

General timeline for students applying to medical/dental school in 2021

*Note: this is for students who wish to start medical/dental school in July/ August 2022

February-March-April

Letters:

Work on getting your letters of recommendation in order. Medical schools require a minimum of 3 letters of recommendation. The HPO recommends a minimum of 5. These letters should include the following:

Life sciences majors:

- 2 RU science letters, preferably both, from upper level major courses
- 1 RU non-science letters
- 2 additional letters

Non-life sciences majors:

- 2 RU letters from your major
- 2 RU science letters from your premed prerequisites
- 1 additional letter

The additional letters should be mostly from academic sources, including anyone who supervised you in research. You may also have letters from outside of the classroom experiences such as shadowing, volunteer work, paid work etc. There is no limit to the number of recommendations you may submit to your HPO file. Avoid letters that are subjective personal testimonials. *Please note that some schools may require a letter from a professional in the field that you have shadowed or worked with. Check the requirements of the individual schools to which you plan to apply.

Personal Statement:

You should have a working draft of your personal statement by now. Attend a Rutgers Career Exploration and Success workshop (careers.rutgers.edu), give it to friends to read, put it in a drawer for two weeks and look at it again. See link for more tips: <http://www.sas.rutgers.edu/cms/hpo/docman-lister/interview-worksheet/97-personal-statement-tips/file>

Disciplinary Clearance:

Please contact the Office of Student Conduct ([Office of Student Conduct – Rutgers University | Division of Student Affairs – New Brunswick](#)) to find out if you have ever been the subject of institutional action. If so, ask to review your file. The centralized, primary application services for health professions schools (AMCAS, AACOMAS, AADSAS, OPTOMCAS, etc.) will ask if you have EVER been the subject of disciplinary action by your institution (Rutgers) and expect you to be honest. Some require verification as part of their secondary or final admissions process. Be informed and proactive! It is far better to be truthful than to forget or ignore something and be found out later. It might appear that you are trying to cover something up.

MCAT:

If you have not taken the MCAT already, you should be studying and have a target date in April, May, or June to take the exam. It takes at least 4 weeks for your scores to be processed. Remember a good portion of your final study time before the exam must consist of taking practice exams in conditions that closely simulate the real exam conditions. Remember, most people score better on their practice exams so if you are barely making your target score on your practice exams, you are probably not ready for the exam. More information and registration information is available at: <https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/taking-mcat-exam/>

DAT:

Same as MCAT, except you can take the exam a bit later because scores are processed immediately. More information:

http://www.adea.org/dental_education_pathways/aadsas/Applicants/Pages/RegisterfortheDAT.aspx

FAMILIARIZE YOURSELF WITH THE APPLICATION PROCESS, SERVICES, AND EXPECTATIONS:

AAMC (MD)

<https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/applying-medical-school-process/>

2021/2022 AMCAS application cycle dates.

The 2021 AMCAS cycle will open for applicants to begin completing their application on **Monday, May 3, 2021 at 9:30 a.m. ET**. Applicants will be able to submit their applications to AMCAS for processing beginning Thursday, **May 27, 2021 at 9:30 a.m. ET**. AMCAS will begin transmitting applicant data to medical schools on **Friday, June 25, 2021 at 7:00 a.m. ET**. These scheduled dates are included below for your reference.

Application Opens: Monday, May 3, 2021

Submission Opens: Thursday, May 27, 2021

Data Transmission: Friday, June 25, 2021

Application help: https://aamc-orange.global.ssl.fastly.net/production/media/filer_public/b2/23/b223c482-8ba3-44dd-bb1c-8835ac84f3e6/2020amcasapplicantguide-060419.pdf

AACOMAS (DO)

<https://choosedo.org/how-to-apply/>

Application Info:

<http://www.aacom.org/InfoFor/applicants/Pages/default.aspx> (Applications open in May.)

AADSAS (Dental)

General information: <https://www.adea.org/aadsas/>

http://www.adea.org/dental_education_pathways/aadsas/Applicants/Pages/default.aspx

The 2021-2022 ADEA AADSAS application cycle will open in May 2021.

May:

Finish the spring semester strong.

Contact the Rutgers registrar and have transcripts with final grades sent to the appropriate application service.

<https://transcripts.rutgers.edu/transcripts/index.html>

Remember, if you have credit from other colleges or universities, you must contact the registrar at those schools and have official transcripts sent from there to the application service. Neither Rutgers, nor the HPO can do this for you. This includes college credits earned while in high school.

Continue working on personal statement. Finalize by the time your application cycle opens.

Finalize MCAT/DAT plans (if not taken already).

June:

Submit your primary application as early as possible. This is really important. The longer you delay the further and further back you get in the line of thousands of applicants medical schools have to review.

Remember: you do not need your test scores or letters of recommendation to submit your primary application. You do need your personal statement, transcripts (unofficial to fill out the application, official to send to the application service), and at least one school you plan to apply to (if you are waiting for scores, you may want to do this and add more schools once you get the score).

July:

Check to make sure all the letters you have requested are showing in your HPOdrome account.

Release your letters of recommendation. Forms available in the HPO or at www.hpo.rutgers.edu, under HPO Forms.

Work on your secondary applications

Mid August

Have all of your application materials in to the medical schools. This includes your MCAT (or DAT), primary and secondary applications, letters of recommendation etc.

Podiatry and Optometry schools have later deadlines find out more here:

Podiatry: AACPM: <http://www.aacpm.org>

Optometry: OPTOMCAS: www.optomcas.org

Considering a gap year??

As the competition for entrance to medical school intensifies, the role of the gap year has become more common. The gap year can be an excellent opportunity to gain further clinical experience, prepare for or retake the MCAT, or complete a biomedical masters' degree to enhance your academics. Consider speaking with an HPO advisor to weigh the pros and cons of applying during the traditional end of junior year timeline versus a gap year to enhance your overall strength as an applicant.