

## **Completing the VMCAS Application:** ***Quick Guide for Applicants to Veterinary Medicine Colleges***

### **Resources**

- [AAVMC VMCAS Application](#) – Website with specific information about the application itself and the process
- [VMCAS Applicant Portal](#) – Information about the veterinary medical career, application prep, and application process.
- Veterinary Medical School Admissions Requirement (VMSAR) Book – General information about the process of applying and specific information about applications and applicants for AAVMC member colleges. Information and specifics about each veterinary medical college in one convenient reference book (\$35 print; \$18 ebook)
  - <http://www.thepress.purdue.edu/titles/vmsar-2016-2017-veterinary-medical-school-admission-requirements-2016-edition-2017-matriculat>
- CPHA Questions Box - We're here to help and we check this every day
  - [questions@prehealth.wisc.edu](mailto:questions@prehealth.wisc.edu)
- VMCAS Helpline – Representatives are available to answer questions about the application.
  - [vmcasinfo@vmcas.org](mailto:vmcasinfo@vmcas.org)
    - When e-mailing, please include your full name, VMCAS id number, and a detailed question.
  - 617-612-2884 available 9-5 EST Monday through Friday.

### **Organizational Overview**

[AAVMC](#) – Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges represents the administration, faculty, and students of all of the veterinary medical institutions in the United States and Canada as well as several international veterinary schools. AAVMC coordinates the application to apply to veterinary medical colleges (VMCAS). You will interact with this organization in many ways throughout your professional career!

[VMCAS](#) – The Veterinary Medical College Application Service a centralized application used by most AAVMC veterinary medical colleges. The application collects personal and academic information in one place and forwards this to the list of schools selected by you.

[Components of the VMCAS](#): Opens in mid-May and can be submitted as soon as it opens. Closes mid-September.

#### **1. Biographical information**

- Legal name, address, contact information, gender, race and ethnicity, citizenship and military experience
  - Note: ROTC is military service
- DENTPIN: Unique identifying number set up with the ADA usually when taking the GRE

#### **2. [Applicant information](#)**

- Parent and family information: parental residency, education, and occupation

- Background information: disclosure of legal and disciplinary actions and licensure
  - Check with Office of Dean of Students to see if they have to report anything about you as part of background check. If so, you will need to include a brief statement about the incident under “institutional actions.”

### 3. [Academic History](#)

- Enter your high school and all colleges you have attended
  - see instructions for Canadian, foreign and U.S. institutions abroad
- [Request official transcripts from the registrar](#) for all institutions where you received college credit.
  - Print out a Transcript Request Form and have the registrar attach the form to the transcript that is sent directly via post to VMCAS.
  - If you don’t include a Transcript Request Form, make sure that “VMCAS” and your full VMCAS identification number is printed directly on the transcript by the registrar.

### 4. [Coursework](#)

- Enter all your US (and Canadian) college courses as they appear on your transcripts. *Do not do this section from memory: coursework must match official transcripts exactly.* Use personal copies of your transcripts to enter course information.
  - You will need to list coursework under the correct term, year, and class level.
  - You will need to categorize your courses under the appropriate [course subjects](#) that will determine Course Subject GPAs.
  - Report transfer courses under the institution where they were originally taken.
- You will be able to list courses that are planned or in-progress. Once you have completed the in-progress courses, you should send the updated transcript directly to the veterinary programs to which you are applying.
- Depending on schools, a [“Prerequisites” tab](#) might be available. Here, you will be given a list of the school’s prerequisite course requirements and asked to designate which courses you have taken or plan to take which you believe will fulfill these requirements.

### 5. [GRE Information](#)

- Official GRE scores are submitted to VMCAS directly from the ETS. Note that you have to use special [program-specific VMCAS GRE codes](#) (which are different from the school’s regular GRE codes).
- All GRE scores sent to VMCAS must be received by VMCAS no later than October 15, 2016. *However, some programs may have a deadline by which they want your scores posted.*

### 6. [Experiences](#)

- Enter your professional experiences in following categories.
  - Veterinary Experience
  - Animal Experience
  - Research Experience
  - Employment Experience
  - Extracurricular Activities
  - Volunteer

- Begin with the most recent experience. Note that the order of experiences on the application is determined by the order in which you enter your experiences not their dates.
- For each activity, you have 600 characters to describe the experience and key responsibility.
  - If you need additional space, you may use the “Explanation Statement.”
- Describe your key responsibilities and experiences for each activity in 600 characters.
- Note that some schools recommend or require additional materials such as a CV or resume. These materials can be uploaded in the Documents tab which will be available if the school opts to receive such materials.

## 7. [Achievements](#)

- List and describe honors, awards, or scholarships that you have received.
  - List them from the most recent to least recent.
  - You should include achievements from high school in addition to those from college.
- Note that you cannot edit or remove entries once you submit the application. However, you can add new achievements after submission.
- List and describe honors, awards, or scholarships that you have received.

## 8. [Personal Statement](#)

- The personal statement is a narrative statement to address the question, “Why veterinary medicine?”
  - Official Prompt: Discuss briefly the development of your interest in veterinary medicine. Discuss those unique activities that have contributed to your preparation for a professional program. Discuss your understanding of the veterinary medical profession, what you have to offer the profession, and your career goals and objectives.
  - You may use personal experiences as a “springboard” for the ways in which you have explored veterinary medicine and developed skills to be good at the role of doctoring. Help the committee learn about you and let them “hear” your voice in your writing.
- The statement is limited to 4,500 characters including spaces (about 1 page).
- The Center for Pre-Health Advising and the UW Writing Center are happy to help!
- Note that the personal statement will be sent to all designated schools.
- **Prepare statement in a Word document so it is easy to share and edit, but copy/paste this into a notepad/txt file to remove formatting before pasting into the application!**

## 9. [Explanation Statement](#)

- This is an optional statement, and it is limited to 2000 characters including spaces.
- Use this space to discuss information that could not be listed anywhere else on the application such as disciplinary action that requires detailed explanations. You could discuss any additional information that you consider “vital” to your application such as interruptions in studies, unique circumstances, or reasons for decisions you have made.

## 10. [Evaluations \(Letters of Reference\)](#)

- You must list at least (3) evaluators in order to submit your application. You may list up to (6) evaluators.
- The Center for Pre-Health Advising recommends getting \*at least\* 3 from:
  - (2) Faculty – preferably science, may be from research
  - (1) Veterinarian – one you have shadowed and knows you well
- Number and types of letters vary among schools. Check the [school descriptor page](#) for specific requirements.
- Letters will go to all schools to which you are applying.
- You will enter in the contact information of your references, and an e-mail request will automatically be sent by VMCAS to the reference.
- While the VMCAS application is only complete with letters, it may be submitted even though letters have not been received.

#### **11. [Schools](#)**

- We recommend that students meet with the Center for Pre-Health advising to discuss their transcript in relation to school requirements and criteria in selecting veterinary medical colleges.
- The Center for Pre-Health Advising maintains a database of UW-Madison alumni. Ask us about contacts at programs you are considering!
- The [VMCAS application fee](#) is \$200, which includes submission to one school. The fee for each additional school is \$100. You cannot substitute or delete schools once you submit the application; however, you can designate additional schools after submission.

#### **12. Previewing and [submitting](#)**

- Print a copy of your application and review it before submitting. Save a PDF copy.
- You may submit your application whether or not your transcripts or letters have been received by VMCAS. However, your application will not be placed into the verification queue until all required transcripts and payments have been received.
- You will have to verify several statements about the veracity of the document before submitting.

#### **13. Monitoring your application**

- It takes VMCAS can take up to 4 weeks to process, verify, and forward the application to designated schools. IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY to monitor the status of your application and notify VMCAS if a school has not received something.
  - VMCAS will only notify you if there is a problem with the coursework section of your application.
  - You can check on [the status of your application](#) by logging in and looking at the program status menu, which lists what materials have been received and verified.

#### **14. Changes after you submit**

- After submission, you cannot edit or delete any information or materials.
- You may add new experiences, achievements, test scores, and additional letter writers.

### **Application Timing**

Submit early, but focus on creating a document that is polished and complete. It's better to submit a stronger application in the middle of June than a sloppy one on the first day!

## Planning your application year

<b>Fall semester the year you apply</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Start researching programs. Make note of prerequisite coursework, observation/shadowing hours, GRE scores, reference letter requirements, and application deadlines.</li><li>• Start talking to potential letter writers.</li><li>• Review strengths/weaknesses of your application</li></ul>
<b>Spring semester the year you apply</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Talk to letter writers</li><li>• Prepare and take the GRE</li><li>• Work on personal essay and experience statements</li><li>• Draw up a list of programs</li><li>• Gather application materials (e.g., transcripts)</li></ul>
<b>May</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Application opens and submissions begins</li><li>• Fee reimbursement program opens</li></ul>
<b>June - August</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Submit</li><li>• Wait for your VMCAS to be “verified”</li><li>• Work on supplemental applications</li></ul>
<b>September</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• VMCAS Web Application deadline</li></ul>
<b>September - March</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Prepare with mock interviews</li><li>• Do school interviews</li><li>• Make decisions and deposit</li></ul>

## **What happens after I submit?**

- AAVMC will verify all documents and import GRE scores before processing and submitting your final application to the designated veterinary medical schools. They will not review or evaluate your application in any other way.
- Supplemental Applications
  - Schools may send you secondary or supplemental applications, which are additional essays or components that are specific to the program.
  - Schools may send secondary essays at different times or for different reasons:
    - Automatically and sometimes immediately after you submit your application
    - OR . . . after your application has been verified with or without a GRE score
    - OR . . . ONLY if you meet certain pre-screening criteria
    - For information about the supplementary applications for specific programs, see school websites: [http://aavmc.org/College-Specific-Requirements/College-Specific-Requirements\\_College-Specifications.aspx](http://aavmc.org/College-Specific-Requirements/College-Specific-Requirements_College-Specifications.aspx)
- You will be invited for a campus visit! Contact the Center for Pre-Health Advising for a mock interview!