Letters of Recommendation

* Most schools require 2-3 references
* Usually, at least 1 (sometimes 2) have to be from OT’s
* Many schools require a letter from an instructor/counselor/advisor and/or previous or present employer
* Make sure to ask your references if they would be willing to write a letter for you months before applications are due, so they have plenty of time.
* References will upload the letter directly through a link sent by OTCAS, so be sure to let your reference know to be looking out for an email from OTCAS (just in case it is sent to their spam folder).

Transcript Entry

* OTCAS requires you to not only send in transcripts, but also list each course manually (you can pay OTCAS to do this themselves, but sometimes this can cause a 2-3 week delay so be sure to plan accordingly).
* Enter in each class exactly as it appears on the transcript (ex: Abnormal Psychology would be ABNORMAL PSYCH)
* Be sure to have transcripts handy!

Transcripts

* This can take the longest out of everything else, so be sure to be on top of it!
* OTCAS requires transcripts from each college or university you attended.
* They will give you a transcript request form for each school to be included in with your transcript; this form allows OTCAS to match the transcript to the OTCAS application.
* Most times, you can upload a file to be included in with your transcript while ordering your official transcript (if that option isn’t there, call the school. Often they’ll have you email the file to the registrar).
* With A&M, you have to email the file to the registrar. Be sure to call them and let them know you’re emailing a file before you request your transcript online.
* It can take 1-3 weeks for OTCAS to receive and verify your transcripts.

Personal Essay

* OTCAS doesn’t give any sort of length requirement.
* They want to see you tell your story succinctly, so try to keep it between 1 ½ to 2 ½ pages.

Supplemental Applications

* Make sure to check if your program requires a supplemental essay (an additional application through the school’s website, not OTCAS).
* Many times these require a fee to submit.

GRE

* Be sure to allow plenty of time for the GRE before applying to schools, so you have time to retake it if you’re unhappy with your scores.
* It’s not too bad of a test, but be sure you study for it (it’s best if you can take it when you’re not in school, so you can devote several weeks just to GRE prep).
* There’s lots of great study programs out there!
* It takes a couple of weeks to receive your scores, so be sure to plan for that if you’re taking it in the summer.

OTCAS FAQ and Instructions

* <https://portal.otcas.org/otcasHelpPages/>

Above all, remain calm!!! This is a complicated and stressful process but you have peers that are going through the same thing and alumni that can offer guidance! If you are in doubt, call the schools you’re interested in and hear from them directly, they’re always happy to help!