



American University of the Caribbean  
School of Medicine

# 2020 Residency Application Guide: The MSPE Letter

## A Guide to Writing Your Noteworthy Characteristics



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## What is the MSPE?

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The **Medical Student Performance Evaluation (MSPE)** is an important document in your residency application. This official letter from AUC summarizes your performance in medical school (academics, clinicals, professionalism, etc.) and paints a general picture of your potential fit as a residency candidate.

The MSPE letter is written by AUC's Office of Student and Professional Development (OSPD) and the Chief Academic Officer. Students will have the chance to review their MSPE letter before it is released to programs on October 1.



## 2

# Components of the MSPE

Component	Description	Responsibility
Identifying Information	Applicant's legal name and medical institution.	OSPD
Noteworthy Characteristics	Three (3) personalized bullet points that summarize the applicant's attributes.	Applicant
Academic History	Expected graduation date, degree, and notice of any adverse actions while in medical school.	OSPD
Academic Progress	Short summary statement of applicant's academic work in the preclinical years as well as summative comments from core clerkships.	OSPD
Summary/Evaluation	A brief synopsis of the applicant's strengths and readiness for residency.	OSPD
Medical School Information	Administrative information about the applicant's medical school and program.	OSPD



## 3 What Are Noteworthy Characteristics?

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The **Noteworthy Characteristics** section includes three (3) bullet points with unique attributes and/or experiences that contribute to your strength as a residency candidate and future physician. They are intended to provide a holistic view of each applicant and to help residency programs select a diverse set of candidates.

These bullet points are **placed at the beginning of your MSPE and serve as an important first impression**. MATCH applicants should set aside considerable time to plan, write, and review their characteristics prior to submission.



## Noteworthy Characteristics Timeline

Date	Activity	Responsibility
January – February 28	Dedicate this time to draft your noteworthy characteristics	Applicant
March 1	Submit your noteworthy characteristics to OSPD for editing and feedback	Applicant
April 1	OSPD will return all feedback on submissions received by 2/18	OSPD
March 1 – June 30	Revise and finalize noteworthy characteristics	Applicant
July 1	Submit MSPE request ( <b><u>deadline</u></b> )	Applicant



## Noteworthy Characteristics: Format & Guidelines

- Write each unique characteristic as its own bullet
- Contain each bullet to two (2) sentences or less (target 40-50 words per bullet)
- Write your characteristics in third person
- Consider starting your bullet with a keyword or phrase
- Use active language
- Focus on big picture concepts; do not spend time on details found elsewhere in the application
- Highlight measurable outcomes related to an achievement or area of success
- Make sure the bullet points combined create a holistic and compelling narrative



## Noteworthy Characteristics: Framing Your Bullets

Noteworthy Characteristics should entice a program to want to get to know you. What are your selling points? What is your brand?

When planning your bullet points, consider what makes you a memorable applicant.



## Noteworthy Characteristics: Common Topics

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Research /  
Publications

Community  
Service

International  
Experience

Overcoming a  
Challenge /  
Hardship

Hobbies  
(Related to  
Career Interest)

Major Life  
Event

Extracurricular

Academics

Leadership

Prior Work  
Experience

Unique History  
/ Background

Mentorship





## Noteworthy Characteristics: Example 1

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- **Resilience:** Tom grew up in financial hardship with a rare childhood disease. He witnessed healthcare disparities from a young age and faced burdening medical expenses. These experiences shaped his interest in medicine and guide his desire to work with underserved communities.
- **Community Service:** As Vice President of AUC's Student Volunteer Committee, Tom facilitated numerous service opportunities for his medical school peers. During Community Action Day, the club's marquee event, he coordinated more than 20 service projects in Sint Maarten, resulting in 200+ students volunteering 700+ hours towards free community health fairs, afterschool programs, assistance with long-term care homes, and community rehabilitation efforts.
- **Research:** During his first two years of medical school, Tom designed and implemented an IRB-approved novel research protocol focused on mosquito-borne tropical diseases among his student peers. This work has resulted in a series of conference presentations and publications, including a first author article in *Journal of Tropical Medicine*.



## Noteworthy Characteristics: Example 2

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- **Previous Work Experience:** Prior to medical school, Susan worked as an anthropologist for 8 years. She participated in historic archeological digs in the Nivin region of Peru, where she studied the cultural and health patterns of civilizations that occupied the Casma Valley between the Middle Horizon and Late Intermedia Period.
- **Health Disparities:** Susan was selected for a competitive clinical medicine fellowship after graduation to study breast abnormalities in Caribbean populations. She was instrumental in leading the study's educational program, which included a dozen free breast screening events with tutorials on self breast exams.
- **Global Health:** Susan participated in a 6-week Global Health Elective in Naggalama, Uganda. She traveled with local physicians to remote villages and provided palliative care to patients with terminal illnesses and chronic diseases. Susan hopes to continue her international relief work and help patients in underserved communities around the world.