

Learner Experience Advisory Council (LEAC)
Terms of Reference
May 15, 2024

Authority:

The University of Toronto Temerty Faculty of Medicine Learner Experience Advisory Council (LEAC) is established under the authority of the Vice Dean Medical Education for the purpose of advising on matters related to the learner experience, with a focus on learner mistreatment. This arises from recommendations made to the Dean by the Optimizing our Learning Environment (OLE) Working Group in 2019, which established the need for Institutional Leadership, Accountability, Clarity, and Awareness-building to address mistreatment as an initial (though not exclusive) area of focus. The Executive Sponsor will be the Associate Dean, Learner Affairs.

Mandate / Purpose:

The LEAC will support the development of strategies to understand the experiences of learners within Temerty Medicine in the following programs:

- MD (all years), including MD/PhD
- Medical Radiation Sciences
- Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy
- Physical Therapy
- Physician Assistant
- Postgraduate Medical Education including:
 - International Medical Graduates (IMGs)
 - Externally sponsored trainees
 - Medical Physics Residents
- Speech-Language Pathology

With a focus on learner mistreatment, the LEAC will consider systems-level interventions on how to optimize the learning environment through (1) mitigating the impact of negative events on learners and (2) re-enforcing positive cultural norms and professional values.

The LEAC recognizes that structural and institutional factors related to sociodemographic identifiers and to the power imbalances that are inherent to hierarchical healthcare environments can influence the well-being, education, and career trajectories of learners. These effects are more pronounced for learners from structurally marginalized groups including those identifying as Black and Indigenous, or from other under-represented racialized minorities, sexual or gender minorities, minoritized faith groups, and individuals living with a disability, among other groups and their intersections. The LEAC is committed to supporting the dismantling of systemic barriers that learners face during their training and supporting learners to achieve resolution of their individual concerns in ways that are fair, timely, and compassionate. The LEAC will strive to use anti-racist, anti-oppressive, and inclusive principles in all aspects of its work.

The *learner experience* is influenced by a myriad of factors and people across our university and affiliated placement sites; the LEAC recognizes its limitations in overseeing all aspects of the learner experience and will strive to create frameworks and strategies that will support learners and faculty in optimizing workplace culture across our environments and within LEAC members' spheres of influence.

Actions / Responsibilities:

- ***Guideline and Process Development***

The LEAC will provide expert consultation for guideline or process development being undertaken by the Learner Experience Unit. The LEAC will strive for consistency, transparency, collaboration, continuity, and common language around principles, pathways, and initiatives, including with respect to how discussions/disclosures/reports based on, or informed by, social identity are addressed, in alignment with work done by the Office of Inclusion and Diversity, Office of Indigenous Health, Professional Values Office, other relevant Temerty Medicine units, relevant University offices, and Clinical Placement Sites.

The LEAC will also strategize how to build awareness of discussion/disclosure/reporting processes and pathways using participatory design thinking and continuous quality improvement approaches. This includes but is not limited to developing processes for post-encounter feedback from learners to support program evaluation and enact iterative improvements to our tools and processes.

The LEAC will also devise strategies to highlight the positive elements of our learning environment, as well as their enablers, and recommend strategies to scale existing initiatives and re-enforce positive cultural norms.

- ***Education and training***

The LEAC will provide guidance and make recommendations on curricular and extracurricular initiatives that can promote a positive learning environment, define mistreatment with examples, communicate existing guidelines and processes, and disseminate resources to learners and faculty at all levels. Members of LEAC may also be asked to engage in direct content development for select educational activities, with the aim of ensuring consistency in messaging and alignment with other key portfolios. Development and monitoring of evaluation strategies for activities and initiatives related to the learner experience will also fall under the purview of the LEAC, in consultation with the Medical Education Data Management and Analytics Advisory Committee.

The LEAC will serve as a resource for learners engaged in extra-curricular initiatives related to the learner experience and mistreatment who are self-organizing to create content.

The LEAC will collaborate closely with departments, placement sites, and other relevant portfolios to ensure a respectful approach to communicating roles, responsibilities, and expectations of clinical faculty.

The LEAC will also devise and recommend strategies to partner with placement sites and TAHSNe on initiatives to educate patients and their families about our commitment to a positive working and learning environment and their roles and responsibilities, as well as those of care providers.

- ***Evaluation***

Evaluation of our learner mistreatment pathways will occur on a regular basis in consultation with program evaluation scientists from the Medical Education Data Management and Analytics Advisory Committee. Mistreatment data will be derived from:

- Voice of the Learner surveys
- Medical school Graduate Questionnaire (conducted by the AFMC)
- Accreditation data as appropriate
- Rotation and Teaching Evaluation data
- Aggregated, de-identified discussions / disclosures / reports to LEU from learners, which inform the Annual Learner Experience Report.

This data will be shared with LEAC on a regular basis to inform its efforts, in accordance with FIPPA and other relevant data-usage guidelines.

Reporting/Accountability

The Director, Learner Experience will be responsible for contributing to the production of an annual report that will be disseminated to learners and faculty across our academic community. This will share aggregated, de-identified data on the number and types of discussions / disclosures / reports received as well as the spectrum of disciplinary actions / resolutions, to ensure accountability and transparency.

These reports will also help guide LEAC strategic priorities, which may involve further outreach to faculty and learners through working groups and focus groups, to address priority issues identified from observing trends and patterns.

Membership:

The LEAC will be Co-Chaired by the Director, Learner Experience and the Assistant Director, Learner Experience.

Diverse learner representation will be prioritized in establishing the LEAC membership. We will aim to have representation from all the learner training programs supported by the Learner Experience Unit, including representation of international trainees.

Members will serve on the LEAC for three years or the duration of their appointment or studies. New members will be invited by the Co-Chairs. The Co-Chairs and executive sponsor will further strive for a diverse and inclusive LEAC with representation from department and placement site leaders, leads from relevant Temerty Medicine portfolios, members from structurally-marginalized groups, and from learners of all levels as outlined above.

The Co-Chairs may invite guests to attend a meeting to contribute their expertise or to provide consultation on specific projects emerging from the LEAC.

Reporting Structure:

The Co-Chairs of the LEAC and the LEAC itself will report to the Associate Dean, Learner Affairs and ultimately to the Vice Dean of Medical Education. Guideline and process recommendations will be reviewed and approved by the appropriate education leaders and governing bodies.

These Terms of Reference will be reviewed by the LEAC approximately every 3 years, or at the request of the executive sponsor.

Working groups may be formed within LEAC on an as-needed basis. They may be formed to address a specific task or to provide a recurring consultative function. The Co-Chairs of the LEAC will appoint chairs for each of the working groups.

Meetings:

The LEAC will meet three times per year, or more frequently if needed.

Minutes of all LEAC meetings will be kept to provide a historical inventory of proceedings and decision-making. Minutes will be distributed to all members of LEAC for their confidential records.

Working groups that arise from LEAC will set their own meeting frequency commensurate with the timelines required to complete their work and report back to the LEAC.

Materials related to meetings, including the agenda, minutes, and other work product, are deemed confidential unless these materials are publicly available. All members of LEAC have a responsibility to ensure that confidentiality is maintained.

Quorum for meetings will be attained when there is a minimum of 10 individuals present with adequate and diverse representation of learners.

Generally, decisions will be arrived at by consensus following discussion. When consensus is not established and a decision is required, the Co-Chairs may choose to conduct a vote, with a simple majority deciding the matter. A vote may be conducted during a meeting and/or by electronic means.