



Candidate Guidelines for Requesting Letters of Evaluation

These guidelines serve as recommendations for candidates when requesting letters of recommendation for health professions graduate programs. For additional guidance after reviewing this document and school-specific info, schedule an appointment with an H3P staff or faculty advisor.

Meeting School or Program Requirements

- Check individual schools for specific requirements, which will vary in terms of number (minimum and maximum) and the types of individuals from whom you need to request letters. This information can be found on individual school websites and/or resources such as Medical School Admission Requirements (MSAR) for MD programs or the PTCAS Directory for PT programs.
- Overall, health professions graduate programs typically require 2-5 individual letters. Depending on your desired field of study, this may include science and non-science faculty members, work or volunteer supervisors, and licensed professionals in your chosen field.

H3P Recommendations

- Seek 1-2 science faculty, 1 non-science faculty, and 1-2 other individuals that have supervised or observed you in an academic, volunteer, clinical, or professional setting.
- Avoid personal references such as family and friends.
- Choose a recommender who knows you well and can write a strong letter over someone you perceive as being in some position of status or importance but does not know you as well.
- Consider different voices of support and how, as a group, these individuals can discuss important aspects of your professional and academic background.

Making the Request

- Approach prospective letter writers early. A minimum of 1 month prior to submission is optimal.
- Arrange a face-to-face meeting, if possible. A phone call or well written email is also acceptable.
- Ask a prospective letter writer if they would be willing to write a strong and supportive letter of recommendation for you. Do not simply ask them to write you a letter.
- When requesting letters from faculty, keep in mind that toward the end of the semester they may be busy with finals as well as writing letters of recommendation for other candidates.

Additional Information

- Provide plenty of information to aid the letter writer in drafting a strong letter. The following documentation should be included with your request:
 - Letter request form (provided by H3P)
 - Resume or CV
 - Personal Statement (can be a draft)
- Letter writers may ask for additional information and/or arrange a meeting.

Application Logistics

- You are responsible for entering and submitting letter requests in the respective application service, or Centralized Application Service (CAS), for your chosen health professions graduate program. Examples include AMCAS, AACOMAS, ADSAS, and PTCAS. Each CAS provides instructions about how to enter letter requests and designate letters for individual schools.
- For medical school (MD) applicants only, some candidates choose to utilize Interfolio, an online tool that help manage your Letters of Evaluation. Note that there is a fee for this service.

- We recommend giving letter drafters a deadline on or around the date you plan to submit your application. For example: if you plan to submit your medical school application on June 1, that should be the deadline you give your letter drafters. Each Centralized Application Service requires time to process applications before disseminating to individual schools.
- Be sure to communicate instructions about how to submit the letter to your letter drafters.

Following up with Letter Writers

- Follow up with your letter writers as necessary with gentle reminders as the submission deadline approaches and if your deadline changes based on when you intend to submit your application.
- Express your gratitude! Writing a strong and positive letter of recommendation takes time and effort, so be sure to thank those who are willing to help you reach your goal.
- Remember to update your recommender on the eventual result of your application. It's easy to forget to do this, but it is deeply rewarding for those who have supported you.