



Letter of Recommendation Guidelines for Faculty

Letters of recommendation are an important part of an application for additional training. During the residency and fellowship application seasons, you may be asked to write a supportive letter of recommendation for a trainee. ***If you did not work with the trainee enough or did not have a positive experience with them, please inform the trainee that they should request a letter from another faculty member.***

General Information

- Strong letters include at least three substantive paragraphs:
 - Introduction of yourself and how you know the trainee, including length of time and how closely you worked together
 - Assessment of the trainee's strengths and abilities based on your personal observations
 - Summary of your recommendation for the program, including the strength of your recommendation
- Be clear in how well you know the trainee and your ability to write an informed letter
- Honesty is important, but remember this is a letter of recommendation and not a performance evaluation
- Avoid exaggeration or vague, generic descriptions of the trainee
 - Use specific examples based on your observation of their performance
- Include your academic rank and any titles you have in the signature line
- Use an actual, rather than digital, signature whenever possible
- Use letterhead and proofread carefully for grammar and spelling

Tips and Tricks

- Request a copy of the trainee's curriculum vitae (CV) and personal statement and review them for pertinent information
 - Be careful not to simply reiterate their CV when writing your letter
- Meet with the trainee before writing the letter to review specific information regarding your work and time together so it is fresh in your mind
 - Discuss their interests and career goals
 - Learn something unique about them that distinguishes them from other applicants
- If the trainee has experience or characteristics you would like to highlight, add an additional paragraph between your assessment and summary
 - Highlight research and volunteer work that make them a unique and strong candidate
 - Do not use this paragraph to review grades, scores, or other information available elsewhere in their application
- Consider including information related to AAMC or ACGME competencies to describe your observations of trainee performance in those areas
- Email the trainee once you have submitted the letter of recommendation so they know the status. ***Do not provide a copy of the letter to trainees who have waived their viewing rights, as indicated on the ERAS cover sheet.***