



Committee on Accreditation of Canadian Medical Schools
Comité d'agrément des facultés de médecine du Canada

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE
DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT (DCI)
for visits in 2026-2027**

**FOR MEDICAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS
LEADING TO THE M.D. DEGREE**

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For further information, contact:
CACMS Secretariat
Committee on Accreditation of Canadian Medical Schools
10th Floor, 150 Elgin Street
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K2P 1L4
Email: cacms@afmc.ca

Visit the CACMS website at:
<https://cacms-cafmc.ca/>

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1. Purpose of the Data Collection Instrument

The DCI is a collection of forms to be completed by medical schools as part of the Committee on Accreditation of Canadian Medical Schools (CACMS) accreditation process.

These instructions are to assist medical schools in completing DCI forms and should be read while looking at a DCI file (see Section 3 below). For a broader overview of accreditation and a discussion of how the DCI is used, the *Guide for the Conduct of CACMS Accreditation Visits* is available on the CACMS website under the [Accreditation documents](#) tab.

2. Assistance from the CACMS Secretariat

Preparation sessions for medical schools with upcoming accreditation visits are organized by the CACMS Secretariat in collaboration with the medical school's administration. These sessions provide general information about accreditation including a description of the DCI forms and their purpose and give participants an opportunity to discuss their questions/concerns with members of the Secretariat. At any time during accreditation preparations, faculty undergraduate accreditation leads (FUALs), and accreditation administrators are encouraged to contact the CACMS Secretariat with their questions via email addressed to: cacms@afmc.ca. All email inquiries will be copied to the FUAL.

3. DCI description

The DCI collectively is comprised of one overview document and twelve additional files that relate specific accreditation standards. These files are available from the CACMS website under the [Accreditation Documents](#) tab. Please ensure to access the DCI corresponding to the academic year of the scheduled accreditation visit.

The overview file (*DCI Overview Data and Context*) contains requests for general background information including data tables and maps. The remaining twelve files, one for each accreditation standard, contain the elements of the standard, their requirements, and associated data indicators. The document *DCI Required Appendices and Content Checklist* should be used alongside the individual overview and standard-specific DCI files.

Each of the twelve files pertaining to an individual accreditation standard is structured as follows:

1. The accreditation standard (appearing in **bold blue font**)
2. The accreditation element (appearing in **bold blue italicized font**)
3. A requirement (in *black italicized font*)
4. Indicator requests related to the requirement (**regular blue font**, identified using uppercase letters)

A separate Lexicon document is accessible on the CACMS website under the Lexicon tab.

For elements with more than one requirement, items 3 and 4 are repeated. Readers may observe that the requirements are simply restatements of all or part of an element.

Each element as a whole is rated by the CACMS as satisfactory, satisfactory with a need for monitoring, or unsatisfactory, based on an assessment of its constituent requirements. Whether a requirement is met is based on an assessment of information that the school provides in response to the indicator requests

within the DCI, the Medical School Self-study report, the Independent Student Analysis report, and information obtained during the accreditation visit.

Responses to indicator requests include narratives, tabular data, and documents or excerpts thereof.

4. Technical Instructions

Technical Instructions for the DCI Overview Data and Context file

Use regular black font when entering narrative and tabular information into the DCI to facilitate identification of information entered by schools.

All maps and schematics should include the requested information and be formatted to be legible when appropriately minimized for inclusion in the visit report document.

Technical Instructions for the DCI files for Standards 1 – 12

Use regular black font when entering information into the DCI to facilitate identification of information entered by schools.

Each DCI template for Standards 1 – 12 is formatted such that DCI indicator requests for each requirement appear in **regular blue font**.

- For narrative responses, the blank space, pre-formatted for regular black font, will expand as necessary to accommodate entered text. Once completed, delete any extra spaces or lines.
- All tabular data are to appear in black font, regardless of source (i.e., ISA, AFMC, or School-reported).
- All required appendices to the DCI are listed in the checklist table provided on the CACMS website (*DCI Required Appendices and Content Checklist*).
- External hyperlinks are not permitted in the DCI.

For required and supplemental appendices, it is helpful to refer to the full title of the document, including the numbering of the required appendix, in the DCI. However, the individual files submitted need to be short (maximum 20 characters). For example, in the DCI, Appendix 1.1-1 A can be referred to as Appendix 1.1-1 A – CPD program mission statement but the document submitted requires a shorter name: RA 1.1-1 A–Mission. The RA stands for Required Appendix. SA can be used for Supplemental Appendix.

Forward these Technical Instructions to any group/individuals completing the DCI or sections of the DCI.

The completed DCI (including the overview data and context file and files for Standards 1-12) must be submitted according to the instructions and timelines provided by the CACMS Secretariat using a Word “docx” format.

5. Content Instructions

Narrative responses to indicator requests are recommended to be thorough, yet concise. Often, a paragraph or two is sufficient, and in some cases, a single sentence response could suffice. Notwithstanding any length considerations, the response needs to be clear and needs to address **all** aspects of the information request(s).

The DCI is reviewed by the visit team, but not the CACMS, as part of the peer-review accreditation process. The visit team uses the school's responses to indicator requests to determine whether a requirement is met and to make its recommendation to the CACMS. In some cases, either before or during the visit, the team secretary may ask the school to provide additional information.

The ISA tabular data are to be presented as supplied to the school in the ISA report. The school, however, may use an asterisk (*) to denote the addition of contextual information related to the tabular data.

In cases where a school has its own administrative data or chooses to insert AFMC Graduation Questionnaire (GQ) data, the school may add those tables in addition to any data tables required in the DCI. Use of AFMC GQ data is optional in the CACMS accreditation process. For any added data tables, the source of the data must be clearly identified. Any added data tables should be in proximity to the indicator request being addressed, but these tables are NOT to be numbered.

In specific circumstances where a document is required to be added as an appendix, schools are asked to highlight and label specific sections of the document so that the visit team can readily identify the required information. Colour highlighting is recommended. Highlighting and labelling in other appendices may be used by the school but are not required.