name

If you have legally changed your name and want to request a **change** of name in your ECFMG record, send a completed *Request to Change Applicant Biographic Information* (Form 182) to ECFMG. Form 182 is available on the Publications page of the ECFMG website and from ECFMG, upon request. Form 182 requires you to provide an explanation of the reason for the name change and must be accompanied by a photocopy of the appropriate document(s), as defined on Form 182. ECFMG must be able to determine from the document(s) you submit that your name has legally changed from the name currently in your ECFMG record to the name you are requesting to appear in your record. This means that it may be necessary for you to submit more than one document to support your name change request. For the purpose of **changing** your name, the document(s) you provide must be **unexpired** (if applicable). These documents may include:

- Passport (including the pages with your photograph and the expiration date)
- Birth certificate
- Marriage certificate
- Official court order
- U.S. Resident Alien Card
- U.S. Naturalization Certificate

Attestations and affidavits are **not** acceptable as documentation to change or verify your name.

Please do not submit an original document; a photocopy of the document is sufficient.

If the name in your ECFMG record is correct but this name does not match **exactly** your name as listed on your medical diploma, transcript, or other credential, you must **verify** that the name on these documents is (or was) your name. To verify your name, send to ECFMG a photocopy of one of the acceptable documents listed above that verifies the name on your medical diploma, transcript, or other credential.

As an alternative to one of the documents listed above, ECFMG will accept for purposes of verifying your name a letter from the Dean, Vice Dean, or Registrar of your medical school that verifies that the name on your

medical diploma, transcript, or other credential is (or was) your name. If you choose to submit a letter from your medical school to verify the name on your medical diploma, transcript, or other credential, the letter must be signed by the Dean, Vice Dean, or Registrar. The letter you submit must be written on your medical school's letterhead. The letter must include the following statement:

**This certifies that the names [name on document] and [name in ECFMG record] belong to one and the same person.**

The document(s) you send must show your name exactly as it appears on your medical diploma/transcript.

All documents submitted to change or verify your name that are not in English must be accompanied by an official English translation that meets ECFMG's translation requirements; see *English Translations* on page 49.

All documents submitted to change or verify your name, including translations, will become a part of your permanent ECFMG record and will not be returned to you.

**IMPORTANT NOTE: If you have a valid *Certification of Identification Form (Form 186)* on file with ECFMG, it will be invalidated when the name in your ECFMG record is changed, and you will be required to complete a new *Certification of Identification Form (Form 186)* the next time you apply for examination.**

## Contact Information

The contact information in your ECFMG record consists of your e-mail and mailing addresses, your telephone number, and your fax number (if applicable). If you provide an e-mail address, ECFMG will send information on the status of your exam applications by e-mail. You will also need an e-mail address to use ECFMG's on-line services (see page v). Be sure to include a complete mailing address even if you supply an e-mail address. Certain ECFMG correspondence, including your Standard ECFMG Certificate, requires a full mailing address.

You should ensure that the contact information in your ECFMG record is current. You can check and update your contact information on-line using OASIS. You can also update your contact information by submitting a completed *Request to Change Applicant Biographic Information (Form 182)* to ECFMG. Form 182 is available on the Publications page of the ECFMG website and from ECFMG, upon request. You cannot submit changes to your contact information to ECFMG by e-mail. ECFMG will not process changes to contact information received from any person other than the applicant.

Changing your e-mail address using OASIS or Form 182 does not update your e-mail address in your e-newsletter subscription(s). If you are subscribed to one or more of ECFMG's e-mail newsletters, such as *The ECFMG® Reporter* (see page vii), and your e-mail address changes, you must update your e-mail address for **each** e-newsletter. To update your e-mail address in your e-newsletter subscription(s), visit the Publications page of the ECFMG website, click on the newsletter(s) you receive, unsubscribe your old e-mail address, and subscribe your new e-mail address.

To protect the privacy of applicants, ECFMG will e-mail applicant-specific information only to the e-mail address in the applicant's ECFMG record. If your e-mail inquiry requires a specific response, you must send your inquiry from the e-mail address in your ECFMG record.

All correspondence with ECFMG, including e-mails, will become a part of your permanent ECFMG record.

## Payment

Full payment for all services is due at the time of application. **If the funds in your ECFMG financial account are not sufficient to cover all fees, your application or other service request will be rejected.** If you apply for more than one exam at the same time, you must pay applicable fees for **all** exams, or your application will be rejected.

If you apply for an exam or request a service **on-line**, you can pay on-line at the time of application/request by:

- **Credit card** – Visa, MasterCard, or Discover.
- **Electronic check** – To use this option, you must have a checking account at a U.S. bank and either a U.S. Social Security Number or U.S. driver's license.

If you apply for an exam or request a service **on-line** and you have a USMLE/ECFMG Identification Number, you can also pay in advance using one of the payment methods described above by accessing OASIS on the ECFMG website. You can also pay in advance by sending a payment to ECFMG using *Payment for Service(s) Requested* (Form 900), available on the Publications page of the ECFMG website. If you submit payment using Form 900, you can pay by:

- **Credit card** – Visa, MasterCard, or Discover.
- **Check, bank draft, or money order** made payable to the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (or ECFMG). All payments must be made in U.S. funds through a U.S. bank. **You must write your full name and USMLE/ECFMG Identification Number on your payment.**

If you submit a **paper** request for service and have a USMLE/ECFMG Identification Number, you can make an advance on-line payment using OASIS, as described above.

If you pay in advance, you should verify that the payment has been received and credited to your ECFMG financial account before you begin the IWA application or request process. You can verify the status of your ECFMG financial account on-line using OASIS.

**IMPORTANT NOTE: If you need to make multiple credit card transactions to pay for an exam or service, you must make these payments to your ECFMG financial account in advance using OASIS or by submitting multiple copies of Form 900.**

All applicants who submit **paper** requests can pay by completing the payment section of the paper request form. If you complete the payment section of the paper request form, you can pay by:

- **Credit card** – Visa, MasterCard, or Discover.
- **Check, bank draft, or money order** made payable to the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (or ECFMG). All payments must be made in U.S. funds through a U.S. bank. **You must write your full name and USMLE/ECFMG Identification Number, if one has been assigned, on your payment.**

Do **not** send payments in cash.

**If you owe money to ECFMG** at the time that your application/service request is processed, ECFMG will apply the payment included with your application/service request to the amount that you owe. Any money that is left after this will be used to pay for the exam(s)/service that you request. If there is not enough money remaining to pay for the exam(s)/service you request, your application/request for service will be rejected.

**If you have money in your ECFMG financial account** at the time that your application/service request is processed, it will be used to pay for the next exam/service request processed by ECFMG.

If your application/service request is rejected, any payment received with that application/request will be credited to your ECFMG financial account.

You can check the status of your ECFMG financial account and make on-line payments using OASIS. ECFMG's on-line payment is secured using industry-standard encryption technology.

All fees are in U.S. dollars. Fees are subject to change without notice. For a current schedule of fees, refer to the ECFMG website at [www.ecfm.org/fees.html](http://www.ecfm.org/fees.html).

## Refunds

If you have money in your ECFMG financial account and will not request additional exams/services, you may send a written request to ECFMG for a refund. If the money in your account was a payment for an exam application that was rejected (because you were not eligible or the application was incomplete or otherwise deficient), your refund will be subject to a \$100 processing fee.

**IMPORTANT NOTE: You should consider carefully the timing of your exam application, eligibility period, and test date. Once registered, you cannot cancel or postpone your registration. If you do not schedule and take the exam, you will not receive a refund or credit of your exam fee(s), and you will be required to reapply, including payment of all applicable fees, to take the exam.**

**Although you cannot cancel or postpone your registration, there are options that provide registered applicants with flexibility. All registered applicants may change their scheduled test date and/or center, subject to availability (see *Rescheduling* on page 34). Applicants registered for Step 1/Step 2 CK may request extension of their eligibility periods (see *Eligibility Period Extension* on page 30). Applicants registered for Step 2 CS who are unable to obtain the appropriate visa to enter the United States to take the exam may request a full refund of the exam fee. Other requests for exceptions from Step 2 CS applicants are considered on a case-by-case basis. ECFMG will consider requests for exceptions only after the applicant's eligibility period has expired.**

## Irregular Behavior

As defined by ECFMG, irregular behavior includes, "all actions or attempted actions on the part of applicants, examinees, potential applicants, others when solicited by an applicant and/or examinee, or any other person that would or could subvert the examination, certification or other processes of the ECFMG." Examples of irregular behavior include, but are not limited to, submission of any falsified or altered document to ECFMG; submission of any falsified or altered ECFMG document to other entities or individuals; falsification of information on application forms; and failing to comply with a USMLE or ECFMG policy, procedure, and/or rule.

The ECFMG Medical Education Credentials Committee and/or the USMLE Committee on Irregular Behavior and Score Validity review allegations of irregular behavior. If the ECFMG Medical Education Credentials Committee determines that you engaged in irregular behavior, a permanent annotation will be included in your ECFMG Status Report and ECFMG Certification Verification Service (CVS) Report. If there is a finding of irregular behavior made on or after August 31, 2006, regardless of the date of the conduct or activity that gave rise to the finding, additional information explaining the basis for the finding of irregular behavior and the resulting action will accompany every ECFMG Status Report and CVS Report. This additional information may also be provided to legitimately interested entities.

Furthermore, ECFMG may bar you from an exam, terminate your participation in an exam, withhold and/or invalidate the results of your exam, withhold a certificate, revoke a certificate, or take other appropriate action. ECFMG will report findings of irregular behavior to the FSMB Board Action Databank, state medical licensing authorities, and directors of graduate medical education programs, among others. ECFMG may also report such findings to the USMLE Committee on Irregular Behavior and Score Validity and to any other organization or individual who, in the judgment of ECFMG, has a legitimate interest in such information.

If the USMLE Committee on Irregular Behavior and Score Validity determines that you engaged in irregular behavior, information regarding this determination becomes part of your USMLE record. Your score report (if applicable) and USMLE transcript will contain a notation regarding the irregular behavior. You may also be barred from examination, or your exam results may be withheld or invalidated.

For examples of irregular behavior and its consequences, see *Irregular Behavior* on pages 42 and 50 and *Irregular Behavior* in the *USMLE Bulletin of Information*.

## EXAMINATION REQUIREMENTS

Applicants for ECFMG Certification must satisfy both the medical science examination and clinical skills requirements. To satisfy these requirements, applicants must pass Step 1 and Step 2 of the United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE). Step 2 of the USMLE has two separately administered components, the Clinical Knowledge (CK) component and the Clinical Skills (CS) component.

### The United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE)

The USMLE is the three-step examination for medical licensure in the United States. The USMLE provides a common system to evaluate applicants for medical licensure. The USMLE is sponsored by the Federation of State Medical Boards of the United States, Inc. (FSMB) and the National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME). The USMLE is governed by a committee consisting of representatives of FSMB, NBME, ECFMG, and the American public. If you apply for examination, you are **required** to read the USMLE *Bulletin of Information* for complete information on the USMLE. The *Bulletin of Information* is available on the USMLE website at [www.usmle.org](http://www.usmle.org).

### Registration Entity and Test Delivery Entity

#### Step 1 and Step 2

ECFMG serves as the registration entity for international medical students/graduates taking Step 1 and Step 2 (CK and CS). This means that ECFMG processes your application and payment, determines your eligibility, and notifies you of the outcome of your application. The NBME serves as the registration entity for students/graduates of U.S. and Canadian medical school programs accredited by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) and U.S. medical schools accredited by the American Osteopathic Association (AOA).

For eligible Step 1/Step 2 CK applicants, ECFMG forwards registration information to NBME, and NBME issues the exam scheduling permits. Scheduling and test centers for USMLE Step 1 and Step 2 CK are provided by Prometric. Prometric serves as the test delivery entity for all examinees taking Step 1/Step 2 CK. Step 1 and Step 2 CK are delivered at Prometric test centers worldwide. ECFMG is not responsible for errors or any associated computer problems that may occur in issuing Step 1/Step 2 CK scheduling permits or in delivering these exams. These functions are the responsibility of NBME and/or Prometric.

For eligible Step 2 CS applicants, ECFMG issues the exam scheduling permits. The Clinical Skills Evaluation Collaboration (CSEC), a collaboration of ECFMG and NBME, is responsible for delivery of the Step 2 CS exam. Step 2 CS is delivered to all examinees at regional CSEC Centers in the United States.

NBME is responsible for determining the results of USMLE exams and for issuing the score reports. ECFMG notifies international medical students/graduates when their Step 1, Step 2 CK, and Step 2 CS score reports are available and provides them with secure, web-based access to the score reports.

#### Step 3

The FSMB serves as the registration entity for **all** Step 3 applicants. To be eligible for Step 3, international medical graduates must have passed Step 1 and Step 2 and must be certified by ECFMG, among other requirements. See *Eligibility* in the USMLE *Bulletin of Information*. If you have not met all eligibility requirements, your application for Step 3 will not be accepted. For detailed information and application procedures for Step 3, contact the individual medical licensing authorities or the FSMB (see *Communicating About USMLE* in the USMLE *Bulletin of Information*). Scheduling and test centers for Step 3 are provided by Prometric, which serves as the test delivery entity for all Step 3 examinees. USMLE Step 3 is delivered at Prometric test centers in the United States.

NBME is responsible for determining the results of USMLE exams and for issuing the score reports. FSMB

notifies examinees when their Step 3 score reports are available and provides them with secure, web-based access to the score reports.

**IMPORTANT NOTE: Step 2 CS has replaced the former ECFMG CSA. ECFMG-certified physicians, and physicians who have successfully completed Fifth Pathway programs, must have taken and passed either Step 2 CS or the CSA in order to register for Step 3. See *Who Is Required to Take Step 2 CS?* in the USMLE Bulletin of Information.**

## Medical Science Examination Requirement

Step 1 and Step 2 CK of the USMLE are the exams currently administered that satisfy this requirement. To meet the medical science examination requirement for ECFMG Certification, applicants must pass both Step 1 and Step 2 CK within a specified period of time. See *Time Limit for Completing Examination Requirements*, below.

ECFMG also accepts a passing performance on the following **former** examinations to satisfy the medical science examination requirement for ECFMG Certification: ECFMG Examination, Visa Qualifying Examination (VQE), Foreign Medical Graduate Examination in the Medical Sciences (FMGEMS), and the Part I and Part II Examinations of the National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME).

Combinations of exams are also acceptable. Specifically, if you have passed only part of the former VQE, FMGEMS, or the NBME Part I or Part II, you may combine a passing performance on the basic medical science component of one of these exams or USMLE Step 1 with a passing performance on the clinical science component of one of the other exams or USMLE Step 2 CK, provided that the components are passed within the period specified for the exam program.

Additionally, ECFMG accepts a score of 75 or higher on each of the three days of a single administration of the former Federation Licensing Examination (FLEX), if taken prior to June 1985, to satisfy this requirement.

**IMPORTANT NOTE: Use of the former NBME Parts or FLEX Components to fulfill eligibility requirements for Step 3 is no longer accepted. See *Formerly Administered Examinations* in the USMLE Bulletin of Information. You should also contact the FSMB for general information and the medical licensing authority of the jurisdiction where you plan to apply for licensure for definitive information on licensure requirements.**

## Clinical Skills Requirement

Step 2 CS of the USMLE is the exam currently administered that satisfies this requirement. Specific time limits for passing Step 2 CS for ECFMG Certification may apply. See *Time Limit for Completing Examination Requirements*, below.

Applicants who have **both** passed the former ECFMG CSA **and** achieved a score acceptable to ECFMG on an English language proficiency test (such as the TOEFL exam or the former ECFMG English Test) can use these passing performances to satisfy the clinical skills requirement for ECFMG Certification.

## Time Limit for Completing Examination Requirements

ECFMG policy requires that applicants pass those USMLE Steps and Step Components required for ECFMG Certification within a seven-year period. This means that once an applicant passes a Step or Step Component, the applicant will have seven years to pass the other Step(s) or Step Component(s) required for ECFMG Certification. This seven-year period begins on the exam date for the first Step or Step Component passed and ends **exactly seven years from this exam date**. If an applicant does not pass all required Steps and Step Components within a maximum of seven years, the applicant's earliest USMLE passing performance will no longer be valid for ECFMG Certification.

**EXAMPLE: An applicant took his first Step or Step Component on October 1, 2006 and passed. The applicant has through October 1, 2013 to take and pass all other Step(s) and Step Component(s) required for ECFMG Certification. If he does not take and pass all other required Step(s) and Step Component(s) on or before October 1, 2013, his passing performance on the October 1, 2006 exam would no longer be valid for ECFMG Certification.**

This seven-year limit does **not** apply to the former ECFMG CSA because the CSA was not a USMLE Step or Step Component. Applicants who satisfied the clinical skills requirement for ECFMG Certification by passing the CSA are required to pass only Step 1 and Step 2 CK within a seven-year period for ECFMG Certification. For these applicants, the seven-year period begins on the exam date for the first USMLE Step or Step Component passed, regardless of when the CSA was passed.

On June 14, 2004, USMLE Step 2 CS became a requirement for ECFMG Certification, replacing the ECFMG CSA as the exam that satisfies the clinical skills requirement. As part of the USMLE, Step 2 CS may be subject to the seven-year time limit for ECFMG Certification as described below:

- **If an applicant's earliest USMLE passing performance that is valid for ECFMG Certification took place on or after June 14, 2004**, the applicant is required to pass Step 1, Step 2 CK, and, if required for ECFMG Certification, Step 2 CS within a seven-year period for ECFMG Certification.
- **If an applicant's earliest USMLE passing performance that is valid for ECFMG Certification took place before June 14, 2004**, the applicant is required to pass only Step 1 and Step 2 CK within a seven-year period for ECFMG Certification; if required for ECFMG Certification, Step 2 CS can be passed outside the seven-year period.

**IMPORTANT NOTE: These policies apply only to ECFMG Certification. The USMLE program recommends to state medical licensing authorities that they require applicants to pass the full USMLE sequence (including Step 3, which is not required for ECFMG Certification) within a seven-year period. The USMLE program also recommends to state medical licensing authorities a limit on the number of attempts allowed to pass each Step or Step Component. See *Time Limit and Number of Attempts Allowed to Complete All Steps and Retakes* in the *USMLE Bulletin of Information*. Most state medical licensing authorities accept the USMLE-recommended limits, but some do not. You should contact the FSMB for general information and the medical licensing authority of the jurisdiction where you plan to apply for licensure for definitive information, since licensure requirements vary among jurisdictions. Additionally, applicants who retake a previously passed Step or Step Component to comply with a time limit should understand the implications for Step 3 eligibility of a failing attempt on a retake. See *Official Performance of Record for Examinees Retaking a Previously Passed Step* in the *USMLE Bulletin of Information*.**

## Eligibility for Examination

ECFMG reserves the right to reverify your eligibility for examination at any time during the application and registration process. Additionally:

- **If your eligibility for an exam changes after you apply but before you take the exam, you are required to inform ECFMG immediately in writing of this change in your status. Such notification must be sent to ECFMG's Applicant Information Services. (See *General Inquiries* on page *ii* for contact information.) Failure to inform ECFMG of a change in your eligibility for examination is considered irregular behavior. (See *Irregular Behavior* on page 15.)**
- **Medical school students who transfer to another medical school after submitting an application for examination must inform ECFMG immediately in writing of this transfer. Such notification**

**must be sent to ECFMG’s Applicant Information Services. (See *General Inquiries* on page ii for contact information.)**

- **If you have been dismissed from medical school, you are not eligible for the USMLE, even if you are appealing the school’s decision to dismiss you.**

The eligibility requirements for examination differ depending on whether you are a medical school **student** or a medical school **graduate**.

### Medical School Students

**To be eligible for Step 1, Step 2 CK, and Step 2 CS**, you must be officially enrolled in a medical school located outside the United States and Canada that is listed in *IMED*, available from the ECFMG website, both at the time that you apply and at the time you take the exam. In addition, the “Graduation Years” in *IMED* for your medical school must be listed as “Current” at the time you apply and at the time you take the exam. An authorized official of your medical school must certify your current enrollment status; instructions will be provided at the time of application. As soon as you graduate and receive your medical diploma, you must send two photocopies of your medical diploma and one full-face, passport-sized, color photograph to ECFMG (see *Provision of Credentials and Translations* on page 45). The photograph that you send must be **current**; it must have been taken within six months of the date that you send it. A photocopy of a photograph is not acceptable.

**In addition to being currently enrolled as described above, to be eligible for Step 1, Step 2 CK, and Step 2 CS**, you must have completed at least two years of medical school. This eligibility requirement means that you must have completed the basic medical science component of the medical school curriculum by the beginning of your eligibility period.

Although you may apply for and take the examinations after completing the basic medical science component of your medical school curriculum, it is recommended that you complete your core clinical clerkships, including actual patient contact, before taking Step 2 CK and Step 2 CS.

If you have passed the former ECFMG CSA, you are **not** eligible to take Step 2 CS, except under certain, well-defined circumstances. Eligible circumstances include: taking Step 2 CS to permanently validate an expired CSA examination date (see *Validity of Examinations for Entry into Graduate Medical Education* on page 9), taking Step 2 CS because your most recent performance on a clinical skills exam (CSA or Step 2 CS) is a failing performance (see *Official Performance of Record for Examinees Retaking a Previously Passed Step in the USMLE Bulletin of Information*), and retaking Step 2 CS to meet a time limit (see *Reexamination and Reapplication* on page 43 and *Retakes* in the *USMLE Bulletin of Information*).

ECFMG reserves the right to reverify with the medical school the eligibility of medical school students who are registered for an exam. If your medical school informs ECFMG that your status has changed, and ECFMG determines you are no longer eligible for examination, your registration will be canceled. When a medical school does not participate in the ECFMG Medical School Web Portal (EMSWP), ECFMG’s reverification of the status of the school’s students may include ECFMG sending a written request for reverification by postal mail to the medical school. If such reverification is requested by ECFMG, ECFMG may cancel the student’s registration or withhold the student’s score report until ECFMG has received reverification of the student’s status directly from the medical school. If your registration is canceled, you may be required to reapply.

### Medical School Graduates

**To be eligible for Step 1, Step 2 CK, and Step 2 CS**, you must be a graduate of a medical school located outside the United States and Canada that is listed in *IMED*, available from the ECFMG website. Your graduation year must be included in the medical school’s *IMED* listing. You must have been awarded credit

for at least four credit years (academic years for which credit has been given toward completion of the medical curriculum) by a medical school that is listed in *IMED*. An authorized official of your medical school must certify your status as a graduate of the school; instructions will be provided at the time of application.

**Two photocopies** of your medical diploma must be submitted at the time of application if your diploma has not been sent to ECFMG previously. (See *Reference Guide for Medical Education Credentials* on page 61 for the exact name of the final medical diploma you must provide.) One full-face, passport-sized, color photograph must accompany the photocopies of your diploma. The photograph must be **current**; it must have been taken within six months of the date that your application is sent to ECFMG. A photocopy of a photograph is not acceptable. If you have graduated and met all requirements for your medical diploma but your medical diploma has not yet been issued, a current, full-face, passport-sized, color photograph and a letter signed by your Medical School Dean, Vice Dean, or Registrar must be submitted with your exam application. The letter you submit must be the original document and must be written on your medical school's letterhead. The letter must include the following statement:

**This is to confirm that [applicant name] has graduated and completed all requirements to receive the [degree title] degree from [medical school/university name]. The degree will be issued [month and year].**

You must then send the photocopies of your medical diploma to ECFMG as soon as your diploma is issued. See *Medical Education Credentials* on page 44.

All documents that are not in English must be accompanied by an official English translation that meets ECFMG's translation requirements. See *English Translations* on page 49.

If you have passed the former ECFMG CSA, you are **not** eligible to take Step 2 CS, except under certain, well-defined circumstances. Eligible circumstances include: taking Step 2 CS to permanently validate an expired CSA examination date (see *Validity of Examinations for Entry into Graduate Medical Education* on page 9), taking Step 2 CS because your most recent performance on a clinical skills exam (CSA or Step 2 CS) is a failing performance (see *Official Performance of Record for Examinees Retaking a Previously Passed Step in the USMLE Bulletin of Information*), and retaking Step 2 CS to meet a time limit (see *Reexamination and Reapplication* on page 43 and *Retakes* in the *USMLE Bulletin of Information*).

ECFMG reserves the right to reverify with the medical school the eligibility of medical school graduates who apply for examination. This may include reverification of the graduate's medical education credentials with the issuing medical school. If such reverification is requested by ECFMG, the graduate will be registered for examination only after ECFMG has received reverification of the graduate's credentials directly from the medical school. If reverification is requested by ECFMG after the graduate has been registered for examination, ECFMG may cancel the graduate's registration or withhold the graduate's score report until ECFMG has received reverification of the graduate's medical education credentials directly from the issuing school. If your registration is canceled, you may be required to reapply.

## Applying for Examination

To apply, use ECFMG's Interactive Web Application (IWA), available on the ECFMG website. A complete application consists of the on-line part, which you complete using IWA; the *Certification of Identification Form* (Form 186) or *Certification Statement* (Form 183), which you obtain through IWA; and any other required documents, as outlined in IWA and in this publication.

Detailed instructions accompany the application. Follow the instructions carefully and answer all questions completely. You should review the instructions **before** you begin working on the application. Some of the necessary items require advance planning. These items may include photographs, official signatures, and additional documents, such as photocopies of your medical diploma if you are a medical school graduate. If your application is not complete, it will be rejected.

ECFMG will notify you by e-mail when your application is received. You can check the status of your exam application on-line using OASIS.

ECFMG will process your application and determine your eligibility to take the exam(s) you requested. ECFMG processes applications typically within three weeks of receipt of the complete application. If you are a student enrolled in a medical school that participates in EMSWP or if you are a graduate of a medical school that participates in EMSWP and your medical education credentials have not been primary-source verified by ECFMG, ECFMG cannot complete the processing of your application until your medical school verifies your status through EMSWP. ECFMG will make your record available to your medical school and request verification typically within three weeks of receipt of a complete application. The time needed to complete the processing of your application is contingent upon your medical school's response to the EMSWP verification request. (See *Medical School Students*, below, or *Medical School Graduates* on page 24.)

Once your application has been processed, ECFMG will notify you of the outcome of your application. For eligible applicants, important information about scheduling and taking the exams will be issued.

**IMPORTANT NOTE: Applications and other requests for services will not be processed if it is determined that doing so would be considered violative of any applicable federal laws or regulations.**

## Medical School Students

The process of applying for examination as a medical school student will vary depending on whether your medical school participates in EMSWP (see page 4). Medical school students enrolled in medical schools that participate in EMSWP will be required to complete a *Certification of Identification Form* (Form 186), if they do not have a valid Form 186 on file with ECFMG. Students enrolled in medical schools that do not participate in EMSWP will be required to complete a *Certification Statement* (Form 183).

You will be able to determine if your medical school participates in EMSWP when you complete the on-line part of the exam application. At that time, IWA will produce the appropriate form, which you will be able to print.

### **Students Enrolled in Medical Schools That Participate in EMSWP**

If you are a medical school student enrolled in a medical school that participates in EMSWP, you must print a *Certification of Identification Form* (Form 186) after completing the on-line part of the application. Form 186 must be completed by you and certified by an authorized official of your medical school. Each medical school has been requested to provide ECFMG with a list of the officials authorized by the school to certify Form 186. Your Form 186 must be certified by an official on this list. Contact your medical school to determine the officials authorized by your medical school for this purpose; ECFMG will not provide this information to applicants. This certification must be **current**; the official must have signed the form within four months of its receipt by ECFMG. **The original, signed Form 186 must be sent to ECFMG from the office of the medical school official who certifies the form.** ECFMG must be able to determine that the form was sent directly from the office of this official. If ECFMG, in its judgment, determines that the form may not have been sent directly from the office of the medical school official who certified the form, the form will not be accepted.

Once accepted by ECFMG, Form 186 remains valid for on-line applications and requests to extend Step 1 and Step 2 CK eligibility periods received during the following five-year period. Applications and requests submitted during this period can be completed entirely on-line.

If there are any additional documents required to complete your application, these documents must be sent to ECFMG with your Form 186, if you do not already have a valid Form 186 on file with ECFMG, and must be accompanied by a completed *IWA Document Submission Form* (Form 187). Form 187 facilitates more efficient processing of the application by ensuring that any additional documents are matched with the on-line part of

the application. Do not include Form 187 if you do not have any additional documents to submit to ECFMG or if you are submitting Form 186 only.

All forms and documents required to complete your application must be sent to ECFMG in one envelope. If you are required to complete a Form 186, this envelope must be sent to ECFMG from the office of the medical school official who certifies your Form 186. If you are not required to complete Form 186, this envelope can be sent to ECFMG by you.

**IMPORTANT NOTE: If you are submitting a request for test accommodations, follow the instructions in the Test Accommodations information on the USMLE website (see *Examinees with Disabilities Requesting Test Accommodations* on page 28 and in the *USMLE Bulletin of Information*). Do not send your request or supporting documents in the same envelope as your application materials; requests and supporting documents for test accommodations should not be accompanied by Form 187.**

Your application will not be considered complete until the completed Form 186 (if you do not have a valid Form 186 on file with ECFMG) and any other required documents are received at ECFMG. To complete the processing of your application, your medical school must verify your status through EMSWP. You will not be registered for examination until your medical school verifies your status.

You can print Form 186 from IWA after completing the on-line part of the application. Form 187 is available from IWA and on the Publications page of the ECFMG website.

### **Students Enrolled in Medical Schools That Do Not Participate in EMSWP**

If you are a medical school student enrolled in a medical school that does not participate in EMSWP or if the information you provide on your application is not sufficient for ECFMG to determine whether your medical school participates in EMSWP, you must print a *Certification Statement* (Form 183) after completing the on-line part of the application. Form 183 must be completed by you and certified by an authorized official of your medical school. Each medical school has been requested to provide ECFMG with a list of the officials authorized by the school to certify Form 183. Your Form 183 must be certified by an official on this list. Contact your medical school to determine the officials authorized by your medical school for this purpose; ECFMG will not provide this information to applicants. This certification must be **current**; the official must have signed the form within four months of its receipt by ECFMG. **The original, signed Form 183 must be sent to ECFMG from the office of the medical school official who certifies the form.** ECFMG must be able to determine that the form was sent directly from the office of this official. If ECFMG, in its judgment, determines that the form may not have been sent directly from the office of the medical school official who certified the form, the form will not be accepted. A completed Form 183 must be submitted for **each** on-line application.

If there are any additional documents required to complete your application, these documents must be sent to ECFMG with your Form 183 and must be accompanied by a completed *IWA Document Submission Form* (Form 187). Form 187 facilitates more efficient processing of the application by ensuring that any additional documents are matched with the on-line part of the application. Do not include Form 187 if you do not have any additional documents to submit to ECFMG or if you are submitting Form 183 only.

All forms and documents required to complete your application must be sent to ECFMG in one envelope. This envelope must be sent to ECFMG from the office of the medical school official who certifies your Form 183.

**IMPORTANT NOTE: If you are submitting a request for test accommodations, follow the instructions in the Test Accommodations information on the USMLE website (see *Examinees with Disabilities Requesting Test Accommodations* on page 28 and in the *USMLE Bulletin of Information*). Do not send your request or supporting documents in the same envelope as your application materials; requests and supporting documents for test accommodations should not be accompanied by Form 187.**

Your application will not be considered complete until the completed Form 183 and any other required documents are received at ECFMG.

You can print Form 183 from IWA after completing the on-line part of the application. Form 187 is available from IWA and on the Publications page of the ECFMG website.

## Medical School Graduates

ECFMG requires that before an international medical graduate can be registered for USMLE, the applicant's status as a medical school graduate must be verified directly by his/her medical school. This status must be verified in one of three ways:

- ECFMG receives primary-source verification of the applicant's medical education credentials; or
- The medical school verifies the applicant's graduate status through EMSWP; or
- The medical school verifies the applicant's graduate status through the *Certification of Identification Form* (Form 186).

As a result, the process of applying for examination as a medical school graduate will vary depending on whether your medical education credentials have been verified by ECFMG and whether you are a graduate of a medical school that participates in EMSWP (see page 4).

You can check the status of your medical education credentials via ECFMG's OASIS. When you complete the on-line part of the exam application, IWA will produce the appropriate version of Form 186, which you will be able to print.

### **Graduates Whose Medical Education Credentials Have Been Primary-source Verified by ECFMG**

If your medical education credentials have been primary-source verified by ECFMG, you must print a *Certification of Identification Form* (Form 186) after completing the on-line part of the application, if you do not have a valid Form 186 on file with ECFMG. Form 186 must be completed by you and certified by an authorized official of your medical school. Each medical school has been requested to provide ECFMG with a list of the officials authorized by the school to certify Form 186. Your form must be certified by an official on this list. Contact your medical school to determine the officials authorized by your medical school for this purpose; ECFMG will not provide this information to applicants. If you cannot have your Form 186 certified by an authorized official of your medical school, it can be certified by a Consular Official, Notary Public, First Class Magistrate, or Commissioner of Oaths. In either case, this certification must be **current**; the official must have signed the form within four months of its receipt by ECFMG.

If your Form 186 is certified by an official of your medical school, **the original, signed Form 186 must be sent to ECFMG from the office of the medical school official who certifies the form.** ECFMG must be able to determine that the form was sent directly from the office of this official. If ECFMG, in its judgment, determines that the form may not have been sent directly from the office of the medical school official who certified the form, the form will not be accepted.

Once accepted by ECFMG, Form 186 remains valid for on-line applications and requests to extend Step 1 and Step 2 CK eligibility periods received during the following five-year period. Applications and requests submitted during this period can be completed entirely on-line.

If there are any additional documents required to complete your application, these documents must be sent to ECFMG with your Form 186, if you do not already have a valid Form 186 on file with ECFMG, and must be accompanied by a completed *IWA Document Submission Form* (Form 187). Form 187 facilitates more efficient processing of the application by ensuring that any additional documents are matched with the on-line part of the application. Do not include Form 187 if you do not have any additional documents to submit to ECFMG or if you are submitting Form 186 only.

All forms and documents required to complete your application must be sent to ECFMG in one envelope. If you are required to complete a Form 186 and this form is certified by an official of your medical school, this envelope must be sent to ECFMG from the office of the medical school official who certifies your Form 186. If you are not required to complete Form 186 or if your Form 186 is certified by a Consular Official, Notary Public, First Class Magistrate, or Commissioner of Oaths, this envelope can be sent to ECFMG by you.

**IMPORTANT NOTE: If you are submitting a request for test accommodations, follow the instructions in the Test Accommodations information on the USMLE website (see *Examinees with Disabilities Requesting Test Accommodations* on page 28 and in the *USMLE Bulletin of Information*). Do not send your request or supporting documents in the same envelope as your application materials; requests and supporting documents for test accommodations should not be accompanied by Form 187.**

Your application will not be considered complete until the completed Form 186 (if you do not have a valid Form 186 on file with ECFMG) and any other required documents are received at ECFMG.

You can print Form 186 from IWA after completing the on-line part of the application. Form 187 is available from IWA and on the Publications page of the ECFMG website.

### **Graduates Whose Medical Education Credentials Have Not Been Primary-source Verified by ECFMG**

#### **Graduates of Medical Schools That Participate in EMSWP**

If you are a graduate of a medical school that participates in EMSWP and your medical education credentials have not been primary-source verified by ECFMG, you must print a *Certification of Identification Form* (Form 186) after completing the on-line part of the application, if you do not have a valid Form 186 on file with ECFMG. Form 186 must be completed by you and certified by an authorized official of your medical school. Each medical school has been requested to provide ECFMG with a list of the officials authorized by the school to certify Form 186. Your Form 186 must be certified by an official on this list. Contact your medical school to determine the officials authorized by your medical school for this purpose; ECFMG will not provide this information to applicants. If you cannot have your Form 186 certified by an authorized official of your medical school, it can be certified by a Consular Official, Notary Public, First Class Magistrate, or Commissioner of Oaths. In either case, this certification must be **current**; the official must have signed the form within four months of its receipt by ECFMG.

If your Form 186 is certified by an official of your medical school, **the original, signed Form 186 must be sent to ECFMG from the office of the medical school official who certifies the form.** ECFMG must be able to determine that the form was sent directly from the office of this official. If ECFMG, in its judgment, determines that the form may not have been sent directly from the office of the medical school official who certified the form, the form will not be accepted.

Once accepted by ECFMG, Form 186 remains valid for on-line applications and requests to extend Step 1 and Step 2 CK eligibility periods received during the following five-year period. Applications and requests submitted during this period can be completed entirely on-line.

If there are any additional documents required to complete your application, these documents must be sent to ECFMG with your Form 186, if you do not already have a valid Form 186 on file with ECFMG, and must be accompanied by a completed *IWA Document Submission Form* (Form 187). Form 187 facilitates more efficient processing of the application by ensuring that any additional documents are matched with the on-line part of the application. Do not include Form 187 if you do not have any additional documents to submit to ECFMG or if you are submitting Form 186 only.

All forms and documents required to complete your application must be sent to ECFMG in one envelope. If you are required to complete a Form 186 and this form is certified by an official of your medical school, this envelope

must be sent to ECFMG from the office of the medical school official who certifies your Form 186. If you are not required to complete Form 186 or if your Form 186 is certified by a Consular Official, Notary Public, First Class Magistrate, or Commissioner of Oaths, this envelope can be sent to ECFMG by you.

**IMPORTANT NOTE: If you are submitting a request for test accommodations, follow the instructions in the Test Accommodations information on the USMLE website (see *Examinees with Disabilities Requesting Test Accommodations* on page 28 and in the *USMLE Bulletin of Information*). Do not send your request or supporting documents in the same envelope as your application materials; requests and supporting documents for test accommodations should not be accompanied by Form 187.**

Your application will not be considered complete until the completed Form 186 (if you do not have a valid Form 186 on file with ECFMG) and any other required documents are received at ECFMG. To complete the processing of your application, your medical school must verify your status as a graduate of that medical school through EMSWP. You will not be registered for examination until your medical school verifies your status.

You can print Form 186 from IWA after completing the on-line part of the application. Form 187 is available from IWA and on the Publications page of the ECFMG website.

### **Graduates of Medical Schools That Do Not Participate in EMSWP**

If you are a graduate of a medical school that does not participate in EMSWP, or if the information you provide on your application is not sufficient for ECFMG to determine whether your medical school participates in EMSWP, and your medical education credentials have not been primary-source verified by ECFMG, you must print a *Certification of Identification Form* (Form 186) after completing the on-line part of the application, if you do not have a valid Form 186 on file with ECFMG. Form 186 must be completed by you and certified by an authorized official of your medical school. Each medical school has been requested to provide ECFMG with a list of the officials authorized by the school to certify Form 186. Your Form 186 must be certified by an official on this list. Contact your medical school to determine the officials authorized by your medical school for this purpose; ECFMG will not provide this information to applicants. This certification must be **current**; the official must have signed the form within four months of its receipt by ECFMG.

If you cannot have your Form 186 certified by an authorized official of your medical school, it can be certified by a Consular Official, Notary Public, First Class Magistrate, or Commissioner of Oaths. You must then send the Form 186 and all additional documents required to complete your application to your medical school. An authorized official of your medical school, as defined above, must then sign the Form 186, verifying your status as a graduate of the medical school. Both signatures must be **current**; the officials must have signed the form within four months of its receipt by ECFMG.

**The original, signed Form 186 must be sent to ECFMG from the office of the medical school official who signs the form.** This means that, if your Form 186 is certified by a Consular Official, Notary Public, First Class Magistrate, or Commissioner of Oaths, you must send your Form 186, and all additional documents as outlined below, to your medical school for verification and your medical school must then send your Form 186, and all additional documents, to ECFMG. ECFMG must be able to determine that the form was sent directly from the office of the medical school official. If ECFMG, in its judgment, determines that the form may not have been sent directly from the office of the medical school official who signed the form, the form will not be accepted.

Once accepted by ECFMG, Form 186 remains valid for on-line applications and requests to extend Step 1 and Step 2 CK eligibility periods received during the following five-year period. Applications and requests submitted during this period can be completed entirely on-line.

If there are any additional documents required to complete your application, these documents must be sent to ECFMG with your Form 186, if you do not already have a valid Form 186 on file with ECFMG, and must be accompanied by a completed *IWA Document Submission Form* (Form 187). Form 187 facilitates more efficient

processing of the application by ensuring that any additional documents are matched with the on-line part of the application. Do not include Form 187 if you do not have any additional documents to submit to ECFMG or if you are submitting Form 186 only.

All forms and documents required to complete your application must be sent to ECFMG in one envelope. If you are required to complete a Form 186, **this envelope must be sent to ECFMG from the office of the medical school official who signs your Form 186.**

**IMPORTANT NOTE: If you are submitting a request for test accommodations, follow the instructions in the Test Accommodations information on the USMLE website (see *Examinees with Disabilities Requesting Test Accommodations* on page 28 and in the *USMLE Bulletin of Information*). Do not send your request or supporting documents in the same envelope as your application materials; requests and supporting documents for test accommodations should not be accompanied by Form 187.**

Your application will not be considered complete until the completed Form 186 (if you do not have a valid Form 186 on file with ECFMG) and any other required documents are received at ECFMG.

You can print Form 186 from IWA after completing the on-line part of the application. Form 187 is available from IWA and on the Publications page of the ECFMG website.

## When to Apply

Step 1, Step 2 CK, and Step 2 CS are offered regularly throughout the year; however there may be occasional, brief periods when all test centers are closed or the exam is not available. In planning the timing of your application, see *Eligibility Periods* on page 29 for information on how eligibility periods are assigned. You should also consider deadlines imposed by the National Resident Matching Program (NRMP) and graduate medical education (GME) programs. (See *Applying to Graduate Medical Education Programs* on page 54.) Finally, you should be aware that demand for test dates/centers at certain times during the year may exceed the number of testing spaces available.

**IMPORTANT NOTE: It is solely the responsibility of the applicant to complete the required exams in time to meet deadlines imposed by the NRMP and/or GME programs. Since the number of applicants seeking to complete these exams may exceed the spaces available in time to meet those deadlines, there is no guarantee that sufficient spaces will be available for all applicants to meet deadlines imposed by the NRMP and/or GME programs. ECFMG assumes no liability of any kind if an applicant does not complete the exams in time to have results available to meet NRMP and/or GME program deadlines.**

## Fees

You must pay all applicable fees at the time of application. If you apply for more than one exam at the same time, you must pay applicable fees for **all** exams at the time of application. **If you do not pay all fees, your application will be rejected.** If your application is rejected, any payment received with that application will be credited to your ECFMG financial account. See *Payment* on page 14.

**For all exams**, there is an examination fee. **For Step 1 or Step 2 CK**, there is an **additional** international test delivery surcharge, if you choose a testing region other than the United States/Canada. These surcharges represent the additional cost of offering Step 1 and Step 2 CK by computer outside the United States and Canada. If you choose to take the exam in the United States or Canada, you do not need to pay a surcharge. For information on Step 1/Step 2 CK testing regions, see *Testing Locations* on page 28. For the current exam fees and international test delivery surcharges, refer to the ECFMG website at [www.ecfm.org/fees.html](http://www.ecfm.org/fees.html).

All fees are subject to change without notice.

## Examinees Who Require Personal Items in the Testing Room

As explained in the USMLE *Bulletin of Information*, unauthorized possession of personal items in the secure areas of the testing centers is prohibited. However, in certain limited circumstances, exceptions to this policy may be made for medical reasons, provided that permission is granted in advance of test administration. Examples of items that require advance permission include medication, an external appliance, or electronic device; examples of appliances and devices to which this policy applies include insulin pumps, inhalers, medications, TENS units, breast pumps, hearing aids, electronic or digitally amplified or otherwise enhanced non-standard stethoscopes (for Step 2 CS), wheelchairs, canes, crutches, and casts. This list is not exhaustive. If you believe that you have a medical condition that requires you to use any of these items in the secure areas of the test center or if you are unsure whether you should request an exception, see *Examinees Who Require Personal Items in the Testing Room* in the USMLE *Bulletin of Information* for instructions. You can contact the Personal Item Exception Coordinator by e-mail at PIE@nbme.org.

## Examinees with Disabilities Requesting Test Accommodations

The USMLE program provides reasonable accommodations for examinees with disabilities who are covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act as amended (ADA). If you are a disabled individual covered under the ADA and require test accommodations, you must obtain information regarding procedures and documentation requirements **before** applying for **each** Step or Step Component.

Detailed information and the required forms are available on the USMLE website. International medical students/graduates must submit official requests and documentation to ECFMG. ECFMG forwards these requests to NBME for processing. NBME processes requests for test accommodations in accordance with USMLE policies and procedures and renders a decision. You will not be registered until your request has been evaluated and a decision rendered. As a result, you may be assigned an eligibility period that is later than the eligibility period you selected at the time of application. Requesting test accommodations will delay the release of your scheduling permit up to eight weeks.

Once your request has been processed, NBME will inform you of the outcome of your request. If you take USMLE Steps or Step Components with test accommodations, your score reports and transcripts may indicate that an accommodation was granted. Score recipients who inquire about the annotation will be provided with information about the nature of the accommodation only.

All requests and accompanying documentation must be in English. If you request test accommodations, you must send your official request/documentation to the ECFMG Test Accommodations Coordinator at the address indicated in the Test Accommodations information on the USMLE website **at the same time** that you apply for the exam. **To protect your privacy, do not send your request for test accommodations to the same address or in the same envelope with application materials.**

For additional information, see *Examinees with Disabilities Requesting Test Accommodations* in the USMLE *Bulletin of Information*.

## Testing Locations

### Step 1 and Step 2 CK

Step 1 and Step 2 CK are delivered at Prometric test centers worldwide. Prometric's test centers are grouped into distinct testing regions. Within each region, Prometric has a central office known as the Regional Registration Center. A list of Prometric testing regions is located on pages 66-68.

When you complete your application, you must choose the testing region where you want to take the exam. If you apply for both Step 1 and Step 2 CK at the same time, you can choose the same testing region for both Step 1 and Step 2 CK, or you can choose a different testing region for each exam. Although you will choose a testing region when you apply, you will not choose a particular test center within that region until you schedule your testing appointment. You can take the exam at any test center in your testing region that offers USMLE, provided there is space available on the date you choose. **The test centers available for USMLE are subject to change.** To obtain current information on test centers in specific testing regions, visit the Prometric website at [www.prometric.com](http://www.prometric.com) or follow instructions on the scheduling permit for contacting Prometric.

If you are unable to keep your testing appointment at the test center you select, you can reschedule for a different test center within your testing region, subject to availability. To avoid a rescheduling fee, you must cancel or reschedule at least five business days before your scheduled testing appointment. See *Rescheduling* on page 34.

## Step 2 CS

Step 2 CS is administered at regional test centers in Atlanta, Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, and Philadelphia in the United States. You will not choose a test center when you complete the application. Once registered, you will select a test center, subject to availability, when you schedule your testing appointment. If you are unable to keep your testing appointment at the test center you select, you can reschedule for a different center, subject to availability. To avoid a rescheduling fee, you must cancel or reschedule more than 14 days before your scheduled testing appointment. See *Rescheduling* on page 34.

Travel information for each test center can be accessed through the ECFMG and USMLE websites.

## Eligibility Periods

### Step 1 and Step 2 CK

When you apply for Step 1 or Step 2 CK, you must select a three-month period, such as January-February-March, February-March-April, etc., during which you would like to take the exam. This three-month period is referred to as your eligibility period. If you apply for Step 1 and Step 2 CK at the same time, you can select the same eligibility period for both Step 1 and Step 2 CK, or you can select a different eligibility period for each exam. You must take the exam during the eligibility period assigned to you. You can take the exam on any day that it is offered during your assigned eligibility period, provided there is space available at the test center that you choose.

When choosing your eligibility period, remember that: Prometric test centers are closed on major local holidays; Step 1 and Step 2 CK are not offered during the first two weeks in January; and the busiest testing times in the United States/Canada testing region are May through July and November through December. Your eligibility period will not be adjusted to compensate for dates when the exams are not available.

To obtain a specific eligibility period:

- ECFMG must receive your **complete** application by the 24th day of that eligibility period, **and**
- The processing of your application must be **completed** by ECFMG by the 25th day of that eligibility period.

**EXAMPLE: On May 3, an applicant selects the May-June-July eligibility period for Step 1 and submits her application. The processing of the application is completed by ECFMG on May 23. The applicant is assigned the May-June-July eligibility period that she selected on her application.**

Keep in mind that delays or interruptions in postal service may delay delivery to ECFMG of materials needed to complete your application.

**If you are a medical school graduate whose medical education credentials have been primary-source verified by ECFMG; a graduate of a medical school that does not participate in EMSWP and your medical education credentials have not been primary-source verified by ECFMG; or a student enrolled in a medical school that does not participate in EMSWP**, it typically takes three weeks from receipt of a complete application for ECFMG to complete the processing of your application.

**If you are a graduate of a medical school that participates in EMSWP and your medical education credentials have not been primary-source verified by ECFMG or if you are a student enrolled in a medical school that participates in EMSWP**, ECFMG cannot complete the processing of your application until your medical school verifies your graduate/student status through EMSWP. ECFMG will make your record available to your medical school and request verification typically within three weeks of receipt of a complete application. The time needed to complete the processing of your application is contingent upon your medical school's response to the EMSWP verification request.

**For all applicants**, although you can select an eligibility period as late as the 24th day of that eligibility period, there is no guarantee that you will be assigned that eligibility period, since the processing of your application may not be completed by the 25th day of the eligibility period. **If the processing of your application is not completed in time to assign the eligibility period you select, you will be assigned to the next eligibility period.** The eligibility period assigned to you will be listed on your scheduling permit. You must read the editions of the ECFMG *Information Booklet* and the USMLE *Bulletin of Information* that pertain to the eligibility period in which you take the exam.

**EXAMPLE: On July 23, an applicant selects the July-August-September eligibility period for Step 2 CK and submits his application. The processing of the application is completed by ECFMG on August 12. The applicant is assigned the next eligibility period, August-September-October.**

As shown in both examples, you will be able to obtain an eligibility period that has already begun, or that will have begun by the time you are registered and your scheduling permit is issued. **Your assigned eligibility period will not be adjusted to compensate for days that have already passed.**

### **Eligibility Period Extension**

If you are unable to take Step 1/Step 2 CK during the three-month eligibility period assigned to you, you may request a **one-time** extension. You may extend your eligibility period only through the next, contiguous eligibility period (the next eligibility period that does not overlap with your original eligibility period).

**EXAMPLE: An applicant's original eligibility period is April-May-June 2010. The eligibility period may be extended only through July-August-September 2010.**

You may request an extension on-line using IWA, available on the ECFMG website. Payment of the appropriate fee must be submitted with the request. If you take the exam during your original eligibility period or if you do not take the exam, you will not receive a refund or credit of the eligibility period extension fee.

You may request an extension of your eligibility period only once for each exam registration. You may request an extension of your eligibility period only **after** your eligibility period has begun. Requests received at ECFMG more than **25 days** after the end of the original eligibility period will **not** be processed. For specific information on deadlines, refer to IWA.

Additionally, you must continue to be eligible to take the exam during the extended eligibility period (you must still be officially enrolled in a medical school located outside the United States and Canada that is listed

in the *International Medical Education Directory [IMED]* and the “Graduation Years” for your medical school must be listed as “Current,” or you must be a graduate of such a medical school and your graduation year must be included in the school’s *IMED* listing). See *Eligibility for Examination* on page 19.

If your eligibility period is extended, NBME will issue a new scheduling permit reflecting the extension. You can obtain the new scheduling permit by accessing IWA. You must bring the new scheduling permit to the test center on the date of your exam.

If you have a scheduled appointment during your original eligibility period and need to cancel and reschedule the appointment for your extended eligibility period, you must cancel or reschedule at least five business days before your scheduled appointment to avoid a rescheduling fee. Requesting an extension of your eligibility period does **not** cancel a scheduled appointment. See *Rescheduling* on page 34.

If you are unable to take the exam during your original or extended eligibility period or you are unable to extend your original eligibility period, you must reapply, including payment of the appropriate fee(s), to take the exam.

## Step 2 CS

When you are registered for Step 2 CS, you are assigned a 12-month eligibility period that begins on the date that the processing of your application is completed.

**EXAMPLE: A complete Step 2 CS application is received at ECFMG on July 15, 2010, and processing of the application is completed on July 28, 2010. The applicant will be assigned an eligibility period of July 28, 2010 – July 27, 2011.**

Your eligibility period will be listed on your Step 2 CS scheduling permit. You must take the exam during your eligibility period. You can schedule a testing appointment for any available date in your eligibility period.

Once your eligibility period is assigned, it cannot be changed or extended. Although you cannot change your assigned eligibility period, you can reschedule a testing appointment for a different date within your eligibility period, subject to availability. To avoid a rescheduling fee, you must cancel or reschedule more than 14 days before your scheduled testing appointment. See *Rescheduling* on page 34.

You may take Step 2 CS only once during each assigned eligibility period. If you take and fail the exam, you may retake it, but you must reapply, pay the examination fee, and obtain a new eligibility period. You may reapply approximately 24 hours after your failing score report becomes available; you do not need to wait for the previously assigned eligibility period to end. If you do not take the exam within your eligibility period, you must reapply, including payment of the examination fee, to take the exam.

## Your Scheduling Permit

When your registration is complete, you will be issued an exam scheduling permit. If you apply for more than one exam at the same time, you will be issued separate scheduling permits for each exam. The scheduling permit includes instructions for scheduling your testing appointment and a description of the form(s) of identification you must bring to the test center on your exam date (see *Acceptable Identification* on page 38).

**The scheduling permit is a very important document, and you should be careful not to lose it. You must bring your scheduling permit to the test center on your exam date. If you do not bring your scheduling permit, you will not be allowed to take the exam.**

Additionally, your name as it appears on your scheduling permit and your form(s) of identification must match exactly. **If the names do not match, you will not be allowed to take the exam** (see *Acceptable Identification*

on page 38). If you are not allowed to take the exam, you will need to reschedule your testing appointment and pay a rescheduling fee. Your rescheduled testing appointment must fall within your assigned eligibility period.

You should verify that all information included in your scheduling permit is correct. The scheduling permit includes your name, the exam for which you registered, and the eligibility period during which you must take the exam. For Step 1 and Step 2 CK, it also includes your assigned testing region. If any of the information on the scheduling permit is incorrect or you have questions or concerns about this document, contact ECFMG by e-mail at [info@ecfm.org](mailto:info@ecfm.org) or by telephone or fax (see *General Inquiries* on page *ii*).

### Step 1 and Step 2 CK

If ECFMG determines that you are eligible, ECFMG will forward your registration information to NBME. NBME will issue your scheduling permit. Scheduling permits are issued in electronic format and can be accessed using ECFMG's Interactive Web Application (IWA). Once your scheduling permit is available, ECFMG will send a notification to the e-mail address in your ECFMG record; this message will include instructions for accessing the electronic scheduling permit using IWA. **You will not receive the scheduling permit or notification by postal mail.**

If the beginning of your assigned eligibility period is more than six months in the future, your scheduling permit will not be available and the notification e-mail will not be sent until approximately six months before the beginning of the assigned eligibility period.

Applicants must print a copy of the scheduling permit and bring it to the test center on their exam date. The Step 1/Step 2 CK scheduling permit includes two important numbers:

- **Your Scheduling Number** – you must provide this number when you schedule your testing appointment; and
- **Your Candidate Identification Number (CIN)** – you must enter your CIN into the computer at the test center to start the exam and to initiate each block of the exam. You must keep this number confidential. For your own protection, do not share your CIN with anyone, except as directed by test center staff on your test day.

If the name in your ECFMG record is changed or your Step 1/Step 2 CK eligibility period is extended while you are registered, a new scheduling permit reflecting this change will be issued. You must access this new scheduling permit using IWA and bring it to the test center on your test date.

If you lose your scheduling permit, you can reprint it by accessing IWA on the ECFMG website.

### Step 2 CS

If ECFMG determines that you are eligible, ECFMG will issue your scheduling permit. Scheduling permits are issued in electronic format and can be accessed using ECFMG's IWA. Once your scheduling permit is available, ECFMG will send a notification to the e-mail address in your ECFMG record; this message will include instructions for accessing the electronic scheduling permit using IWA. **You will not receive the scheduling permit or notification by postal mail.**

If the name in your ECFMG record is changed while you are registered, a new scheduling permit reflecting this change will be issued. You must access this new scheduling permit using IWA and bring it to the test center on your test date.

If you lose your scheduling permit, you can reprint it by accessing IWA on the ECFMG website.

## Scheduling

You can schedule your testing appointment as soon as you obtain your exam scheduling permit. Your scheduling permit provides instructions for reviewing available test dates and centers and scheduling a testing appointment.

To schedule a testing appointment, you must select a test date and center. The test date you select must fall within your assigned eligibility period. For Step 1/Step 2 CK, the test center you select must fall within your assigned testing region.

Testing appointments are available on a “first-come, first-served” basis. You should monitor the availability of test dates within your eligibility period. You should also review the important information in *When to Apply* on page 27. **If you do not schedule and take the exam during your eligibility period, you will lose your payment for the exam and you will need to reapply, including payment of applicable fees, to take the exam in the future.**

### Step 1 and Step 2 CK

You can schedule your testing appointment with Prometric up to six months in advance. You must schedule before 12:00 noon (local time at the Regional Registration Center for your testing region) at least five business days prior to the exam date that you want.

When you schedule, you must provide the Scheduling Number listed on your scheduling permit. You will receive your Prometric Confirmation Number. Be sure to keep this number. If you need to reschedule your testing appointment, you will need your Prometric Confirmation Number.

### Step 2 CS

A schedule for reporting Step 2 CS results is available on the ECFMG and USMLE websites. Please refer to this information before scheduling a testing appointment if you need your results by a specific deadline. You should also review the important information in *How Step 2 CS Test Dates Become Available*, below.

Step 2 CS is administered in both morning (AM) and afternoon (PM) sessions. Although you will select your test **date** and **center**, you will not be able to choose your test **session**. When you confirm a testing appointment, you will be assigned to either an AM or PM session. A PM session is assigned if, for that test date and center, AM sessions have been filled and PM sessions have been opened. When reviewing available test dates, you will be informed whether AM or PM sessions are currently being assigned for each date, and you can continue to check available dates for one offering your preferred session. Before you confirm a testing appointment, you will be informed once again whether an AM or PM session will be assigned.

After you confirm your testing appointment, you will be able to print a confirmation notice that includes your scheduled test date, arrival time, test center, and other important information. You should bring the confirmation notice to the test center on your test date. If you lose the confirmation notice, you can reprint it by accessing Step 2 CS Calendar and Scheduling on the ECFMG website.

### How Step 2 CS Test Dates Become Available

- Testing appointments are available on a “first-come, first-served” basis (although scheduling restrictions may be imposed). It is possible that you will not be able to obtain a testing appointment for the time period and/or test center you prefer.
- The availability of testing appointments will change frequently as a result of applicant scheduling and rescheduling.

- It is possible that testing appointments will become available for the time period and/or test center that you prefer **after** you have scheduled an appointment for a different time period and/or center. In this event, you can change your scheduled test date and/or center, subject to availability. A fee may be charged for this service (see *Rescheduling*, below).
- Although you can monitor available test dates for the time period and test center that you prefer, availability is not guaranteed. You must take the exam during your assigned eligibility period. If you do not take the exam during your eligibility period, you must reapply, including payment of the exam fee, to take the exam.

## Rescheduling

### Step 1 and Step 2 CK

If you are unable to keep your testing appointment on the scheduled date or at the scheduled test center, you may change your date and/or center, subject to availability. You may cancel and reschedule at the same time, or you may cancel and then reschedule at a later date. Your new test date and center must fall within your assigned eligibility period and testing region, respectively. You will need to provide your Prometric Confirmation Number when you cancel or reschedule.

To reschedule your appointment, follow the instructions for contacting Prometric on your scheduling permit. To avoid a rescheduling fee, you must cancel or reschedule your appointment at least five business days before your appointment. If you are testing in the United States or Canada, you must cancel or reschedule by 12:00 noon, Eastern Time in the United States, at least five business days before your scheduled appointment. If you are testing outside the United States/Canada, you must cancel or reschedule by 12:00 noon, local time at the Regional Registration Center for your testing region, at least five business days before your scheduled appointment. If you give notice of less than five business days, you must pay Prometric a rescheduling fee when you arrange your new appointment. If you give notice of less than five business days, Prometric may require additional time to process your request.

If you cannot take the exam during your assigned eligibility period, you may request an extension. See *Eligibility Period Extension* on page 30 for additional information. However, you must still cancel a scheduled testing appointment, as described above, if you cannot keep the appointment. Requesting an extension of your eligibility period does **not** cancel a scheduled testing appointment.

### Step 2 CS

If you have a scheduled testing appointment and are unable to take the exam on your scheduled test date or at your scheduled test center, you can cancel your scheduled testing appointment and reschedule for a different date and/or center, subject to availability. A fee may be charged for this service depending on how much notice you provide when canceling your appointment, as described below. To cancel or reschedule, access Step 2 CS Calendar and Scheduling on the ECFMG website.

Before canceling and/or rescheduling a scheduled testing appointment, you will have the opportunity to review available test dates at all testing locations. Your rescheduled test date must fall within your assigned eligibility period. There is no limit on the number of times you can cancel and reschedule your testing appointment. However, a rescheduling fee is charged for each rescheduled testing appointment that does not meet the notice requirements described below. **Any** change to a scheduled testing appointment constitutes rescheduling.

You can cancel and reschedule at the same time, or you can cancel and then reschedule later. You can cancel and/or reschedule at any time through the end of the day before your scheduled test date. However, no canceling or rescheduling is allowed beginning at 12:00 midnight, Eastern Time in the United States, on the scheduled test date until it is confirmed that you did not take the exam (typically one to two days). If you do not cancel and you miss your scheduled testing appointment, you can reschedule after this confirmation period.

**IMPORTANT NOTE: If you cancel without rescheduling or miss your scheduled testing appointment, there is no guarantee that testing appointments during your eligibility period will be available at a given test center, or at any test center, when you attempt to reschedule. If you do not reschedule within your eligibility period, you must reapply, including payment of the exam fee, to take the exam.**

There is no fee to **cancel** a scheduled testing appointment; the fee, if applicable, is due at the time of **rescheduling**. However, the date that you **cancel** your appointment, using Eastern Time in the United States, will determine whether you pay a rescheduling fee and the amount of this fee.

- If you cancel more than 14 calendar days before (but not including) your scheduled test date, there is **no fee** to reschedule.
- If you cancel during the 14-day period before (but not including) your scheduled test date, your fee will be **\$150** when you reschedule.
- If you miss your scheduled testing appointment without canceling, your fee will be **\$400** when you reschedule.

If you are unable to keep your scheduled testing appointment, **you should cancel your appointment as soon as possible to avoid a rescheduling fee**, regardless of whether you are ready to reschedule.

## Preparation

### Format of the Exams

Step 1 and Step 2 CK are each one-day, multiple-choice exams that are administered by computer. Each exam consists of multiple-choice questions divided into 60-minute blocks. The Step 1 testing session lasts approximately eight hours. The Step 2 CK testing session lasts approximately nine hours.

Step 2 CS is a one-day exam that consists of 12 simulated patient cases. The Step 2 CS testing session lasts approximately eight hours.

For detailed information on test lengths and formats, see *Preparing for the Test* in the *USMLE Bulletin of Information*. You should also review the orientation materials and run the sample test materials available on the USMLE website at [www.usmle.org](http://www.usmle.org).

### Orientation and Practice Materials

Orientation and practice materials for all Steps and Step Components are available on the USMLE website.

The sample Step 1/Step 2 CK test materials will help you become familiar with the types of questions and exam software that you will encounter on the date of your exam. It is **recommended** that you practice with the exam software before taking the exam. You should also review the additional information on examination content and test formats available on the USMLE website.

For Step 2 CS, the materials include the *Step 2 Clinical Skills (CS) Content Description and General Information* booklet, a practice patient note program that is similar to the one you will use if you choose to type your post-encounter patient notes, and samples of handwritten patient notes. An orientation video is also available.

If you are registered for an exam and cannot access the materials on the USMLE website, you may request a CD that contains most of the orientation and practice materials available on the USMLE website. To request a CD, submit a completed *Request for USMLE® Orientation Materials CD* (Form 108) to ECFMG. Form 108 is available on the Publications page of the ECFMG website and from ECFMG, upon request.

## NBME Self-Assessments

The NBME offers web-based self-assessments to help medical students and graduates evaluate their readiness for computer-based Steps and Step Components (Step 1, Step 2 CK, and Step 3).

- The Comprehensive Basic Science Self-Assessment (CBSSA), which is built to the same content specifications as Step 1, covers material in basic science medical education courses. There are six unique CBSSA forms available, each featuring 200 multiple-choice questions divided into four sections.
- The Comprehensive Clinical Science Self-Assessment (CCSSA), which is built to the same content specifications as Step 2 CK, covers material in core clinical clerkships. There are four unique CCSSA forms available, each featuring 184 multiple-choice questions divided into four sections.

A self-assessment built to the same content specifications as the multiple-choice component of Step 3 is also available.

NBME research demonstrates that under certain circumstances there is a moderate relationship between performance on the CBSSA and CCSSA and subsequent Step 1 or Step 2 CK exams. Medical students and graduates may find these self-assessments to be valuable tools as they prepare for USMLE Step 1 and Step 2 CK.

All questions have appeared previously in the USMLE, and no questions are duplicated across forms. Users can choose to take the self-assessments under two timing conditions: standard USMLE pacing or self-pacing.

Users receive immediate performance feedback in the form of a performance profile showing content areas of strength and weakness. For the CBSSA (Step 1) and CCSSA (Step 2 CK), feedback also includes a table that “translates” the self-assessment score to an approximate score on the USMLE scale. Both CBSSA and CCSSA have one form with an expanded feedback option, which provides a count of incorrect items and the opportunity to review them.

The self-assessments are available for \$45.00 per form for standard forms and \$60.00 per form for expanded feedback forms.

For complete information, to view a sample assessment, or to purchase an assessment, access the NBME Self-Assessment Services website from the NBME website at [www.nbme.org](http://www.nbme.org).

### Step 1/Step 2 CK Practice Session at a Prometric Test Center

If you have obtained your scheduling permit for Step 1 or Step 2 CK, you can register to take a practice session for this exam at a Prometric test center. You must pay a fee to Prometric for this service. **The materials used for the practice sessions at Prometric test centers are the same USMLE sample test materials that are available on the USMLE website. No new material will be presented during the Prometric practice sessions.**

If you would like to take a practice session at a Prometric test center, you must register for the practice session and obtain a practice session scheduling permit. You can register for a practice session on the USMLE website. Information on the fee for the practice sessions is also available on this site.

When you register for a practice session, you will be asked for the Scheduling Number and Candidate Identification Number from your Step 1 or Step 2 CK scheduling permit. You should allow seven business days for issuance of your practice session scheduling permit. Once your scheduling permit is available, ECFMG will send a notification to the e-mail address in your ECFMG record; this message will include instructions for accessing the electronic practice session scheduling permit using IWA.

## Taking the Exam

### Step 1 and Step 2 CK

You should arrive at the Prometric test center 30 minutes before your scheduled testing appointment. **If you arrive after your appointment time, you may not be allowed to take the exam. If you arrive more than 30 minutes after your scheduled testing appointment or do not have both the scheduling permit and acceptable identification, you will not be allowed to take the exam.** If you are not allowed to take the exam for these reasons, you will need to reschedule your testing appointment and pay Prometric a rescheduling fee. Your rescheduled testing appointment must fall within your assigned eligibility period.

**IMPORTANT NOTE: The USMLE program has adopted Prometric’s Biometric Identity Management System (BIMS) as part of standard test day procedures for computer-based Step examinations in most test centers. These procedures include electronic capture of your identification, including your fingerprints and photograph, on the test day. As you move in and out of the test lab at the test center, you will be able to use your finger to authenticate your identity using the scanners located in the test center, improving the security and integrity of the testing process and limiting or eliminating the need for you to provide additional identification throughout the test day to test center staff. For more information on BIMS, refer to the USMLE website at [www.usmle.org](http://www.usmle.org), the *USMLE Bulletin of Information*, and the *BIMS Privacy Notice for USMLE Candidates*, available on the USMLE website.**

You must bring **both** your scheduling permit and acceptable identification (see *Acceptable Identification* on page 38). If the name in your ECFMG record is changed or your eligibility period is extended while you are registered for Step 1/Step 2 CK, NBME will issue a new scheduling permit reflecting this change. You must access this new scheduling permit using IWA and bring it to the test center. Name changes must be received **and processed** by ECFMG no later than seven business days before your testing appointment, or you will not be able to test.

If you need directions to the test center, visit the Prometric website at [www.prometric.com](http://www.prometric.com) or contact Prometric in advance of your test date. If you are testing in the United States/Canada, call the test center using the telephone number provided when you scheduled your appointment. If you are testing outside the United States/Canada, contact the Regional Registration Center for your testing region using the contact information on your scheduling permit.

For detailed information on procedures upon arrival and throughout the testing day, see *Testing* in the *USMLE Bulletin of Information*.

### Step 2 CS

The time you should arrive will be listed on the confirmation notice you will print after scheduling your testing appointment. **If you arrive during the on-site orientation, you may be allowed to test; however, you will be required to sign a Late Admission Form. If you arrive after the on-site orientation, you will not be allowed to test. You will have to reschedule your testing appointment and pay the rescheduling fee.** If you start to test and elect not to complete the examination, the attempt may appear as an “incomplete examination” on your USMLE transcript.

You must bring your scheduling permit and acceptable identification (see *Acceptable Identification* on page 38). If the name in your ECFMG record is changed while you are registered for Step 2 CS, a new scheduling permit reflecting this change will be issued. You must access this new scheduling permit using IWA and bring it to the test center. Name changes must be received **and processed** by ECFMG no later than seven business days before your testing appointment, or you will not be able to test.

You should also bring your confirmation notice to the test center. You can reprint your confirmation notice by accessing Step 2 CS Calendar and Scheduling on the ECFMG website.

Travel information for each test center can be accessed through the ECFMG and USMLE websites.

For detailed information on procedures upon arrival and throughout the testing day, see the USMLE *Step 2 Clinical Skills (CS) Content Description and General Information* booklet, available on the USMLE website, and *Testing* in the USMLE *Bulletin of Information*.

## Travel Status

Applicants traveling to the United States to take an exam are responsible for making the necessary travel and accommodation arrangements. If you are neither a U.S. citizen nor a U.S. lawful permanent resident, you are responsible for obtaining required travel documents. These documents may include a visa to enter the United States. The requirements of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and U.S. embassies and consulates regarding issuance of visas and travel to and from the United States are subject to change. You should review current requirements before applying for a visa. For additional information, visit the DHS website at [www.dhs.gov](http://www.dhs.gov) and the U.S. Department of State website at <http://travel.state.gov/visa>.

Step 2 CS is administered only in the United States. Upon request, ECFMG provides Step 2 CS applicants with a letter that may assist during the process of applying for a visa. The letter indicates that the applicant is registered for Step 2 CS, one of the exams required for ECFMG Certification. The letter also indicates that the applicant is required to travel to the United States to take the exam and provides the date by which the applicant must complete the exam. You can request this letter when you apply for Step 2 CS. After completion of the registration process, ECFMG will issue the letter, and it will be available to you through IWA. If you are unable to obtain the appropriate visa to enter the United States to take Step 2 CS, you may request a full refund of the exam fee. See *Refunds* on page 15.

If you are traveling from a distant location, you should consider arriving a day or two before the examination in order to be rested.

## Acceptable Identification

Your name as it appears on your scheduling permit and your form(s) of identification must match **exactly**. Since your name on the scheduling permit appears in the Latin alphabet (in “English language letters”), the name on your identification must also appear in the Latin alphabet. The spelling of the name on your scheduling permit must match **exactly** the spelling of the name on the form(s) of identification you present at the test center. If the names do not match as described above, you will not be allowed to take the exam. See *Name of Applicant* on page 11.

The form of identification you present must be one of the forms of **unexpired**, government-issued identification listed below that contains your **name in the Latin alphabet**, your **signature**, and your recent (no more than 10 years earlier) **photograph**. The following forms of identification are acceptable, only if they meet all of these requirements:

- Passport
- Driver’s license with photograph
- National identity card
- Other form of **unexpired**, government-issued identification that meets all of these requirements

If your unexpired, government-issued form of identification contains your name in the Latin alphabet and your photograph but not your signature, you can use another form of unexpired identification that contains your signature, such as a student/employee identification card or a credit card, to **supplement** your photo-bearing, government-issued identification.

If you do not have acceptable identification, as described above, that contains your name in the Latin alphabet, you can apply for an ECFMG Identification Card (EIC). You may use a valid EIC **in place of** one of the forms of identification listed above to gain admittance to the test center on the date of your exam. To receive an EIC, you must complete an *ECFMG Identification Card Request Form* (Form 180), available from ECFMG upon request. To request Form 180, you must submit a written request to ECFMG (see *Communicating with ECFMG* on page *ii*) **after** you have been registered for examination. ECFMG will not provide Form 180 to individuals who are not registered for examination. Each EIC is valid for one testing appointment only and will be collected at the test center at the end of your testing appointment.

**IMPORTANT NOTE: The purpose of the EIC is to provide acceptable identification for examinees who do not have identification that contains their name in the Latin alphabet. Do not request an EIC if you already have identification that meets all of the requirements listed above. Requests for EICs are processed typically within four weeks of receipt of a completed Form 180.**

## Scoring and Score Reporting

### Minimum Passing Scores

For ECFMG Certification, you must obtain at least the USMLE-recommended pass outcome for each required Step or Step Component. The USMLE-recommended minimum passing level is reviewed periodically and may be adjusted at any time. Notice of such review and any adjustments will be posted on the USMLE website. (See *Minimum Passing Scores* in the *USMLE Bulletin of Information*.)

### Scoring

NBME is responsible for determining the results of USMLE exams and for issuing the score reports. (See *Scoring and Score Reporting* in the *USMLE Bulletin of Information*.)

**IMPORTANT NOTE: The USMLE program routinely monitors the scoring of the Step examinations for unusual performance results, such as unusually low scores. If this process raises concerns, e.g., about your readiness to test or your level of motivation in trying to pass the examination, you may be contacted by representatives of the USMLE program. Unusual performance patterns may result in your being unable to reapply or retest pending an acceptable explanation for the noted aberrancies. Lack of an acceptable response from you may result in referral to the USMLE Committee on Irregular Behavior and Score Validity. The committee may prohibit you from future testing until such time as you comply with certain conditions, e.g., produce evidence of additional education experience or motivation to succeed. If you wish to become more familiar with the USMLE examinations, you should utilize the practice materials available on the USMLE website or from ECFMG, upon request, before taking the examinations.**

### Reporting of Scores

Results for Step 1/Step 2 CK are typically available within three to four weeks after your test date. However, delays are possible for various reasons. In selecting your test date and inquiring about results, you should allow at least eight weeks after your test date to receive notification that your score report is available. Results for Step 2 CS are available according to the Step 2 CS Schedule for Reporting Results, available on the USMLE and ECFMG websites. To avoid misinterpretation and to protect the privacy of examinees, ECFMG will not provide scores or pass/fail outcomes by telephone, fax, or e-mail to anyone, including examinees.

Please note that the reporting of scores may be delayed if additional data and/or analyses are required to assure the validity of the test scores. Additionally, ECFMG reserves the right to reverify with the medical school the

eligibility of medical school students and graduates who are registered for examination. If ECFMG requests reverification of your student/graduate status with your medical school, your score report will be issued only after reverification of your status has been received by ECFMG.

Score reports are issued in electronic format only and can be accessed using ECFMG's OASIS; **you will not receive a paper score report by postal mail.** Once your score report has been issued, ECFMG will send a notification to the e-mail address in your ECFMG record. Instructions on how to view, download, and print your examination results will be available in the e-mail notification.

Score reports are available for approximately 120 days from the date of e-mail notification. Once the score report is removed from the website, your results will be provided to you only in the form of an official USMLE transcript. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that you print your score report while it is available.

**IMPORTANT NOTE: ECFMG may provide your medical school with data on your performance on administrations of USMLE Step 1, USMLE Step 2 CK, and USMLE Step 2 CS. Data provided include whether you passed the exam administration, and, for Step 1 and Step 2 CK, your numerical score on both two-digit and three-digit scales.**

**You have the option to withhold your exam results from your medical school; data are not available on examinees who exercise this option. To have the results of an exam administration withheld, you must submit a request through ECFMG's IWA at least 10 days before your scheduled test date. If you make this request, the score information provided to the medical school for that exam administration will list your name and the notation "record withheld at the request of the examinee." If you want your score for that exam administration reported to your medical school subsequently, you must request and pay for a USMLE transcript (See *USMLE Transcripts* on page 41 and *Official USMLE Transcripts and Providing Scores to Third Parties in the USMLE Bulletin of Information*).**

### **Step 1 and Step 2 CK**

Score reports for Step 1 and Step 2 CK include a pass/fail designation, numerical scores, and graphical performance profiles, which summarize areas of strength and weakness to aid in self-assessment. These profiles are developed as assessment tools for the benefit of examinees only and are not reported or verified to third parties.

Except as otherwise specified below, to receive a score for Step 1/Step 2 CK, you must begin **every block of the test**. If you do not begin every block, no results are reported, and the "incomplete examination" attempt appears on your USMLE transcript.

If your examination is incomplete, you may request that a score be calculated and reported, with all missed test items scored as incorrect. This score is likely to be lower than the score you would have achieved had you completed all sections of the examination. If you decide to request calculation and reporting of your score, the score will appear on your USMLE transcript as though it were complete; it will remain the permanent score for the examination administration. If your exam is incomplete, you will be notified in writing by NBME. You will have 45 days from the date of this notification to request the exam to be scored as described above.

### **Step 2 CS**

Performance on Step 2 CS is reported as pass or fail. Score reports include performance profiles, which reflect the relative strengths and weaknesses of the examinee's performance across the subcomponents of Step 2 CS.

For Step 2 CS, if you do not begin every case, your performance may be assessed on those cases completed. If this assessment would result in a passing outcome no matter how poorly you may have performed on the missed case(s), then a "pass" will be reported. If this assessment would result in a failing outcome no matter

how good your performance on the missed case(s), then a “fail” will be reported. Otherwise, the attempt may be recorded as an “incomplete examination.”

Additional information on scoring and score reporting for all Steps and Step Components is available in the *USMLE Bulletin of Information*.

## Score Rerechecks

For all Steps and Step Components, a change in your score or in your pass/fail outcome based on a rerecheck is an extremely remote possibility. However, a request for a rerecheck will be honored if you submit a *Request for Rerecheck of USMLE® Step 1, Step 2 CK, or Step 2 CS Score* (Form 265) and the fee for this service to ECFMG. Form 265 is available on the Publications page of the ECFMG website and from ECFMG, upon request. Your request must be received at ECFMG no later than 90 days after your score report release date.

For Step 1/Step 2 CK, standard quality assurance procedures ensure that the scores reported for you accurately reflect the responses recorded by the computer. When a request for score rerecheck is received, your original response record is retrieved and rescored using a system that is outside of the normal processing routine. The rerechecked score is then compared with your original score.

For Step 2 CS, score rerechecks first involve retrieval of the ratings you received from the standardized patients and from the physician note raters. These values are then resummed and reconverted into final scores in order to confirm that the reported pass/fail outcome was accurate. There is no rerating of your encounters or of your patient notes; videos of encounters are not reviewed. Videos are used for general quality control and for training purposes and are retained only for a limited period of time.

Patient notes are carefully reviewed, in some instances by multiple physicians, before scores are released. As part of the quality control procedures for initial scoring, examinees who fail Step 2 CS solely on the basis of the Integrated Clinical Encounter subcomponent and who are performing at a level that is near the minimum passing point, have their patient notes rated by multiple physician note raters. Therefore, patient notes are not reviewed again when a rerecheck is requested.

## USMLE Transcripts

To request an official USMLE transcript, you must contact the appropriate registration entity. You must contact the Federation of State Medical Boards if you are registered for or have taken Step 3 and/or you want to send your transcript to a medical licensing authority. In all other cases, submit your transcript request to ECFMG by sending a completed *Request for Official USMLE® Transcript* (Form 172) and the appropriate fee to ECFMG. Form 172 and additional information are available on the Publications page of the ECFMG website and from ECFMG, upon request. You can check whether your USMLE transcript has been sent using OASIS. For a description of the information provided in USMLE transcripts, see *Official USMLE Transcripts and Providing Scores to Third Parties* in the *USMLE Bulletin of Information*.

**IMPORTANT NOTE: Graphical performance profiles, which are included in your original score reports, are not included in your USMLE transcript.**

If you apply to residency programs through the Electronic Residency Application Service (ERAS), you may request electronic transmittal of your USMLE transcript to these programs. For additional information, refer to the ERAS applicant information available on the ECFMG website at [www.ecfmg.org/eras](http://www.ecfmg.org/eras). Information on the status of requests for electronic transmittal of USMLE transcripts via ERAS is not available through OASIS.

## CSA Performance History

If you took the former ECFMG CSA, your USMLE transcript will indicate only that you have CSA examination history. It will not provide any additional information on your attempt(s) on the CSA. To request official copies of your CSA performance history, you must complete a *Request for an Official ECFMG® CSA® History Chart* (Form 297) and submit it to ECFMG with the appropriate fee. Form 297 is available on the Publications page of the ECFMG website and from ECFMG, upon request. For each attempt on the ECFMG CSA, the Official ECFMG CSA History Chart includes the month and year of the administration and the result of your performance. For additional information, refer to the instructions that accompany Form 297.

## Testing Conditions, Validity of Scores, and Irregular Behavior

### Testing Conditions

Policies and procedures to govern the administration of the exams have been established to ensure that no examinee or group of examinees receives unfair advantage on the exam, inadvertently or otherwise. If there is a reason to believe that the integrity of the examination process is jeopardized, the USMLE parent organizations may invalidate all or any part of an exam. If information indicates that continued testing would jeopardize the security of the examination materials or the integrity of scores, the USMLE parent organizations reserve the right to suspend or cancel test administration. See *Testing* in the *USMLE Bulletin of Information*.

### Validity of Scores

To ensure the integrity of the examination system, the validity of scores reported for USMLE examinations is assured by every means available to the USMLE program. The performance of all examinees is monitored and may be analyzed statistically to detect aberrancies that may result in a classification of scores as indeterminate. To designate a score as indeterminate means that the score achieved may not represent a valid measure of the examinee's knowledge or competence as sampled by the exam, based upon statistical analyses or otherwise. See *Validity of Scores* in the *USMLE Bulletin of Information*.

### Irregular Behavior

The USMLE program's definition of irregular behavior includes, "any action by applicants, examinees, potential applicants, or others when solicited by an applicant and/or examinee that subverts or attempts to subvert the examination process." All USMLE exams are monitored through use of audio and video monitors, recording equipment, and by test center staff. Failure to adhere to the instructions of test center staff during the exam may result in a determination of irregular behavior and permanent annotation of your USMLE record and transcripts. If you are observed engaging in a possible violation of test administration rules or other forms of irregular behavior during an exam, you will not necessarily be told of the observation by a proctor at the time of the exam. See *Irregular Behavior* in the *USMLE Bulletin of Information*.

**IMPORTANT NOTE: Postings and discussion of examination content and/or answers on the Internet are violations of the USMLE Rules of Conduct. If there is evidence that you have violated this or any other test administration rule, actions may be taken under the USMLE policies and procedures on irregular behavior. If you are found to have engaged in irregular behavior, information regarding this determination becomes part of your USMLE record. Your score report (if applicable) and USMLE transcript will contain a notation regarding the irregular behavior. You may also be barred from taking the USMLE in the future. Additionally, your exam results may be withheld or invalidated. See *Testing Regulations and Rules of Conduct* and *Irregular Behavior* in the *USMLE Bulletin of Information*.**

## Reexamination and Reapplication

**For the purpose of ECFMG Certification**, there is no limit on the number of times you can take a Step or Step Component you have not passed. If you pass a Step or Step Component, you may not retake it, and you will have seven years to pass the other Step(s) or Step Component(s) required for ECFMG Certification. This seven-year period begins on the exam date for the first Step or Step Component that you pass and ends **exactly seven years from this exam date**. If you do not pass all required USMLE Step(s) and Step Component(s) within a maximum of seven years, your earliest USMLE passing performance will no longer be valid for the purpose of ECFMG Certification. See *Time Limit for Completing Examination Requirements* on page 18.

If a USMLE passing performance is no longer valid for ECFMG Certification, you may request an exception to retake the previously passed exam that is no longer valid. See *Retakes* in the *USMLE Bulletin of Information*. You may only request the exception at the time that you apply for the previously passed exam. Exceptions to the reexamination policy are not approved prior to your submitting the exam application.

**IMPORTANT NOTE: If an applicant's earliest USMLE passing performance that is valid for ECFMG Certification took place before June 14, 2004, the applicant is required to pass only Step 1 and Step 2 CK within a seven-year period for ECFMG Certification; if required for ECFMG Certification, Step 2 CS can be passed outside the seven-year period. (See *Time Limit for Completing Examination Requirements* on page 18.) If this applicant passes Step 1 and Step 2 CK within a seven-year period, these passing performances will remain valid for ECFMG Certification, regardless of when Step 2 CS is taken and passed. This applicant will not be eligible to retake Step 1 or Step 2 CK for the purpose of meeting a time limit imposed by a state medical licensing authority until after he or she is certified by ECFMG.**

If you **fail or do not complete** a Step or Step Component, you may retake it, but you must reapply, including payment of the appropriate fee(s). The following restrictions apply:

- You may take Step 1 no more than **four times** in any 12-month period.
- You may take Step 2 CK no more than **four times** in any 12-month period.
- You may take Step 2 CS no more than **three times** in any 12-month period.

When you reapply, your eligibility period will be adjusted, if necessary, to comply with these restrictions. You must read the editions of the *ECFMG Information Booklet* and the *USMLE Bulletin of Information* that pertain to the eligibility period in which you take the exam.

If you **do not take an exam during your assigned eligibility period**, you must reapply, including payment of the appropriate fee(s), if you wish to take the exam. **In this event ECFMG cannot process a subsequent application for this exam until two weeks after the end of the eligibility period for the exam you did not take.**

**IMPORTANT NOTE: These policies apply only to ECFMG Certification. The USMLE program recommends to state medical licensing authorities that they require applicants to pass the full USMLE sequence (including Step 3, which is not required for ECFMG Certification) within a seven-year period. The USMLE program also recommends to state medical licensing authorities a limit on the number of attempts allowed to pass each Step or Step Component. See *Time Limit and Number of Attempts Allowed to Complete All Steps and Retakes* in the *USMLE Bulletin of Information*. Most state medical licensing authorities accept the USMLE-recommended limits, but some do not. You should contact the FSMB for general information and the medical licensing authority of the jurisdiction where you plan to apply for licensure for definitive information, since licensure requirements vary among jurisdictions. Additionally, applicants who retake a previously passed Step or Step Component to comply with a time limit should understand the implications for Step 3 eligibility of a failing attempt on a retake. See *Official Performance of Record for Examinees Retaking a Previously Passed Step* in the *USMLE Bulletin of Information*.**

## MEDICAL EDUCATION CREDENTIALS

An international medical graduate must have been awarded credit for at least four credit years (academic years for which credit has been given toward completion of the medical curriculum) by a medical school that is listed in the *International Medical Education Directory (IMED)* of the Foundation for Advancement of International Medical Education and Research (FAIMER). There are restrictions on credits transferred to the medical school that awards an applicant's medical degree that can be used to meet this requirement. See *Transfer Credits*, below. The physician's graduation year must be included in the medical school's *IMED* listing. The FAIMER *IMED* contains information supplied by countries about their medical schools. FAIMER is not an accrediting agency.

**NOTE REGARDING INELIGIBLE PRACTITIONERS: Graduates not eligible for admission to the exams or for ECFMG Certification include, but are not limited to: Graduates licensed only in stomatology, ayurvedic or homeopathic medicine, or those awarded only the diploma of Physician-Epidemiologist-Hygienist, Physician-Biochemist, Physician-Cyberneticist, Physician-Biophysicist, Licensed Medical Practitioner, or Assistant Medical Practitioner.**

Applicants for ECFMG Certification must document the completion of all requirements for, and receipt of, the **final medical diploma**. ECFMG verifies every applicant's final medical diploma with the appropriate officials of the medical school that issued the diploma. When ECFMG sends your medical diploma to your medical school for verification, ECFMG will request the medical school to include your **final medical school transcript** when the school returns the verification of your medical diploma to ECFMG. Verification by ECFMG with the issuing school may also be required for transcripts that are submitted by applicants to document transferred credits. An applicant's credentials are not considered complete until ECFMG receives and accepts verification of the final medical diploma, final medical school transcript, and, if required, transfer credit transcript(s) directly from the issuing school(s).

Please do not send any credentials not required by ECFMG (such as licenses, certificates of full registration, high school diplomas, academic awards, etc.). Submission of unnecessary documents can delay the processing of your application.

### Transfer Credits

Transfer credits are credits earned for a course taken at one institution (such as a medical school) that are accepted by another medical school toward meeting its degree requirements. For example, a student attends a medical school for one year and earns credits for 12 courses. The student transfers to another medical school, which accepts the credits for those 12 courses toward meeting its degree requirements. The credits for those 12 courses are then referred to as transfer credits.

All applicants who have transferred credits to the medical school that awarded or will award their medical degree must disclose and document these credits when they apply to ECFMG for examination, **regardless of when the credits were earned**. See *Credentials for Exam Registration* on page 48. Failure to disclose and document these credits may have a number of negative consequences, including delaying exam registration and certification by ECFMG, and may result in a finding of irregular behavior. See *Irregular Behavior* on page 50.

Additionally, for the purpose of ECFMG Certification, credits earned on or after January 1, 2008 that are transferred to the medical school that awarded or will award an applicant's medical degree must meet **all** of the following criteria:

- Credits must be transferred from one *IMED*-listed medical school to another *IMED*-listed medical school.
- Credits must be for courses taken at one medical school within seven years of the date of graduation at the medical school that accepts the transferred courses.
- Credits must be for courses that were passed at the medical school at which the course was taken.

Applicants whose transferred credits do not comply with the policy outlined on page 44 will not meet the requirements to be registered by ECFMG for examination or the requirements for ECFMG Certification. Applicants whose transferred credits do not meet **all** the criteria listed on page 44 may request an exception from the ECFMG Medical Education Credentials Committee.

## Provision of Credentials and Translations

### Credentials for ECFMG Certification

You may not submit your credentials to ECFMG until you apply for an exam. If you send credentials to ECFMG before you apply for an exam, they will not be processed.

**If you are a medical school graduate** when you submit your first exam application, your medical education credentials must be submitted with this initial exam application.

**If you are a medical school student** when you submit your first exam application, send your medical education credentials as soon as you graduate and receive them.

You must include your full name and USMLE/ECFMG Identification Number on the **front** of all credentials and the **back** of photographs before sending them to ECFMG. See *Credentials for Exam Registration* on page 48.

After you have applied for an exam, if you need to send credentials to ECFMG separately from an exam application, you must send the credentials to the following address:

Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG)  
Attn: Registration and Credentials Services  
3624 Market St., 4th Floor  
Philadelphia, PA 19104-2685  
USA

ECFMG will not accept letters or other deliveries that arrive with postage or other fees due.

When your credentials have been processed, ECFMG will notify you. You can also check the status of your credentials by accessing OASIS on the ECFMG website.

Documents submitted to ECFMG as part of the exam application and certification process, including translations, will not be returned.

### **Final Medical Diploma**

ECFMG requires all medical school graduates to submit copies of their final medical diploma.

You must send two photocopies of your final medical diploma to ECFMG. Do not send an original diploma. The exact name of the final medical diploma you must provide is listed in the *Reference Guide for Medical Education Credentials* on pages 61-65. The *Reference Guide* lists these medical credential qualifications by country of medical school. Although this *Reference Guide* is based upon information that was current at the time of publication, this information is subject to change.

The photocopies of your medical diploma **must be 216 mm x 279 mm (8½ in x 11 in)**. **If these documents are larger than 216 mm x 279 mm (8½ in x 11 in), you must send reduced photocopies that are 216 mm x 279 mm (8½ in x 11 in).**

You must send the photocopies of your diploma to ECFMG by mail or courier service. ECFMG does **not** accept these documents by fax or e-mail. You must send one full-face, passport-sized, color photograph with the copies of your medical diploma. The photograph that you send must be **current**; it must have been taken within six months of the date that you send it. A photocopy of a photograph is not acceptable.

You must submit the photocopies of the final medical diploma in the original language, containing the issue date and all of the appropriate signatures of the medical school and/or university officials. Documents that are not in English must be accompanied by an official English translation. ECFMG will not accept copies of a medical diploma that is not in English without an official English translation. Likewise, ECFMG will not accept an English translation of a diploma without copies of the original language document from which the English translation was prepared. (See *English Translations* on page 49.)

Do not submit professional evaluations of your final medical diploma. ECFMG does not accept such evaluations in lieu of your final medical diploma.

You must also complete and submit with your medical diploma the *ECFMG Medical Education Credentials Submission Form* (Form 344) and **two copies** of the *Medical School Release Request* (Form 345). These forms are available on the Publications page of the ECFMG website and from ECFMG, upon request. If you are submitting the photocopies of your medical diploma with an exam application, follow the instructions for additional documents in *Applying for Examination* on page 21.

### **Final Medical School Transcript**

When ECFMG sends your medical diploma to your medical school for verification, ECFMG will request the medical school to include your final medical school transcript when the school returns the verification of your medical diploma to ECFMG.

If ECFMG is unable to obtain your final medical school transcript directly from your medical school, ECFMG will contact you and request that you submit to ECFMG two photocopies of your final medical school transcript. If ECFMG has previously verified your medical diploma with your medical school but not the final medical school transcript, you must send two photocopies of the final medical school transcript to ECFMG. ECFMG will then send a copy of the final medical school transcript to the medical school for verification.

The photocopies of your medical school transcript **must be 216 mm x 279 mm (8½ in x 11 in)**. **If these documents are larger than 216 mm x 279 mm (8½ in x 11 in), you must send reduced photocopies that are 216 mm x 279 mm (8½ in x 11 in)**. You must send the photocopies of your transcript to ECFMG by mail or courier service. ECFMG does not accept these documents by fax or e-mail.

You must send one full-face, passport-sized, color photograph with the photocopies of your final medical school transcript. The photograph that you send must be **current**; it must have been taken within six months of the date that you send it. A photocopy of a photograph is not acceptable.

You must submit the photocopies of the final medical school transcript in the original language. Documents that are not in English must be accompanied by an official English translation. ECFMG will not accept copies of a medical school transcript that is not in English without an official English translation. Likewise, ECFMG will not accept an English translation of a transcript without copies of the original language document from which the English translation was prepared. (See *English Translations* on page 49.)

Do not submit professional evaluations of your final medical school transcript. ECFMG does not accept such evaluations in lieu of your final medical school transcript.

### **Transcript(s) to Document Transferred Credits**

If you have transferred credits to the medical school that awarded or will award your medical degree, you must document these credits when you apply for examination, regardless of when the credits were earned. You must send to ECFMG two photocopies of an official transcript issued by the school or institution at which the course was taken.

The photocopies **must be 216 mm x 279 mm (8½ in x 11 in). If these documents are larger than 216 mm x 279 mm (8½ in x 11 in), you must send reduced photocopies that are 216 mm x 279 mm (8½ in x 11 in).**

You must submit the photocopies of the transcript in the original language. Documents that are not in English must be accompanied by an official English translation. ECFMG will not accept copies of a transcript that is not in English without an official English translation. Likewise, ECFMG will not accept an English translation of a transcript without copies of the original language document from which the English translation was prepared. (See *English Translations* on page 49.)

Do not submit professional evaluations of your transcript. ECFMG does not accept such evaluations in lieu of your transcript.

You must also complete and submit with your transcript(s) the *ECFMG Medical Education Credentials Submission Form* (Form 344). Form 344 is available on the Publications page of the ECFMG website and from ECFMG, upon request. To submit the transcript to ECFMG, follow the instructions for additional documents in *Applying for Examination* on page 21.

### **Name on Medical Diploma and Transcript(s)**

The name on your medical diploma and transcript(s) must match **exactly** the name in your ECFMG record. If the names do not match exactly, you must submit documentation that **verifies** the name on your medical diploma/transcript(s) is (or was) your name. The documentation must show your name exactly as it appears on your medical diploma/transcript(s). (See *Name of Applicant* on page 11 and *Changing or Verifying Your Name* on page 12.)

An example of a discrepancy between the name in your ECFMG record and the name on your medical diploma/transcript(s) would be if your ECFMG record lists your married name, but your medical diploma/transcript(s) lists your maiden name.

Other examples of a discrepancy include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Use of initials for the first name or last name (surname) on the medical diploma/transcript(s)

**EXAMPLE: “Mary Smith” in your ECFMG record, but “M. Smith” or “Mary S.” on your medical diploma/transcript(s).**

- Difference in the sequence of names

**EXAMPLE: “Pravin Chandra Patel” in your ECFMG record, but “Pravin Patel Chandra” or “Chandra Pravin Patel” on your medical diploma/transcript(s).**

- Hyphenations and separations in names

**EXAMPLE: “Alice Al Quigley” in your ECFMG record, but “Alice Al-Quigley” or “Alice Alquigley” on your medical diploma/transcript(s).**

## Credentials for Exam Registration

If you are a medical school **graduate**, the two photocopies of your medical diploma and the current color photograph must be sent with your application for examination (if your diploma and photograph have not been submitted to ECFMG previously). If you have graduated and met all requirements for your medical diploma but your medical diploma has not yet been issued, a current, full-face, passport-sized, color photograph and a letter signed by your Medical School Dean, Vice Dean, or Registrar must be submitted with your exam application. The letter you submit must be the original document and must be written on your medical school's letterhead. The letter must include the following statement:

**This is to confirm that [applicant name] has graduated and completed all requirements to receive the [degree title] degree from [medical school/university name]. The degree will be issued [month and year].**

To submit these items to ECFMG, follow the instructions for additional documents in *Applying for Examination* on page 21.

You must then send the photocopies of your diploma to ECFMG as soon as the diploma is issued. You must also complete and submit with your medical diploma the *ECFMG Medical Education Credentials Submission Form* (Form 344) and **two copies** of the *Medical School Release Request* (Form 345). These forms are available on the Publications page of the ECFMG website and from ECFMG, upon request. See *Credentials for ECFMG Certification* on page 45.

**If you graduated from medical school and do not submit your medical diploma or a letter from your medical school, as described above, and these documents have not been received previously by ECFMG, your application will be rejected.**

**If the name on your diploma does not match the name in your ECFMG record and you do not submit acceptable documentation that verifies the name on your diploma, your application will be rejected. (See *Name of Applicant* on page 11 and *Changing or Verifying Your Name* on page 12.)**

If you are a medical school **student**, you should send the photocopies of your medical diploma and current, full-face, passport-sized, color photograph to ECFMG as soon as you graduate and receive the diploma. See *Credentials for ECFMG Certification* on page 45.

**Students and graduates** who have transferred credits to the medical school that awarded or will award their medical degree must document these credits when they apply for examination, regardless of when the credits were earned. Failure to provide appropriate documentation of transfer credits will prevent exam registration. See *Credentials for ECFMG Certification* on page 45. To submit these items to ECFMG, follow the instructions for additional documents in *Applying for Examination* on page 21.

If your credentials are complete, you are generally not required to resend these documents when you apply for subsequent exams. After receiving your medical diploma, ECFMG will notify you and advise if additional credentials are required.

If you have questions or concerns about your credentials, you can contact ECFMG by e-mail at [credentials@ecfm.org](mailto:credentials@ecfm.org) or by telephone or fax (see *General Inquiries* on page ii).

All documents that are not in English must be accompanied by an official English translation that meets ECFMG's translation requirements. See *English Translations* on page 49.

## English Translations

Any document submitted to ECFMG that is not in English must be accompanied by an English translation, prepared by and certified to be correct by a government official (for example, a Consular Officer), medical school official (for example, a Dean or Registrar), or a professional translation service.

The translation must appear on letterhead. It must bear the signature and title of the government or medical school official or representative of the translation service and, if there is one, the seal of the government official, medical school, or translation service. If the translation service is a private company, the letterhead must identify the company as a translation service. The translation must be a word-for-word translation of the original language document. An abstract or summary translation of the document is not acceptable. The translation must be prepared from the original document or a photocopy of the original document. ECFMG will not accept a translation prepared from a transcription (transcribed version) of the document.

An English language certificate issued by the medical school that is not a word-for-word English language version of the degree, transcript, or other document in the original language is not acceptable as a translation. English translations that do not meet the requirements above will not be accepted. Examples of unacceptable translations include, but are not limited to:

- translations prepared by a notary who is not a government or medical school official or representative of a professional translation service,
- a translation that was not signed by the translator or official or representative of the translation service, and
- a translation that is not a word-for-word translation of the original language document.

Additionally, applicants are not permitted to translate their own documents.

Documents submitted to ECFMG as part of the exam application and certification process, including translations, will not be returned.

ECFMG does not endorse or recommend individual translation services. However, you can locate a translation service by consulting the website of the American Translators Association at [www.atanet.org](http://www.atanet.org).

## Verification of Credentials

ECFMG verifies every applicant's final medical diploma with the appropriate officials of the medical school that issued the diploma and requests the medical school to include the final medical school transcript when the school returns the verification of the medical diploma to ECFMG. Verification by ECFMG with the issuing school may also be required for transcripts that are submitted by applicants to document transferred credits. You will not fulfill the ECFMG medical education credential requirements until verification of your final medical diploma, final medical school transcript, and, if required, transfer credit transcript(s) is received directly from the issuing school(s) and accepted by ECFMG.

In some instances, the verification process can be lengthy due to the processing time required by the institutions and prevailing postal conditions. ECFMG will notify you when your diploma has been sent to your medical school for verification. If ECFMG does not receive a response from your medical school within the anticipated time period, ECFMG will send subsequent verification requests to your medical school. ECFMG will notify you when it sends these subsequent requests. ECFMG will also notify you after receiving and evaluating the verification from your medical school. You can check the status of these medical education credentials on-line using OASIS.

ECFMG reserves the right to reverify with the medical school the eligibility of medical school graduates who apply for examination. This may include reverification of the graduate's medical education credentials with the issuing medical school. If such reverification is requested by ECFMG, the graduate will be registered for examination only after ECFMG has received reverification of the graduate's credentials directly from the medical school. If reverification is requested by ECFMG after the graduate has been registered for examination, ECFMG may cancel the graduate's registration or withhold the graduate's score report until ECFMG has received reverification of the graduate's medical education credentials directly from the issuing school. If your registration is canceled, you may be required to reapply.

**IMPORTANT NOTES: Applicants are responsible for any fees associated with the verification of the final medical diploma, final medical school transcript, and transcript(s) to document transferred credits. If your medical school charges a fee for the verification of your diploma and/or transcript, ECFMG will advise you to contact your medical school directly regarding the fee and the method of payment. If the final medical school transcript provided by your medical school is not in English, ECFMG will have the transcript translated into English by an independent translation service, will charge your ECFMG financial account for the translation, and will notify you of the charge. The current translation fee is \$205. See *Payment* on page 14 for information on how to make a payment to your ECFMG financial account.**

**In early 2010, ECFMG will begin to pilot electronic primary-source verification of medical education credentials through the ECFMG Medical School Web Portal (EMSWP). Monitor the ECFMG website for additional information.**

## Irregular Behavior

The ECFMG Medical Education Credentials Committee reviews allegations of irregular behavior. As defined by ECFMG, irregular behavior includes, "all actions or attempted actions on the part of applicants, examinees, potential applicants, others when solicited by an applicant and/or examinee, or any other person that would or could subvert the examination, certification or other processes of the ECFMG." Examples of irregular behavior include, but are not limited to, submission of any falsified or altered document to ECFMG; submission of any falsified or altered ECFMG document to other entities or individuals; falsification of information on application forms; and failing to comply with a USMLE or ECFMG policy, procedure, and/or rule. A finding of irregular behavior by ECFMG may be sufficient cause for ECFMG to bar you from an exam, to terminate your participation in an exam, to withhold and/or invalidate the results of your exam, to withhold a certificate, revoke a certificate, or to take other appropriate action. ECFMG will report findings of irregular behavior to the FSMB Board Action Databank, state medical licensing authorities, and directors of graduate medical education programs, among others. ECFMG may also report such findings to the USMLE Committee on Irregular Behavior and Score Validity and to any other organization or individual who, in the judgment of ECFMG, has a legitimate interest in such information.

In all cases when the ECFMG Medical Education Credentials Committee has made a finding of irregular behavior, a permanent annotation will be included in the individual's ECFMG Status Report and ECFMG Certification Verification Service (CVS) Report. If there is a finding of irregular behavior made on or after August 31, 2006, regardless of the date of the conduct or activity that gave rise to the finding, additional information explaining the basis for the finding of irregular behavior and the resulting action will accompany every ECFMG Status Report and CVS Report. This additional information may also be provided to legitimately interested entities.

## **Representative Examples of Irregular Behavior**

Representative examples of allegations of irregular behavior and actions taken by the ECFMG Medical Education Credentials Committee include:

- **Altering or Fabricating Letters of Recommendation**

The ECFMG Medical Education Credentials Committee reviewed an allegation of irregular behavior in connection with an individual who altered a Letter of Recommendation prior to submitting it to ERAS Support Services at ECFMG.

Following review, the ECFMG Medical Education Credentials Committee determined the individual had engaged in irregular behavior and **took action to permanently revoke the individual's Standard ECFMG Certificate and to permanently bar the individual from admission to all ECFMG examinations.**

- **Submitting a Fraudulent Medical School Diploma to ECFMG**

The ECFMG Medical Education Credentials Committee reviewed an allegation of irregular behavior in connection with an individual who submitted to ECFMG a fraudulent medical diploma in conjunction with an application for USMLE examinations.

Following review, the ECFMG Medical Education Credentials Committee determined the individual had engaged in irregular behavior and **took action to permanently bar the individual from admission to all ECFMG examinations and from ECFMG Certification.**

## The Fifth Pathway Program

The Fifth Pathway, created by the American Medical Association (AMA) in 1971, has allowed certain students who attended four years at an international medical school to complete their supervised clinical work at a U.S. medical school, to become eligible for entry to U.S. residency training, and ultimately to obtain a license to practice in the United States.

Individuals who pursued the Fifth Pathway completed the four-year didactic curriculum at the international medical school, but they did not complete the internship and/or social service requirement for graduation. Instead, they completed a Fifth Pathway program, which is one year of supervised clinical work at a U.S. medical school. Since they did not complete the internship and/or social service requirement, they did not receive the final medical diploma and, therefore, are not graduates of the international medical school.

**IMPORTANT NOTES: The AMA's Council on Medical Education has announced that it will no longer support the Fifth Pathway as a mechanism for eligibility to enter the first year of ACGME-accredited graduate medical education programs. The last Fifth Pathway program class to be supported is the January 2009 entering class, which ends in December 2009.**

**Additionally, the USMLE program will cease acceptance of Fifth Pathway certificates issued after December 31, 2009 for the purpose of meeting Step 3 eligibility requirements. For valid Fifth Pathway certificates issued through December 31, 2009, the USMLE program has not yet determined whether they will be accepted indefinitely for purposes of meeting Step 3 eligibility criteria or whether a cut-off date will be imposed. Individuals holding Fifth Pathway certificates that are not accepted by the USMLE program for purposes of meeting Step 3 eligibility will be required to obtain ECFMG Certification in order to be eligible for Step 3. Monitor the USMLE website for additional information.**

Participants in Fifth Pathway programs who have not completed the internship and/or social service required for graduation at the international medical school and for receipt of the final medical diploma are **not** eligible for ECFMG Certification. However, these individuals may apply to ECFMG for examination, provided that they hold a Fifth Pathway certificate issued on or before December 31, 2009 or are enrolled in a Fifth Pathway program that will result in issuance of a Fifth Pathway certificate on or before December 31, 2009.

# ENTRY INTO GRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION IN THE UNITED STATES

## An Overview for International Medical Graduates

To enter programs of graduate medical education in the United States that are accredited by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME), international medical graduates must hold a Standard ECFMG Certificate without expired examination dates, if applicable. (See *Validity of Examinations for Entry into Graduate Medical Education* on page 9.) However, for international medical graduates, obtaining ECFMG Certification is just one of the steps required to enter such programs. The purpose of this section is to provide an introduction to the steps typically involved in entering graduate medical education in the United States.

**IMPORTANT NOTE: The information that follows is intended as a general introduction. It is not intended to be a complete list of all requirements. Additionally, some information may not be relevant for all applicants. While this overview is believed to be accurate as of this writing, ECFMG assumes no responsibility or liability therefore. In each case, you should contact the particular institution, organization, program, or state licensing authority for specific requirements.**

### Residency Training Programs

Residency programs, usually referred to as “residencies,” provide training at institutions, such as universities, medical schools, and hospitals. Residencies provide medical specialty training at the graduate level.

### ACGME Accreditation

The Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) is the body that accredits U.S. graduate medical education programs. The ACGME has established general requirements for all residencies as well as special requirements for each medical specialty. The ACGME accredits individual programs, not institutions. Refer to the current edition of the *Graduate Medical Education Directory* (see below) for a complete list of ACGME-accredited residency programs.

### The *Graduate Medical Education Directory*

The *Graduate Medical Education Directory (GMED)*, published by the American Medical Association (AMA), is recognized as the official list of ACGME-accredited graduate medical education programs. In addition to describing the general and special requirements for each medical specialty, including the duration and scope of education, *GMED* lists all accredited residency programs by specialty. The entry for each program includes: the name and location of the residency program, the size of the program, the official program number, and contact information for the residency program director.

This publication may be available to you in your medical school’s library. You can purchase this publication by visiting the AMA website at [www.ama-assn.org](http://www.ama-assn.org) or by contacting the AMA at (800) 621-8335. Mention product number OP416709.

## Number and Availability of Residency Positions

There are no formal restrictions, overall or by program, limiting the number of international medical graduates that enter ACGME-accredited residency programs. However, certain specialties and programs within those specialties vary in their competitiveness.

The number of positions available in any given year depends on a variety of factors, including the amount of funding available to the program and the program's staffing needs. In recent years, more than 6,000 international medical graduates have entered U.S. programs in Post Graduate Year 1 (PGY 1) positions annually. For the 2007-2008 academic year, approximately 7,200 international medical graduates entered U.S. PGY 1 positions.

ECFMG plays no role in determining the number or mix of residency positions that are offered by residency programs or in selecting applicants to fill these positions. All decisions regarding the selection of applicants, including whether an interview is granted, whether and where an applicant is ranked for the purpose of the National Resident Matching Program (NRMP), and whether a contract is actually offered, are made by the directors of the residency programs.

## Selecting Residency Programs

Before you can begin the application process, you must select one or more medical specialties. Selecting a medical specialty is best done with the help of advisors. It may be helpful to consult physicians practicing in the specialties you are considering. You should also consider the degree to which a given specialty would be professionally satisfying. For each specialty, it may be useful to research the overall number of positions available, the degree of competition typically experienced in obtaining a position, and the experience of prior international medical graduates, particularly graduates of **your** medical school, in obtaining residency positions. Detailed information on the number of positions, by specialty, offered and filled by the NRMP is available on the NRMP website at [www.nrmp.org](http://www.nrmp.org).

After you have selected a specialty or specialties, you must decide to which programs within those specialties you will apply. There is no limit on the number of programs to which you can apply. Factors that you may wish to consider in selecting programs include the location of individual programs, their hospital affiliations, accreditation, and the performance of their graduates.

## ECFMG Certification

You must hold a Standard ECFMG Certificate without expired examination dates, if applicable, **before** entering an ACGME-accredited residency program. See *Validity of Examinations for Entry into Graduate Medical Education* on page 9.

Although you must be ECFMG-certified before entering the program, you can apply to residency programs before you are certified by ECFMG. If you apply to residency programs using the Electronic Residency Application Service (ERAS), ECFMG will automatically transmit an ECFMG Status Report to the programs to which you apply. See *Electronic Residency Application Service (ERAS)* on page 54.

You can also participate in the NRMP prior to becoming ECFMG-certified, provided you have passed the exams required by the NRMP and the results of these exams are reported to the NRMP in time to participate. See *National Resident Matching Program (NRMP)* on page 54.

Prior to **entering** a program, you should provide the hospital with a copy of your Standard ECFMG Certificate. Additionally, the hospital should contact ECFMG to confirm your ECFMG certification status. See *Confirmation of ECFMG Certification Status* on page 10.

## Applying to Graduate Medical Education Programs

### Electronic Residency Application Service (ERAS)

The Electronic Residency Application Service (ERAS) was developed by the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) to transmit residency applications and supporting documents, such as transcripts, letters of recommendation, and medical student performance evaluations, to residency program directors over the Internet.

As the designated Dean's office for all international medical students and graduates, ECFMG supports the ERAS application process for these applicants. ECFMG issues to each applicant a unique identification number, known as a Token, which allows the applicant to access the AAMC's ERAS website to complete the ERAS application. ECFMG collects the applicant's supporting documents and transmits them to the ERAS PostOffice, where they are accessible to the residency programs to which the applicant applies. ECFMG also transmits to the ERAS PostOffice an ECFMG Status Report, an updated Status Report when there is a change in the applicant's ECFMG certification status, and, as requested by the applicant, the applicant's USMLE transcript.

Most medical specialties participate in ERAS. For the list of specialties participating in ERAS 2010 (for residency positions beginning in July 2010), visit the AAMC ERAS website at [www.aamc.org/eras](http://www.aamc.org/eras). Additional specialties may participate in ERAS for residency positions beginning in July 2011. Information on participating specialties for ERAS 2011 will be posted on the AAMC ERAS website, as it becomes available.

If you apply to programs in participating specialties, you must submit your residency applications using ERAS. If you apply to programs that do **not** participate in ERAS, you must contact the program directors for paper application materials and instructions.

To participate in ERAS, you **must** have access to the Internet. For information on ERAS, visit the AAMC ERAS website at [www.aamc.org/eras](http://www.aamc.org/eras). Additional information for international medical students/graduates using ERAS is available on the ECFMG website at [www.ecfm.org/eras](http://www.ecfm.org/eras) or from ECFMG, upon request.

All applicants for residency positions, regardless of the method of application, should contact residency program directors for specific requirements and deadlines. Applicants should also register with the NRMP (see below).

### National Resident Matching Program (NRMP)

The National Resident Matching Program (NRMP), also known as "the Match," matches applicants with available positions in programs of graduate medical education. Applicants submit to the NRMP a list of residency programs in order of preference. The programs listed are those programs to which they have applied (via ERAS or traditional paper applications). Program directors also submit to the NRMP ranked lists of the applicants they prefer for positions in their programs. These lists are referred to as rank order lists. Once the NRMP has collected all of this information, applicants and available positions are matched by computer using a mathematical algorithm. The Match results are announced in March for programs that begin in July. Both applicants and program directors agree to accept the results of the Match.

Most program directors consider the interview to be a critical part of the selection process. When compiling their rank order lists, program directors usually rank only the applicants they have interviewed. There is no guarantee that the programs to which you have applied will interview you or include you on their rank order lists. If you are ranked by programs, there is no guarantee that you will be matched to any of these programs.

You cannot match to a program if you are not ranked by that program.

You can include any or all of the programs to which you applied (via ERAS or traditional paper applications) on your rank order list, regardless of whether you have interviewed with the programs; however, it is very unlikely that a program will rank you if you have not been given an interview. When compiling your rank order list, you should consider which programs offer residencies that meet your expectations. Data from the NRMP for 1996-2009 indicate that your chances of being matched may increase with the number of programs that you rank. However, since it is possible to match with any program you rank, even if the program ranks low on your list, you should **not** include programs that you definitely are not willing to attend.

**IMPORTANT NOTE: The NRMP and ERAS are distinct, complementary programs. ERAS is a method of applying to residency programs. The NRMP is a method of matching applicants with positions in these programs. Registering for the NRMP is a different process from applying to residency programs through ERAS. If you wish to participate in both the NRMP and ERAS, you must register separately with *each* service. Applying to residency programs through ERAS does not enroll you in the Match.**

Three days prior to release of the general Match results in March, applicants find out whether or not they have matched to a program, although they do not learn the specific program to which they have matched. The following day, program directors are notified whether all of their positions were filled in the Match. Also, on that day, the list of unfilled programs becomes available to unmatched NRMP registrants on the NRMP website at [www.nrmp.org](http://www.nrmp.org). You must be registered for the Match by the February late registration deadline in order to have access to unfilled program information.

To participate in the Match, you will need access to the Internet and an e-mail address. Participants in the Match use the Internet to register, pay fees, and submit their rank order lists to the NRMP. They also use the Internet to access information resulting from the Match, such as whether they have matched, where they have matched, and information on unfilled programs.

You must register for the Match on the NRMP website at [www.nrmp.org](http://www.nrmp.org). You must provide your USMLE/ECFMG Identification Number at the time of registration. You can register for the Match and submit your rank order list to the NRMP prior to meeting the NRMP exam requirements described below.

Students/graduates of international medical schools must have passed all exams necessary for ECFMG Certification (see *Examination Requirements* on page 17), and the results must be reported to the NRMP in time to participate in the Match. Students/graduates of international medical schools are not required to have satisfied the medical education credential requirements for ECFMG Certification in order to participate in the Match. Participants in Fifth Pathway programs must contact the NRMP for information on the exam requirements for Match participation. Beginning in September, the NRMP will contact ECFMG directly to confirm that you have passed the necessary exams. After the rank order list certification deadline, the NRMP will automatically withdraw applicants who have not passed the necessary examinations; however, applicants who are withdrawn still will have access to the list of unfilled programs that is made available during Match Week.

**IMPORTANT NOTE: If you have passed exam(s) through other organizations, such as the National Board of Medical Examiners or the Federation of State Medical Boards, that may be used for ECFMG Certification, you should provide this information to ECFMG well in advance of the NRMP rank order list certification deadline in February. ECFMG will not report such exam information to the NRMP for the purpose of confirming your eligibility to participate in the Match until such exam information has been verified by ECFMG with the appropriate organization and accepted by ECFMG.**

### **Important Dates for the 2010 Match:**

August 15, 2009	Registration opens on the NRMP website
November 30, 2009	Registration deadline (registrations after this date are accepted with an additional late fee)
February 24, 2010	Late registration deadline, and rank order list certification deadline
March 18, 2010	Results of Match announced

### **Tentative Dates for the 2011 Match:**

August 2010	Registration opens on the NRMP website
November 2010	Registration deadline
February 2011	Late registration deadline, and rank order list certification deadline
March 2011	Results of Match announced

For additional information, visit the NRMP website at [www.nrmp.org](http://www.nrmp.org) or contact: NRMP, 2450 N Street NW, Washington, DC 20037-1127 USA; Telephone: (202) 828-0566 or toll-free (in the United States) (866) 617-5838; E-mail: [nrmp@aamc.org](mailto:nrmp@aamc.org).

### **Obtaining a Visa**

International medical graduates who are neither U.S. citizens nor U.S. lawful permanent residents must obtain an appropriate visa for themselves and their dependents, if any, to participate in programs of graduate medical education or training in the United States. A common visa employed for this purpose is the J visa. See *Exchange Visitor Sponsorship Program (J-1 Visa)* on page 57.

### **Examination Requirements Under the *Health Professions Educational Assistance Act of 1976 (PL94-484)***

To obtain a visa to enter the United States to perform services as members of the medical profession or to receive graduate medical education, certain foreign national physicians are required under the provisions of Public Law 94-484 to pass the National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME) Part I and Part II exams or an exam determined to be equivalent for this purpose. The Secretary of Health and Human Services has recognized Step 1 and Step 2 of the United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE), as well as the former Visa Qualifying Examination (VQE) and the Foreign Medical Graduate Examination in the Medical Sciences (FMGEMS), as equivalent to NBME Part I and Part II exams for the purposes of PL94-484. For additional information on visa requirements, refer to the websites of the ECFMG Exchange Visitor Sponsorship Program at [www.ecfmg.org/evsp](http://www.ecfmg.org/evsp), U.S. embassies and consulates of the U.S. Department of State at [www.usembassy.gov](http://www.usembassy.gov), and the immigration bureaus of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security at [www.dhs.gov](http://www.dhs.gov).

## Exchange Visitor Sponsorship Program (J-1 Visa)

ECFMG is authorized by the U.S. Department of State to sponsor foreign national physicians as J-1 Exchange Visitors in programs of graduate medical education and training. The objectives of this program are to enhance international exchange in the field of medicine and to promote mutual understanding between the people of the United States and other countries through the interchange of persons, knowledge, and skills.

The duration of stay for a J-1 Exchange Visitor physician is limited to the time typically required to complete the advanced medical education program. This refers to the specialty and subspecialty certification requirements published by the American Board of Medical Specialties. Participation is further limited to seven years and is reserved for those progressing in training programs.

Foreign national physicians seeking ECFMG sponsorship as J-1 Exchange Visitors must meet, among other requirements, a number of general requirements, which are detailed in ECFMG's application materials for J-1 visa sponsorship. At a minimum, applicants must meet all of the following requirements:

- Hold a Standard ECFMG Certificate without expired examination dates, if applicable. See *Validity of Examinations for Entry into Graduate Medical Education* on page 9.
- Have passed USMLE Step 1 and Step 2 CK; or the former VQE, NBME Part I and Part II, or FMGEMS; or an acceptable combination thereof. See *Examination Requirements Under PL94-484* on page 56.
- Hold a contract or an official letter of offer for a position in an approved graduate medical education or training program.
- Provide a statement of need from the Ministry of Health of the country of most recent legal permanent residence. This statement must provide written assurance that the country needs specialists in the area in which the Exchange Visitor will receive training. It also serves to confirm the physician's commitment to return to that country upon completion of training in the United States (as required by §212(e) of the Immigration and Nationality Act as amended). (Note: If permanent residence is in a country other than that of citizenship, the Ministry of Health letter must come from the country of most recent legal permanent residence.)

Application materials and additional information on the Exchange Visitor Sponsorship Program are available on the ECFMG website at [www.ecfm.org/evsp](http://www.ecfm.org/evsp) and from ECFMG, upon request.

**IMPORTANT NOTE: Visa requirements and procedures are subject to change. For updated information, visit the websites of the ECFMG Exchange Visitor Sponsorship Program at [www.ecfm.org/evsp](http://www.ecfm.org/evsp), U.S. embassies and consulates of the U.S. Department of State at [www.usembassy.gov](http://www.usembassy.gov), and the immigration bureaus of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security at [www.dhs.gov](http://www.dhs.gov).**

### **IMG Advisors Network (IAN)**

ECFMG's IMG Advisors Network (IAN) connects qualified international medical students/graduates who plan to enter U.S. graduate medical education with international medical graduates who have already entered or completed U.S. training programs and who can provide first-hand advice on what to expect in their new roles in U.S. graduate medical education and, more generally, from living and working in the United States.

To participate in IAN as an advisee, an international medical graduate must:

- have been offered a position in an ACGME-accredited training program, and
- have submitted an application and payment to the ECFMG Exchange Visitor Sponsorship Program for initial sponsorship as a J-1 Alien Physician.

OR

- be registered with ERAS, and
- have submitted a rank order list to NRMP.

To participate in IAN as an advisor, an international medical graduate must:

- be certified by ECFMG,
- either be in or have completed training in an ACGME-accredited program,
- be licensed to practice medicine (training or permanent license) in at least one state or jurisdiction in the United States,
- have ready access to e-mail, and
- be willing to reply to inquiries from advisees in an honest and timely manner.

For more details on IAN, visit the Acculturation Program section of the ECFMG website at [www.ecfm.org/acculturation](http://www.ecfm.org/acculturation) or send e-mail to [acculturation@ecfm.org](mailto:acculturation@ecfm.org).

# STATEMENT OF VALUES, MISSION, AND PURPOSES

## Values

The values of ECFMG are expressed in its vision statement:

“Improving world health through excellence in medical education in the context of ECFMG’s core values of collaboration, professionalism and accountability.”

## Mission

The charge of ECFMG is expressed in its mission statement:

“The ECFMG promotes quality health care for the public by certifying international medical graduates for entry into U.S. graduate medical education, and by participating in the evaluation and certification of other physicians and health care professionals. In conjunction with its Foundation for Advancement of International Medical Education and Research (FAIMER), and other partners, it actively seeks opportunities to promote international medical education through programmatic and research activities.”

## Purposes

The purposes (goals) that actuate and accomplish ECFMG’s mission are to:

- Certify the readiness of international medical graduates for entry to graduate medical education and health care systems in the United States through an evaluation of their qualifications.
- Provide complete, timely, and accessible information to international medical graduates regarding entry to graduate medical education in the United States.
- Assess the readiness of international medical graduates to recognize the diverse social, economic and cultural needs of U.S. patients upon entry into graduate medical education.
- Identify the needs of international medical graduates to become acculturated into U.S. health care.
- Provide international access to testing and evaluation programs.
- Expand knowledge about international medical education programs and their graduates by gathering data, conducting research, and disseminating the findings.
- Improve international medical education through consultation and cooperation with medical schools and other institutions relative to program development, standard setting, and evaluation.
- Improve assessment through collaboration with other entities in the United States and abroad.
- Improve the quality of health care by providing research and consultation services to institutions that evaluate international medical graduates for entry into their country.
- Enhance effectiveness by delegating appropriate activities in international medical education to FAIMER.

## ORGANIZATIONAL MEMBERS

The Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG) is a private, nonprofit organization. ECFMG's organizational members are:

American Board of Medical Specialties

American Medical Association

Association of American Medical Colleges

Association for Hospital Medical Education

Federation of State Medical Boards of the United States, Inc.

National Medical Association

## Appendix 1: Reference Guide for Medical Education Credentials

### IMPORTANT NOTES:

- The information in this *Reference Guide*, although based upon the most current information available at the time of publication, is subject to change.
- Graduates not eligible for admission to the exams or for ECFMG Certification include, but are not limited to: Graduates licensed only in stomatology, ayurvedic or homeopathic medicine, or those awarded only the diploma of Physician-Epidemiologist-Hygienist, Physician-Biochemist, Physician-Cyberneticist, Physician-Biophysicist, Licensed Medical Practitioner, or Assistant Medical Practitioner.

### Final Medical Diploma

ECFMG requires all medical school graduates to submit two copies of their final medical diploma. For the exact name of the final medical diploma you must supply, refer to the country of your medical school below. See *Final Medical Diploma* on page 45 for complete information, including the items that you must submit with the copies of your diploma.

### Final Medical School Transcript

When ECFMG sends your medical diploma to your medical school for verification, ECFMG will request the medical school to include your final medical school transcript when the school returns the verification of your medical diploma to ECFMG. If ECFMG is unable to obtain your final medical school transcript directly from your medical school, ECFMG will contact you and request that you submit to ECFMG two copies of your final medical school transcript. ECFMG will then send a copy of the final medical school transcript to the medical school for verification. See *Final Medical School Transcript* on page 46.

### A

Country of Medical School	Required Credentials
Afghanistan .....	Doctor of Medicine diploma
Albania .....	Mjek I Pergjithshem diploma
Algeria .....	Docteur en Medicine diploma
Angola .....	Doctor em Medicina diploma
Antigua and Barbuda .....	Doctor of Medicine diploma
Argentina .....	Medico diploma
Armenia.....	Doctor of Medicine diploma
Aruba .....	Doctor of Medicine diploma
Australia.....	MBBS diploma
Austria .....	Medicinae Universalis Doctor diploma
Azerbaijan .....	Physician diploma

### B

Country of Medical School	Required Credentials
Bahrain .....	Doctor of Medicine diploma
Bangladesh .....	MBBS diploma
Barbados .....	MBBS diploma
Belarus .....	Kvalifikacija (Physician) diploma
Belgium.....	Arts (Physician) or Doctor of Medicine diploma
Belize .....	Doctor of Medicine diploma
Benin.....	Docteur en Medecine diploma
Bolivia.....	Titulo en Provision Nacional de Medico Cirujano or Licentiate en Medicina diploma
Bonaire.....	See “Netherlands Antilles”
Bosnia-Herzegovina.....	Lekar or Zdravnik diploma
Brazil.....	Medico or Bacharel em Medicina diploma

**B** *(continued)*

Country of Medical School	Required Credentials
Bulgaria .....	Master's/Physician diploma
Burkina Faso .....	Docteurat d'Etat en Medecine diploma
Burundi .....	Doctor of Medicine diploma

**C**

Country of Medical School	Required Credentials
Cambodia .....	Doctor of Medicine diploma
Cameroon .....	Docteur en Medecine diploma
Cayman Islands .....	Doctor of Medicine diploma
Central African Republic .....	Docteur en Medecine diploma
Chad .....	Docteurat en Medecine diploma
Chile .....	Medico Cirujano diploma
China .....	Bachelor of Medicine in Medicine degree certificate
Colombia .....	Medico or Medico Cirujano diploma
Comoros .....	Doctor of Medicine (M.D.) diploma
Congo .....	Docteur en Medecine diploma
Cook Islands .....	Doctor of Medicine diploma
Costa Rica .....	Medico Cirujano diploma
Cote d'Ivoire .....	Docteurat d'Etat en Medecine diploma
Croatia .....	Doctor of Medicine diploma
Cuba .....	Doctor en Medicina diploma
Curacao .....	See "Netherlands Antilles"
Czech Republic .....	M.U.Dr. (General Practitioner) diploma

**D**

Country of Medical School	Required Credentials
Democratic Republic of the Congo .....	Docteur en Medecine diploma
Denmark .....	Candidatus Medicinae diploma
Dominica .....	Doctor of Medicine diploma
Dominican Republic .....	Doctor en Medicina diploma

**E**

Country of Medical School	Required Credentials
Ecuador .....	Doctor en Medicina y Cirugia or Medico diploma
Egypt .....	MB ChB diploma
El Salvador .....	Doctor en Medicina diploma
Estonia .....	Doctor of Medicine diploma
Ethiopia .....	Doctor of Medicine diploma

**F**

Country of Medical School	Required Credentials
Fiji .....	MBBS diploma
Finland .....	Licenciate in Medicine diploma
France .....	Docteur en Medecine diploma

**G**

Country of Medical School	Required Credentials
Gabon .....	Docteurat d'Etat en Medecine diploma
Georgia .....	Physician diploma
Germany .....	Final State Exam Certificate (Dritter Abschnitt Certificate [3 part state exam] or Zweiter Abschnitt Certificate [2 part state exam])
Ghana .....	MB, ChB diploma
Greece .....	Ptychion Iatrikes diploma

**G** *(continued)*

Country of Medical School	Required Credentials
Grenada .....	Doctor of Medicine diploma
Guatemala .....	Titulo de Medico Cirujano or Licenciado de Medico Cirujano diploma
Guinea .....	Docteur en Medecine diploma
Guinea-Bissau .....	Doctor en Medicina diploma
Guyana .....	Doctor of Medicine or MBBS diploma

**H**

Country of Medical School	Required Credentials
Haiti .....	Docteur en Medecine diploma
Honduras .....	Doctor en Medicina y Cirugia diploma
Hong Kong .....	MBBS diploma
Hungary .....	Orvosdoktor or MD diploma

**I**

Country of Medical School	Required Credentials
Iceland .....	Candidatus Medicinae diploma
India .....	MBBS diploma
Indonesia .....	Dokter diploma
Iran .....	Doctor of Medicine diploma
Iraq .....	MB, ChB diploma
Ireland .....	MB BCH BAO diploma
Israel .....	Doctor of Medicine diploma
Italy .....	Laurea, Laurea specialistica, or Magistralis Doctor in Medicina e Chirurgia diploma

**J**

Country of Medical School	Required Credentials
Jamaica .....	MBBS diploma
Japan .....	Igaku (Bachelor of Medicine) diploma
Jordan .....	M.D. or MBBS diploma

**K**

Country of Medical School	Required Credentials
Kazakhstan .....	Physician or Doctor of Medicine diploma
Kenya .....	MB ChB diploma
Kuwait .....	MBBS diploma
Kyrgyzstan .....	Physician or Doctor of Medicine diploma

**L**

Country of Medical School	Required Credentials
Laos .....	Docteur en Medecine diploma
Latvia .....	Physician or Doctor of Medicine diploma
Lebanon .....	Doctor of Medicine or MB, BCH diploma
Liberia .....	Doctor of Medicine diploma
Libya .....	MB BCH diploma
Lithuania .....	Physician diploma

**M**

Country of Medical School	Required Credentials
Macedonia .....	Doctor of Medicine diploma
Madagascar .....	Docteur en Medecine diploma
Malawi .....	MBBS diploma
Malaysia .....	Doktor Perubatan or MBBS diploma

**M** *(continued)*

Country of Medical School	Required Credentials
Mali .....	Docteur en Medecine diploma
Malta .....	Doctor of Medicine diploma
Mauritius .....	MBBS diploma
Mexico .....	Titulo de Medico Cirujano diploma
Micronesia.....	Doctor of Medicine diploma
Moldova .....	Doctor of Medicine diploma
Mongolia.....	Physician diploma
Montenegro.....	Doctor of Medicine diploma
Montserrat.....	Doctor of Medicine or MBBS diploma
Morocco .....	Docteur en Medecine diploma
Mozambique .....	Licenciatura em Medicina diploma
Myanmar .....	MBBS diploma

**N**

Country of Medical School	Required Credentials
Nepal.....	MBBS diploma
Netherlands .....	Arts diploma
Netherlands Antilles.....	Doctor of Medicine diploma
New Zealand .....	MB ChB diploma
Nicaragua .....	Doctor en Medicina y Cirugia or Titulo de Medico Cirujano diploma
Niger .....	Docteur en Medecine diploma
Nigeria.....	MBBS diploma
North Korea .....	Doctor diploma
Norway.....	Candidatus Medicinae diploma

**O**

Country of Medical School	Required Credentials
Oman.....	Doctor of Medicine diploma

**P**

Country of Medical School	Required Credentials
Pakistan .....	MBBS diploma
Panama.....	Doctor en Medicina diploma
Papua New Guinea.....	MBBS diploma
Paraguay.....	Doctor en Medicina y Cirugia or Titulo de Medico Cirujano diploma
Peru .....	Titulo de Medico Cirujano diploma
Philippines.....	Doctor of Medicine or MBBS diploma
Poland .....	Lekarz or Doctor of Medicine diploma
Portugal.....	Licenciatura em Medicina diploma

**Q/R**

Country of Medical School	Required Credentials
Romania.....	Doctor-Medic diploma
Russia.....	Doctor of Medicine diploma
Rwanda .....	Docteur en Medecine diploma

**S**

Country of Medical School	Required Credentials
Saba.....	See "Netherlands Antilles"
Saint Kitts and Nevis .....	Doctor of Medicine diploma
Saint Lucia .....	Doctor of Medicine diploma
Saint Maarten.....	See "Netherlands Antilles"

**S (continued)**

Country of Medical School	Required Credentials
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines .....	Doctor of Medicine diploma
Samoa.....	Doctor of Medicine diploma or MBBS diploma
Saudi Arabia.....	MBBS diploma
Senegal.....	Doctor of Medicine diploma
Serbia.....	Lekarz or Doctor of Medicine diploma
Seychelles.....	Doctor of Medicine diploma
Sierra Leone.....	MBBS diploma
Singapore.....	MBBS diploma
Sint Eustatius.....	See "Netherlands Antilles"
Slovak Republic.....	Medicinae Universae Doctor diploma
Slovenia.....	Lekar or Zdravnik diploma
Solomon Islands.....	Doctor of Medicine diploma
Somalia.....	Laurea en Medicina e Chirugia diploma
South Africa.....	MB ChB diploma
South Korea.....	Eui-haksa or Euimoosuksa diploma
Spain.....	Licenciado en Medicina y Cirugia diploma
Sri Lanka.....	MBBS diploma
Sudan.....	MB, BS diploma
Suriname.....	Arts diploma
Sweden.....	Lakarexamen diploma
Switzerland.....	Diplome Federal diploma
Syria.....	Doctor of Medicine diploma

**T**

Country of Medical School	Required Credentials
Taiwan.....	Bachelor of Medicine diploma
Tajikistan.....	Physician diploma
Tanzania.....	Doctor of Medicine or MBBS diploma
Thailand.....	Doctor of Medicine diploma
Togo.....	Docteur en Medecine diploma
Trinidad and Tobago.....	MBBS diploma
Tunisia.....	Docteur en Medecine diploma
Turkey.....	Doctor of Medicine diploma
Turkmenistan.....	Physician diploma

**U**

Country of Medical School	Required Credentials
Uganda.....	Doctor of Medicine or MB ChB diploma
Ukraine.....	Doctor of Medicine diploma
United Arab Emirates.....	MBBS diploma
United Kingdom.....	MB ChB or MB ChB BAO diploma
Uruguay.....	Doctor en Medicina diploma
Uzbekistan.....	General Practitioner diploma

**V/W**

Country of Medical School	Required Credentials
Vanuatu.....	MBBS or Doctor of Medicine diploma
Venezuela.....	Medico Cirujano diploma
Viet Nam.....	Doctor of Medicine diploma

**X/Y/Z**

Country of Medical School	Required Credentials
Yemen.....	BS in Medicine, MBBS, or Doctor of Medicine diploma
Zambia.....	MB ChB diploma
Zimbabwe.....	MB ChB diploma

## Appendix 2: Testing Regions for USMLE Step 1 and Step 2 CK

When you apply for Step 1 or Step 2 CK, you must select one of the testing regions (Africa, Asia, etc.) from the list below where you will take the exam. At the time of publication, test centers offering Step 1/Step 2 CK were located in the countries listed below for each testing region. However, the availability of test centers is subject to change without notice. Before selecting your testing region, visit the Prometric website at [www.prometric.com](http://www.prometric.com) or contact Prometric for current information on the availability and location of test centers for Step 1 and Step 2 CK.

If you select a testing region other than the United States & Canada, you must pay the appropriate international test delivery surcharge for each exam for which you apply. This surcharge is **in addition** to the examination fee. (See *Fees* on page 27.) For the current examination fees and international test delivery surcharges, refer to the ECFMG website at [www.ecfm.org/fees.html](http://www.ecfm.org/fees.html).

**IMPORTANT NOTE: If you plan to test in Egypt, Hong Kong, India, or Israel, refer to the special notes for these locations below, to ensure that you select the correct testing region.**

### AFRICA

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Ghana	South Africa
Kenya	Uganda
Mauritius	Zimbabwe

(For centers in **Egypt**, select **MIDDLE EAST** testing region.)

### ASIA

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Bangladesh	People's Republic of China
Malaysia	(For <b>Hong Kong</b> , select <b>ASIA</b> testing region. For centers in other available cities in the PRC, select <b>CHINA</b> testing region.)
Nepal	Philippines
Pakistan	Singapore

(For centers in **India**, select **INDIA** testing region.)

### AUSTRALIA

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Australia	New Zealand
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### CHINA

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People's Republic of China

(For **Hong Kong**, select **ASIA** testing region. For centers in other available cities in the PRC, select **CHINA** testing region.)

## **EUROPE**

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Armenia  
Croatia  
France  
Germany  
Greece  
Ireland  
Israel

Lithuania  
Netherlands  
Portugal  
Spain  
Switzerland  
Turkey  
United Kingdom

## **INDIA**

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India

## **INDONESIA**

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Indonesia

## **JAPAN**

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Japan

## **KOREA**

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Korea

## **LATIN AMERICA**

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Argentina  
Bolivia  
Brazil  
Chile  
Colombia

Dominican Republic  
Guatemala  
Mexico  
Peru  
Venezuela

## **MIDDLE EAST**

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Egypt  
Jordan  
Kuwait

Lebanon  
United Arab Emirates

(For centers in **Israel**, select **EUROPE** testing region.)

## **TAIWAN**

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Taiwan

## **THAILAND**

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Thailand

## **UNITED STATES & CANADA**

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### **UNITED STATES**

Test centers are located in every U.S. state, as well as Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands.

### **CANADA**

Test centers are located in Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Quebec, and Saskatchewan.