



American University of the Caribbean School of Medicine

Residency Application Information for AUC Students

2022

Match Handbook

March 2021



American University of the Caribbean
School of Medicine

*Congratulations
on having come this far!*

Should you have any comments or questions regarding this handbook
or the Match® process, please contact:

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INTRODUCTION: PATHS TO RESIDENCY

As a student/graduate of a foreign medical school, you can:

Apply to several residency programs through a matching service such as:

- ERAS®/NRMP® Partnership a.k.a. “The MATCHSM”, SFMatch® or Urology Match® (for most Allopathic/M.D. residency programs)
- CaRMS (for residency programs in Canada)

“THE MATCH” APPLICATION PROCESS

Your pursuit of a residency will involve several entities:

- NRMP National Resident Matching Program®, or The MATCH
- SF Match For Ophthalmology or Plastic Surgery applicants
- Urology Match For Urology applicants
- ERAS Electronic Residency Application Service® (administered by AAMC)
- ECFMG Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates®
a.k.a. AUC’s “Designated Dean’s Office” (ERAS Support Services)

You will need to:

- Research residency programs (a good place to start is Fellowship and Residency Electronic Interactive Database Access System (FREIDA) Online – see Useful Links)
- Write a Personal Statement which can be modified for each residency program application
- Update your CV
- Request Letters of Recommendation from your attendings, preceptors, program directors, chairs
- Register with ECFMG (and upload information, including photo, through OASIS)
- Apply for ECFMG Certification via the Pathway Application
- Complete the Occupational English Test (OET) for ECFMG Certification
- Apply to ERAS
- Register with NRMP
- Submit Transcript and Medical Student Performance Evaluation (MSPE) requests to AUC
- Apply to programs via ERAS
- Submit your Rank Order List (ROL) via NRMP

The ERAS/NRMP Matching Service Requires:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| • Application forms and payment | provided by student |
| • Personal Statement | provided by student |
| • CV (curriculum vitae a.k.a. resumé) | provided by student |
| • Picture | provided by student |
| • USMLE/Board Scores | provided by student/ECFMG |
| • Letters of Recommendation | provided by writers (attendings, directors, etc.) |
| • MSPE Letter (Dean’s Letter) | provided by AUC |
| • Transcript | provided by AUC |

RESOURCES FOR “THE MATCH” PROCESS

Contacts at AUC

The following AUC staff members are involved in the residency matching application process:

- 305-446-0600, option 4 for the Office of the Registrar who processes ERAS Transcript requests, Licensure Forms and Clinical Rotation Assessment Forms
- 305-446-0600, option 5 for the Office of Student and Professional Development for assistance with residency application questions and MSPE letters**Note: A dean will approve and sign all MSPE letters.*

Match Terminology

Main Match: You registered for the NRMP Match service and you will be notified in March if you obtained a residency position through their matching service.

Supplemental Offer and Acceptance Program (SOAP): You registered for the NRMP Match service, but you were notified in March that you did not receive a match. You then have the opportunity to compete for unfilled residency positions in what is now known as the SOAP.

Independent Applicants: International Medical Graduates (IMGs) or Foreign Medical Graduates (FMGs). You will be considered an IMG even if you are a US citizen or resident. The title has to do with the fact that you attended medical school abroad.

Types of Residency Positions

Categorical Position: Offers full residency training required for Board Certification in that particular specialty.

Preliminary Position: Offers 1-2 years of training, often prior to entry into advanced specialty programs. Surgery and Internal Medicine training programs can offer preliminary positions in addition to categorical positions.

Transitional Year: As defined by the ACGME, a Transitional Year is a one-year educational experience in GME structured to provide a program of multiple clinical disciplines and designed to facilitate the choice of and/or preparation for a specialty. This provides a broader exposure to different fields whereby the residents rotate through cores and electives much like they did in Clinical Sciences during medical school. It is important to note that the Transitional Year is not, itself, a complete graduate education program.

Advanced Positions: These are positions that do not begin until one to two years after the Match. They are in specialty programs that require completion of 1 or more years of preliminary training. You may apply for these, but you must also apply for the required years of preliminary training. Specialties in this category include, but are not limited to, Urology, Ophthalmology, Dermatology and Neurology.

Non-NRMP Match Details

Students wishing to pursue a residency in Ophthalmology or Urology apply for these positions through the San Francisco Match (www.sfmach.org) and the American Urological Association (www.auanet.org), respectively. The more specialized, non-NRMP Matches are highly competitive. Most programs will only consider USMLE® Step 1 scores over 230. For more detailed information on the application process, please contact AUC's Office of Student Professional Development.

Canadian Residency Matching Service (CaRMS): The CaRMS process is similar to the NRMP process. For guidelines and instructions for participating in CaRMS, please consult www.carms.ca and AUC's Canadian Match Handbook. Also, if you are applying for residency in Canada, you must sit for the Medical Council of Canada Qualifying Exam 1 (MCCQE-1) and the National Assessment Collaboration Examination (NAC). Only Canadian citizens or permanent residents may apply to CaRMS.

Mini Glossary

AAMC	Association of American Medical Colleges
ACGME	Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education
AMA	American Medical Association
AOA	American Osteopathic Association
AUA	American Urological Association
CV	Curriculum Vitae, a.k.a. resumé
ECFMG	Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates a.k.a. the "Designated Dean's Office" for AUC students and all students/graduates of foreign medical schools
ERAS	Electronic Residency Application Service
FCVS	Federation Credentials Verification Service: created by the FSMB to verify physician credentials for licensing by state medical boards.
FMG/IMG	Foreign or International Medical Graduates (AUC graduate students)
FREIDA	Fellowship and Residency Electronic Interactive Database (AMA website)
FSMB	Federation of State Medical Boards (non-profit organization that represents the medical boards of the United States and its territories).
MSPE	Medical Student Performance Evaluation, formerly known as the "Dean's Letter." Completed by AUC Office of Student Professional Development, this formal document objectively summarizes each student's academic history, awards, achievements, work experiences, and extracurricular activities during medical school. The MSPE is a letter of evaluation and cannot be used as a letter of recommendation.
NBME EXAM	National Board of Medical Examiners Exam
NRMP	National Resident Matching Program
OASIS	Online Applicant Status and Information
USMLE	United States Medical Licensing Examination®: a three-step examination for medical licensure co-sponsored by the FSMB and the NBME
OET	Occupational English Test required for the ECFMG Pathway Application

Calendar of Important ERAS/NRMP® Dates

2021 | Dates are subject to change. Please review specific dates on AAMC and NRMP websites. Dates below reflect typical timeline for residency application process.

January Update CV and complete first draft of Personal Statement (OSPD's [C.V.](#) and [Personal Statement](#) Guides)

Start working on Noteworthy Characteristics (see [OSPD's Guide](#) for assistance)

January - April **Schedule** OET and Kaplan CSPE

Submit request to speak to an [AUC Physician Match Advisor](#) about Match Strategy (PMA will also review C.V., Personal Statement and Noteworthy Characteristics) (Deadline April 1)

April 1 Deadline to submit [Noteworthy Characteristics for Review](#) to OSPD

[Pathway Application for ECFMG Certification is expected to be available for the 2022 Match](#)

June 1 Noteworthy Characteristics returned to students

Begin researching programs of interest using [ACGME](#), [Electronic Residency Application Service's list of participating specialties and programs](#), the [Fellowship and Residency Electronic Interactive Database](#) and [AUC's past residency placements](#)

June Register in MyERAS and begin working on application

Obtain your 2022 ERAS Token in the ERAS Support Services section of ECFMG and the token at AAMC's [MyERAS website](#). Once you have registered, start submitting your [supporting documents](#).

July 1 **Deadline** to submit [MSPE Letter Request](#) for 2022 Match

Mid-August AUC's recommended **deadline** to take Step 2 CK, OET and Kaplan CSPE in order to have scores reported by September 15

August-October OSPD Residency Interview Webinars/Presentations will be conducted

September 1 Use the [MyERAS website](#) to transmit your MyERAS application, supporting documents, and Personal Statement(s) to residency programs.

Programs will not have access to applications until September 15 at 9:00 a.m., Eastern Time in the United States. All applications submitted September 1 through September 15 will appear to programs as being submitted on September 15. It is recommended to upload your supporting documents no later than September 7 to ensure their availability on September 15 when programs begin accessing applications.

September 15 [Registration for NRMP](#), or "the Match," opens at 12:00 p.m., Eastern Time in the United States.

October 1 **MSPE Letters are released to programs**

November 30 Applicant **NRMP Standard Registration Deadline** for the 2022 Match

2022 | Dates are subject to change. Please review specific dates on AAMC website.

Mid-January USMLE **Deadline** for taking USMLE Step 2 CK in order to participate in the Main Match

Ranking opens

End of February NRMP **Deadlines** for Late Registration, Rank Order List certification, or Withdraw from The Match

Mid-March **Match Week:** NRMP notifies applicants to let them know IF they matched. Unfilled program list released. Unmatched applicants may begin applying to unfilled programs NRMP Match results released. SOAP concludes at 5 p.m. ET

July 1, 2022 Residency begins

**Dates are based on [ERAS 2021 Residency Timeline for IMGs](#)*

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

About the ERAS/NRMP® Residency Matching Application Process

Q. What is a Rank Order List?

A. It is a list of the residency programs that interest you, ranked in the order of your preference.

Q. How many programs should I apply to?

A. It depends on how competitive you are for your desired specialty. Highly competitive students should apply to 100 or less programs. Moderately competitive students should apply to 150-200 programs. Students who have multiple attempts on USMLE exams should apply to as many programs as you can afford. Do NOT apply to more than one program at the same medical center. Do NOT apply to any program in which you would not want to attend. DO apply to programs in more than one state, especially if you are seeking a competitive residency. Look into places that others may not want to go to, such as rural areas or underserved populations. You will gain experience that you wouldn't otherwise get.

Q. Do I need to have my USMLE Step 2 CK score to apply for a residency?

A. No. Most programs do not require USMLE Step 2 CK at the time of application or interview. Please review AUC's USMLE Step 2 CK policy in the Student Handbook. It is ideal to have a USMLE Step 2 CK score reported by the time you apply to programs in mid-September, but not necessary. Aim to have a USMLE Step 2 CK score reported before September 15 of the year prior to entering the Match.

Q. Do I need to take USMLE Step 2 CS to apply for a residency?

A. No. The Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB) and NBME, co-sponsors of the United States Medical Licensing Examination® (USMLE®), announced on January 26, 2021 that USMLE Step 2 CS is discontinued. Applicants will no longer be required, or able, to take this exam. With this change, International Medical Graduates will need to apply for ECFMG Certification via the ECFMG Pathway Application and fulfill the requirements in order to be eligible to participate in the Match.

Q. With the discontinuation of USMLE Step 2 CS, am I still required to pass Kaplan CSPE?

A. Yes. Kaplan CSPE is still an AUC requirement for graduation. For the 2021 Match, passing Kaplan CSPE allowed AUC to attest to a student's clinical skills via the Clinical Skills Attestation Form required for the ECFMG Pathway Application.

Q. When should I take Kaplan CSPE?

A. It is recommended to complete Kaplan CSPE prior to mid-August to have a passing score prior to the application release date of September 15th. Students typically perform best on the exam after successfully completing their Medicine Core Clerkship. Students struggling on their NBME Shelf Exams typically perform better on Kaplan CSPE after successfully completing their Core Clerkships.

Q. Do I need to graduate before I can apply for a residency?

A. Yes and No. Most programs do not require that you graduate before applying or interviewing; however, they do require that you graduate before your residency begins in July. The latest month you can graduate is June.

Some programs do require that you become ECGMG certified before applying or interviewing, which would require graduation from AUC. You must do your research to find out.

Q. Are AUC students/grads considered "foreign" or "international" medical students/grads?

A. Yes. You will be considered an FMG/IMG.

Q. What is the "Designated Dean's Office" for AUC?

A. ECFMG is the "Designated Dean's Office" for AUC students and all students/graduates of foreign medical schools.

Q. Where can I find information about the residency programs participating in the Match service?

A. There are several resources: ERAS website, NRMP website, AMA website/FREIDA Online.

A few more things about the application process...

Make sure your application is not just as complete as possible, but also as strong as possible. It is advantageous to show that you are well rounded and personally interested in the field for which you are applying. Have your application in as early as you can.

Be prepared to answer for any lapses in study time or deficient grades.

Customize your personal statement to each specialty in which you apply. Sending a generic statement looks just as bad as sending an internal medicine application to a pediatric program.

About USMLE Steps I and II**Q. Are my USMLE Step scores important?**

A. Yes, VERY. Not only do program directors look at your scores, they look to see how many attempts you made in order to pass. The first attempt is the most favorable result and a score of 217 or higher on USMLE Step 1 and 224 or higher on Step 2 CK are advantageous according to [NRMP's Charting Outcomes in the Match for International Medical Graduates](#).

Q. When should I take USMLE Step 2 CK?

A. Students must satisfy the AUC USMLE Step 2 CK policy found on page 70 of the [Student Handbook](#). If possible, students should aim to take USMLE Step 2 CK by mid-August* prior to the year they enter the Match in order to have the score back around the day that NRMP Registration opens. Students must submit a passing score for USMLE Step 1 and Step 2 CK by the Rank Order Deadline, which normally occurs in late February, in order to participate in the Main Match.

*Dates are subject to change. Confirm with USMLE.

Q. If I fail my USMLE Step exam, can I take it again?

A. Yes. However, many programs are likely to not interview candidates who have taken it more than twice.

Note 1: You will not be allowed to retake the exam if you pass with a low score.

Note 2: Most licensing boards require that you take USMLE Steps 1, 2 and 3 within a seven-year period.

About ECFMG Certification**Q. Do I need to be ECFMG Certified to participate in the Match?**

A. Yes and No. You must be eligible for ECFMG Certification, be cleared for a pathway for certification and verified by ECFMG by NRMP's Rank Order List deadline in order to participate in the Match, but you cannot be fully ECFMG Certified until after you graduate.

Some programs request that you be ECFMG Certified at the time of application or by Rank Order List deadline; these programs are typically not IMG-Caribbean friendly. You can refer to your program of interest's website for more information. The majority of IMG friendly programs understand that you must graduate in order to be fully certified.

Q. How do I apply for ECFMG Certification?

A. You will apply via the ECFMG Online Pathway Application which is expected to be available on the ECFMG website in April 2021. Please refer to the ECFMG website for more information:

https://www.ecfm.org/certification-requirements-2022-match/?utm_source=web&utm_medium=ecfm-news&utm_campaign=pathways_2022_annc.

Q. When do I apply for ECFMG Certification via the Pathway Application?

A. Once you are sure you will be applying for the 2022 Match, it is recommended to apply for ECFMG Certification via the Pathway Application as soon as it becomes available. You will not be able to participate in the Match if you do not complete the application, pay the fee, and complete all requirements by the deadlines provided by ECFMG. Be sure to stay up to date with the latest announcements from ECFMG and AUC: https://www.ecfm.org/certification-requirements-2022-match/?utm_source=web&utm_medium=ecfm-news&utm_campaign=pathways_2022_annc.

Q. Are there additional requirements for ECFMG Certification via the Pathway Application?

A. Yes. Applicants are required to pass the OET and meet the clinical skills requirement for ECFMG Certification. For the 2021 Match, the clinical skills requirement was met for AUC students by passing the Kaplan CSPE. Requirements for the 2022 Match are expected to be posted by ECFMG in April 2021 when the Pathway Application becomes available. The OET will be required for all pathways.

Q. How do I schedule the OET and when is the deadline to sit for the exam?

A. The OET can be scheduled via the following link: <https://www.occupationalenglishtest.org/l/ecfm/>. We recommend for students to complete this exam prior to mid-August to have results back by application release on September 15th. ECFMG's deadline to complete the exam in order to be eligible for the 2022 Match has not yet been announced. The deadline for the 2021 Match was December 31st.

About Letters of Recommendation (LORs)**Q. Whom should I ask for a Letter of Recommendation?**

A. You should ask clerkship attendings, preceptors, and directors – your primary source for LoRs. Also, try to develop good working relationships with the staff and attendings at the hospitals where you complete your rotations. Ensure that you have a LoR for the specialty to which you are applying. The best way to ask for a LoR is directly and at the end of your rotation. Receiving clear, positive feedback and feeling good about your performance in the rotation are great indicators of getting a favorable LoR. A good tip is to ask the potential letter writer in this way: "I'm going to need a strong letter of recommendation next year when I'm applying for residency. Do you feel like you know me well enough to write one?" This leaves the letter writer the option to decline and thus saves the student from getting

a letter that could hurt his or her chances for matching. More info at <http://www.ecfm.org/echo/asking-for-lor.html>.

Q. Should I waive my right to see a Letter of Recommendation?

A. AUC's recommendation is to waive the right to see the LoR, but the decision is ultimately up to the student. A student not electing to waive his or her right can raise a red flag to some program directors. It can indicate that the applicant is not confident that the letter will be supportive, or rather, he or she is concerned it will reflect something negative. Students who waive their right will not be permitted to see the LoR at any time during the application process or after the Match.

Q. How many Letters of Recommendation should I obtain?

A. You may upload as many as you want to your ERAS account, but ERAS will transmit a maximum of four letters of recommendation.

Q. How do I submit my Letters of Recommendation?

A. Per AAMC guidelines, all letters must be uploaded by the author or the author's designee using the Letter of Recommendation Portal (LoRP). From there, students will enter and finalize LoR Authors and print out a Letter Request Form along with instructions for the Author to upload the letter. Students will submit these Request Forms and instructions to each Author by email, mail, or in person. Authors complete their LoR, save it in PDF format and access the LoRP to upload their letter. More info at https://www.aamc.org/services/eras/282520/lor_portal.html.

Q. How long does it take for Letters of Recommendation to appear in ERAS?

A. Once ERAS receives your letters, it can take up to two weeks to scan and upload the information into its system. Receipt of documents can be tracked in the ERAS Support Services Document Tracking System, which you can access via your account in ECFMG's OASIS. Contact ERAS for more information.

About Submitting a Photo

Q. How do I submit my photo?

A. Digital Photos should be uploaded to ECFMG via OASIS.

About Transcripts

Q. How can I obtain my transcript?

A. Complete the form at <https://www.credentials-inc.com/tplus/?ALUMTROSS0478>.

Q. How long will it take for the transcript to appear in ERAS?

A. Once AUC uploads your transcript to ECFMG, it will take up to two (2) business days for the document to appear in the applicant's ERAS account. Receipt of documents can be tracked in the ERAS Support Services Document Tracking System, which you can access via your account in ECFMG's OASIS. Contact ECFMG for more information.

About MSPE Letters

Q. What is an MSPE Letter?

A. The MSPE Letter, formerly known as the "Dean's Letter," is the Medical Student Performance Evaluation. MSPE letters are submitted in support of residency and fellowship applications through ERAS and released to residency programs Oct. 1. AUC's MSPE Letter is composed in accordance with [AAMC guidelines](#) and will only include academic performance information and accomplishments achieved during medical school.

Q. Does the MSPE Letter count as a Letter of Recommendation?

A. No, it is a letter of evaluation.

Q. What is included in the MSPE Letter?

A. The MSPE Letter includes the following information: Student name and location of university
Noteworthy Characteristics (bullet-points summarizing your performance, accomplishments, awards, research, publications, memberships, activities and distinguishing features)

Dates of attendance at AUC

Notice of any LOAs, Dismissals, Probationary Periods and/or Disciplinary Action

Graduation date or anticipated graduation date

Non-course specific summary for Basic Sciences (time taken to complete Basic Sciences and GPA Class Rank at the end of Basic Sciences)

Clinical rotation locations and overall evaluations along with preceptor's comments Signature of the Clinical Dean or Chief Academic Officer

Comparison performance graphs for Basic Sciences courses and Core Clinical Clerkships

Summary Statement

Q. What is included in the Noteworthy Characteristics?

A. The AAMC has issued new [recommendations for the MSPE Letter](#). The Unique Characteristics section was replaced by a Noteworthy Characteristics section in AUC's MSPE Letters submitted for the 201 Match.

The Noteworthy Characteristics section is intended to help a residency program selection committee review applicants holistically to achieve a residency class that brings a diverse set of background experiences, characteristics and perspectives.

Students should use the [Noteworthy Characteristics Guide](#) document to start crafting which Noteworthy Characteristics he or she wants used in the MSPE Letter. Students will be required to submit Noteworthy Characteristics when requesting the MSPE Letter. The first day to request the letter is June 1. Consider the below guidelines when drafting the Noteworthy Characteristics:

- Provide a maximum of three characteristics highlighting the most salient noteworthy characteristics of the student.
- This section should be presented as a bulleted list. Each characteristic should be described in two sentences or less. Information about any significant challenges or hardships encountered by the student during medical school may be included. (See samples below)
- Lengthy biographical descriptions are not recommended due to the time required for review and because these details can be found in other sections of the applicant's portfolio (e.g., ERAS application, personal statement, letters of recommendation, interviews).

Q. When is the best time to request an MSPE letter?

A. The deadline to request an MSPE Letter is July 1 prior to entering the Match. A student's Noteworthy Characteristics must be included in the request. Students will receive a copy of the MSPE Letter in mid-late August prior to entering the Match to capture as many rotation comments/grades and to review for factual errors.

Q. How do I get an MSPE letter?

A. Submit your request via the online form [MSPE Letter](#).

Q. What type of information will I need to include on the MSPE request form?

A. The request form will ask you for the following:

- Contact Information
- Student ID
- AAMC ID
- Preferred/Parallel Specialty
- Noteworthy Characteristics
- Community Service Activities and Roles
- Reasons for LOAs (optional)

Q. How can I know if AUC has received my MSPE request?

A. Students will receive an automated email confirmation after the request form has been successfully submitted.

Q. Can I see the MSPE letter before it is sent to ERAS?

A. Yes. A complimentary PDF copy of the letter will automatically be emailed to you for verification in mid to late August before it goes to ERAS.

Q. I don't like some of the clinical evaluation comments on my MSPE Letter—can they be changed/removed?

A. No. Your MSPE is like a report card—none of your evaluations can be omitted. However, we urge you to review your evaluation comments as you receive them at the end of each of your clinical rotations. If you do not receive your evaluations at the end of each rotation, please make sure that you ask to see them and address any issues you may have at that time.

Q. How can I make sure that my MSPE letter is the best it can be?

A. Make certain at the time of your request that you have completed the rotations (and received the evaluations) that you would like included in your letter.

B. Make certain that you have received and read the evaluations for each of your rotations as soon as they are available (within 45 days of rotation completion) so that you are not surprised by what appears on the MSPE letter. Your contact at AUC for evaluations is the Office of the Registrar aucregistrar@aucmed.edu. Remember, comments cannot be changed or amended by anyone other than the preceptor who wrote them. It is imperative that you review the comments and make sure they are correct. It is up to you to contact the preceptor if there is a dispute with the comments.

About the Interview

Q. What are some tips for doing well in the interview?

1. Participate in OSPD's Residency Interview Webinars/Presentations, which are typically held from September-October both at many of AUC's affiliated clinical sites as well as via online webinars. Students will learn how to present themselves in a professional manner along with tips on how to answer difficult questions.
2. Set up an appointment with your Physician Match Advisor to gain his/her perspective on the process.
3. Be on time. If you can't be on time, or can't make the appointment at all, contact your interviewer to let them know as quickly as possible. You should apologize and have a VERY GOOD REASON for being late or canceling.
4. Look the part. Your appearance does count. Be neat, well groomed, modest/modest, and professional.
5. Act the part. Be positive, friendly, and most importantly, enthusiastic. Criticism and a negative

demeanor/attitude/tone will not get you the job.

- a. Learn how to shake hands in a professional manner. Limp or overly firm handshakes are off-putting. Make sure you smile and make eye contact.
 - b. Listen carefully, don't interrupt when the interviewer is speaking and avoid these two extremes 1) one word answers; and 2) overly long, rambling and tangential responses. Remember to smile.
 - c. Be appropriately confident. If you are a little nervous, it's okay to admit it. If you are very nervous, get it under control or you risk showing that you lack confidence in your abilities.
 - d. Be gracious. Mind your manners and show respect for the interviewers. Make them feel that you are appreciative of the time they are taking with you.
 - e. After the interview, send a short handwritten thank you letter to the committee or Program Director via US Mail.
6. Be prepared. Plan A is to be early, Plan B is to be on time. Practice answering interview questions. Practice "looking" and "acting" the part.
 7. Do your homework. Research the program you are being interviewed for. Come prepared with two or three well thought out questions about the program that cannot be easily found on the website.
 8. If possible, research the person who will be interviewing you.

[Below is a list of common interview questions taken from the American Medical Association's website:](#)

1. Why did you choose this specialty?
2. Why are you interested in this program?
3. What are your goals?
4. Tell me about yourself?
5. What did you do before medicine? (To an older student)
6. Why should we pick you?
7. What are your strengths?
8. What are your weaknesses?
9. Are you interested in academic or in clinical medicine?
10. Do you want to do research?
11. What was the most interesting case that you have been involved in?
12. Present a case that you handled during medical school.
13. Do you plan to do a fellowship?
14. What could you offer this program?
15. How do you rank in your class?
16. Do you see any problems managing a professional and a personal life?
17. Are you prepared for the rigors of residency?
18. Where do you see yourself in 5 years?

19. What questions do you have?

Residency Resources

Useful Links

OSPD Website <https://www.aucmed.edu/student-life/ospd>
ERAS <https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-residency/applying-residencies-eras/>
ECFMG <http://www.ecfm.org>
NRMP <http://www.nrmp.org/>
OASIS <https://oasis2.ecfm.org/>
FREIDA Online <https://freida.ama-assn.org/>

AUC School of Medicine 2020 Residency Placement Report:

[2020 Residency Placements | AUC School of Medicine \(aucmed.edu\)](#) This report is published each year and summarizes data for AUC graduates. It details AUC's residency attainment rate and breaks down how AUC graduates matched into different specialties for 2019. It also lists resources provided by AUC's Office of Student Professional Development.

AUC School of Medicine Past Residency Placements:

<https://www.aucmed.edu/about/residency-placements>

A list of where students secured residency in previous years. It's a great way to determine IMG-friendly programs.

National Resident Matching Program (NRMP): <http://www.nrmp.org/>

NRMP produces a number of reports to help students assess competitiveness for specialties as well as detailed information on "How the Match Works." Also check out the section on the "Matching Algorithm."

2020 NRMP Program Director Survey:

<https://mk0nrmp3oyqui6wqfm.kinstacdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/2020-PD-Survey.pdf> The survey is published every two years with information to help students learn about the factors programs use in selecting and ranking applicants. Pay attention to the charts titled "Average USMLE Step 1 and CK Scores Programs Consider When Granting Interviews" to develop target scores for different specialties for USMLE Step 1.

2020 NRMP Charting Outcomes for International Medical Graduates (IMGs):

https://mk0nrmp3oyqui6wqfm.kinstacdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Charting-Outcomes-in-the-Match-2020_IMG_final.pdf The inaugural report was published in 2014 and is specific to IMGs. Students can learn about the mean USMLE scores and attempts for different specialties.

2020 NRMP Results and Data: https://mk0nrmp3oyqui6wqfm.kinstacdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/MM_Results_and-Data_2020-1.pdf

The report is published each year and summarizes data from the Main Residency Match. Table 1 shows how many positions were offered for each specialty as well as what percentage was filled by US Seniors - a useful way in determining IMG-friendly specialties. Take note of the number of positions for primary care specialties such as Internal Medicine (Categorical) (7,542) and Family Medicine (3,629) compared to other specialties.

ECHO Resources: <http://www.ecfm.org/echo/resources.html>

A variety of resources presented by ECFMG's Certificate Holder's Office (ECHO) to help IMGs prepare for the residency application process. Articles provide information on the residency interview, personal statement, research and much more.

ERAS Support Services for Applicants: <http://www.ecfm.org/eras/applicants-index.html>

Students' primary source for questions about the residency application, supporting documents, eligibility requirements, timelines and fees.

Recommended Reading

- Iserson, Kenneth, ***Getting Into a Residency: A Guide for Medical Students***
- Alguire, Whelan, and Rajput, ***The International Medical Graduate's Guide to US Medicine & Residency Training***
- American Medical Association ***State Medical Licensure Requirements and Statistics 2014***
- Le, Tao, Bhushan, V., and Amin, C. ***First Aid for the Match: Insider Advice from Students and Residency Directors***

MAKING A SUCCESSFUL MATCH - HELPFUL TIPS & ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Helpful Tips

Be Prepared and Plan Ahead

Research the residency programs that interest you. Familiarize yourself with the websites of the parties involved in the Match process, and read the information provided by AUC. Look up information about the process online. Talk to someone who has participated in the past. Students can also sign up for the Physician Match Advisor program by using the following request form: <https://my.aucmed.edu/contact-us/resources>. Check out Appendix 3 called Residency Application Assessment towards the end of this handbook to ensure you haven't overlooked any important items.

Prepare All Necessary Documents Sooner Rather Than Later

Have someone with writing skills proofread your personal statement, CV and application. Don't miss any deadlines and keep a Match calendar handy. Be ready to participate in the SOAP in case you don't obtain a residency during the Main Match.

A Word About Social Media

Your residency program will be your employer for the next few years of your life. Be aware that, like many employers today, they may look up your social media pages, blogs and so forth during the screening process. Make sure that there is nothing visible on those pages that can be called into question. Use good judgment when posting photographs, videos, status updates, comments, and blog posts. Make the most of your privacy settings; make items you are unsure of as invisible as possible. Better yet, don't post anything in questionable taste.

States with Stringent Residency Requirements

California– PTAL a.k.a. "California Letter"

Effective January 1st 2020 a PTAL will no longer be required for international medical graduates. The minimum requirements for postgraduate training in California will require successful completion of thirty-six (36) months of a Board-approved program for all applicants, regardless of whatever the medical school attended was domestic or international. A Postgraduate Training License PTAL will be issued to all residents who are participating in a California ACGME program. The issuance of a PTAL will allow residents to train without violating the law.

For more information about PTAL, please check out the [Medical Board of California](#).

States with Stringent Licensure Requirements

AUC requires all students to complete 54 weeks of rotations that are scheduled at hospitals that participate in or sponsor an ACGME-accredited residency or fellowship program in the same subject area of the requested rotation. These 54 weeks must include all 5 core clerkship rotations. In addition, for students interested in licensure in Texas and California, a 4-week Family Medicine elective rotation at an ACGME-sponsored program must be included. Once students have met AUC's ACGME weeks

requirement, they are free to enroll in up to 18 weeks of non-ACGME rotations, including Global Health Electives, and other specialty electives.

Licensure forms must be obtained directly from the medical licensing board for the state where the student desires to practice. It is the student's responsibility to check with the appropriate licensing body to ensure all requirements have been met for that specific state. Once completed, licensure forms are to be sent to AUC along with the form's final destination address.

California—requires at least 4-weeks of Family Medicine at an ACGME-accredited facility.

Texas –Texas law requires total medical education to be at least 130 weeks, which means at least 50 weeks in AUC's clinical sciences need to be ACGME accredited (students complete 80 weeks in basic sciences; 80+50=130).

Texas law also requires applicants to complete at least 4 weeks of Family Medicine in an ACGME-accredited program.

If all AUC core clerkships are ACGME accredited (42 weeks) then the student would need to complete 4 weeks of Family Medicine and 4 weeks of electives in an ACGME-accredited programs to satisfy requirements for Texas.

Supplemental Rank Order List (SROL)

Students applying to advanced positions such as Neurology, Anesthesiology, Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, Radiology, etc., will also have to apply to a one-year preliminary surgery or preliminary medicine position. These students will have the option to create what is known as a supplemental rank order list to apply to these positions. NRMP has a tutorial that provides a detailed description of how to create and certify these supplemental lists. See the "NRMP Creating A Rank Order List (Applicants) E-Learning Tutorial at this link: <http://www.nrmp.org/ranking-residency-programs/>.

Note 1: SROLs are run through the Match algorithm only when the applicant is successfully matched to the advanced position.

Note 2: The applicant may create a unique SROL for each advanced position.

Note 3: Applicants may choose to not use the SROL and just rank the preliminary positions after the advanced positions on their primary rank order lists. Please note however, this can create a scenario where the applicant only matches to the advanced position and will have to go through SOAP to obtain the preliminary position. It can also lead to the applicant matching only to a preliminary position and not an advanced position, thereby forcing the applicant to through SOAP to obtain the advanced position.

Frequently Asked Questions About Making a Successful Match

Q. What qualifications do the residency program directors look at?

A. AUC professionals will say they look at everything:

- Board scores (USMLE Steps I, II, and III, when applicable)
- Noteworthy Characteristics
- Curriculum vitae, a.k.a. resume
- Education (degrees earned, institutions and dates attended)
- Work experience
- Honors/awards/distinctions
- Research experience as well as abstracts/presentations/publications
- Community service/medical mission experience
- Student government/leadership experience

- MSPE (Dean's Letter)
- Transcript
- Personal statement
- LoRs

The Couples Match

The Couples Match was intended for married couples and committed pairs. It allows for the couple to match in the same area, so that they may live together during residency. Going through the Match as a couple has a similar success rate to going through the Match as an individual.

How It Works

Each partner signs up for the Match individually and goes on interviews individually, indicating to the program(s) that he/she is applying to the Match as a couple. Once interviews are completed, the couple then compiles a combined rank order list (ROL) with every possible combination of program and location, including the scenarios where one matches and the other does not. Once the list is certified, the NRMP will match the pair to the most preferred pair of programs to which each has been offered a position. For a more detailed explanation from the NRMP, visit:

<http://www.nrmp.org/match-process/couples-in-the-match/>.

Things to Consider

There are compromises to be made. To match in the same area, one partner (or both) may not get his or her first choice program.

The possibility exists that one partner may not match. While it does not affect the matched partner's matched status, the unmatched partner will have to go through SOAP.

You'll need to submit rank order lists of identical length that account for every possible outcome—including the possibility that one partner will match and another will not. If the algorithm doesn't find a match in the paired ranks that a couple submits, it will not process the match lists separately.

For this reason, couples will often rank the same program several times against a different program on their partner's list and include combinations at the bottom in which one partner goes unmatched. Check out the NRMP's guide "[Couples: Viewing and Certifying Rank Order Lists](#)" for more details.

It becomes more difficult if one or both partners have chosen competitive specialties or are mismatched in their competitiveness for their chosen specialty.

Check out: [Navigating the Couples Match: Advice from AUC Grads](#)

Tips for Navigating the Couples Match

- Start researching programs early.
- Let the programs know that you plan on going through the couples match. They may be able to schedule you and your partner on the same day for interviews, saving you time and money. Be specific about who your partner is and the department in which he or she is interviewing.
- Apply to programs in the same hospital (if in different specialties) or to hospitals within 50 miles of each other.
- Consider focusing your applications on areas where there are multiple hospitals within a commutable distance.
- Rank programs in the order of your personal preference. Remember this is the next 3 to 7 years of your life, the majority of which will be spent within the confines of a particular hospital. Rank thoughtfully.

- When creating the matched/unmatched section of the ROL, try to favor the partner with the more competitive specialty. That is, the partner with the less competitive specialty will have an easier time if he or she needs to scramble, as there will probably be more options (i.e. Anesthesiology versus Family Medicine).
- COMMUNICATE! Make sure each one knows what the other is looking for in a program, what they are willing to endure, what they will not tolerate, and so forth.
- Remember, the San Francisco and other specialty matches DO NOT have a couples match.
- Contact the Office of Student Professional Development if you require additional guidance.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU DON'T RECEIVE A MATCH

Don't panic—it can and does happen on occasion, even if you do everything right. Seek objective advice about why this may have happened and make the necessary changes to improve your chances with the next match. You may reach out to our team of Physician Match Advisors who can help provide insight on how to improve your application. Complete the request form here <https://my.aucmed.edu/contact-us/resources>.

You may also contact OSPD to learn about ways to strengthen your residency application for the following year and to receive news of any open residency positions that become available.

Stay medically active. Here are some options:

- Check your AUC email address: OSPD will continue to send opportunities to unmatched students as they become available.
- Pursue a masters or doctoral degree
- Get involved in a research study
- Volunteer for a medical mission
- Apply for an observership or externship
- Seek out in-hospital jobs, such as surgical assisting, research assisting, chart reviewing, or even volunteer work. The important thing is for you to develop relationships with the hospital staff and have the administration see that you are a dedicated, hard worker.
- You can also consider non-clinical work. MDs are still in demand at pharmaceutical companies, in hospital administrations, managed care companies, government agencies, and insurance companies. Universities also hire MDs as adjunct faculty and lecturers. For information, news, and job boards for nonclinical jobs, look at www.nonclinicaljobs.com. Network, stay in touch with matched grads and have them keep an eye out for openings in their programs.
- Many specialty organizations, such as the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) will post residency vacancies, so check their websites often.
- Enroll with Find A Resident, service that matches unmatched residents with unfilled positions. <https://www.aamc.org/students/residents/findaresident/>
- Take time out to carefully examine your application materials. Look at your CV and personal statement. Were they as strong as they could have been? What about your letters of recommendation? Is it possible to collect stronger ones? AUC has a personal statement and CV editing service to help you craft the best documents possible.
- Get in touch with your financial aid advisor to find out how these options will affect the terms of your student loan repayment agreement.

Note 1: ERAS Support Services at ECFMG will retain all MSPEs, medical school transcripts, and letters of recommendation that were transmitted to the ERAS Post Office. However if you do not reapply each year consecutively this information will be lost. As a result, you will be responsible for obtaining letters of recommendation if AUC does not have them on file for you.

Appendix 1 - Target USMLE Scores

USMLE STEP 1 PERFORMANCE FOR STUDENTS WHO MATCHED IN 2017, 2018, AND 2019 CLASSES				
SPECIALTY	# RESIDENCY PLACEMENTS	% MATCHED INTO SPECIALTY	AUC MEAN	IMGs MEAN*
			STEP 1	
ANESTHESIOLOGY	17	3.1%	232	231
DERMATOLOGY	1	0.2%	N/A**	238
EMERGENCY MEDICINE	18	3.3%	238	232
FAMILY MEDICINE	150	27.5%	211	211
INTERNAL MEDICINE	202	37.0%	226	224
INTERNAL MEDICINE/PEDIATRICS	3	0.5%	227	224
NEUROLOGICAL SURGERY	0	0.0%	N/A	236
NEUROLOGY	9	1.6%	229	227
OB/GYN	12	2.2%	231	229
ORTHOPEDIC SURGERY	0	0.0%	N/A	239
PATHOLOGY	5	0.9%	224	226
PEDIATRICS	40	7.3%	220	221
PLASTIC SURGERY	0	0.0%	N/A	N/A**
PM&R	2	0.4%	225	226
PSYCHIATRY	29	5.3%	219	224
RADIOLOGY-DIAGNOSTIC	9	1.6%	248	239
SURGERY-GENERAL	13	2.4%	242	237
SURGERY-VASCULAR	0	0.0%	N/A	N/A**
*SOURCE: 2018 NRMP'S CHARTING OUTCOMES IN THE MATCH FOR INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL GRADUATES				
** TOO SMALL OF SAMPLE SIZE TO REPORT				

USMLE STEP 2 PERFORMANCE FOR STUDENTS WHO MATCHED IN 2017, 2018, AND 2019 CLASSES				
SPECIALTY	# RESIDENCY PLACEMENTS	% MATCHED INTO SPECIALTY	AUC MEAN	IMGs MEAN*
			STEP 2	
ANESTHESIOLOGY	17	3.1%	242	237
DERMATOLOGY**	1	0.2%	N/A**	246
EMERGENCY MEDICINE	18	3.3%	244	241
FAMILY MEDICINE	150	27.5%	225	225
INTERNAL MEDICINE	202	37.0%	235	234
INTERNAL MEDICINE/PEDIATRICS	3	0.5%	239	233
NEUROLOGICAL SURGERY	0	0.0%	N/A	242
NEUROLOGY	9	1.6%	230	234
OB/GYN	12	2.2%	239	238
ORTHOPEDIC SURGERY	0	0.0%	N/A	245
PATHOLOGY	5	0.9%	232	230
PEDIATRICS	40	7.3%	231	232
PLASTIC SURGERY	0	0.0%	N/A	N/A**
PM&R	2	0.4%	218	232
PSYCHIATRY	29	5.3%	236	227
RADIOLOGY-DIAGNOSTIC	9	1.6%	250	242
SURGERY-GENERAL	13	2.4%	247	245
SURGERY-VASCULAR**	0	0.0%	N/A	N/A**
*SOURCE: 2018 NRMP'S CHARTING OUTCOMES IN THE MATCH FOR INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL GRADUATES				
** TOO SMALL OF SAMPLE SIZE TO REPORT				

Appendix 2 - Sample CV

[HTTPS://WWW.AUCMED.EDU/CONTENT/DAM/DMI/WWW_AUCMED_EDU/PDFS/OSPD/SAMPLE-CV-AND-TIPS.DOCX](https://www.aucmed.edu/content/dam/dmi/www_aucmed_edu/pdfs/ospd/sample-cv-and-tips.docx)

Appendix 3 - Sample MSPE Letter

[HTTPS://WWW.AUCMED.EDU/CONTENT/DAM/DMI/WWW_AUCMED_EDU/PDFS/SEPT2018-MSPE-LETTER-SAMPLE.PDF](https://www.aucmed.edu/content/dam/dmi/www_aucmed_edu/pdfs/sept2018-mspe-letter-sample.pdf)

Appendix 4 - Residency Application Assessment

Residency Application Assessment

While we know you have worked extremely hard on your residency application, there are some common pitfalls that even the most detail-oriented applicant can overlook. Review the list below to see if any apply to you.

1. Are your USMLE scores comparable to the scores listed in the NRMP?

https://mk0nrmp3oyqui6wqfm.kinstacdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Charting-Outcomes-in-the-Match-2020_IMG_final.pdf See page 9 for the preferred specialty for which you applied.

- a. Try to stay within a 10 point range of the specialty you are interested in. Remember that programs will filter out scores that are too low.

2. Do you have letters of recommendation in both your preferred specialty and your parallel specialty?

- a. Your residency applications should include three letters of recommendation. You will need at least one letter in the specialty or specialties in which you are applying. If you are a repeat applicant, it is especially important as you will have had time to obtain one.

3. Do you have positive evaluations and comments in your MSPE letter for both your preferred specialty and parallel specialty?

- a. A negative evaluation or comment in the specialty you are applying can impact residency programs' decisions to offer you interviews. Remember that AUC cannot remove or omit comments in your MSPE letter. Only Evaluators can submit new evaluations. You may want to consider applying to a specialty in which you have a positive evaluation and comment.

4. Did you apply to different geographic regions in the United States?

- a. Do not limit yourself to one geographical area. Identify areas that are IMG-friendly and apply to those. Just because you complete a residency in one location does not mean that you will have to stay there beyond your residency training.

5. Did you apply to community based programs?

- a. Community-based programs can be excellent training grounds. Community hospitals are often in areas of need where you, as a physician, can see cases that you would not otherwise have the opportunity to treat.

6. Did you apply to programs in which you rotated?

- a. *With the exception of the UK hospitals, all hospitals where you completed core rotations have residency programs in those specialties. If you completed electives at other hospitals, take the time to research what residencies they have available.*

7. Did you apply to programs where AUC graduates have previously matched?

- a. *AUC's website lists residency placements as far back as 2008. This is an excellent resource as it indicates the programs where your colleagues have matched. The match lists of other Caribbean schools are also good places to look. Here is the link to AUC's placements: <https://www.aucmed.edu/about/residency-placements>*

8. Did you apply on or as close as possible to the mid-September NRMP Registration date?

- a. *While we do not know how a given program will select applicants to interview, we can tell you that the sooner they have your information, the better. That way, no matter when they start filtering applications, your's will be there. If you are waiting on a document such as an LOR or USMLE score, the programs you apply to will be notified that there are new documents in your file.*

9. Did you write different, specialty-specific personal statements for each specialty that you applied to? Was each statement void of all grammar, spelling, and punctuation errors?

- a. *Make sure that your personal statement speaks directly to the reason why you want to pursue the specialty. See these links for tips:*
http://www.acponline.org/medical_students/impact/archives/2010/05/perspect/
<http://www.ecfm.org/echo/personal-statements.html>
This is a two-part video on the personal statement process:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nB7-wBkALU> (Part 1)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F1hwn2G2H_A (Part 2)

10. Is your CV appropriate and void of spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors?

- a. *Make sure that you are including information relevant to your medical career. This includes research, additional degrees, medical missions and so forth.*

11. Are you sure that all of your residency application documents are in your ERAS account?

- a. *It is your responsibility to periodically check your account to make sure that everything is in it. We can only verify that your AUC transcript, MSPE letter, and letters of recommendation are in your account. All other documents are provided by you, USMLE, or ECFMG.*