

Transfer Students

Note: In order for a transfer student to have an interview by a member of Rutgers, Health Professions Office, at least 3 of the academic letters need to be from Rutgers-New Brunswick.

How Do I Check on the Status of My Letters?

Once you request a letter, log onto the HPOdrome to make sure it has been received. The URL is:
<https://hpodrome.rutgers.edu>

Use your Netid or scarlet mail username and password to gain access to your profile page. For security purposes, only those with an active Rutgers account can be access the system. If you do not have an active Rutgers account, call the HPO to check on the status of your letters.



Rutgers, Health Professions Office

Mailing Address:

A207 Nelson Biological Laboratories
604 Allison Road
Piscataway, NJ 08854

Phone: (848) 445-5667

Fax: (732) 445-6341

Email: HPO@biology.rutgers.edu

Website: www.hpo.rutgers.edu

RUTGERS

Health Professions Office



Asking for a Letter of Recommendation

**“A Good Packet of Letters is Often
What Separates Academically
Qualified Students” — Dr. Babiarz**

There is no such thing as a minimum number of letters. To be a competitive candidate for medicine or dentistry, you will need to collect 5 or more recommendation letters: an requirement. **You should not just get the first and fastest five you can. You should build your collection over the years.**

There is no such thing as a universal letter of support. We do not recommend sending letters recommending you for medicine to a summer, graduate, or scholarship program. The most competitive (successful) candidates solicit letters specific for each situation.

Who Do I Ask?

In your first two years, teaching assistants and professors from smaller courses know you best. Request letters from them. Then, as you choose and begin work in your major, you should get support from the full time faculty. It is strongly recommended that at least two of your academic letters should be from your major, two from science (if you are not a science major), and one non-science to show your well-roundedness. Therefore we suggest collecting 5 or more academic letters over 3 years.

A successful application must convince the school that you are committed to the career and are making an informed decision. A letter from a professional in the field adds to your packet. In some cases (Osteopathic Medicine) this letter is a requirement.

You should solicit letters that support your activities. If you do research, one from your mentor is required. If you perform, create, lead, participate in clubs, community outreach programs, or any other activity, get a letter from a leader or coordinator that supports your commitment.

When you are done you want to be able to use your letters to support the strengths of your application. I am a good student - here are my grades and letters from professors that agree. I am committed to

[medicine] and made my choice based on my volunteer and shadowing experiences, here is a letter from these experiences that supports me and predicts success. I love children and work for them in my free time, here is a letter from the Child Life Program at RWJ or your rescue squad, or your choir director, or your supervisor from work, research mentor, and so on.

Medical and dental schools rely on these letters for personal insights. A good packet of letters is often what separates academically qualified students from those without such support.

What Should I Do Before Asking?

Make yourself noticed by the instructor.

- Go to class regularly, be an active participant
- Speak with the faculty member so that they know who you are
- Go to office hours
- Tell the professor after the 1st exam that you will ask for a letter at the end of the class giving them time to monitor your performance
- Open a file at the Health Professions Office

What should I provide?

- Write a one-page resume
- Ask for a meeting and come ready to discuss

your goals and your resume. You should not hand the recommendation form to the instructor and simply leave, or worse yet, leave it in the instructor's mailbox.

- Use the appropriate forms and envelopes.

Which Form Do I Use?

For health professional programs, there are two types of forms, and you must use the correct one.

- General Letter of Recommendation forms are provided by the HPO, and they can be used for medical, dentistry and podiatry schools. It is important that the front portion of the form be completed. The evaluator needs to know whether the Privacy Rights Waiver has been signed. Reviewers should be asked to submit a typed, signed statement on letterhead. Letters are accepted electronically via email as long as they are in a signed PDF file format. Students can ask faculty for these letters at any time.
- Allied Health Programs Recommendation Forms are unique to optometry (OPTOMCAS), public health (SOPHAS), physician assistant (CASPA) and physical therapy (PTCAS) applications. These forms are part of the application, and students ask for these letters at the time of application. Go to the program website and follow their instructions precisely.