

# 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](https://utd.link/EY25_explainer)

# 5 Steps to Prepare for EY2025

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

Want a video explanation of these steps? Use this QR code.

Coming Soon!

## 1. REGISTER ONLINE

- Available to: All UT Dallas students and alumni, beginning OCT 1. <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.
  - **Allows Step 5:** a HPAC Evaluation Letter.

## 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.)

Hey! Did you see this part?

### 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.**

# More HPAC Applicant Support Services

## 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.

## 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.*

### 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.*



# 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 months of full-time employment.

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

How would you score yourself?	
Highest Evidence of Strength 0 to 3*	Lowest Evidence of Weakness / or X
Interpersonal	AND
Intrapersonal	AND
Scientific Reasoning	AND
Altruism	AND
Healthcare	AND

## 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.

	PROVEN EXCEPTIONALISM 4	POSSIBLE EXCEPTIONALISM 3	PROVEN STRENGTH 2	POSSIBLE STRENGTH 1	INSUFFICIENT EVIDENCE 0	POSSIBLE WEAKNESS "/"	CLEAR WEAKNESS "X"
Interpersonal	Rare accomplishments in teamwork or cross-cultural communication.	Extensive leadership in teams or communications (i.e. service-sector manager)	Significant teamwork or cross-cultural communications (i.e. service-sector job)	Some teamwork or cross-cultural communications (i.e. service-sector job, team projects)	No teamwork or cross-cultural communications (i.e. service-sector job, team projects)	Problematic teamwork or cross-cultural communications (i.e. fired from service-sector job or healthcare exp)	Repeated problems with teamwork or cross-cultural communications (i.e. repeated firings from service-sector job or healthcare exp)
		Extensive sought experiences in unfamiliar cultures or groups.	Significant sought experiences in unfamiliar cultures or groups.	Record includes sought experiences in unfamiliar cultures or groups.	Few experiences outside a limited social/cultural bubble.	Expressed insensitivity toward unfamiliar cultures or groups.	Expressed prejudice which the student defends when confronted.
	Distinguished or award-winning communication professional.	Relied-upon communication professional: 911 Operator, institution spokesperson, etc.	Experienced professional communicator. Record probably includes media jobs (i.e. radio DJ, journalist, editor, etc.)	Capable professional communicator. Record probably includes media extracurriculars.	Communication skills adequate or not assessed.	Unclear or vapid communication, but clarifies on follow up.	Difficult to understand even after follow-up.
		Deep personal connection with interviewer.	Strong rapport with interviewer.	Rapport with interviewer.	No interviews or live advisor meetings.	Inconsistent rapport with interviewer.	
Intrapersonal	Flourishing under extraordinary loads.	Flourishing under sustained full load.	Thriving under sustained full load.	Succeeding under sustained full load.	Hobbies, activities suggest work/life balance.	Struggling under normal load.	Struggled under light load.
	Extensive activities requiring ≥20 hrs/wk of devoted training (i.e. Olympic-level athletics)	Extensive activities requiring ≥10 hrs/wk of devoted training (i.e. high-level athletics)	Significant activities requiring ≥10 hrs/wk of devoted training (i.e. high-level athletics)	Some activities requiring ≥10 hrs/wk of devoted training (i.e. high-level athletics)		Responds immaturely to criticism, frustration, or failure	Shuts down in the face of criticism, frustration, or failure.
	Initiated project of transformative community or academic impact.	Initiated project of significant community or academic impact.	Initiated independent research, thesis, study abroad, community initiative.	Initiated supervised research, thesis, study abroad, community initiative.		Required repeated clear instruction. App/docs weakly completed.	Required active supervision. App/docs incomplete.



Interpersonal		Rec letters indicate trust in positions of critical responsibility; failures cause lasting injury/death	Rec letters indicate trusted in positions of significant responsibility; failures would harm others	Rec letters indicate trust in positions of responsibility; failures would inconvenience others	No positions of responsibility	Poor ethical or moral decision making in last 2 years: conduct violations, law-breaking, etc.	Poor ethical or moral decision making in the last year: conduct violations, law-breaking, etc.
	Initiated project of transformative community or academic impact.	Initiated project of significant community or academic impact.	Initiated independent research, thesis, study abroad, community initiative.	Initiated supervised research, thesis, study abroad, community initiative.		Required repeated clear instruction. App/docs weakly completed.	Required active supervision. App/docs incomplete.
	Thriving despite an extraordinary degree* of environmental, personal, or systemic hardships. * <1% of applicants experience this degree of hardship	Thriving despite a rare degree* of environmental, personal, or systemic hardships. * <5% of applicants experience this degree of hardship	Thriving despite an unusual degree* of environmental, personal, or systemic hardship. * <10% of applicants experience this degree of hardship	Thriving despite environmental, personal, or systemic disadvantages. * <25% of applicants experience this degree of hardship	Has not faced significant hardships or disadvantages.	Recent not thriving: C's or W's within the last year	Current not thriving: Multi-semester pattern of C's or W's through current semester, indicating ongoing problems.
Scientific Reasoning	Exceptionally evidenced graduate-level reasoning skills.	Significantly evidenced graduate-level reasoning skills.	Exceptionally evidenced undergraduate-level reasoning skills.	Significantly evidenced undergraduate-level reasoning skills.	Average evidence of scientific reasoning skills.	Little evidence of reasoning skills.	Evidence of poor reasoning skills.
	Accomplished R&D professional, has made significant novel contributions to their field.		Publication or co-publication of analytical, investigative, or scientific work to professional audience.	Publication or co-publication of analytical, investigative, or scientific work to lay audience.	Minimal scientific engagement outside requirements of major or profession.	Attempted research but soon quit. Guarded or conspicuously absent letter from research supervisor.	Terminated from research group without option to return.
		Superb test scores, overall and in all subsections.	Excellent test scores, overall and in all subsections.	Strong test scores, overall and in all subsections.	Acceptable test scores, overall and in all subsections.	Concerning test scores, overall or in any subsection.	Highly concerning test scores, overall or in any subsection.
Altruism	Vast altruistic or unpaid healthcare experiences	Exceptional altruistic or unpaid healthcare experiences	Extensive altruistic or unpaid healthcare experiences	Significant altruistic or healthcare experiences.		Minimal altruistic experiences.	No altruistic experiences.
	Positively transformed the lives of hundreds, or positively changed thousands.	Positively transformed the lives of many others, or positively changed hundreds.	Positively transformed the lives of others, or positively changed many.	Positively impacts the lives of others.	Insufficient evidence to confirm impact on others' lives.	Has harmed others but takes responsibility.	Feels justified in having harmed others or continuing to cause harm.
Healthcare Experience		Exceptional patient care and/or shadowing across many settings.	Extensive patient care and/or shadowing across multiple settings.	Significant patient care and/or shadowing.	Some patient care and/or shadowing.	Minimal patient care and/or shadowing.	Almost no patient care and/or shadowing.
	Years of full-time professional patient care.	Exceptional professional patient care including "messy" patient care: stool, wounds, etc.	Extensive professional patient care including hands-on, physical care.	Significant professional patient care including direct patient contact.	Some interaction with those helped.	No or minimal interaction with those helped.	Expressed hostility toward patient care.
	Extensive caring for others at significant risk to self, requiring specialty safety gear (i.e. airborne transmission precautions)	Significant caring for others at significant risk to self, requiring specialty safety gear (i.e. airborne transmission precautions)	Significant caring for others at some risk to self, requiring continuous safety protocols (i.e. contact transmission precautions)	Significant caring for others at mild risk to self, requiring rigorous adherence to standard safety precautions.		Safety or transmission protocols not rigorously followed.	Safety or transmission protocols repeatedly ignored.
	Rare feedback from health professionals. i.e. "Only applicant this year I would trust to treat my mother."	Excellent feedback from health professionals. i.e. "exceptional, indispensable"	Strong feedback from health professionals. i.e. "valuable, excellent."	Solid feedback from health professionals. i.e. "solid, acceptable, would hire."	No feedback from health professionals.	Generic, guarded, or absent letter from healthcare supervisor.	Negative feedback from health professionals. i.e. "Would not hire."

# 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 courseloads 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 homeless, 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. Splosion, 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

Assessment of Pre-Professional Competencies, per the <u>Standard Rubric</u>		
<u>COMPETENCY</u>		<u>2024 EVIDENCE SHOWS...</u>
Interpersonal	4	<i>proven exceptionalism</i>
Intrapersonal	3	<i>possible exceptionalism</i>
Scientific Reasoning	1	<i>possible strength</i>
Altruism	0	<i>insufficient evidence to assess strength</i>
Healthcare Experience	2/	<i>possible strength + possible weakness (disparaged other professions)</i>

## 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 courseloads 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

