



WRITING YOUR AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

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The Autobiographical Sketch (ABS) represents a significant portion of your medical school application. Listed here are some answers to FAQs and general tips to ensure your ABS is great!

1 FORMATTING

Because there is a low character count, formatting can be quite casual / non-conventional. It is absolutely acceptable to use:

Short forms: b/c (because), w/o (without), dr (doctor), pt (patient), execs (executives), Sr (senior).

Symbols: @ (at), & (and).

Point-form: you can separate different points with periods, semicolons, or dashes.

Ex: Collaborate w/ co-workers to deliver quality customer service; quickly learn procedures; engage in active & empathetic listening.

Ex: Collaborated w co-workers to deliver quality customer service. Quickly learned procedures. Engage in active + empathetic listening.

2 QUALITY OVER QUANTITY

You do NOT need to fill out every slot! It is probably better to have less inputted activities / experiences than to have your Sketch be cluttered with many trivial entries. On a similar note, consider combining smaller, similar activities into one entry to give it more impact. For example, were you a server at Baskin Robbins one year, and a manager the next year? Instead of creating two separate entries, consider writing *Manager at Baskin Robbins* and later in the entry (either in the timeline slot or in the description slot) you can mention your promotion.

3 HOW OLD IS TOO OLD?

Many applicants worry about inputting entries that are many years old - for example, a club they led or a job they held in high school. Ultimately, if you did something impressive when you were younger, you should let your examiner know about it! Although more recent experiences *may* hold more weight, older accomplishments will still enhance your application and the impression that you leave on your examiner! Personally, I included numerous experiences from high school on my Sketch!

4 CANMEDS

The CANMED framework describes the following seven roles of physicians: Medical Expert, Communicator, Collaborator, Leader, Health Advocate, Scholar and Professional. Whenever possible, try to show the examiner how your activities reflect some of these roles. For example, if you were the manager at Baskin Robbins you likely led a team, collaborated with your coworkers, communicated well with customers etc.



5

VERIFIERS

A verifier is truly just a person who can verify that what you are saying is true. If possible, try to have someone senior to you verify your entry, but a colleague, peer, teammate, or student is completely fine. If you are having trouble finding a verifier for a certain activity, it is ok to use a family member or friend (as long as you do this sparingly). This may be necessary for solo activities such as exercising, or playing an instrument, or activities from a long time ago where you have lost contact with your colleagues

6

DO NOT LIE, BUT DO NOT BE HUMBLE

Never lie on your Sketch - it is unethical and will likely be noticed. That being said, be proud of what you have done and do not downplay your accomplishments! Although it may feel unnatural to boast about yourself and your accomplishments, it is the only way your examiner will get a sense of how incredible you truly are

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EDIT, EDIT, EDIT

Give yourself time to edit your Sketch! Check your spelling (and then check it again). Make sure your titles, timelines, and descriptions are accurate and that you have effectively highlighted your accomplishments. It often helps to have a fresh pair of eyes look it over as well - consider asking a peer, a teacher, or any of us at the Medical Mentor Community!

