

Medical Student Performance Evaluation (MSPE) Frequently Asked Questions for Qualified Assessors

Q: What is the Medical Student Performance Evaluation (MSPE)?

A: The MSPE or “Dean’s Letter” is sent to residency program directors as a part of a student’s residency application. The purpose of the MSPE is to provide an evaluation of their academic performance. It does not serve as a letter of recommendation.

Q: When is the MSPE sent to Residency programs?

A: Based on AAMC policy, MSPEs will be transmitted via ERAS for all graduating U.S. medical students on October 1st of the graduating year by the Deans Office. Each residency program a student applies for will be able to view the letter.

Q: What is included in the MSPE?

A: The MSPE is broken into several large sections: Identifying Information, Noteworthy Characteristics, Academic History, Academic Performance including Professional Assessment, Academic Progress, OHSU Competencies, Summary, and Appendix. More detail here:

Identifying Information: Student name and short introduction to the evaluation

Noteworthy Characteristics: Three bullet points (100 words maximum) written and provided by the student dedicated to experiences you have achieved during medical school that relate to medicine but are outside the academic program. Examples are: Wallace Clinic, Health Fair at Mall 205, research activities, national conferences, any awards received, etc. Students may also use this section to highlight outside interests: skiing, hiking, gardening, family outings, etc.

Academic History and Professional Assessment: Detailed information about matriculation date, expected graduation date, class quartile, combined degrees (MD-PhD, MD-MPH), additional OHSU experiences (MCR, Pathology experience, Physician Scientists), special distinctions (AOA, Gold Humanism Society), dates of any extensions, leaves of absences, or breaks in coursework, repeated coursework (D-Marginal or F/NP-Failed courses) and, adverse actions. The Professional Assessment section is the same for all students and states that the OHSU professionalism standards have been met; unless disciplinary action at Progress Board has recommended this section be amended in which case the student will be notified in writing of the amendments prior to the MSPE transmittal.

Academic Progress: Detailed course information from Foundations of Medicine (FoM) through Summer 1 block of 4th year including; grades for all required courses taken in FoM, narrative comments about student performance in Preceptorships, the scholarly project synopsis written and provided by the student, grades and narrative comments about student performance provided by Qualified Assessors for core, elective and intersession experiences, graphical information about the core clinical experiences, and all Clinical Subject Exam “shelf exam” and fmCASES scores and passing thresholds.

OHSU Competencies: Details and graphical information of student obtained OHSU competencies to date in comparison to class mean.

Summary: OHSU’s recommendation of the student to residency programs including class quartile.

Appendix: Other helpful information when interpreting the MSPE.

Q: What is NOT included in the MSPE?

A: The MSPE does not include Step 1, Step 2CK or Step 2CS scores, Clinical Skills Lab (CSL) comments, Professionalism Monitoring Forms (PMF's), letters of recommendation, additional research beyond the Scholarly Project section (MD-PhD, MD-MPH and Physician Scientist see section below), Scholarly Project work weeks, JCON elective courses, away rotation courses and electives taken during FoM.

Q: What if students request to change MSPE comments?

A: Students must speak with the Course Director. Students have eight weeks after the MSPE comments are posted in MedHub to dispute a comment with the Course Director before comments are locked and final. If a Course Director/Qualified Assessor wishes to change comments, they should contact the Program Manager for UME Assessments (Leslie Haedinger haedinge@ohsu.edu) to do so.

****The goal is accurate portrayal of student performance for the future employer****

When writing MSPE comments please keep the following guidelines in mind:

- 200 words or less (see example below)
- Includes an accurate account of both strength and opportunities/challenges
- Include direct comments about EPAs and OHSU Competencies
- Include preceptor comments to back up claims
- Do not include exam scores and percentages

Example of MPSE comments:

Short (56 words)

- Student has an easy and caring manner. Well organized and attentive with excellent insightful questions. She is a humanitarian and it shows. She easily shows maturity and leadership in the care of patients. Compassion and stamina seem to come naturally to her. Very professional and always warm and respectful. Diligent and timely with relevant study materials.

Long (324 words)

- Student did an excellent job on her XX rotation. Preceptor Noted: She was flexible and did a good job. She had a good fund of knowledge which was at or slightly above peer level. She improved over the course of the rotation. She had very thorough differential that she worked on narrowing down. She should continue to work on being sure to include all important aspects of history, but this will come as she gains more experience. Clinicians Noted: She was a great addition to XX team at the XX. She was professional, reliable, and a real team player. She was a pleasure to work with. Her knowledge base was excellent and she was committed to self-improvement. She often asked for tips to improve her performance and readily applied the feedback. She was ready during rounds and anticipated the team's needs which helped to expedite our rounds and make our days more efficient. She was always early to help out the intern with the list, was frequently reading to learn more about the patients and their XX problems and management, and followed her patients very closely. In addition, in her patient presentations, she showed compassion for her patients, which was very refreshing as this is not a skill that can be taught. She was prepared for her cases daily and was an active participant in XX, clinic, and on the ward. She was fantastic with patients and their families, very well loved. She was great at rounding and presenting pertinent information. She worked hard to improve her ability to gather and synthesize information and showed significant improvement. She was well-prepared and excellent in the operating room in knowing the patient and disease process. Her prepared presentations were at the level of a resident. She was one of the team's favorite students so far. Residents, faculty, and the PA said they would want her as one of their own residents.

Q: Can students make additional edits to the MSPE?

A: Yes, for very specific things. Edits will be made by the Deans Office ONLY for the following three instances: 1) Incorrect names, pronouns, dates; 2) Incorrect grades OR missing core courses/intersessions/electives; 3) Updates to the Scholarly Project synopsis (if your work has since been completed/published and you wish to provide the citation) before transmittal.

For more information or any questions regarding the MSPE, please contact Leslie Haedinger, Program Manager, UME Assessments (haedinge@ohsu.edu or 503-494-8017.)

Last update: 11/1/19 LH