ADEA | THE VOICE OF DENTAL EDUCATION

Tips for Writing an ADEA AADSAS Letter of Evaluation

The suggestions are intended to enhance the letter-writing process by providing best practices for ADEA AADSAS® (ADEA Associated American Dental Schools Application Service) letter writers to consider. They can be applied to both individual and committee letters.

1. Provide an accurate assessment of the applicant's suitability for dental school.

2. Briefly explain your relationship with the applicant:
   - How long have you known the applicant?
   - In what capacity have you interacted (e.g., as faculty, as a predental advisor, as a supervisor)?

3. Quality of information is more important than letter length. Focus on the applicant rather than details of the lab, course, assignment, job or institution.

4. Only include information on grades, GPA or DAT scores if you also provide context to help interpret them.

5. Focus on behaviors you have observed directly when describing an applicant's suitability for dental school. Consider describing:
   - The situation or context of the behaviors,
   - The actual behaviors you observed and
   - Any consequences of the behaviors.

6. Ask the applicant for permission if you plan to include any information that could be private or sensitive.

7. Consider including unique contributions that an applicant would bring to an incoming class, such as:
   - Obstacles that the applicant had to overcome and how those obstacles have led to new learning and growth and/or
   - Contributions that an applicant would bring to a dental school's diversity, broadly defined (e.g., background, attributes, experiences).

8. If you make comparisons between the applicant and others, be sure to provide context, including:
   - Who you are comparing the applicant to (e.g., students in a class, students in your department, co-workers) and
   - Your rationale for the comparison.

Note: Permission was given by the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) to adopt this information for dentistry.