INFORMATION MASTER PROGRAM MASTER OF SPECIALIST MEDICINE

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PROGRAM SCHEDULE

When you have a master degree of medicine, and have gone through the selection process, you can register for the Master of Specialist Medicine. You will be trained for the profession of medical specialist.

The master program is divided into three levels and four competence domains. The four domains (derived from CanMEDS) are scientist, physician, communicator and manager.

- Level 1 or basic level for the resident (ASO) is relevant for all specialties.
- Level 2 reflects the main domains that are (partly) common for a group of specialties. This level covers the core-curriculum of the specialty.
- Level 3 implies the knowledge, science and skills of the main/sub specialty. Level 3 is the follow-up of level 2, and requires independent, consultative work, with an increase of complexity and autonomy. This assumes extra knowledge and skills in diagnosis and therapy.

The duration of training depends on the specialty and ranges from 4 to 6 years. In the final years the residents write a master thesis.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The competence needed for each specialty (30 specialties) was drafted by the specialty subcommittees (each group having a coordinating residency supervisor in the specialty per university) – presided by the VLIR – and defined in terms of academic and professional performance, needed to be able to practice medicine in the specialty. The knowledge, skills and attitudes were linked to 'learning outcomes', 'what is the minimal competence an ASO (assistant-specialist in training) must have at the end of his/her education?' Sources for these learning outcomes were the documents used by the accreditation commissions, and international reference documents. The learning outcomes were discussed with representatives of the profession and with the ASOs themselves.

Per specialty, the following is defined:

i. Definitions

ii. General competence
The general skills related to professional action as a medical specialist, in an economically sound framework and taking into account social and ethical aspects of medical specialist practice.

iii. Domain-specific competence
The skills a medical specialist must acquire, characterizing the actual context in which he/she practice his/her profession

iv. Profile medical specialist
This section contains the core of the specialty. Specific characteristics of the field are briefly described.
v. Preconditions
This section describes the necessary preconditions for the successful organization of the specialty.

vi. Objectives - Learning outcomes for each level
These objectives are built up with increasing complexity and increasing autonomy based on a scientific basis. The objectives are related to both the general and the domain-specific competence.

vii. Overview of knowledge, skills and attitudes
This overview describes the minimal competence that the medical specialist must have at the end of his training so that he/she has adequate knowledge, skills and attitudes to be able to give quality patient care in his/her specific area of expertise.

LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR EACH SPECIALTY
Here you will find all learning outcomes for each specialty. Only the general skills are listed here. Pdfs are in Dutch. [http://med.kuleuven.be/education/ASO/eind.html](http://med.kuleuven.be/education/ASO/eind.html)

SPECIALTIES
anesthesia and resuscitation (5 years)
cardiology (6 years)
dermatology and venerology (4 years)
physical medicine and rehabilitation (5 years)
gastro-enterology (6 years)
forensic medicine (5 years)
geriatrics (6 years)
obstetrics and gynecology (5 years)
general surgery (6 years)
internal medicine (5 years)
children and youth psychiatry (5 years)
laboratory medicine (5 years)
medical oncology (6 years)
neurosurgery (6 years)
neurology (5 years)
nuclear medicine (5 years)
ophthalmology (4 years)
orthopaedic surgery (6 years)
ophotaryngology and head and neck surgery (5 years)
pathological anatomy (5 years)
pediatrics (five years)
plastic surgery (6 years)
respiratory medicine (6 years)
adult psychiatry (5 years)
radiology (5 years)
radiotherapy and oncology (5 years)
rheumatology (6 years)
stomatolgy and oral and maxillo-facial surgery (4 years)
emergency medicine (6 years)
urology (6 years)
SELECTION PROCESS AND RESIDENCY PLAN

SELECTION PROCESS

The pre-specialization program prepares the ASO for a subsequent specialization. It assumes full-time co-internship in the chosen department of the University Hospitals and attendance of under- and postgraduate seminars. In addition, clinical lectures need to be attended as well. In some specialties a ‘special issues’ course has been added to the curriculum. Self-tutoring takes the shape of seminar work – literature study – and laboratory work or a clinical study.

Candidates for specialization are chosen based on their residency during the master program and their co-internship in the pre-specialization, their intellectual and social capacities, their scientific education and their academic performance. A first selection is made in January, a second one in April.

There is a limited number of spots available per specialty. It is not always possible to start in the specialty of your first choice.

If you first graduated from another medical program (e.g. GP), you have to do a three-month co-internship first. Afterwards you will be evaluated and will be able to start your specialization if there are any spots still available.

If you are a student from outside the KU Leuven you should contact the university residency supervisor of the specialty of your choice directly. You will have to do a three-month co-internship in that specialty. Given the program’s educational capacity and the legislation stipulating the planning of the health care, the number of specialization spots is limited. If your co-internship is evaluated positively and you meet the other selection criteria as well, you qualify for an educational plan.

RESIDENCY PLAN

To be able to file a valid residency plan, you must have permission to practice medicine in Belgium. This means that:

- you’ll need a valid diploma of Medicine. For a foreign diploma of medicine you must apply for equivalence of your degree. Further information can be found in the brochure [http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/naric/Buitenldiploma_Naric_VI_ENG_web.pdf](http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/naric/Buitenldiploma_Naric_VI_ENG_web.pdf)
- you had the visa of the Medical Commission attached to your diploma (cf. supra);
- After the recognition of the degree and the visa, the candidate goes to the relevant provincial council of the ‘Orde van geneesheren’ (‘Order of Medical Practitioners’) to apply for a registration. The relevant council is the province where the candidate starts to practice medicine.
- The candidate must have done a co-internship of at least three months. After a positive evaluation of both the co-internship and other selection criteria, you can obtain a residency.
- The educational program is in Dutch. A foreign candidate must fulfill the Dutch language requirements of level 5. For more information see [http://ilt.kuleuven.be/english/](http://ilt.kuleuven.be/english/)
In accordance with Belgian legislation the plan needs to be filed for approval by registered mail within three months after the program has started. If this period is exceeded, the residency and the program will only be valorized starting from the day the registered letter was posted.

The residency plan must contain following data:
- the specialty which the application relates to;
- the start and end dates per educational period and of the whole duration of the program;
- the departments where the program will be attended;
- the name (names) of the residency supervisor(s) (signature and stamp);
- the name of the coordinating residency supervisor (signature and stamp).

The original residency plan must be delivered to dhr. J. Knapen (K.U.Leuven, Administration Faculty of Medicine) BEFORE THE END OF JULY THROUGH THE OFFICE OF YOUR CHOSEN SPECIALTY. He will in turn make sure that the plan reaches its final destination:

FOD VOLKSGEZONDHEID
DG-2 – Basisgezondheidszorg
Eurostation Blok II – 2D08C
Victor Hortaplein 40/bus 10
1060 BRUSSEL

Call-center : 02/524.97.97

The following documents should be included:
- certificate of enrollment in the Order of Medical Practitioners;
- copy of your diploma;
- contract with residency supervisor or hospital for ‘fair compensation’;
- certificate that says you were accepted for the particular specialty by the Faculty of Medicine of the KU Leuven (certificate of acceptance).

ACCREDITATION

You have to file the application for accreditation as medical specialist yourself. You can do so at the administration desks of the various university residency supervisors, after you have successfully completed your program.
**PHD**

If you’d like to combine the Master of Specialist Medicine with a PhD program, you can. In that case you’ll to enroll as both a master student and a PhD candidate. You’ll also have to make a customized residency plan.

**DUAL ENROLLMENT**

The ASO (Assistant-Specialist in Training) enrolls in the PhD program and in the Master of Specialist Medicine.

**PhD program**

In the first year and when you enroll for your PhD defence the candidate pays € 275 (see: [http://gbiomed.kuleuven.be/phd/PhD_Students/manuals.html](http://gbiomed.kuleuven.be/phd/PhD_Students/manuals.html)).

**Master program**

As a Master student you’ll pay € 63/year, any credits taken not included. You’ll pay € 4,3 per credit.

**ISP (INDIVIDUAL STUDY PROGRAM)**

**PhD program**

There is no need for an ISP.

**Master program**

For every ASO (including those who are PhD candidates) an ISP needs to be filed. This ISP notes which master program courses are taken in a particular year.

For the course ‘Aanvullingen in …’ (‘Additions in …’) the ASO can decide for him-/herself when he/she will take the course. This is discussed with the coordinating residency supervisor.

In order to spread the master program the customized model program can be used. This encompasses more flexibility to spread the different courses for the PhD candidates. The course ‘Probleemoplossend vermogen en vaardigheden’ (‘Problem-solving ability and skills’) runs continuously during the PhD program and can be taken up after two years of clinical practice or one year of clinical practice and two years of PhD.

**EXEMPTIONS**

A course or part of a course taken in one program can be credited in the other. This is especially the case for master program courses under the role of ‘scientist’. Seminars, conferences attended by the ASO/PhD candidate will be credited for both programs.

**PhD program**

If a training activity for ‘Wetenschappelijke verdieping in …’ (‘Scientific deepening in …’) is taught by an international guest lecturer, it can be used to be exempt from one of the 15 seminars a PhD candidate needs to attend.

**Master program**

If the course ‘Statistics’ is taken in the PhD program, an exemption is given for the course on biostatistics in the master program. This exemption is to be applied for correctly.

A seminar attended in the PhD program can be used for 'Wetenschappelijke verdieping in …' (‘Scientific deepening in …’). For the calculation of the credits (obligatory for the
The calculation rules of the master program are used. The ASO-PhD candidate keep a certificate of attendance for every seminar he/she attended. This is important to grant exemptions later on. If a seminar is attended in the PhD program, the ASO should inform the administration beforehand that he/she needs a certificate of attendance. He/she can do this at phd@gbiomed.kuleuven.be. Other exemptions are processed individually. Applications for exemptions are done no later than the end of the third week after the start of the program. Applications include the following information:

- copy of the diplomas or certificates you base your application on;
- the results or grades;
- the subject contents.


**PORTFOLIO**

To be able to keep an overview, we expect the ASO-PhD candidate compiles two portfolios. These portfolios are provided by the respective program representatives.

**PhD program**

The PhD portfolio can be found on Toledo (cf. http://gbiomed.kuleuven.be/phd/PhD_Students/manuals.html, topic 9).

**Master program**

The Master portfolio is provided on the first seminar and can be found on Toledo. It is still a pen and paper portfolio.

**EXTENSION OF THE MASTER PROGRAM**

The extension of the master program is usually two years, depending on the specialty. For their ISP ASO-PhD candidates can contact the administration of the ‘Master of Specialist Medicine’.

**FELLOWSHIPS: FWO AND IWT**

**Later**

**MASTER THESIS**

For the master thesis the PhD research can be used as a starting point, supplemented by articles which appeared later on and a reflection which compares the PhD research to the current status of the field to which the research applies. See also the information booklet on Toledo.
FAQ

Re-enrollment at KU Leuven

For a re-enrollment you will be invited by e-mail to do so online. You will find the re-enrollment option in the menu of your ‘KULoket’. After your re-enrollment the necessary documents will be send by mail to your postal address.

If you enroll for the first time at the KU Leuven, you must do so in the University Halls in the Naamsestraat (or on the internet) before mid October. When you enroll you will receive the necessary data to register and to fill out your individual study program online in the Toledo system.

Which language criteria do you have to meet if you are not a native speaker Dutch?

A candidate-student with a diploma from outside the Flemish Community will only be allowed to enroll in this Dutch-speaking program if he/she meets at least one of the following criteria:

a. You can prove that you did and passed the exams in at least one year of your secondary or higher education.

b. You passed the exam which – according to the Nederlandse Taalunie (Dutch Language Union) – gives the student the necessary language level to follow Dutch-language higher education. For certain programs the institution can, however, ask for a higher language level.

c. You passed the exam for Dutch level 5, organized by the Instituut voor Levende Talen (Institute for Living Languages – ILT) of the KU Leuven. You will find more information here: [http://ilt.kuleuven.be/](http://ilt.kuleuven.be/).

d. You can provide a certificate of a course in Dutch language which the university regards as equal to the exam above or you can prove conclusively that you have the necessary language proficiency. The evaluation whether you meet one of the criteria is done by the Bureau Internationaal Onthaal (International Office), if necessary after consulting the ILT.

Can I do the program on a part-time basis?

The residency plan required for accreditation is strictly full-time. The Master of Specialist Medicine has 120 credits which are spread over the entire program.

What exactly is the master thesis?

The Master program is included by a master thesis, which holds 30 credits. During the preparation of the master the ASO is supposed to be able to clinically think about the professional situation and/or the scientific aspects that support the specialty. The master thesis reflects the general critical-reflective attitude of the specialist with regard to a specific research question and his/her capacity to answer questions at the thesis defense, mostly coming from real clinical observation and/or study. The Master thesis allows for autonomous clinical work to be judged, research abilities to be evaluated and scientific attitude to be secured and strengthened.

The master thesis actually consists of two parts:
A. Obligatory: 20 credits

The ASO chooses one of two options:

1. A scientific research project in the specialty resulting in a written account. The project should be original scientific research and should take the shape of a scientific article (with original research protocol) or a systematic literature review. The project is to be defended before a(n) (inter)university jury.
2. A reflection in which the doctoral research project is compared to the current status of the field and in which translational aspects of the research are highlighted. This can lead to a follow-up article. The written work is to be defended before a(n) (inter)university jury.

In preparing one of these options the ASO respects following timeframe:

- The subject of the study, including the method used, is submitted to the university residency supervisor, no later than at the start of level 3. The ASO proposes (with his/her approval) a co-promoter, who is part of the appointed medical staff of the specialty at UZLeuven. The university residency supervisor approves the project after consulting the department council and reports the project, the ASO and the co-promoter to the faculty administration.
- The ASO reports his/her progress to the co-promoter every three-four months.
- The project is submitted no later than the 1st of March of the year of promotion.
- The university residency supervisor puts together the jury.
- The oral defense takes place in May of the year of promotion.

B. Choice options: 10 credits

The ASO adds additional credits (to arrive at a total of 30 credits) by making a choice from the options below:

1. An additional scientific article as first or second author (which is required for most Accreditation Commissions), accepted for publication in a peer reviewed journal (10 credits). The article is accepted no later than the 1st of May of the year of promotion.
2. A case report with the necessary accompanying scientific explanation, as first or second author, accepted for publication in a peer reviewed journal (10 credits). The case report is accepted no later than the 1st of May of the year of promotion.
3. A poster or paper at a national conference, including its written account and a certificate of attendance (5 credits) or at an international conference, including its written account and a certificate of attendance (10 credits). The poster or paper is presented in the course of the ASO program.
4. A reflection on a portfolio of case studies with the necessary accompanying scientific explanation. This reflection is to be defended before a(n) (inter)university jury (10 credits).
   - The subject of the case studies are submitted to the university residency supervisor, no later than at the start of level 3. The ASO proposes (with his/her approval) a co-promoter, who is part of the appointed medical staff of the specialty at UZLeuven or one of the affiliated residency supervisors. The university residency supervisor approves the project and the co-promoter.
   - The ASO reports his/her progress to the co-promoter every three-four months.
   - The report is submitted no later than the 1st of January of the year of promotion.
   - The oral presentation takes place in March or April of the year of promotion.
CONTACTS – MASTER OF SPECIALIST MEDICINE

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