

Have you been tasked with writing a letter of recommendation for a student applying to veterinary school through VMCAS? Are you unsure of how to write this letter of recommendation or what to include? Read below!

Admissions committees do not care if you have overseen a student in a clinical setting or not. Focus on what you DO know about this student, rather than identifying areas that you have not observed. In your letter, you will want to enthusiastically recommend this student for admission to veterinary school through describing the student's actions, experiences, character, and values, touching on what makes this student stand out and why they will excel in the field.

Here are personal characteristics that you can speak on:

- Integrity
- Maturity
- Inquisitiveness and analytical skills
- Motivation
- Interpersonal skills
- Communication skills
- Compassion
- Civic and community-mindedness
- Well roundedness and interests
- Leadership in student and/or community organization
- Ability to take on tasks and/or delegate

Here is a link to the AAMC List of Core Competencies – while this list is catered towards medical students and medical applicants, this list is still applicable to veterinary applicants. Review this list of core competencies and feel free to speak to a student's strengths in any of these areas: <https://students-residents.aamc.org/real-stories-demonstrating-premed-competencies/premed-competencies-entering-medical-students>

Feel free to share a personal story that touches on your experience with this student. If they went above and beyond one day, feel free to share it!

In your letter, you should explicitly state something like: "I strongly recommend this student for admission to veterinary program" OR "THIS STUDENT will be an asset in any veterinary program, and I strongly recommend HER/HIM for admission" so there is no confusion on your stance.

Looking for an example of a letter? See below.

To whom it May Concern:

My name is Jane Doe, and I am pleased to write this letter of recommendation on behalf of Sarah Smith, who has been an employee under my supervision for the past year at ABC Company.

During this time, I have had the opportunity to observe her growth firsthand, and I can confidently say that she is one of the most dedicated, dependable, and compassionate employees I have worked with. Her strong work ethic and genuine commitment to her position make her an excellent candidate for veterinary school. Regardless of the task, Sarah is always ready to take on additional responsibilities and acts as a true team player. While our work is not veterinary medicine related, I know that the strong interpersonal skills and character traits that she possesses will set her up for success in vet school.

Sarah consistently demonstrates professionalism, initiative, and a willingness to learn. She approaches each task with thoughtfulness and attention to detail. In her position, Sarah is very organized, she does not shy away from responsibility, and she often goes above and beyond what is expected of her, especially in fast-paced or high-demand situations. Her ability to communicate effectively, prioritize her tasks, and be compassionate speaks volumes about her readiness for the demands of a veterinary program. On the day where a new employee was being onboarded, our shift manager was running late. Without having been asked, Sarah immediately introduced herself to our new hire and began giving her a tour of the facility to fill time and ensure that the new hire felt welcome. It is actions like this that showcase how willing Sarah is to contribute to any team she is a part of.

While I have not seen Sarah in a veterinary office firsthand, what I think sets Sarah apart is her empathy and passion for both animals and the people who care for them. To gain additional veterinary experience, Sarah had to decrease her weekly hours with us from 40 hours to 24 hours per week. While we miss her here, we know that she is willing to make sacrifices to pursue her a career in the field. It is clear that veterinary medicine is not just an interest for her, but a long-term passion grounded in service, curiosity, and integrity.

I am confident that Sarah will be a dedicated, hardworking, and thoughtful veterinary student, and she will be an asset to your program and the profession. I give her my strongest recommendation for admission to veterinary school, and I look forward to bringing my animals to a future veterinarian that I trust will prioritize her clients as much as she will her patients.

Please feel free to contact me if you require any additional information.

Sincerely,
Jane Doe

Supervisor at ABC Company

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