1 What is the MSPE?

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 1st.
# Components of the MSPE

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

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Important Dates</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; – March 31&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Dedicate this time to draft your Noteworthy Characteristics.</td>
<td>Applicant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Submit your Noteworthy Characteristics to OSPD for editing and feedback by April 1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt;.</td>
<td>Applicant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>OSPD will return all feedback on submissions received by June 1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt;.</td>
<td>OSPD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; – June 30&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Revise and finalize Noteworthy Characteristics.</td>
<td>Applicant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Submit MSPE request (by July 1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt;).</td>
<td>Applicant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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 (e.g. “Mr. Doe was named to the Dean’s List for four consecutive semesters”)
• 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.

Consider: What makes you a memorable applicant.

Focus on: Your accomplishments and aspects of your journey that you are most proud to share.

What makes you stand out from other applicants?

What are your selling points?

What is your brand?
Noteworthy Characteristics: Common Topics

- 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: What to Avoid

- Copying and/or listing activities or experiences directly from your CV
- Including information regarding which specialty you apply to or why you chose that specialty
- Including too much personal information that cannot be tied back to a positive personal trait or your desire to become a physician
- Summative statements about your academic progress or personal traits
Submission Process of Noteworthy Characteristics

1. Take time in **January** and **February** to draft your **Noteworthy Characteristics**.

2. Once complete, you will submit your **Noteworthy Characteristics** to OSPD via email (ospd@aucmed.edu) by **April 1st** using an attached word document which will need to include your **name**, **D number**, **preferred specialty**, **parallel specialty** (if applicable) and **Noteworthy Characteristics**. Please title the subject line of the email: **Noteworthy Characteristics Review**.

3. Once submitted, OSPD will review your submission, and provide feedback to you via email.
   - Your submission will be reviewed for content, style and grammar.
   - OSPD will return feedback by **June 1st** on submissions received by **April 1st**.

4. Once all necessary revisions are made, you will need to request your MSPE letter using the following link: [https://connect.aucmed.edu/msperequest](https://connect.aucmed.edu/msperequest)
   - Be sure to include your most up-to-date finalized Noteworthy Characteristics in your request.
   - The deadline to request your MSPE letter is **July 1st**.
Noteworthy Characteristics: Example 1

- **Resilience**: Tom grew up in financial hardship with a rare childhood disease, where 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-plus students volunteering 700-plus 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

• **Previous Work Experience**: Prior to medical school, Susan worked as an anthropologist for eight 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 six-week Global Health Elective in Naggalama, Uganda, where 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.
Noteworthy Characteristics: Example 3

• **Leadership:** As Prime Minister of AUC’s Canadian Medical Student Association, Anjali serves as an advocate for her fellow Canadian students. In her position, she has inspired her fellow students to participate in community service activities and initiated a medical mission trip where she and her fellow students and faculty offered wellness checks and HIV testing to underserved communities in Haiti.

• **Mentorship:** Anjali has carried the work ethic developed through her 4-year experience as a Division I college athlete through her journey towards becoming a physician. This experience inspired her to create a children’s soccer league in Sint Maarten to promote health and wellness through after school activities while serving as a mentor for children in the community.

• **Global Health:** Driven by her desire to learn about different health care systems, Anjali completed two electives in the United Kingdom. This exposure has helped shape her view of different medical systems and she aspires to implement her learned best practices into her future practice of medicine.
Residency Application Supporting Documents

- MSPE
- Medical School Transcript
- USMLE Score Transcripts
- Personal Statement
- Curriculum Vitae (CV)
- LORs

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**Personal Statement**

A key component of your residency application

An opportunity to show who you are beyond your CV, grades & test scores

Should be customized to the specialty you are applying to

A chance to help you stand out from other applicants & allow a selection committee to learn more about you

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Steps for Writing Your Personal Statement

1. Review the guidelines and make sure you are aware of the required format.

2. Brainstorm Ideas

3. Draft, and redraft until you are confident with your statement.

4. Seek feedback from a mentor, faculty, or peer, and ask someone to proof read for grammatical or stylistic errors.

5. After all edits have been made, upload to ERAS to submit as part of your residency application.
Personal Statement: Format & Guidelines

One Page
(try to keep it under 700 words)

Single Spaced

Standard & Legible Font
(ex: Times New Roman/Arial)

Be aware of sentence structure, writing style & transitions

Writing style flows smoothly and is void of any grammar or spelling errors

Specialty Specific - Tailor your personal statement to a particular specialty. If you are applying to more than one specialty, write a personal statement for each specialty.

Focus on the positive. If there are red flags in your application that you would like to explain, you can incorporate this briefly, but only do so if you are able to tie this back to a learning experience, or something that you have overcome.

KEY TIP: Be sure to review the “MyERAS Residency USER GUIDE” located on the AAMC website for specific details regarding the full guidelines for your Personal Statement in ERAS.
**Personal Statement: Where to Begin**

_Brainstorm ideas of which direction you would like to take your personal statement. When brainstorming, consider:_

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason for choosing a specific specialty &amp; the experiences that led to this</th>
<th>Your interests, motivations, and what you would contribute as a resident to a program and/or a physician to the community</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Include a story or anecdote that demonstrates your commitment to a particular specialty</td>
<td>Meaningful hobbies, skills or key attributes that distinguish you from other candidates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A patient encounter that had the greatest impact on you and inspired you on your path towards a specific specialty</td>
<td>Any “aha” moments that changed how you approach life, medicine, or your work today</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop a narrative that connects something personal about you to your pursuit of becoming a physician and your goals post-residency</td>
<td>The skills you developed through prior work experience and ways in which these skills can contribute to your practice of medicine</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Personal Statement: Sample Structure

**Introduction (1 Paragraph)**
- Lays the foundation for the rest of the Personal Statement
- Explains a personal story that led you to your desired specialty
- Should entice the reader and be intriguing

**Body (2-3 Paragraphs)**
- Focus on what you bring to the table
- Provide clinical examples and any story of influence relatable to your specialty
- Suggest specific skills that distinguish you from other candidates

**Conclusion (1 Paragraph)**
- Reiterate interest in desired field and emphasize goals
- Include future long-term goals
- Convince the reader that you will be a valuable asset to the program

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Personal Statement: What to Avoid

- Clichés & Generic Statements
- Speaking in general terms rather than using specific examples
- Sensitive topics such as religion or politics
- Grammar & Spelling Errors
- Not having the right balance of emotion and professionalism
- Including too many different topics and not considering the flow
- Items copied straight from your CV
- Waiting until the last minute to begin drafting your statement
- Not following the guidelines
Personal Statement: 4 Key Tips

- Start early & dedicate enough time
  Begin brainstorming ideas & develop a draft by January of your application year

- Follow the guidelines required by the AAMC using the MyERAS Residency User Guide

- Seek feedback & thoroughly proof read

- Be specialty specific & incorporate examples
Personal Statement: Additional Resources

- ACP: Medical Student Perspectives: Writing the Residency Application Personal Statement
- ECFMG: Personal Statement “Do’s” and “Don’ts”
- USMLE AdvisorMD: Part 1: The Personal Statement by Dr. Brian
  - Part 2: The Personal Statement by Dr. Brian
- Sample Personal Statements
- USMLEWEB
- Kenneth V. Iserson: Iserson’s Getting into a Residency: A Guide for Medical Students

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Student Services | Stay Connected

Office of Student Professional Development (OSPD)

Department Email: ospd@aucmed.edu | Department Phone: 305-446-0600, option 5

Students and graduates can schedule an appointment to discuss the residency application process and match strategy with an OSPD Advisor.

UME Student Services

Department Email: umestudentservices@aucmed.edu
Department Phone: 305-446-0600, option 3

Office of the Registrar

Department Email: aucregistrar@aucmed.edu
Department Phone: 305-446-0600, option 4

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