

APPLICATION TIMELINE & CHECKLIST

For Students Applying to Medical Schools for Entering Class 2026 (EC26)

INTRODUCTION

The instructions and timeline on the following pages are intended for GS Postbac and undergraduate premeds who plan to apply, with the support of the GS Premedical Committee, to medical school in 2025 for 2026 admission. We've packed a lot of information into just a few pages, with the goal of providing a concise summary of the key milestones and action items. For thorough and more detailed information about all aspects of the application process, see the document "Application Year Guidelines" available on the web site under the tab "Applying to Medical School" (gs.columbia.edu/content/applying-medical-school).

This document consists of two parts. The first section provides a month-by-month timeline and checklist, beginning in Fall 2024, for applying for the EC26 general admission cycle. The second describes the schedule of assurance dates by which the Postbac Program will submit committee letters of support to AMCAS and other application services.

The Premedical Committee is eager to collaborate with you on the important project of applying to medical school and we look forward to getting to know you better in the process.

TIMELINE AND CHECKLIST FOR EC26 GENERAL APPLICATION CYCLE

FALL 2024

Register for an AAMC ID. The internal application requires the applicant to have an AAMC ID. This can be acquired at any time. To register with the AAMC, click the sign-in link in the top-right of the AMCAS homepage (students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school-amcas/applying-medical-school-amcas) then click *Register for an AAMC Account* and complete and submit the online registration form.

October 2024

- Attend one of the required general applicants meetings for students planning to apply in 2025:
 - October 21 at 2:00 p.m. (in person)
 - October 25 at 10 a.m. (in person)
 - October 29 at 6:00 p.m. (online)
- Registration opened on October 2 (depending on the test center location for MCAT test dates in January, March, April, May, and June 2025).
- Attend MCAT panel on October 31 featuring postbac students who have taken the test.
- After attending a general applicants meeting, initiate your online internal application portfolio, complete the fields of the web forms, and begin uploading the required documents once they are ready. You can initiate your internal application portfolio here:
<https://admissions.gs.columbia.edu/apply/?pk=PI>
- *Be sure to click the “Submit Application” button on the Review page. If you do not click this button, you have not submitted your internal application.*

JANUARY 2025

January 23

- Submit your internal application by noon on this date in order to be eligible for a Premedical Committee Letter for EC26. Students who do not submit the internal application by this date will not be eligible for a committee letter in this cycle. Materials in the internal application include:
 - web form questionnaire responses,
 - essays,
 - a draft of your common application work & activities entries,
 - a draft of your common application personal statement,
 - drafts of select secondary application responses,
 - photograph (head shot), and
 - verification of clinical experience to date.

The required components of the internal application are described in the document “Essays and Uploads” available at gs.columbia.edu/content/applying-medical-school.

[*Postbacs only*:] Apply for the Certificate in Premedical Sciences through the Student Success Portal.

Begin reading the Medical School Application Year Guidelines available at:
gs.columbia.edu/content/applying-medical-school.

FEBRUARY 2025

- Schedule a portfolio review for some time between February and the end of May.
- Attend the PPSC's annual Medical School Fair (Saturday, February 1).
- Register for the MCAT, if you have not already done so.
- Order a set of your transcripts to review for accuracy and to use when completing the AMCAS application in May/June (you will need to reorder your Columbia transcript showing your spring grades).
- February 14**
 - Date by which students are *encouraged* to have recommendation letters on file with the Postbac Premed Program Office from:
 - supervisors of completed research/clinical experiences
 - previous employers
 - Columbia faculty from courses completed in previous semesters
 - faculty at non-Columbia academic institutions
 - Students are encouraged to act early, but letters of recommendation will be accepted until June 30, 2025, at noon.

MARCH 2025

- Attend a personal statement writing workshop, if you have not already done so.

APRIL 2025

- Ask faculty of spring courses and year-long courses for recommendations, if appropriate.
- Tell your GS premed advisor your anticipated MCAT date.
- Attend Application Year Panel (date TBA).

MAY 2025

- [*Postbacs only*:] Attend Postbac Class Day (each postbac finishing study in the spring or summer 2025 is welcome to invite two guests). Tentative 2025 date: May 16.
- AMCAS application usually goes live during the first week of May. Begin to fill it out, drawing on an accurate set of transcripts.
- Meet with the Postbac Program's writing consultant to discuss drafts of your personal statement.
- Meet with your premedical advisor to discuss where you plan to apply.

- Send your advisor a close-to-final draft of your personal statement and work & activities entries to review before submitting your AMCAS application.
- Have transcripts from all institutions attended sent to AMCAS using the AMCAS transcript request form.
- Have your Columbia transcript sent to AMCAS electronically through Student Services Online (SSOL). On the “Select Documents” page, be sure to choose the “AMCAS Transcript” option. Do not have your Columbia transcript sent until spring semester grades have been recorded on it.

JUNE 2025

June 15

- Submit AMCAS application (and AACOMAS and TMDSAS, if applicable) by June 15 at noon.
 - If applying with committee support, select the letter type “Committee Letter” in the Letters of Evaluation section of AMCAS; and title this “Columbia University Premedical Committee Letter.” As the primary author, list your premedical advisor in the form *Dean [first name] [last name]*. The Committee Letter will encompass not only the letter written by the Premedical Committee, but also a selection of the individual letters of recommendation in your file at Columbia. Do not select “Letter Packet” or “Individual Letter”; also, do not list the individual letters in your file at Columbia.
- After submitting your AMCAS application, you must upload a pdf of your application to your portfolio on the internal application status page by June 15 at noon. The only common application that will be accepted is one that has already been submitted. **The submission date should be stamped at the top of the first page of the AMCAS application as proof of submission.**
- **Applications without the date will be returned.**

June 30

- Take the MCAT by June 30. If you plan to take the MCAT after this date, you must submit an extension request by June 30 at noon.
- By this date at noon, your portfolio in the GS Premedical Office must contain the items listed below. If it is missing any of these items, you must submit an extension request by June 30 at noon.
 - Minimally four letters of recommendation, at least two of which must be from Columbia University science faculty.
 - A copy of the common application that was submitted electronically to the common application service (AMCAS, AACOMAS, TMDSAS).
 - A screenshot of your MCAT registration confirmation (showing the date, time, and address of your MCAT exam).
 - Verification of pertinent health care experience (at least 120 hours).

JULY 2025

Situational Judgment Tests: A growing number (45 and counting) of medical schools require applicants to take a situational judgment test (SJT), a vehicle for assessing an applicant's judgment and aptitude for decision-making. Most schools requiring an SJT prescribe CASPer (Computer-based Assessment for Sampling Personal Characteristics), a 90-minute web-based test; a smaller number of schools prescribe the AAMC's PREview Professional Readiness Exam (90-105 minutes). While a few schools may allow you to take either SJT, for the most part the exams are not interchangeable and you may need to take both. For information about CASPer, see: caspertest.com. For information about PREview, see: students-residents.aamc.org/aamc-preview/aamc-preview-professional-readiness-exam. *If you need to take SJTs, we recommend that you do so by mid-July. Depending on your schedule, it may make sense for you to take them in May or June; discuss the pros and cons of this with your advisor.*

July 15

- The MCAT must be taken by this date (if you applied by June 30 for a deadline extension).

July 31

- Your portfolio must be complete by noon on this date (for those who applied for a deadline extension by June 30).

JULY/AUGUST 2025

After submitting your common application, though perhaps not until it has been verified, you will begin receiving secondary applications. Aim to submit secondary applications by the first week of August regardless of the date provided by the medical school. (If you receive secondary applications in August, plan to submit them within two weeks.)

Resolve any financial holds at Columbia.

AUGUST 2025

August 15

- This is the date by which your committee letter will be uploaded, if you have met the relevant deadlines listed below under "Overview of Committee Letter Eligibility and Assurance Dates."

SEPTEMBER 2025

September 1

- This is the date by which your committee letter will be uploaded, if you took the MCAT by July 15 and/or your portfolio was complete by July 31 (with approved extensions beyond the June 30 deadline).

FALL 2025 AND SPRING 2026

Postbacs will be automatically enrolled in Maintenance of Status, a 0-credit course, unless they are enrolled in classes at Columbia during these semesters.

- Please keep the status of your application at each of the schools to which you are applying current on your portfolio status page. If you have invitations for interviews, update the application tracker in Slate and schedule a mock interview with a GS premed advisor.

- Before each medical school interview, consult the interview feedback forms found here: gs.columbia.edu/content/medical-school-interview-feedback.

- After each interview:
 - Complete the interview feedback form found at the link above.
 - Send thank you notes to your interviewers.

- Keep in touch with your advisor throughout the application year.

- When you matriculate at medical school, please send your advisor a photograph of you at your White Coat Ceremony. We'd love to see it and (with your permission) to share it with current postbacs.

OVERVIEW OF COMMITTEE LETTER ELIGIBILITY AND ASSURANCE DATES

The GS Premedical Committee provides a committee letter of support for every student who meets eligibility criteria (outlined at gs.columbia.edu/content/medical-school-letters-of-recommendation). In order to receive a committee letter for the EC26 application cycle, students must submit an internal application (components of which are listed on p. 2 of this document) via the Slate portal by **January 23, 2025, at noon**. Students who submit by this date are eligible for committee support for EC 26. Students who do not submit by this date are not.

A student's committee letter will be uploaded either by **August 15** or by **September 1**, depending on when the student submits the AMCAS application, takes the MCAT, and has a complete portfolio on file with the Premedical Office (see the required elements of a complete portfolio below). The deadlines are shown in the table below.

If you meet these deadlines...	Your letter will be uploaded by...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AMCAS submitted by June 15 • MCAT taken by June 30 • Portfolio complete by June 30 	August 15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AMCAS submitted by June 30 <i>with approved extension request</i> • MCAT taken by July 15 <i>with approved extension request</i> • Portfolio complete by July 31 <i>with approved extension request</i> 	September 1
<p>If you miss <u>any</u> of these deadlines...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit your internal application by January 23 at noon • Submit your AMCAS application by June 30 at noon • Take the MCAT by July 15 • Have a complete portfolio by July 31 at noon <p>...you will not be eligible to receive a letter of committee support for the EC26 cycle.</p>	

Notes on the deadlines above:

- Students who intend to **submit AMCAS (or other common application) after June 15** must request an extension by noon on that date. A student whose request is approved will be allowed to submit the common application as late as noon on June 30.
- Students who intend to **take the MCAT after June 30** must submit a request for an extension by noon on that date; their requests must indicate the planned MCAT date; extensions up to July 15 will be granted.
- Students whose **portfolio will not be complete by June 30** must submit a request for an extension by noon on that date. This request must include an explanation for the delay and a proposed date by which the outstanding materials will be submitted.
- Requests for an extension to the AMCAS submission deadline, the MCAT deadline, or the complete portfolio deadline should be made with the online form on Slate. Students will find the link to this form on their application status page when they log into their portfolios.

- A portfolio will be considered incomplete on July 31 at noon if it does not contain (in addition to the materials due by January 23) all of the following:
 - Minimally four letters of recommendation, at least two of which must be from Columbia University science faculty.
 - A copy of the common application that was submitted electronically to the common application service (AMCAS, AACOMAS, TMDSAS). The only common application that will be accepted is one that has already been submitted. **The submission date should be stamped at the top of the first page of the AMCAS application as proof of submission. Applications without the date will be returned.** You must upload a pdf of your common application to your portfolio on the internal application status page by the deadline.
 - A screenshot of your MCAT registration confirmation (showing the date, time, and address of your MCAT exam).
 - Verification of pertinent health care experience.