



MACAP Clinical Handbook

Welcome From WGU

Welcome to the clinical portion of the Medical Assistant Career Accelerator Program (MACAP) at WGU. We are excited for you to begin working in the clinical labs with your course instructor and classmates. During your time in the lab and externship, you will have the opportunity to apply your knowledge from the online course and practice your hands-on skills in a supervised learning environment. Our highly trained staff and robust training curriculum provide the foundation for helping you become a proficient medical assistant. Our goal is to prepare you to pass the Certified Medical Assistant Exam and to help you further develop the skills needed to accelerate your career. Again, we are glad to have you here!

Section I: Clinical Lab Bootcamps

Overview

The Medical Assisting program includes a hands-on component referred to as clinical lab bootcamp. During these clinical lab bootcamps, students will work with a course instructor to practice and test for competency on a wide variety of clinical and administrative skills. The competencies and skills that will be covered at each clinical lab bootcamp will correlate with the coursework.

Preparing for Clinical Lab Bootcamps

Three clinical lab bootcamps are scheduled at incremental times throughout the medical assistant curriculum. During these clinical lab bootcamps, students will work with their lab instructor to practice clinical and administrative skills and then test to prove competency through role-playing and demonstrations. These clinical lab bootcamps will occur approximately every 10 weeks for two consecutive eight-hour days. Students will be notified of these dates in advance for planning purposes. The student is responsible for any cost of lodging, food, and travel. Attendance at these scheduled clinical lab bootcamps is mandatory. Failure to attend any portion of any scheduled clinical lab bootcamp will result in withdrawal from the program.

Clinical Lab Bootcamp Eligibility

Students must be on pace with the course content to attend the clinical lab bootcamps. Program pacing milestones are provided by the course instructors and program mentors at the beginning of the course. Students are ineligible to attend the clinical lab bootcamp if these milestones are not achieved.

Students must have all of their required immunizations completed at least one week prior to attending the clinical lab bootcamps. The Clinical Learning Placement Support team will notify the student of these deadlines and if their American Data Bank account becomes out of compliance.

For detailed information regarding the compliance requirements, please visit <https://sites.google.com/view/medicalassistingcompliance/home> or email healthplacement@wgu.edu.

Welcome Package and Required Supplies

Prior to the first clinical lab bootcamp, each student will receive items that are required for the clinical portion of the curriculum. Items that students will receive include two sets of scrubs, stethoscope, blood pressure cuff, and an ID badge. Use of these items is mandatory at each clinical lab bootcamp as well as during clinical externship.

Students will be provided with ordering instructions for WGU issued scrubs as well as instructions on how to order their WGU identification badge. Medical assistant scrubs must be ordered from the provided website. Delivery can take up to 7–10 weeks, so it is imperative that the order is placed in a timely manner.

Students are required to wear a watch that has the ability to display seconds.

Attendance

Attendance for clinical lab bootcamps is mandatory. Failure to attend all scheduled clinical lab bootcamps will result in withdrawal from the program.

Skills and Competency Testing

Each student is required to pass a competency exam for each clinical and administrative task. These competency exams will be conducted during the clinical lab bootcamp. If a student requires remediation for any competency, additional time may need to be scheduled with the course instructor.

Dress Code

To prepare the student for the workforce in a healthcare setting, appropriate dress codes will be enforced. Failure to comply will result in a dismissal from the clinical lab bootcamp until the student is able to return in the proper attire. It is critical to note that the student will need to successfully complete the required clinical lab bootcamp to progress in the program. Finally, for items that the student is required to purchase, careful consideration has been used to make practical and economic choices.

- Uniform: All students must be in WGU issued scrubs during clinical lab bootcamps. Scrubs must be clean and wrinkle free; they should fit appropriately and present a professional appearance. A white or black long-sleeve shirt may be worn underneath the uniform. A white lab coat or scrub jacket is also acceptable.
- Name badge: A WGU student name badge must always be worn at the clinical lab site.
- Footwear: Shoes that are non-porous and close toed must be worn. Mesh tennis shoes are NOT acceptable.
- Hair: Hair must be clean and present a professional appearance. If hair is shoulder length or below, it must be tied back and away from the face. Neatly trimmed facial hair is acceptable. Hats of any kind are not allowed.
- Make-up: Make-up should appear fresh and natural; excessive make-up is not acceptable.
- Nails: Fingernails should be clean and kept short. If nail polish is used it must be of natural color and unchipped. Acrylic, gel, or any form of artificial nail is not allowed.
- Hygiene: Personal hygiene plays a major role in professional appearance. All students should pay particular attention to bathing regularly, ensuring absence of body and mouth odor, and a neat and clean professional appearance.
- Jewelry: Only one small ring, class ring, or wedding band or set is acceptable. A small ring is defined as the same size or smaller than a class ring. Very large or long dangling

earrings are not appropriate; only one small stud earring per ear is allowed.

- Body piercing and body art: No jewelry or hardware may be evident other than one small, stud earring per ear. Body art and tattoos must always be covered.
- Medical exception: Any request for exception(s) to the dress code for medical reasons must be signed by the student's personal physician and provided to the program mentor or course instructor.

Lab Rules

- Breaks: During clinical lab bootcamps breaks will be given at assigned times. It is required that students return from breaks on time and ready to work.
- Food and drink: Since students will be working with lab specimens, food and drink are not allowed in the lab at any time. If a student brings food or drinks, these must be kept in the designated break area for consumption during the allowed break times. Gum chewing is not acceptable.
- Cell phones: Cell phone use is prohibited during lab time unless the course instructor allows them for a specific activity. Failure to discontinue the use of a cell phone during clinical lab bootcamps will result in a dismissal from that day's course.
- Smoking: Because smoking is not allowed on many medical facility campuses, any tobacco usage must be done off campus. This may only occur during the allotted break times.

Student Code of Conduct

During the MACAP program, students must adhere to the Student Code of Conduct as listed in the WGU Student Catalog. Any violation of the student code of conduct can result in dismissal from the program. To review the Student Code of conduct in its entirety, please visit: <https://cm.wgu.edu/t5/Student-Rights-Responsibilities/Code-of-Student-Conduct/tab/129>

Section II: Clinical Externship

Overview

The clinical externship is designed to provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge of program objectives and to practice competencies achieved during the coursework and clinical lab bootcamps. Program leadership will ensure that the clinical externship experience and instruction for students is meaningful. Sites should provide each student a variety of experiences that at a minimum align with the program competencies that were completed during each of the clinical lab bootcamp sessions and throughout the coursework.

This unpaid, supervised clinical externship is at least 160 contact hours in an ambulatory healthcare setting, demonstrating the knowledge, skills, and behaviors of the Medical Assisting Education Review Board (MAERB) core curriculum in performing clinical and administrative duties. The clinical externship must be successfully completed before a certificate of completion is issued. Students will be required to demonstrate and pass the same clinical and administrative competencies covered in the bootcamps at the clinical externship.

On-site supervision of the student will be provided at the externship location by an individual who has knowledge of the medical assisting profession.

Students may not work as a medical assistant during the program or accrue hours for externship until they have passed all necessary coursework, the clinical bootcamps, and are enrolled in the L007MA The Professional Medical Assistant course.

Externship Eligibility

The student must pass all clinical competencies during the three clinical lab bootcamps and demonstrate competency in all the coursework within the specified program schedule and pacing plan to advance to the clinical externship.

All compliance requirements such as immunizations and BLS card must remain up to date throughout the duration of the program.

Preparing for Clinical Externship

The student will be required to work during normal business hours of the assigned clinic – 40 hours per week, Monday through Friday. This will allow the student to experience the medical assistant role and be afforded the opportunity to grow confidence, skills, and competency by attending consecutive clinical externship days. Weekend only or part-time schedules are not available.

If the student wishes to maintain a job during externship, the student must arrange their work schedule accordingly. Employer and childcare arrangements should be made well in

advance of the clinical externship. The student will not be able to delay their externship start date due to lack of planning or notification to their place of employment.

Clinical Learning Placement Support (CLPS)

Students are assigned a Placement Support Coordinator who will provide the student with their externship site assignment and be the students' guide to understanding the requirements of the externship placement process. The Placement Support Coordinator begins contact with the student within two weeks from the first Clinical Lab Bootcamp and are the primary point of contact for all communication and documentation required for the MACAP externship. The Placement Support Coordinator confirms student completion of all compliance and site-specific placement requirements and provides the official clearance confirmation email advising if a student is fully cleared to begin externship.

Externship Site Assignments

WGU is unable to guarantee specific facility externship options in advance. At the time the Placement Support Coordinator contacts the student, they will assist in identifying and establishing an appropriate externship site. Site pairings depend on facility availability and student location.

If a student requests to complete an externship with their employer, WGU will be required to visit the site in advance and review the operations of the office. This is to ensure that the site can adequately support the student in the required medical assisting competencies. Additionally, the student's employer will need to enter into an affiliation agreement with WGU to legally support the student.

Petition of Incomplete

Students should make every effort to attend their assigned externship location. If the student is unable to attend externship due to an extenuating circumstance, such as a medical emergency, the student can file for a Petition of Incomplete with their Program Mentor. The student must provide documentation to support the hardship that prevents them from attending. If approved by the Program Mentor and Program Leader, the student will be granted an extension for completion of the program. If the student fails to meet the approved extension deadline, they will be withdrawn from the program.

If a student refuses an externship placement for reasons other than an extenuating circumstance, such as site preference, the student will be withdrawn from the program.

Attendance

Attendance at the clinical externship is mandatory. The student will be working as a medical assistant in an ambulatory clinic and will be considered part of the healthcare delivery team during their scheduled shifts. Students are required to complete a minimum of 160 hours at their assigned clinical site.

If a student must be absent from a scheduled day at the site due to illness or another emergency, the student needs to contact their site preceptor and their course instructor.

If a student does not show up for their scheduled hours and does not notify their preceptor

ahead of time, the site can dismiss the student from their clinical placement. Failure to attend scheduled externship hours without notifying a preceptor can result in dismissal from the program.

Dress Code

Students must follow the same dress code as required for Clinical Lab Bootcamps unless otherwise required by their externship facility.

Code of Conduct

It is imperative to remain professional and practice the Medical Assistant Code of Ethics provided by the American Association of Medical Assistants:

The AAMA Code of Ethics for medical assistants sets forth principles of ethical and moral conduct as they relate to the medical profession and the particular practice of medical assisting. Members of the AAMA dedicated to the conscientious pursuit of their profession, and thus desiring to merit the high regard of the entire medical profession and the respect of the general public which they serve, do pledge themselves to strive always to:

- 1. Render service with full respect for the dignity of humanity.*
- 2. Respect confidential information obtained through employment unless legally authorized or required by responsible performance of duty to divulge such information.*
- 3. Uphold the honor and high principles of the profession and accept its disciplines.*
- 4. Seek to continually improve the knowledge and skills of medical assistants for the benefit of patients and professional colleagues.*
- 5. Participate in additional service activities aimed toward improving the health and well-being of the community.*

Any violation of the Student Code of Conduct, Code of Ethics, or any other unprofessional behavior, may result in dismissal from the clinical externship site and potentially the Medical Assisting Program.

Dismissal from the clinical site

Clinical site preceptors may dismiss a student from site due to behavioral reasons, lack of attendance, or poor performance. If a preceptor notifies the student they are no longer to return to the site, the student must contact their Externship Instructor immediately.

If a student is dismissed from clinical externship for any reason, the student forgoes all logged hours and is responsible for locating another site. Once the student locates a new site, the student must notify their Placement Support Coordinator and provide the site information.

If a student is dismissed from externship a second time, they will be withdrawn from the program.

Completion

Students must verify that they have completed at least 160 hours with their course instructor prior to leaving their externship site. Once this has been confirmed, along with completion of the L007MA coursework, the student is required to schedule their final exit call with their course instructor. During this call, the instructor will review the final evaluation from the student's clinical preceptor, as well as provide the student with directions to sign up for the CMA exam. The course instructor will send out a link to a Program Completion Form that verifies the student's name and address for their diploma.