Going Virtual: 2020-2021 Residency Interview Season

Part 2: Residency Selection in a Virtual Environment

Thursday, September 17th, 2020

Holistic Review in GME Framework and COVID-19 Related Changes to the MSPE

Amy Addams
Director, Student Affairs Alignment and Holistic Review
Holistic Review in GME

Flexible

Strategically Focused
Originally designed for medical schools

Screening  Interviewing  Selecting
AAMC Holistic Review in Admissions Framework™

- Emphasizes the importance of giving individualized consideration
- Provides operational guidance
- Encourages using a balanced approach

**DEFINITION**

Holistic review is a **flexible, individualized way** of assessing an applicant’s capabilities, by which **balanced consideration** is given to experiences, attributes, competencies, and academic or scholarly metrics (EACM) and, when considered in combination, how the individual **might contribute value to the institution’s mission.**
CORE PRINCIPLE 1
In a holistic recruitment and selection process, criteria are:

- Broad-based
- Linked to institutional mission and goals
- Promote diversity and inclusion as essential to excellence

CORE PRINCIPLE 2
A balance of experiences, attributes, competencies, and metrics (EACM) are:

- Used to assess applicants with the intent of creating a richly diverse interview and selection pool
- Applied equability across the entire candidate pool
- Supported by performance data that show certain Es, As, Cs, and Ms are linked to a likelihood of success as a resident
CORE PRINCIPLE 3

Screeners and reviewers:

*Give individualized consideration* to how each applicant may contribute to the institution or program’s learning environment and practice of medicine.

*Weigh and balance* the range of criteria needed to achieve the outcomes desired by the program or institution.

EACM Criteria Identification Tool
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Publications</th>
<th>Research experience</th>
<th>Experience with diverse populations</th>
<th>Patient care</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Educational background</td>
<td>Cultural competence</td>
<td>Life experiences</td>
<td>Proficiency in a 2nd language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal skills</td>
<td>Interest in specialty</td>
<td>Grants</td>
<td>professionalism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Experiences - Encompasses the path an applicant has taken to get to where s/he is.

The outer ring acknowledges the influence of the world context in which these experiences took place.
Attributes - Includes the applicant's current skills and abilities, personal qualities, and relevant demographic factors.

Competencies - Include the way in which an applicant applies their skills including how they think, achieve results, interact with people, and self-manage.
Holistic Review

1. Mission-driven

2. Strategically focused

3. Acknowledges diversity as essential to institutional excellence

4. Informed by local data
Institutional/Program Mission, Goals & Diversity Interests

Selection Criteria

New MSPE Guidance: Addressing COVID-19-Related Changes
2016 MSPE Task Force Recommendations

- Standardize organization across schools
- Highlight the six ACGME Core Competencies
- Include details on professionalism (exemplary and lapses)
- Replace “Unique Characteristics” with “Noteworthy Characteristics.”
- Limit “Noteworthy Characteristics to three bullet points that highlight salient experiences and attributes
- Locate comparative data in the body of the MSPE
- Include information on how grades and data are derived
- Provide a school-wide comparison if using a final “adjective” or “overall rating”
- Include six sections: Identifying Information, Noteworthy Characteristics, Academic History, Academic Progress, Summary, and Medical School Information.
- Limit MSPE to 7 single-spaced pages in 12-point font

Recommended COVID-19-related changes to the MSPE

- Except where noted, the MSPE Working Group endorses using the 2016 Recommendations
- Emphasizes clarity over uniformity for the upcoming residency application cycles
- Changes were recommended for the following sections:
  - Academic History
  - Academic Progress
  - Summary
- MSPEs may be 1-2 pages longer as a result
Academic History

Recommended change
Include a brief introductory statement indicating whether the applicant’s academic experience was or was not affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Academic Progress – Clerkships Section

Recommended changes
- Continue to list rotations, including electives, in chronological order:
  - Include a brief description of COVID-related changes (e.g., grading, mode, etc) in the relevant narrative(s).
  - If your school utilized virtual/remote electives, include a brief description of how they were delivered and assessed.
- Consider including a brief statement about whether the student was allowed to participate in away rotations and how (e.g., virtually, in-person, etc.) at the start of the Clerkships section.
Summary

Recommended changes

• Keeping with the 2016 recommendation, if your school groups or ranks students, disclose how you arrived at these groupings/rankings and define any terms used (e.g., “excellent,” “superior,” etc.).

• Briefly describe any changes your school made to grouping or ranking processes or categories.

Takeaways

• Emphasis on clarity for the 2020-2021 cycle (and upcoming cycles)

• Decisions about how to represent COVID-related curricular changes are made at the school level in accordance with institutional policies

• ERAS applications will be accepted with MSPEs that do not follow these recommendations

• The MSPE is a performance evaluation, not a letter of recommendation
Preparing for Virtual Interviews

Rebecca Fraser, PhD
Director, Admissions and Selection Research and Development

Goals for interviews

Valid, Job-related
Fair
Reliable
Legally sound
Standardized
Humanizing
How do virtual interviews compare to in-person?

Same
- Two-way interaction
- Questions and scoring rubric
- Standardization in questions and evaluation
- Scheduling based on applicant and interviewer shared availability

Different
- Applicants and interviewers require a device with:
  - Internet access
  - Web camera
  - Microphone
  - Interview software or app
- Eliminates travel for in-person interviews
- Less positive applicant reactions

Preparing Applicants
Set Clear Expectations

- Interview process
  - Scheduling
  - Length
  - Interview platform – instructions and requirements
- Interview preparation
  - What competencies or types of questions
  - How to prepare – program resources, AAMC resources
  - Opportunities to practice on the interview platform
- Confidentiality and security
  - What information can and cannot be shared
  - What behavior is and is not permitted
  - Consequences for breaching confidentiality
- Dress code
- Location

Consider challenging circumstances

We are all working under different circumstances.

- Varied control over interview location
  - Limited privacy
  - Different settings and backgrounds
- Varied internet access
  - Unstable or unreliable internet
- Varied access to technology
  - No webcam
  - No computer
- Varied savviness with technology
- Varied degree of adversity faced
Preparation Resources for Applicants

Preparation Guide for Applicants Participating in Virtual Interviews

Prep for Success in Your Virtual Interview Webinar

- Overview of virtual interviews
- Identifying a suitable environment
- Preparing and practicing with technology
- Gathering information about the interview
- Preparing for and responding to interview questions
- Possible challenges with virtual interviews and possible steps to overcome them

AAMC Resources for Residency Program Directors

- Best Practices for Conducting Residency Program Interviews (PDF)
- Virtual Interview Tips for Program Directors (PDF)
- Preparation Guide for Applicants Participating in Virtual Interviews (PDF)

Virtual Interview Webinars

- Prep for Success in Your Virtual Interview
  (Audience: Applicant)
  - Many residency programs are pursuing virtual interviews this year. Programs may be conducting live virtual interviews or incorporating an asynchronous/demand virtual interview into their process. This webinar will help you prepare for success in your virtual interviews by identifying a suitable environment, preparing and practicing with technology, and preparing for and responding to interview questions. It will also discuss how to address possible challenges you may face with virtual interviews and possible steps you might take to overcome them.
  - Access the slides here: [RSI927kadka (PDF)]

Preparing Interviewers
Preparing Interviewers

Schedule  Technology and Platform Support  Interview Protocol  Introductory Script  Interview Questions  Evaluation Criteria  Applicant Information

Practicing with technology and the platform

Prepare
- Provide a tutorial or customized training
- Encourage practicing with the interview platform prior to interview day
- Perform a dry run with interviewers
- Share FAQs and tech support contact info

Setup
- Consider the setup and position of technology
- Test the technology just before the interview
- Provide log-in information and navigation instructions

Then, prepare for the unexpected.
Identifying a suitable environment

- Private, quiet
- Free of potential distractions, to the extent possible
- Well-lit (window, lamp, etc.)
- Neat backdrop, free of distractions
- Nearby outlet

Planning for the unexpected

Possible disruptions

- Call drops
- Computer malfunctions
- Internet fails (outage, thunderstorm)
- Laptop battery dies
- Interruptions (children, dogs, roommates)
- Incoming calls, emails, messages

Proactive planning

- Acknowledge that unexpected interruptions may occur on either side due to circumstances
- Establish a back-up plan if a technical issue cannot be resolved quickly
- Provide applicant contact info for re-connecting via phone
- Keep your computer plugged in or an outlet nearby
- Turn off email or other message notifications
- Silence your personal phone, if possible
Preparing to conduct the interview

- Recommend interviewers review all interview materials
- Remind interviewers of questions that inappropriate and off-limits
- Recommend panel interviewers coordinate with one another
- Require interviewers to complete unconscious bias training

- Interview protocol
- Introductory script
- Interview questions
- Application materials typically provided
- Scoring rubric or evaluation criteria
- Documentation instructions

Unconscious bias training

Unconscious Bias Resources for Health Professionals

At academic medical centers, unconscious biases can compromise diversity and inclusion efforts in admissions, curriculum development, counseling, and faculty advising, among other functions.

The AAMC provides resources and trainings to assist these institutions to meet their goals around addressing unconscious biases.

Addressing Implicit Bias in Virtual Interviews

The AAMC now provides a “Conducting Interviews During the Coronavirus Pandemic” resources page. This page also includes a webinar addressing implicit bias in virtual interviews. During this webinar, participants will receive an overview of unconscious bias, reflect upon how their own biases manifested, and receive guidance on how to recognize and mitigate their biases when conducting, reviewing, and scoring virtual or in-person interviews. This webinar is strongly recommended for anyone conducting interviews or evaluating interview responses.

Webinar:
Addressing Implicit Bias in Virtual Interviews
Creating a comfortable atmosphere

Discuss with interviewers how to humanize the interview experience while ensuring a fair interview process for all applicants.

- Welcome the applicant
- Acknowledge unusual circumstances
- Set clear expectations
- Be mindful, stay focused
- Follow the interview protocol
- Do not ask inappropriate questions prohibited by law

Evaluating applicants

- Apply the scoring rubric or criteria consistently to evaluate applicants’ interviews
- Do not consider factors outside of the applicant’s control
  - Audio/video quality
  - Technology issues that may occur
  - Setting/background of location
  - Unexpected or uncontrolled interruptions
- Take steps to mitigate unconscious bias from influencing the evaluation of applicant interviews
  - AAMC webinar: Addressing Implicit Bias in Virtual Interviews
Interviewer checklist

Ready…
- Identify a suitable environment
- Practice using the technology
- Review the interview protocol and materials (questions, scoring)
- Complete unconscious bias training

Set…
- Scan your room
- Setup your interview space
- Minimize technology-driven distractions or interruptions

Go!
- Create a comfortable atmosphere
- Follow the interview protocol to ensure a fair process for all applicants
- Document your evaluations

Resources for Interviewers

Virtual Interview Tips for Interviewers Guide
Creating a Positive Virtual Interview Experience Webinar
- Practicing with technology
- Identifying a suitable location
- Creating a comfortable atmosphere
- Evaluating applicants

Addressing Implicit Bias in Virtual Interviews Webinar
- Overview of implicit bias
- How biases manifest
- Types of rating biases
- Recognizing and mitigating implicit bias
Key Takeaways

- Validity, reliability, fairness, and applicant reactions are critical to a successful interviews.
- Virtual interviews demand thoughtful planning to humanize the interview experience.
- Setting clear expectations and creating a comfortable atmosphere can improve applicant reactions.
- Guidance and support related to technology, location, and the interview process will help interviewers conduct smooth and successful interviews.

AAMC Virtual Interview Resources
Virtual Interview Guidance

Online resources available for conducting virtual interviews, including webinars:

- **Creating a Positive Virtual Interview Experience**
  - Interviewers

- **Addressing Implicit Bias in Virtual Interviews**
  - Program directors and interviewers

- **Prep for Success in your Virtual Interview**
  - Applicants

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Peer-Reviewed Articles Published in Medical Journals About Virtual Interviewing


Preparing for a virtual interview season: Learning from each other

Fiona Gallahue, MD, FACEP

President, Council of Residency Directors in Emergency Medicine (CORD-EM)

Associate Professor and Residency Program Director, Emergency Medicine, University of Washington

PREPARING FOR A VIRTUAL INTERVIEW SEASON: Looking at the Challenges and Opportunities
Challenges:
RESIDENCY RESOURCES - NEED MORE EVERYTHING

Opportunities:
How can this change to an asynchronous environment be of benefit to a program?
1. Allows us to further expand awareness of our residency’s brand identity

2. Collaboration between stakeholder organizations to set expectations around the interview season
3. Creates opportunity for interactions beyond the interview day

Preparing Interviewers
Questions?

Holistic Review: holisticreview@aamc.org

MSPE: mspe@aamc.org

Virtual Interviews: residencyinterview@aamc.org

Dr. Fiona Gallahue: fionagallahue@gmail.com

This webinar is being recorded and will be shared with you.