

## OptomCAS Letters *important information for applicants*

### What is OptomCAS?

This year (2009), all twenty schools and colleges of optometry will be participating in OptomCAS, the Optometry Centralized Application Service. The service will launch on July 15, and allows applicants to submit one application that can be sent to multiple optometry schools.

### How can I send my letters through OptomCAS?

OptomCAS requires two components for each Letter of Recommendation (LOR): a rating of attributes, and a letter. There are only four spaces allotted for evaluators within OptomCAS. Although there are suggestions for selecting your evaluators in OptomCAS, it is important that you review the letter requirements for each school to which you will apply, as requirements may differ by program.

You have several options for how you can send your letters to OptomCAS:

#### **1. If you already have letters in The Career Center's Letters of Evaluation (LEO) service**

- You must create an OptomCAS Rating of Attributes Form for each evaluator, and ask your evaluator to complete this form **EVEN** if this individual has already completed a LEO form. OptomCAS will only accept letters that have the OptomCAS Rating of Attributes Form. Your evaluators can submit these forms to The Career Center, and they will be included within LEO.
- OptomCAS will not accept letters that are more than two years old prior to the opening of OptomCAS, so only letters in LEO dated July 15, 2007 or later can be used for your application.
- You may select up to four letters to be sent to OptomCAS in one LEO mailing. The OptomCAS rating of attributes form for each evaluator will be attached to each evaluator's letter.

#### **2. If you plan to have your evaluators submit their letters to LEO**

- You must create an OptomCAS Rating of Attributes Form for each evaluator. You will need to ask each evaluator to complete a LEO form, an OptomCAS Rating of Attributes Form, and a letter.
- You may select up to four letters to be sent to OptomCAS in one LEO mailing. The OptomCAS Rating of Attributes Form for each evaluator will be attached to each evaluator's letter.

#### **3. If you plan to have your evaluators submit their letters directly to OptomCAS**

- You will enter your evaluator's information in OptomCAS, and select either paper or electronic format for the letter (determine the preferred format with your evaluator).

### If OptomCAS can handle my letters, what are the benefits of using LEO?

OptomCAS will only allow your evaluators to submit letters for the purpose of applying to Optometry schools. The Career Center's Letters of Evaluation (LEO) service provides you with additional benefits:

- You can open your LEO file at any time: You can begin contacting your evaluators so they can start writing letters now. Once OptomCAS is open, then you will only need to ask them to complete the Rating of Attributes Form.
- Letters in LEO are sent via UPS: You can track the letters to ensure they have been received. This also allows you to follow up if there are any errors in processing through application services or admissions offices.
- Your LEO file is good for ten years: LEO letters can be used for other graduate or professional school applications. Asking your evaluators to write their letters for "graduate/professional study" would offer you this flexibility. In addition, for the 2009 launch of OptomCAS, your information will not be stored if you need to reapply. With LEO, you would still be able to use your letters in a future application cycle, or for different educational goals.
- You have twelve spaces for letters within LEO: You may have more than four evaluators you are considering for your letters. Before OptomCAS opens and you can review individual school requirements for letters, you can secure and store your letters. Once OptomCAS opens, you can select which four letters you will use for your application.

*For more information on OptomCAS, please visit [www.optomcas.org](http://www.optomcas.org).*



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