

# ADMISSION OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

## Office of Admissions

Undergraduate Admissions  
4400 University Drive, MS 3A4  
Fairfax, VA 22030

Graduate Admissions  
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Phone: 703-993-2000  
Website: [admissions.gmu.edu](https://www2.gmu.edu/admissions)

## General Requirements

Application for admission by international students should be made directly to the Office of Admissions via the online application (<https://www2.gmu.edu/admissions-aid/apply-now/>).

Priority application deadlines are as follows:

Freshman Fall	June 1
Transfer Fall	March 1
Freshman Spring	October 1
Transfer Spring	October 1
Graduate	Varies by academic program. Please check <a href="http://admissions.gmu.edu/grad">http://admissions.gmu.edu/grad</a> ( <a href="http://admissions.gmu.edu/grad/">http://admissions.gmu.edu/grad/</a> ) for specific program details.

These deadlines ensure adequate time to process applications and prepare immigration documents. All international applications must be accompanied by the nonrefundable application fee. Items that must be submitted with the application form and fee are official transcripts and degree certificates (in original language and, if applicable, certified English translation); evidence of English proficiency (please see the English proficiency website (<https://www2.gmu.edu/admissions-aid/how-apply/international/english-proficiency-requirements/>) for more details); the Certificate of Financial Responsibility (<https://admissions.gmu.edu/documents/internationalFinancialResponsibilityCertificate.pdf>) (CFR); financial support documents; copy of passport identification page; and for those present in the United States, copies of immigration documents verifying current nonimmigrant status. Other documentation such as recommendation letters, essays, portfolios, etc., may be required by the academic program. Please visit the Admission website (<https://www2.gmu.edu/admissions-aid/apply-now/how-apply/graduate/>) for full details on items required and deadlines.

Applications from international students are reviewed with all other applications. Admission to the university is competitive; therefore, while minimum standards ensure that an application will be considered, they do not guarantee admission. The number of applicants, qualifications of the applicant pool, and the amount of available space determine the number of admission offers that Mason can make. In addition to overall admission requirements, some schools and colleges have individual requirements for acceptance into the major. For more information on selective majors, please visit "Majors with Selective Admission (<https://www2.gmu.edu/admissions-aid/how-apply/freshman/>)" section for

freshmen, and "Selective Admission Majors (<https://www2.gmu.edu/admissions-aid/how-apply/transfer/>)" section for transfers.

Applicants who are accepted to a program will receive an online admission decision via their online application portal. Most students come to the United States on an F-1 visa, but students who are sponsored by the U.S. Government, their home government, or another organization may be required to enter the United States on a J-1 Exchange Visitor's Visa. To be issued an immigration document (Form I-20 for F-1 status or Form DS2019 for J-1 status), students must prove they have sufficient financial support to cover their expenses while at Mason. If the documentation submitted is satisfactory, the university will issue Form I-20 for F-1 status or Form DS2019 for J-1 status and mail it to the address indicated on the Certificate of Financial Responsibility. For students who are already in the United States, Form I-20 or Form DS2019 may be picked-up in person, if requested.

International students outside the United States may use their immigration documentation to schedule a visa interview with the U.S. embassy or consulate nearest their place of residence and apply for an F-1 or J-1 student visa. For more information about the visa application process, check with the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate, or go to the Department of State's website (<https://www.state.gov>).

Students in a nonimmigrant visa category other than F-1 or J-1 may submit the CFR and copies of immigration documents indicating their immigration status. They do not need to submit financial support documents unless they plan to change to a student visa. For more information pertaining to immigration status, contact the Office of International Programs and Services (OIPS) at 703-993-2970. Additional information is available on the OIPS website (<https://oips.gmu.edu>).

## Freshman and Transfer Requirements

A freshman student is a first time university student who has never before enrolled in a college or university after graduating from secondary school. A transfer student is one who has completed course work at another college or university after graduating from secondary school. In addition to the requirements defined for all applicants, international students must meet the following standards:

- Freshman applicants must submit certified official copies of all secondary or high school transcripts in the original language along with an English translation, if applicable. Official results of any leaving certificates or university entrance exams also must be submitted.
- Transfer applicants must submit official transcripts from each post-secondary institution attended, sent directly to Mason from the institution.
- International students may be considered for admission without an SAT or ACT score through our score optional admission program. Qualifications for score optional consideration can be found at <https://www2.gmu.edu/admissions-aid/apply-now/how-apply/freshman> (<https://www2.gmu.edu/admissions-aid/apply-now/how-apply/freshman/>).
- Non-native English-speaking applicants are required to meet the University's English Proficiency requirement. Please visit the English Proficiency requirements page (<https://www2.gmu.edu/admissions-aid/apply-now/how-apply/international/english-proficiency-requirements/>) for more detailed information.

- Applicants with English proficiency exam results below the minimum qualifying score for direct entry may be referred to an INTO Mason Pathway or Academic English program (<https://www2.gmu.edu/academics/mason/>).
- All transcripts from colleges or universities outside the United States must be translated into English and evaluated with a course-by-course evaluation by a NACES (<https://www.naces.org/members/>) (National Association of Credential Evaluation Services) recognized U.S. evaluation agency before an admission decision can be made. Applicants are responsible for the timely translation and evaluation of documents and all costs and fees associated with these services. A list of accepted evaluation agencies is available here (<https://www.naces.org/members/>). Please note all transcripts and documents submitted to the university will become part of the applicant's permanent record and will not be returned.
- International students already in the United States with F-1 status must complete immigration transfer procedures within 15 days of the program start date. For processing of immigration transfers, contact OIPS at 703-993-2970 or visit their website (<https://oips.gmu.edu>).

## Admissions Policies for Graduate International Students

In addition to the general admission requirements (<https://catalog.gmu.edu/admissions/graduate-policies/>), all international students must be familiar with international application procedures (<https://www2.gmu.edu/admissions-aid/apply-now/how-apply/international/>) and must follow the following additional requirements when applicable.

## Graduate Students with International Degrees

Mason requires the equivalent of a four-year U.S. bachelor's degree from an appropriately accredited international institution of higher education for direct admission to a graduate degree program. All applicants who were educated outside the United States are required to submit an official credential evaluation, written either by an approved evaluation company (<https://www.naces.org/members/>), or by Mason evaluators. Please review the International Transcript Submission Guidelines (<https://admissions.gmu.edu/documents/internationalTranscriptGuidelines.pdf>) for further details. Complete information on this and all international admissions requirements can be found at Admissions (<https://www2.gmu.edu/admissions-aid/how-apply/international/>). Mason Admissions, in collaboration with the Office of the Provost, has final authority on equivalency of degrees.

- All transcripts from colleges or universities outside the United States must be translated into English, if applicable, and submitted to the Office of Admissions for evaluation.
- Graduate students' documents should show the award for either a bachelor's degree or equivalent, and/or a graduate degree, as applicable. See (<https://www2.gmu.edu/admissions-aid/apply-now/how-apply/graduate/application-deadlines-and-requirements>).

## Special Conditions for All International Applicants

A complete list of application requirements at all levels can be found online (<https://www2.gmu.edu/admissions-aid/how-apply/international/>).

Note the following:

- Federal regulations prohibit students on visitor visas (B-1 and B-2) from enrolling in school. Students who entered the United States on a visitor visa should not plan to study. For more information, contact OIPS.
- Federal regulations prohibit F-2 spouses of F-1 students from engaging in full-time study, and F-2 children may engage in full-time study only from kindergarten through 12th grade. F-2 dependents may engage in study that is vocational or recreational in nature. F-2 dependents seeking to pursue full-time or degree study in the United States must change their status to F-1. For more information, contact OIPS.
- Students enrolled at the university in F-1 or J-1 nonimmigrant status must maintain full-time enrollment each fall and spring semester. For undergraduate students, this means 12 credit hours each semester. Full-time status for graduate students is defined by the Office of the University Registrar, and information can be found in the AP.6 Graduate Policies (<https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/academic/graduate-policies/>) section of this catalog. Because of this requirement, F-1 or J-1 international students do not qualify for part-time programs.
- Students in F-1 and J-1 status may enroll in online courses, but F-1 students may count only one online course toward full-time status. J-1 students may not count online courses toward full-time status. For the purpose of this regulation, an online course is one that the University Registrar defines as online, for which no significant requirements (such as attendance, examinations, etc.) must be fulfilled in person.
- Admission for international students is offered for fall (August) and spring (January) terms.
- Prospective students who seek to enter the United States in F-1 or J-1 immigration status, or who seek to attend Mason following attendance at another US school, must complete the Certificate of Financial Responsibility (CFR), which can be downloaded online (<https://admissions.gmu.edu/documents/internationalFinancialResponsibilityCertificate.pdf>). The form and financial support documents must be submitted to the Admissions Office with the application.
- Students already in the United States should submit copies of immigration documents verifying current nonimmigrant status. This documentation should be submitted with the application for admission.
- Prior to issuing an I-20 or DS-2019 form, the University is required to verify that a student has sufficient financial support to pay for both educational and living expenses. If source is a sponsor, confirmed funding must be documented for the first year of study, typically with a sponsor letter and current bank statement or a scholarship award letter or an assistantship offer. The source of funds for subsequent years must be shown, although for sponsored students a bank statement is required only for the first year. Students who are self-funded must show funds on deposit for the full term of their program. The CFR gives an estimate of annual expenses, including tuition, living expenses, and health insurance; and it also explains what type of documentation is accepted.
- All new students admitted to the university must submit an Immunization Record Form signed by a health care provider. Requirements, information and forms are available online (<https://shs.gmu.edu/immunizations/>).

- Financial sponsors who wish to be billed directly must provide a U.S. billing address. Mason does not bill third parties overseas. It is the student's responsibility to make sure tuition and fees are paid on time.

## **International Student Health Insurance**

University policy requires all F-1 and J-1 visa students to have health insurance. Federal law requires all students on a J-1 visa to have health insurance that includes coverage for medical evacuation and repatriation. Medical evacuation coverage pays for returning a seriously ill student to his or her home country. Repatriation coverage pays for returning a student's remains to his or her home country.

Mason offers health insurance for students on J-1 and F-1 visas. When international students register for classes, the cost of this coverage is automatically billed to their account by the Office of Student Accounts. This fee is due by the tuition payment due date. Failure to pay this insurance fee, or successfully obtain an exemption, may result in the cancellation of class registration. Late fees may be assessed if charges are not paid by the deadline established by the Student Accounts Office.

International students are required to purchase insurance for fall and spring/summer semesters. For exemption from international student health insurance, refer to the University Policy 6002 (<https://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/health-insurance-requirement-for-international-f-1-and-j-1-visa-students/>).