

Dear Reference Writer,

PhORCAS™ references play a substantial role in our decision-making process and we thank you for providing yours. In an attempt to make fair comparisons amongst candidates, we developed a brief tip sheet to serve as guidance as you prepare your reference. We appreciate you carefully reviewing and incorporating this guidance into your reference.

- Candidate characteristics: using the PhORCAS™ scale below, please provide comments for **at least 6 of the 13 characteristics as well as any items marked “exceeds” or “fails to meet”** so that the selection committee can get a picture of the candidate’s fit for the residency program.
  - **Exceeds:** the candidate exceeds what is expected to enter a residency program
    - Tip: It would be most helpful to indicate where the candidate exceeds expectations compared to other candidates who are prepared to enter residencies. It would not be expected for a candidate to be rated at this level for all, or even most, of the characteristics. **Please provide specific comments if this rating is selected.**
  - **Appropriate:** the candidate performs appropriately for what is expected to enter a residency program
  - **Fails to meet:** the candidate fails to meet the level expected to enter a residency program
    - Tip: **Please provide specific comments if this rating is selected.**
  - **N/A:** not applicable or not observed
- Narrative Comments (five questions)
  - Please **DO NOT** attempt to cut and paste a recommendation letter into any of the narrative comments boxes.
  - Please respond to the questions with as much detail as possible, including specific examples.
  - Last question – candidate’s fit for a particular program: Responding to this question is optional. However, if you have specific information regarding the residency program and whether the candidate will be a good fit, please include it here with specifics.
- Overall recommendation (highly recommend, recommend, recommend with reservations, or do not recommend)
  - Tip: Please consider the congruence of this overall rating with your ratings of the candidate characteristics. For example, a candidate who receives a “highly recommend” overall recommendation would be expected not to receive any ratings of “fails to meet” and may receive one or more ratings of “exceeds”.

Again, thank you for taking the time to provide this reference.

Kind regards,

Oregon Health & Science University Residency Advisory Committee