

FAQs: (Pathology)

Given Step 1 is now Pass/Fail, what advice would you give to a first-year medical student about what they can or should be doing early on to be competitive in your specialty?

Introduce yourself to pathologists in your local department and begin to establish a personal relationship where possible.

Would you ever take someone with a Step 1 failure?

We do not make categorical decisions, and evaluate each applicant on a case by case basis.

What advice would you give about getting letters of recommendation in your specialty?

Choose someone who has directly observed you, preferably in a formal elective or course.

What is the value of doing audition rotations in your specialty?

This is definitely helpful and obviously gives a department first hand knowledge regarding the applicant's strong and weak points.

To what extent does research, publications, or presentations affect one's ability to match in your specialty?

Case presentations and publications are a definite asset in obtaining a residency in our program.

Is a Step 2CK score needed before you will invite someone for an interview?

No, each applicant is evaluated on a case by case basis.

What does the perfect applicant look like in your specialty?

Someone with direct "hands-on" experience, so that the applicant really understands what pathology is. Not someone merely choosing pathology because of "work-life" balance, or a perceived easy lifestyle.

Does a student need to Honor in your specialty to match?

No.

The students have significant elective time during their 3rd year for career exploration.

a. What electives would you recommend to a student who knows they are interested in your specialty?

Subspecialty areas in pathology such as hematopathology or forensic pathology, etc.

b. What electives would you recommend to a student who is undecided but considering your specialty?

A general combined anatomic-clinical elective providing experience in all areas of pathology.

Is there anything else I haven't asked that you feel an applicant to your specialty ought to know?

The practice of pathology is difficult, and the interpretation of microscopic images is much more subjective than most applicants realize. As in all medical fields, there is uncertainty in the practice of

medicine, which largely involves balancing probabilities. Medical education is largely training for uncertainty.