Instructions for
HPAC Applicant Support

Application Year (AY) 2024; Entry Year (EY) 2025

Registration opens OCT 1 at https://utd.link/EY2025.

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New for EY 2025
• All health professions can use all steps—even interviews and evaluation letters!
• No minimum GPA. No minimum MCAT/DAT score.
• Unlimited seats for steps 1-3. ~350 seats for steps 4-5.
• Optional self-service portal on eLearning.
• “Am I a Strong Applicant?” self-evaluation tool (pp. 4-5).
• Examples of an “advisor letter” and “committee letter” (pp. 6-8).

Find this document (with active links!) online: https://utd.link/EY25_explainer
5 Steps to Prepare for EY2025

Directions: complete each step you can, in order, as early as you can.

1. **REGISTER ONLINE**

   **Available to:** All UT Dallas students and alumni, beginning OCT 1. [https://utd.link/EY2025](https://utd.link/EY2025)

   **Benefits to You:**
   - HPAC’s professional application advisors help you assess your candidacy and prepare for the professional school applications you’ll submit next summer.
   - **24/7 self-service portal on eLearning.** (Requires an active NetID. No active netID? E-mail your HPAC advisor.)

2. **BRAINSTORM + ESSAYS + MOCK APPLICATION**

   **Available to:** All who complete Step 1.

   **Benefits to You:**
   - Brainstorm saves you time in every coming step of the application process.
   - **Personal Statement Workshop** (in-person or online) guides you to complete your Personal Statement in one day! See dates on eLearning.
   - **Mock Application** prepares you to complete professional school applications.

3. **REVISE MOCK APPLICATION AND ESSAYS**

   **Available to:** All who complete Step 2.

   **Benefits to You:**
   - **Revisions With Advisor** (online or in-person) perfect your application’s descriptions and essays. Identify any weak areas and how to address them.

4. **SPRING INTERVIEWS**

   **Available to:** The first ~350 students who submit a REVISED Mock Application (see deadlines, below)

   **Benefits to You:**
   - Simulate professional school interviews. Practice your interview skills.

5. **HPAC EVALUATION**

   **Advisor Letter available to:** Allied health applicants who complete Step 4.

   **Committee Letter available to:** Medical and dental applicants who complete Step 4 AND submit to HPAC: their test scores, an UPDATED Mock Application that includes spring grades and activities, and all recommendation letters (via HPAC’s Clearinghouse Service, pg. 3).

   **Benefits to You:**
   - Many professions prefer an evaluation letter if your school provides one.
   - **Allied Health Professions – Your advisor can be one of your letter writers!** Just ask your advisor, and they’ll write a candid, holistic evaluation of your candidacy including details about your background and UT Dallas that admissions deans appreciate. (See sample, pg. 6.)
   - **Medical and Dental – HPAC adds to your recommendation letters a “committee letter”:** an exceptionally thorough, candid, holistic evaluation of your candidacy including details about your background and UT Dallas that admissions deans appreciate. (See sample, pg. 7-8.)

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**DEADLINES TO RECEIVE A HPAC EVALUATION**

Like professional school applications, HPAC’s letter process is a rolling process. Even though a rolling process has administrative deadlines, the deadlines are traps!! Complete every step as early as possible, not as late as possible.

>80% of successful applicants complete each step within 2 months.

1. Complete Step 2 by submitting a **DRAFT Mock Application**. Deadline DEC 15. **Recommended OCT 1-NOV 30.**
2. Complete Step 3 by submitting a **REVISED Mock application**. Deadline FEB 28. **Recommended NOV 1-JAN 15.**
3. Complete Step 4 by interviewing with assigned faculty member. Deadline MAY 31. **Recommended MAR 10-MAY 10.**
4. (Medical/Dental) submit to HPAC: MCAT/DAT scores, all rec letters, UPDATED Mock Application accurate through May 2024. Deadline JUL 15. **Recommended APR 10-JUN 10.**
Clearinghouse Service: collection of recommendation letters

Medical and dental schools give applicants the option to use a clearinghouse service to collect their recommendation letters into a “letter packet.” (When a medical or dental applicant completes Step 5 of HPAC Applicant Support, HPAC adds a committee evaluation letter to the student’s letter packet.)

To use HPAC as a clearinghouse for your recommendation letters—which is required for Step 5—give each of your letter writers this Letter of Evaluation Form. It includes your confidentiality release and instructions for the writer to 1) format their letter and 2) send it to HPAC.

When HPAC receives each letter, you’ll see it appear on eLearning.

No health profession requires you to use a clearinghouse service. If you choose not to use a clearinghouse service, you’ll enter each writers’ name and email in the applications you complete in summer, then writers will upload their recommendation letters individually.

WHO should I ask for recommendation letters?

Most medical and dental schools ask for 3 rec letters. HPAC’s clearinghouse service can accept up to 5.

Whether you use HPAC’s clearinghouse service or not, note these rec letter requirements...

• All applicants should include at least one healthcare provider. Dental applicants MUST include a dentist.
• Some schools still require letters from two science professors. Most no longer do. HPAC recommends that you include at least one letter from a science professor.
• If much of your experience comes from one research, work, or volunteer setting, HPAC recommends that you request a letter from that setting.
• The Letter of Evaluation Form tells writers what info makes a strong recommendation letter, and how to submit their letter to HPAC.

WHEN should I ask for recommendation letters?

Usually in spring. However, HPAC can accept letters year-round and keeps them on file until you need them.

Letters should be dated within 1 year of your application.

Letters don’t have a “due date” exactly, but your application to professional schools isn’t fully complete without them. HPAC recommends that you request letters no later than April since writers may take several weeks to write and submit your letter.

Application Portraits

All health professions require a small photo as part of your application. HPAC provides free professional application portraits in fall and spring. See dates on eLearning.
Am I a strong applicant?

This rubric’s 5 sections are based upon the AAMC Pre-Med Competencies. Rows in each section represent some ways you might demonstrate strength or weakness in that competency. This rubric is a rough guideline, NOT a complete evaluation!!

On each row of the rubric below, CIRCLE any text that describes you.

“Significant?” Roughly equivalent to >1 year of full-time employment.

“Extensive?” Roughly equivalent to >1 year of full-time employment.

### How would you score yourself?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>Proven Exceptionalism</th>
<th>Proven Strength</th>
<th>Possible Strength</th>
<th>Possible Exceptionalism</th>
<th>Proven Weakness</th>
<th>Clear Weakness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td>Rare accomplishments in teamwork or cross-cultural communication.</td>
<td>Extensive leadership in teams or communications (i.e. service-sector manager)</td>
<td>Significant teamwork or cross-cultural communications (i.e. service-sector job)</td>
<td>Some teamwork or cross-cultural communications (i.e. service-sector job, team projects)</td>
<td>No teamwork or cross-cultural communications (i.e. service-sector job, team projects)</td>
<td>Problematic teamwork or cross-cultural communications (i.e. fired from service-sector job or healthcare exp)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scientific Reasoning</td>
<td>Distinguished or award-winning communication professional.</td>
<td>Experienced professional communicator.</td>
<td>Capable professional communicator.</td>
<td>Limited professional communicator.</td>
<td>Problematic professional communicator.</td>
<td>Repeated problems with professional communication (i.e. repeated firings from service-sector job or healthcare exp)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altruism</td>
<td>Extensive activities requiring ≥20 hrs/wk of devoted training (i.e. Olympic-level athletics)</td>
<td>Extensive activities requiring ≥10 hrs/wk of devoted training (i.e. high-level athletics)</td>
<td>Significant activities requiring ≥10 hrs/wk of devoted training (i.e. high-level athletics)</td>
<td>Some activities requiring ≥10 hrs/wk of devoted training (i.e. high-level athletics)</td>
<td>No activities or few activities (i.e. fired from service-sector job or healthcare exp)</td>
<td>Repeated problems with professional communication (i.e. repeated firings from service-sector job or healthcare exp)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### What scores are competitive for medical schools?

Average medical applicants typically score at least one “1” in each competency. Strong medical applicants typically score at least one “2” in each competency. Top medical applicants typically score at least one “3” in each competency.

“4” scores represent years of dedication or struggle, and rarely apply to traditional-aged medical applicants. They are uncommon even among top medical applicants.

Any “/” represents a growth area to address before medical application. Discuss with your HPAC advisor.

Any “X” represents a dealbreaker that must be addressed before medical application. Discuss with your HPAC advisor.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Healthcare Experience</th>
<th>Scientific Reasoning</th>
<th>Altruism</th>
<th>Interpersonal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Years of full-time professional patient care.</strong></td>
<td>Exceptional patient care and/or shadowing across many settings.</td>
<td>Exceptional altruistic or unpaid healthcare experiences.</td>
<td>Initiated project of transformative community or academic impact.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Extensive caring for others at significant risk to self, requiring specialty safety gear (i.e. airborne transmission precautions)</strong>*</td>
<td>Extensive professional patient care including ‘messy’ patient care: stool, wounds, etc.</td>
<td>Extensive altruistic or unpaid healthcare experiences.</td>
<td>Initiated project of significant community or academic impact.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rare feedback from health professionals, i.e. “Only applicant this year I would trust to treat my mother.”</strong></td>
<td>Excellent feedback from health professionals, i.e. “exceptional, indispensable”</td>
<td>Positively transformed the lives of hundreds, or positively changed thousands.</td>
<td>Thriving despite an extraordinary degree* of environmental, personal, or systemic hardships.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Rec Letters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positively impacts the lives of others.</th>
<th>Positively transformed the lives of many others, or positively changed hundreds.</th>
<th>Exceptional altruistic or unpaid healthcare experiences.</th>
<th>Exceptionally evidenced graduate-level reasoning skills.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minimal altruistic experiences.</td>
<td>Significant altruistic experiences.</td>
<td>Exceptionally evidenced graduate-level reasoning skills.</td>
<td>Exceptionally evidenced graduate-level reasoning skills.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Test Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strong test scores, overall and in all subsections.</th>
<th>Excellent test scores, overall and in all subsections.</th>
<th>Average evidence of scientific reasoning skills.</th>
<th>Exceptionally evidenced graduate-level reasoning skills.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acceptable test scores, overall and in all subsections.</td>
<td>Concerning test scores, overall or in any subsection.</td>
<td>Little evidence of reasoning skills.</td>
<td>Exceptionally evidenced graduate-level reasoning skills.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Publication or co-publication of analytical, investigative, or scientific work to professional audience.</th>
<th>Publication or co-publication of analytical, investigative, or scientific work to lay audience.</th>
<th>Minimal scientific engagement outside requirements of major or profession.</th>
<th>publication or co-publication of analytical, investigative, or scientific work to lay audience.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attempted research but soon quit.</td>
<td>Guarded or conspicuously absent letter from research supervisor.</td>
<td>Terminated from research group without option to return.</td>
<td>Terminated from research group without option to return.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Ethical Conduct

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Required active supervision. App/docs incomplete.</th>
<th>Poor ethical or moral decision making in the last year: conduct violations, law-breaking, etc.</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Professional Practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Has not faced significant hardships or disadvantages.</th>
<th>Has harmed others but takes responsibility.</th>
<th>Insufficient evidence to confirm impact on others’ lives.</th>
<th>Insufficient evidence to confirm impact on others’ lives.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recent not thriving: C’s or W’s within the last year</td>
<td>Thriving despite environmental, personal, or systemic disadvantages.</td>
<td>Insufficient evidence to confirm impact on others’ lives.</td>
<td>Insufficient evidence to confirm impact on others’ lives.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Other

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exceptional patient care and/or shadowing across many settings.</th>
<th>Extensive professional patient care including ‘messy’ patient care: stool, wounds, etc.</th>
<th>Exceptional altruistic or unpaid healthcare experiences.</th>
<th>Exceptionally evidenced graduate-level reasoning skills.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Some patient care and/or shadowing.</td>
<td>Significant patient care and/or shadowing.</td>
<td>Minimal altruistic experiences.</td>
<td>Exceptionally evidenced graduate-level reasoning skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No feedback from healthcare supervisors.</td>
<td>Generic, guarded, or absent letter from healthcare supervisor.</td>
<td>Minimal altruistic experiences.</td>
<td>Exceptionally evidenced graduate-level reasoning skills.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Notes

- *<1% of applicants experience this degree of hardship.
- *<5% of applicants experience this degree of hardship.
- *<10% of applicants experience this degree of hardship.
- *<25% of applicants experience this degree of hardship.
Sample HPAC Evaluation: Advisor Letter

EXAMPLE STUDENT
Applying to enter PHARMACY SCHOOL in EY2025

Pharmacy School Admissions,

I spent several hours meeting with Example Student as her pre-health advisor, especially during the year prior to her pharmacy application, when we worked together to revise her application and essays. I gather that Example focused early upon pharmacy school: she took many AP classes in high school and, through clinical rotations classes, shadowed several doctors and became a certified EMT and pharmacy technician. Example entered UT Dallas in fall 2021 and initially stumbled, earning some C’s in her first year, but took advantage of the Student Success Center and Peer Led Team Learning to improve her study skills. She held a near-4.0 GPA since that first semester. Example is on track to gain research experience this summer and to complete her BS Applied Basketweaving next year.

Example has been active in student groups and community outreach since spring of her freshman year. She rose to officer positions in TAF (Type A’s Forever) and the Richardson Hyenas Club, which she described in her PharmCAS essays as influential experiences that taught her focused time management and to win at all costs.

One thing I discussed with Example is that even though her GPA since her first semester is high, she has not yet taken loads that demonstrate readiness for the heavier loads of pharmacy school. Her light-to-full course loads include notoriously easy UT Dallas science classes like The Fun of Physics and online Earthquakes. However, she also undertook and scored well in A&P I and Molecular Genetics, which are especially rigorous at UT Dallas. Those A’s provide the strongest evidence I see for her potential to excel in advanced sciences.

Interpersonal skills are a clear strength for Example, as shown by her effectiveness in selling boat anchors to farmers in Iowa in the summer after her junior year, and by her >2000 hours of slickly produced video game reviews on YouTube. The best evidence I see of her intrapersonal grit was in fall of her junior year, when she maintained a high GPA in challenging courses after the downturn in global anchor sales left Example temporarily homelessness, malnourished, and suffering from scurvy. Thankfully, Example got back into university housing the next semester and recovered from scurvy after eating more citrus fruits.

Example shows strong interest in health professions, having spent >400 hours in hospitals and clinics, yet surprised our interviewer by making inaccurate statements about several allied health professions. Example has not yet demonstrated much altruism, and had a hard time remembering a time that she’d helped anyone since entering UT Dallas.

Example’s essays describe her strong interest in providing medical care to disadvantaged rural populations, but I question her sensitivity to the needs of rural patients. During her practice interview with chemistry professor Dr. X. Splozion, Example referred to country people as “ignorant hicks.”

Helen Helpful
Pre-Health Advisor
Sample HPAC Evaluation: Committee Letter

EXAMPLE STUDENT
Applying to enter MEDICAL SCHOOL in EY2025

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment of Pre-Professional Competencies, per the Standard Rubric</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>COMPETENCY</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrapersonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scientific Reasoning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altruism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthcare Experience</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RECOMMENDED

Student’s record includes SOME evidence of MOST AAMC competencies—interest in healthcare, academic strength, maturity, and professionalism—and does not suggest any critical deficiencies. A “good” applicant.

Overview

Example Student focused early upon pharmacy school: she took many AP classes in high school and, through clinical rotations classes, shadowed several doctors and became a certified EMT and pharmacy technician. Example entered UT Dallas in fall 2021 and initially stumbled, earning some C’s in her first year, but took advantage of the Student Success Center and Peer Led Team Learning to improve her study skills. She held a near-4.0 GPA since that first semester, albeit at light-to-full course loads that included notoriously easy UT Dallas science classes like The Fun of Physics and online Earthquakes. However, she also undertook and scored well in A&P I and Molecular Genetics, which are especially rigorous at UT Dallas and provide solid evidence of her potential to excel in advanced medical sciences. Example is on track to gain research experience this summer and to complete her BS Applied Basketweaving next year.

Example has been active in student groups and community outreach since spring of her freshman year. She rose to officer positions in TAF (Type A’s Forever) and the Richardson Hyenas Club, which she noted on TMDSAS as her ‘most significant experiences’ because they taught her focused time management and to win at all costs.

Interpersonal skills are a clear strength for Example, as shown by her effectiveness in selling boat anchors to farmers in Iowa in the summer after her junior year, and her >2000 hours of slickly produced video game reviews on YouTube. She also possesses uncommon grit and resilience, as displayed during fall of her junior year, when she maintained a high GPA in challenging courses after the downturn in global anchor sales left her temporarily homelessness, malnourished, and suffering from scurvy. Thankfully, Example got back into university housing the next semester and recovered from scurvy after eating more citrus fruits.

Example shows strong interest in health professions, having spent >400 hours in hospitals and clinics, yet surprised our interviewer by making inaccurate statements about several allied health professions.

Example has not yet demonstrated much altruism, and had a hard time remembering a time that she’d helped anyone since entering UT Dallas.

<letter continues>
Advisor’s Comments – Helen Helpful, Health Professions Advisor since 2008
I met Example several times to revise her application essays and discuss her interests. She always struck me as charismatic, focused, and plucky, with an impressive ability to pop back from misfortune.

From our conversations I got the impression that her main interests are health entrepreneurship, and encouraged her to focus her essays in that direction. However, Example preferred to pattern her essays after a heartwrenching account of a disabled patient on a farm that she encountered on Reddit.

In all our interactions, Example was polite, enthusiastic, and bold in her ideas and convictions.

Interviewers’ Comments – Dr. X. Splozion, Professor of Chemistry
Example was on time for our interview and well prepared. She spoke very well on a wide variety of topics, and rarely paused in responding to my questions. She thought quickly and I would say her speaking and interview skills are very good. We had a lovely conversation about her travels and about the surprising physiology of voles.

To me, Example’s course record suggests that she could do well in a medical curriculum if she chooses to apply herself. After all, she has done well in some difficult courses and performed acceptably on MCAT. She is confident in her ability to take on future challenges, having overcome economic and health challenges during college.

I wish that Example had any altruistic experiences, or seemed to have learned more from his healthcare experiences. Though he claims to have shadowed for more than 400 hours in hospitals and clinics, he could not tell me the names of people he worked with and described the tasks he accomplished only in the vaguest terms. I particularly did not like how he addressed rural patients as “ignorant hicks”, especially given that he desires to become a small town doctor “like on the TV show Northern Exposure.”

Intellectual Qualities: AVERAGE; Interpersonal Qualities: AVERAGE.

Committee’s Comments and Holistic Assessment
Some committee members expressed strong concerns about Examples dismissive comments toward rural patients during her interview with Dr. Splozion, and that she did not choose to pursue courses which would have prepared her better for MCAT and the rigors of medical year one. However, the votes to recommend Example “with reservations” were overruled by the committee majority, who pointed to Example’s success in rigorous classes, adaptability, and resilience as evidence that she can rise to the challenge of medical training and practice.

Committee members were unanimous in hoping that Example gains more diverse healthcare and service experiences before entering medical school, which they hope will broaden and mature her perspective on patients.

Helen Helpful
Pre-Health Advisor