



Policy #:	MLS-M-04
Effective date:	09/2018
Target group:	All students
Section:	Medical Laboratory Science program
Last revision date:	08/01/2024

## Medical Laboratory Science Student Essential Abilities

### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to describe the essential abilities that students of the Bachelor of Science in Medical Laboratory Science program should possess to be successful.

### Policy

Prospective and current students are required to review and acknowledge the essential abilities described herein. In compliance with the National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Science (NAACLS) accreditation standards, the Division of Medical Laboratory Sciences will make these essential abilities available to prospective students and the public.

### Student questions of compliance

Current and prospective students who are concerned that they do not have these essential abilities should consult with the Bachelor of Science in Medical Laboratory Science Program Director or IU South Bend Academic Advising to discuss individual situations and receive further guidance. Students are encouraged to communicate with the Office of Accessible Educational Services to identify reasonable accommodations to support their needs.

### Essential abilities

Essential abilities are the physical, intellectual, and behavioral expectations of the Bachelor of Science in Medical Laboratory Science program that students should possess to successfully participate in courses and clinical experiences.

#### Communication Skills

A student in the Medical Laboratory Science program must possess communication skills necessary to interact and communicate with faculty, classmates, healthcare professionals, and patients. Examples of communication skills include the able to:

- Establish rapport with faculty, healthcare professionals, patients, and classmates.
- Demonstrate effective communication skills that include verbal, non-verbal, and written forms.
- Obtain and disseminate relevant information as required to complete assignments and tasks.

### Visual and perceptual skills

A student in the Medical Laboratory Science program must possess sufficient visual skills to perform and interpret laboratory assays and receive non-verbal communication appropriately. Examples of visual skills include the ability to:

- Have visual acuity corrected to 20/40 or better with the ability to accommodate at a distance of 10-20 feet,
- Judge distance and depth accurately,
- Read computer screens, documents with small print, and hand-written notation,
- Read lines, letters, and numbers on laboratory equipment as small as one millimeter apart,
- Characterize color, clarity, and viscosity,
- Observe items under a microscope using binocular vision.

### Motor skills – physical ability, coordination, and dexterity

A student in the Medical Laboratory Science program must possess adequate motor skills to perform a variety of laboratory assays. Examples of manipulative skills include the ability to:

- Turn dials, press keypads, and move switches,
- Grasp and release small objects,
- Have fine motor control with corresponding hand-eye coordination. Hand functions should include rotation, squeezing, and repetitive movement,
- Have normal tactile feeling that is sensitivity to heat, cold, pain, pressure, etc.,
- Use full manual dexterity which includes the function of both arms, both wrists, both hands, and fingers, with or without a reasonable accommodation as determined by the IU South Bend Office of Accessible Educational Services,
- Utilize a computer keyboard and mouse,
- Lift and move objects weighing 20 pounds,
- Effectively and safely move from one location to another.

### Intellectual and Critical Thinking Skills

A student in the Medical Laboratory Science program must possess a range of intellectual skills that allows for mastery of a broad and complex body of knowledge that constitutes a medical laboratory science education. Examples of intellectual skills include the ability to:

- Use critical thinking skills necessary for sufficient clinical judgment,
- Follow directions and procedures accurately and completely,
- Define problems, measure, calculate, analyze data, and implement solutions,
- Identify cause and effect relationships,
- Exercise independent judgement,
- Organize workspace, make decisions, prioritize tasks, and work on multiple tasks simultaneously,
- Recognize potentially hazardous materials, equipment, or situations, and respond safely to minimize risk of injury,
- Use long-term and short-term memory skills,
- Receive and analyze academic and professional feedback through self-direction and self-correction.

### Emotional Stability and Personal Temperament

A student in the Medical Laboratory Science program must show emotional health and intellectual ability to exercise good judgment, to complete clinical responsibilities promptly, and to relate to patients, instructors, and colleagues with courtesy, and respect. Appropriate professional conduct includes the ability to:

- Fulfill commitments and be accountable for actions,
- Take responsibility for one's own learning and professional development,
- Work both independently and collaboratively as a professional team member,
- Be honest and forthright about error or uncertainty,
- Maintain professional decorum and composure under the stress of didactic and clinical demands,
- Show respect for personal, professional, and cultural diversity in the classroom and clinical setting,
- Exercise professional and ethical judgement, integrity, honesty, dependability, patient confidentiality, and adhere to the academic and professional code of ethics.

### Procedure

1. All prospective students will have access to the expected essential abilities prior to applying for program admission.
2. Upon applying to the program, applicants will indicate that they have read and understand the expected essential abilities.
3. Upon admission in the Bachelor of Science in Medical Laboratory Science program will be required to acknowledge the ability to demonstrate the required essential abilities.
4. Faculty has the responsibility to determine whether a student has demonstrated these essential abilities. Faculty has the right to consult on essential abilities, and with those who are experts in a performance area that is of concern.
5. Students failing to meet these essential abilities, as determined by faculty, at any point in their academic program may have their progress interrupted until they have demonstrated their ability to meet these essential abilities within negotiated time frames. Prescribed standards of performance will be determined by the course instructor and/or the IU South Bend School of Health Sciences Applied Health Sciences Council.
6. Students will be dismissed from their program of study if determined they are unable to meet these essential abilities, even if reasonable accommodation is provided.
7. Students failing to demonstrate these essential abilities criteria, as determined by the faculty, may appeal this adverse determination in accordance with Indiana University and IU South Bend School of Health Sciences Applied Health Sciences Council appeal procedures.

### Related Policies

- MLS-M-01 Bachelor of Science in Medical Laboratory Science Student Application

### Policy History

Date	Action
09/2018	Original policy CLS-11 written

6/14/2023	Updated policy number and essential abilities; policy reviewed by Director of Institutional Equity and Inclusive Excellence
08/01/2024	Updated division name, policy name, and titles due to campus reorganization