



# Anatomical Pathology Selection Criteria

## **Q. Why are we posting this? Isn't this supposed to be a secret?**

**A.** We follow the Best Practices in Applications and Selection Guidelines which advocates a fair and transparent process for application review, interviews, and ranking. The BPAS guidelines are endorsed by the U of C's PGME office.

## **Q. What do we look for in an applicant?**

1. Documented interest and experience in anatomical pathology, as evidenced by previous pathology elective rotations or observerships, past or upcoming.
2. Aptitude for anatomical pathology (strong evaluations from pathology electives, and at least one letter of reference from a pathologist)
3. Broad and well-rounded medical knowledge (strong medical school performance +/- exam scores)
4. Excellent written and spoken English skills and non-verbal communication skills
5. Evidence of research and teaching ability
6. Desirable personality attributes such as collegiality, teamwork skills, leadership skills, conflict management ability, and time management skills
7. Strong professionalism attributes (including integrity, reliability, collegiality, resilience, punctuality and responsibility)

## **Q. How do we select applicants for interview?**

**A.** We accept applications through CaRMS, and consider applications from Canadian-trained medical student as well as AIMGs in that match. In recent years, our program has offered three spots per year to Canadian medical graduates, and one spot per year to an Alberta International Medical Graduate (AIMG). There is also a mechanism for International applicants (sponsored IMG's) for our program, those persons are to contact [imgapps@ucalgary.ca](mailto:imgapps@ucalgary.ca) for further information and process. International applicants are reviewed by the program only after they have satisfied all conditions of the Post Graduate Medical Education Office at the University of Calgary. Any international applicant accepted into the program cannot subvert the CaRMS match. **We currently do not have the capacity to consider sponsored international applicants or applicants for re-entry training positions.**

Each year we have more qualified applicants than interview spots. A team of 6-8 independent reviewers, consisting of staff pathologists and current anatomical pathology residents, scores each CaRMS application based on the degree of fit with our program's selection criteria.

The scores are averaged, and the applicants with the highest overall scores are invited for an interview. Applicants with widely divergent scores, as well as applicants with scores at the borderline of the interview threshold, receive further discussion prior to final a decision.

Please note that applicants with no previous anatomical pathology experience are generally deemed unqualified, and will not be considered for an interview.

**Q. How does our interview process work?**

**A.** We offer two interview days during the designated CaRMS season. When invited for an interview, applicants are asked to provide their first choice and second choice of date, and whether they prefer morning or afternoon. Unfortunately, due to the complexity of our interview process, we are unable to accommodate requests for interviews outside of the designated interview days.

We make every attempt to conduct our interviews in the most fair, transparent, and equitable way possible. We use a panel format for our interviews. Both staff pathologists and current anatomical pathology residents serve as interviewers. Each applicant rotates through four different panels of two interviewers and each interview lasts about 25 minutes. Each panel has a designated set of standardized questions that are asked of all interviewees. As with the initial CaRMS file review, each interviewer scores each applicant independently and objectively.

Obviously, the interview is also intended as a way for applicants to get to know our program, and decide if they would be happy training here. Therefore, the interview includes ample time for interviewees to ask questions of current residents and staff. Lunch and a light breakfast are provided, as well as an optional dinner. We also provide a tour of our facilities at Foothills Medical Centre. The interview process takes about half a day.

**Q. How do we decide how to rank applicants?**

**A.** This is a complex process which involves a face-to-face meeting of the interview committee immediately after the interviews are complete. The interview scores are combined with the CaRMS file review scores in order to determine the rank order. Sometimes scores are tied or are very close. In that case, there is a group discussion about the rank order.

We take pride in the fact that all members of the selection committee, including our current residents, have an equal voice in ranking decisions. We make every effort to rank applicants objectively based on how well they meet our program selection criteria, and on our perception of their ability to succeed and thrive in our residency program.

**Q. Do I need to do an AP elective at the U of C in order to be considered for an interview?**

**A.** No. However, if you have a strong interest in our program, we highly recommend coming for an elective here, since it will allow you to get to know the program better, and will help you make a more informed decision.