



Alignment Check Index (ACI)

PURPOSE

To provide a tool that allows residency applicants to compare their experiences and characteristics to the domains that residency programs consider in their own assessment of their program's values and interests. The Alignment Check Index (ACI) creates an alignment index that applicants can use in helping them determine to which programs to apply.

This tool will be piloted and evaluated for the 2022-2023 application season.

PROCESS

Residency Programs

Based on their mission, values, and interests, programs will place weights on the following categories:

1. Academic metrics
2. Work Experience
3. Community Service/Advocacy
4. Research Experience
5. Teaching Experience
6. Background and Lived Experiences

Prior to application season programs will choose a weight percentage of emphasis in each category, adding up to a total of 100%. The weights for these categories may be updated yearly but will remain fixed for each application season.

Residency Applicants

Residency applicants will reflect on their experiences as they prepare to apply for residency. They will self-assess and assign point values in each of the following categories (maximum 9 points per area):

1. Academic metrics
2. Work Experience
3. Community Service/Advocacy
4. Research Experience
5. Teaching Experience
6. Background and Lived Experiences

Applicants will not see how programs have weighted these domains. The ACI app will generate a list of programs for the applicant, ranking them from highest alignment score to the lowest. This list will be available to the applicant to guide their application considerations and not shared with programs.

ACI FAQs for Program Directors

Is my program required to complete the ACI?

No. The purpose of the ACI is to provide guidance to applicants on which programs they have the most alignment with. This is a voluntary process for program directors to provide an opportunity for applicants to make an educated decision on whether to apply to their program based upon the program's values and the applicant's characteristics. It is to the program's advantage to complete the ACI to provide greater transparency to applicants.

What is the advantage for programs to participate in the ACI?

By participating and providing weights for each of the domains, the ACI may help to limit the number of applications to programs from applicants whose ACI results suggest that they would not align well with the mission and values of the program. This may lead to a decrease in applications to review from applicants they are unlikely to consider and an increased opportunity to perform more holistic review of applications.

How does the ACI work?

Participating programs review and consider the mission, values and interests of their programs and weigh their programs' emphasis on 6 domains, summing to 100%: Academic Metrics, Work Experience, Community Service/Advocacy, Research Experience, Teaching Experience, and Background and Lived Experiences. For example, a program with a heavy emphasis on research, and less so on teaching, might weight research experience 30%, and teaching experience 10%. Applicants, similarly, evaluate their own experiences in these same domains. Using the weights of participating programs, the ACI app will generate a list of programs for the applicant and rank them from the highest alignment score to the lowest. The goal is to provide transparency and a better sense of how an applicant's experiences may or may not be what a particular program is looking for, which could lead to applicants choosing to narrow their focus on programs that are in more alignment.

Can I place an equal weight on each of the 6 domains?

The ACI provides an opportunity for programs to choose the importance of each of the domains relative to one another to align with the mission and values of their program; it is the program's discretion to determine how to weigh each of the domains. Choosing equal weights for each category will reduce the program's opportunity to distinguish itself from others, and to attract better aligned applicants. Program directors are encouraged to discuss these categories with their department leadership and other faculty to determine the importance of each of the domains.

Can I change the emphasis placed on the domains?

Prior to the opening of the application season, programs will be asked to complete the ACI application. Once this is completed, this information CANNOT be changed for the application season. If the pilot is successful and continues for future years, programs will have the opportunity to change the weights at the beginning of each season.

Do I have to fill out the ACI or can my Program Manager complete the ACI?

It is strongly recommended that the Program Director complete the ACI after performing an internal assessment of the program's values and desired values for incoming residents for that season. The Program Manager may also complete it after consultation and clear direction from the program director.

Why would I want to change my ACI weights from year to year?

Some programs may desire to keep the weights on each of the domains the same from year to year, but other programs may wish to change the emphasis based upon the needs of their program. For example, if there is a strong desire to recruit residents interested in medical education and teaching, then a program director may desire to increase the weight on Teaching Experience for the upcoming application cycle.

Will I see an applicant's alignment with my program?

No. This is a self-assessment for applicants to use in determining whether to apply to a given program. Programs will NOT receive any indications of whether an applicant had a high or low alignment with their program.

Is the applicant able to see the weights I assign to each category?

No. The computation for the alignment occurs in the background and the applicant only sees the results as a list of programs that are ranked from the highest alignment score to the lowest, based on an applicant's characteristics and experiences.

How would an applicant know if I chose not to participate in the ACI?

Applicants will be notified that not all programs may choose to participate in the ACI and that the lists they receive may not include all OBGYN residency programs they might be interested in. We hope all programs will participate to streamline the process for the applicants.

Who do I contact if I have any further questions?

For questions specific to the ACI, please send an email to TransitionFeedback@apgo.org.
