

Committee Interview FAQs

What is an HPO committee statement?

The HPO committee statement is a letter of recommendation written by a member of the HPO committee that provides a snapshot of candidates within the context of their undergraduate work at Rutgers, New Brunswick. Students must apply for a committee statement and, if they meet the requirements, they are placed on a waitlist. They will then be scheduled for a one-on-one interview with a member of the HPO committee as we have availability. The interview is formal and will likely include questions about academics, extracurriculars, and motivation toward medicine/dentistry, community service, clinical experiences, and ethical and current medical issues. The interviewer writes the statement, including information from the interview and the HPO Interview Worksheet components, and also selects the strongest letters of recommendations from the student's HPO file. The student then signs a release form and the letters are sent to the appropriate application service.

Can I get into medical or dental school without a committee statement?

Yes. The committee statement is an added resource and may be preferred but is not required by the vast majority of medical schools. For a list of medical school policies on committee statements/letters, see the following:

https://aamc-orange.global.ssl.fastly.net/production/media/filer_public/d1/80/d18002bf-ce17-4afa-9497-100ed43d4e1d/msar_medical_school_letter_policies.pdf

That said, our requirements are made with the statistical information on what constitutes a competitive and successful applicant from Rutgers New Brunswick. We provide a generous margin on the lower end of those statistics but, in most cases, if you don't qualify for our interview on the basis of your grades and/or MCAT scores, it will be those numbers that prevent you from successfully gaining admission, not the lack of a committee statement.

What are the requirements to obtain an HPO committee statement and interview?

There are minimum GPA and MCAT requirements, letter of recommendation requirements, and the information required by the HPO Interview Worksheet. These requirements are posted in March for the application cycle that begins in that year. The requirements are set by the committee by looking at previous years admissions trends. As mentioned above, we try to set our requirements somewhat below the averages for accepted students in the previous cycle so that we can serve as many students as possible while still providing the best committee letters possible for our students.

When can I apply for a committee interview?

We generally accept completed applications for the committee interview between the beginning of April and the end of June.

Do I need my MCAT or DAT score to apply for a committee interview?

Not necessarily. If your cumulative and science GPA are a 3.6 or above, you can apply for the interview but we may opt not to schedule you for the interview until your score is reported.

Can alumni apply for committee statements?

We do write committee statement for students who completed the bulk of their undergraduate premedical or predental requirements at RU NB. We have specific criteria, including GPA, test scores, letters of recommendation, etc. Alumni who have graduated within the past 3-4 years may apply for a committee letter but they must qualify on the basis of their undergraduate work. The point of the committee letter is to provide a snapshot of an applicant as a Rutgers student and provide a context for them as applicants within their peer group (fellow undergraduate applicants at RU NB). We do not consider graduate work when evaluating students' eligibility for a committee letter since we don't have the ability to put that work in context and have little means of evaluating their performance in other programs. This is the same reason we do not include grades from transfer coursework outside of RU when we determine eligibility for an HPO committee interview. If you don't qualify for a committee statement on the basis of your undergraduate work, speak with an advisor about your options for submitting letters of recommendation. It may or may not be in your best interest to have them sent through our office.

Is the committee statement necessary for the primary application?

No. We recommend that you submit your primary application as early in the application cycle as possible. Your committee statement does not have to be submitted until later in the cycle and your application is not usually fully reviewed for a possible interview at medical or dental school until your secondary applications are complete, optimally by early to mid-August

How is the HPO science GPA calculated?

We provide a Rutgers BCPM based on courses at RU that count towards majors in those subjects and that are most commonly taken by Rutgers premedical students to satisfy the science prerequisites and preparatory courses for medical school. As a general rule, courses included for Biology must have a prerequisite of Biology 115 and 116; those included for Chemistry must have a prerequisite of Chemistry 161 and 162 (or equivalent); those included for Physics must have a prerequisite of General Physics 203 and 204 (or equivalent); those included for Math must have Pre-calculus 115 (or equivalent) .

The GPA on your HPOdrome account reflects only the courses you have taken at Rutgers. It reflects courses that have been e-credited.

Why might the HPO science GPA different from my verified AMCAS, AACOMAS, or AADSAS GPA?

It should be close to the calculation on your verified AMCAS application but may not be exactly the same. Your HPOdrome BCPM is based on coursework offered and taken at Rutgers, New Brunswick.

AMCAS standardizes GPAs across many institutions and we are not able to exactly mirror their system. For one example, your HPOdrome BCPM will not include grades taken at other institutions but your AMCAS BCPM will.

Your HPOdrome BCPM will not represent your BCPM for osteopathic or dental school because they use different systems to calculate GPAs. For students interested in applying for an HPO interview, we have calculators on our web site (under the current students tab) that will help you figure out if you qualify for a committee interview and get a ballpark of your science GPA for those types of schools. Again, our calculators may not provide you with an exact replica of the one on your application once it is verified by AACOMAS or AADSAS.*** Please note that for the upcoming application cycle AACOMAS is changing their policy on repeated courses (<http://www.aacom.org/become-a-doctor/applying/notice-of-repeat-coursework-policy-change>) but the HPO will continue to use the old policy of taking the highest grade for a repeated course when determining eligibility for an HPO committee interview, at least for this upcoming application cycle.

For more information on how the application services calculate grade point averages:

AMCAS

Grade conversion information: https://aamc-orange.global.ssl.fastly.net/production/media/filer_public/10/ab/10ab9407-7134-4477-9fc9-140d8acb35af/amcas_grade_conversion_guide.pdf

Course classification guide: https://aamc-orange.global.ssl.fastly.net/production/media/filer_public/e5/68/e5687e03-f55e-4ce6-a4e4-892eaab328dc/amcas_course_classification_guide.pdf

AACOMAS

Information on grade conversion and much more: <http://help.unicas.com:8888/aacomashelpPages/instructions/the-application-process/grade-point-averages-gpas/index.html>

AADSAS

Information on grade conversion and how gpa is calculate, and much more: http://www.adea.org/uploadedFiles/ADEA/Content_Conversion/dental_education_pathways/Instructions/AADSAS_Instructions/2015-ADEA-AADSAS-Instructions.pdf

What about reapplicants who had a committee interview in the previous cycle but did not gain admission the first time?

Reapplicants who had a committee interview for the previous cycle should apply for a committee letter update. Worksheets and information are on our web site.