



American University of the Caribbean
School of Medicine

OCA Match Corner

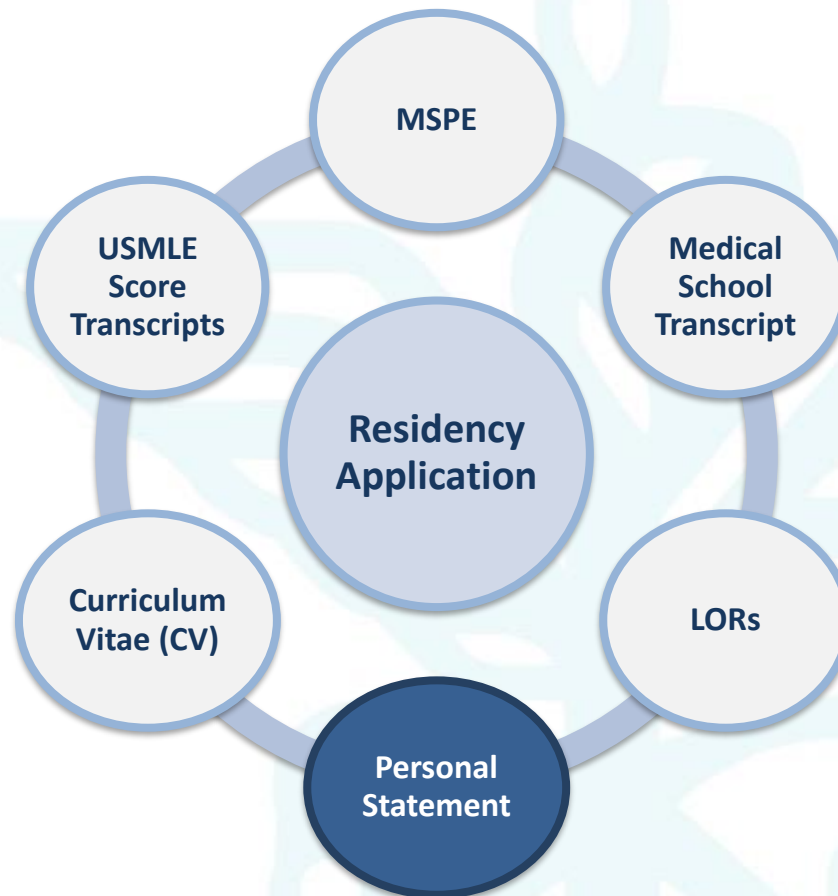
Office of Career Advisement

Personal Statement Guide



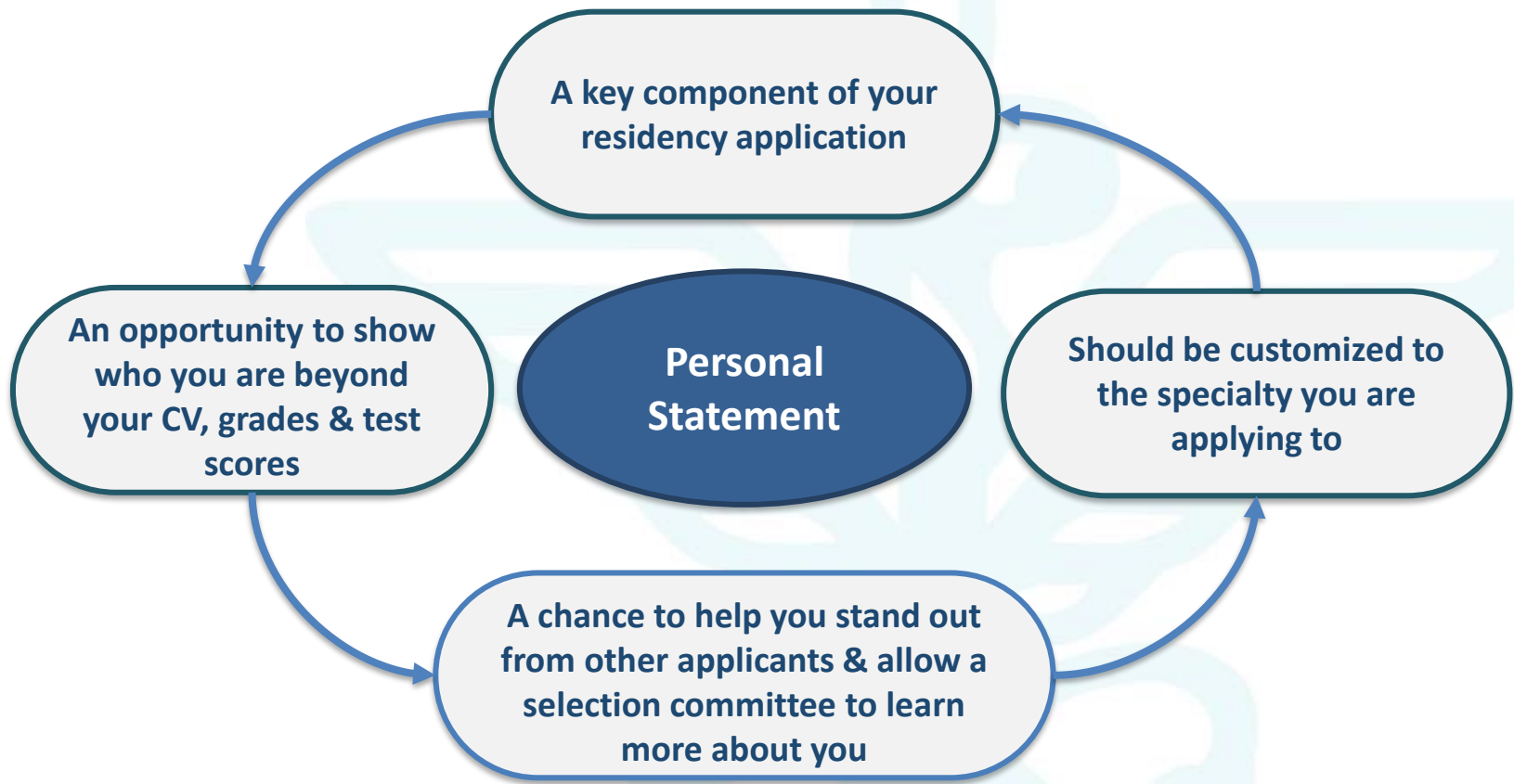
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Residency Application Supporting Documents





Personal Statement





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:*

Reason for choosing a specific specialty
& the experiences that led to this

Your interests, motivations, and what you
would contribute as a resident to a program
and/or a physician to the community

Include a story or anecdote that
demonstrates your commitment to a
particular specialty

Meaningful hobbies, skills or key attributes
that distinguish you from other candidates

A patient encounter that had the greatest
impact on you and inspired you on your path
towards a specific specialty

Any “aha” moments that changed how you
approach life, medicine, or your work today

Develop a narrative that connects something
personal about you to your pursuit of
becoming a physician and your goals
post-residency

The skills you developed through prior work
experience and ways in which these skills can
contribute to your practice of medicine



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



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](#)

[Personal Statement “Do’s” and “Don’ts”](#)

ECFMG

USMLE
AdvisorMD

[Part 1: The Personal Statement by Dr. Brian](#)
[Part 2: The Personal Statement by Dr. Brian](#)

[Iserson’s Getting into a Residency: A Guide for Medical Students](#)

Kenneth V.
Iserson