

GRADUATE ADMISSION POLICIES

Admission to graduate programs is competitive. Selection criteria differ by program and are established by departmental faculty. Applicants are evaluated on the strength of their academic background, results of standardized exams (if required by the program), work experience, and any additional evidence of potential success in the program. Each year, program faculty members determine the number of admission offers they may extend by the university resources available for their program.

Admission Standards

To be *considered* for degree status, the general university graduate admission requirements are as follows:

- **An earned baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education, or international equivalent, verified from official transcripts.** (For details, see Admission of International Students.) Expectation of an earned baccalaureate degree prior to the first day of classes for the term for which the student is applying will also meet this requirement. Students who are awaiting conferral of the degree will be permitted to register for their first semester. Enrollment, however, beyond the first semester in any graduate program requires an official transcript that verifies conferral of a bachelor's degree. Students enrolled in classes who have not submitted the required proof of degree will have a hold placed on their record. This hold, which will prevent future registration, will not be released until the proper documentation has been provided.
- **A minimum 3.00 GPA on a 4.00 scale in baccalaureate study.** The GPA requirement may be higher for some graduate programs. The university, at its discretion may, in evaluating the meeting of this requirement, additionally consider the difficulty of the baccalaureate degree, relevant work experience, or other evidence of ability to succeed in graduate study.
 - For students with post baccalaureate credits, a separate GPA is calculated for each institution.

International students should reference Admission of International Students for additional requirements.

Graduate Applications

Applicants should apply online (<http://www2.gmu.edu/admissions-aid/how-apply/graduate>). Applications for the Antonin Scalia Law School can be found online (<http://www.law.gmu.edu/admissions>).

Graduate applications are generally reviewed by the Admissions Committee only upon completion of the application, and submission of all supplemental materials as required by the program. At their discretion, the academic units may issue a decision before an application is complete. Applicants receive written notification of the official admission decision.

Graduate Application Requirements

For full consideration for graduate admission, applicants must submit the following:

- Completed online application for graduate study
- Nonrefundable application fee
- Application for Virginia In-State Tuition Rates, if claiming entitlement to these rates

- One unofficial transcript from all institutions previously attended. For information on how to submit unofficial transcripts, visit the website (<http://www2.gmu.edu/admissions-aid/how-apply/graduate>).
- Goals statement as required by the program
- Letters of recommendation as required by the program
- Other materials specified by the program, including official exam scores from Graduate Admission Exams (such as GRE or GMAT), departmental forms, portfolios, or interviews

Specific departmental admission requirements for degree-seeking students are listed in this catalog under the relevant discipline, with supplemental material requirements listed online (<https://www2.gmu.edu/admissions-aid/how-apply/graduate/application-deadlines-and-requirements>).

Applicants with international educational credentials earned outside of the US should read the Admission of International Students section for more information on required documentation and English Proficiency Standards.

Graduate Admission Exams

Most graduate programs use test scores as an additional measurement of an applicant's qualifications. The exams most often required by graduate programs include the GRE, GMAT, MAT and/or Praxis Core. Specific departmental admission requirements for degree-seeking students are listed in this catalog under the relevant discipline.

For information on how to submit graduate admission exam scores, visit the website (<http://www2.gmu.edu/admissions-aid/how-apply/graduate>).

English Proficiency Standards

Mason students participate in rigorous graduate coursework as part of their university educational experience. Therefore, students at Mason must have a full command of academic English at the graduate level in order to be successful throughout their studies. All new graduate students are expected to accurately comprehend written graduate-level English, clearly understand rapidly spoken English in classroom lectures and in professional settings, write with proper grammar and syntax, and be able to respond quickly in English using a vocabulary appropriate for collegiate settings.

For this reason, Mason has a high standard of English proficiency for graduate admission. All Mason graduate programs strictly require applicants to meet that English proficiency standard. Applicants who have earned a bachelors, masters, or doctoral degree from a regionally accredited university in the United States, Canada (excluding province of Quebec), Commonwealth Caribbean (Antigua, Barbuda, Belize, Cayman Islands, Dominica, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago), United Kingdom, Ireland, Australia, and New Zealand are considered to have met that standard. All other applicants are required to take an English proficiency examination and meet minimum scores set by Mason in order to be considered for admission. The TOEFL, Pearson Test of English, or IELTS exams can be used to meet this requirement.

For details on English proficiency requirements, see Admission of International Students. Individual programs reserve the right to set higher minimum scores and, therefore, their admission requirements in this catalog should be reviewed.

Self-Service Center

Mason provides all graduate applicants with an online Self-Service Center (SSC) at the point of the application submission. The SSC can be accessed online (<https://www2.gmu.edu/admissions-aid/how-apply/application-status>). Applicants are responsible for regularly reviewing the SSC for uploading many of the required items for their application and reviewing important information regarding their admission status.

E-mail

Mason uses the e-mail account provided at the point of application to communicate with applicants. Applicants should use this to communicate with the Office of Graduate Admissions, school/department/program and other administrative units, and check it regularly for important information regarding their admission application.

Offer of Admission

Applicants will be notified that a decision has been made on their application via their email. In order to view their official decision letter, applicants must log in to their online Self-Service Center. The offer of admissions will not be sent via postal mail. The offer of admission specifies the effective date of admission, category of admission offered, and name of the advisor or advising team assigned to the applicant. This offer is good only for the semester and program for which the applicant applies. The offer must be accepted by submitting an online Intent to Enroll form and a deposit, if required by the school, college or program. A denial of admission is not subject to appeal. Questions pertaining to admission waitlists should be directed to the appropriate college or school as policies vary by graduate program.

Right to Withdraw Offer

Mason reserves the right to withdraw offers of admission if applicants fail to satisfy all requirements or it is determined that admission was obtained through the use of incomplete, falsified, altered, or embellished information. In the case of withdrawal of admission from a matriculated student, credit earned at Mason may be withheld. Additionally, the university reserves the right to withdraw the offer of admission to any student based on cancellation of any test score required for admission.

Admission of Graduate Degree Holders

Those holding one or more graduate degrees may earn an additional graduate degree in another discipline. For admission to a second graduate degree program, students should submit an application, transcripts, and other documents as required by the second degree program. Course credits used to satisfy the degree requirements for the first graduate degree may not be used to satisfy the degree requirements for the second graduate degree. In programs with overlapping or similar requirements, students will be advised in the subsequent degree program regarding appropriate course substitutions for subjects already covered.

Provisional Admission

Provisional admission specifies requirements that must be met prior to graduation, as detailed below.

It is intended for those applicants who have provided evidence that suggests they are able to pursue graduate work but have not taken foundational or pre-requisite coursework requirements, or do not meet GPA minimum requirements.

A degree-seeking graduate applicant with a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education, or international equivalent, with a GPA below the minimum for the graduate program or missing specific foundational or pre-requisite coursework requirements may, at the discretion of the academic unit or program, be offered provisional admission if sufficient evidence is presented to suggest the applicant has the ability to pursue graduate work. As a first priority when starting the graduate program, a provisionally admitted student must satisfy the provisions of admission. Once the student has satisfied the provisions specified in the offer of admission and submitted all admission credentials, the provisional qualifier will be removed from the student's record. Written confirmation indicating the removal will be sent to the student from the academic unit, institute dean or director.

Provisionally required courses must be completed successfully, earning a grade of B or better, on the student's first attempt within the first 12 credits of enrollment (or a more restricted time frame specified by the department in the offer of provisional admission). Provisionally required courses may not be repeated. Students who do not complete these courses successfully will be terminated from the program. All applicants admitted provisionally are in degree-seeking status, and course work taken appears as part of their graduate-level transcript. Students in provisional status may not take courses in the consortium or elsewhere, or transfer graduate course work into their program until the provisions of admission have been met.

While the provision is in effect, graduate students whose registration includes undergraduate courses are considered full time if they meet the undergraduate standard by being registered in at least 12 credit hours per semester. For more information on full-time status, see the Student Classification sections in AP.5 Undergraduate Policies and AP.6 Graduate Policies of this catalog.

Conditional Admission

Conditional admission specifies requirements that must be met prior to enrollment, as detailed below.

It is intended for those applicants who do not meet the academic standards of admission but provide sufficient evidence to suggest the ability to pursue graduate work. Conditional admission cannot be offered to applicants who have not met minimum English language proficiency requirements as outlined in the English Proficiency Standards under Admission of International Students. It also may not be offered to applicants who do not have or will not earn a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education, or international equivalent. An applicant will not be fully admitted and allowed to enroll into the graduate program until meeting the conditions set for admission.

A graduate applicant who does not meet the minimum admission standards may, at the discretion of the academic unit or program, be offered conditional admission if sufficient evidence is presented to suggest that the applicant has the ability to pursue graduate work. Conditionally admitted students must satisfy the conditions of their admission prior to enrollment in courses. Once the student has satisfied the conditions specified in the conditional offer of admission and submitted all admission credentials, including test scores, the conditional offer of admission will be updated to full or provisional admission. Notification of full or provisional admission will be provided to the student in the form of an updated letter of admission from the Office of Graduate Admissions.

The conditional offer of admission will be withdrawn if the student does not meet the conditions within one academic year from the first day of

classes for the semester to which they applied (or a more restricted time frame specified by the program in the offer of admission).

Deferred Application Decision Pending Additional Coursework

Applicants are notified when action on an application has been deferred pending completion of courses that are prerequisite to graduate study in a chosen field. Applicants should notify the Office of Graduate Admissions in writing via email at masongrad@gmu.edu as soon as the prerequisites have been met. Applicants are responsible for furnishing unofficial transcripts confirming that prerequisite courses have been satisfactorily completed. Applicants have one academic year or less, dependent upon the program, to complete prerequisites. An admission decision cannot be made until these grades are received.

NOTE: The above admission decisions (provisional, conditional, and deferred pending additional coursework) are utilized at the discretion of each academic unit. Applicants should refer to the admissions website of the academic unit to which they are applying for further clarification on the types of admissions decisions that are made for their program of interest.

Deferral or Reconsideration of Admitted Students

The Office of Graduate Admissions, in coordination with the program of admission, will consider requests from admitted students to either defer enrollment or reconsider their application for a future term. Depending on program of admission, the applicant will either be granted a deferral or reconsideration.

A deferral is an automatic admission that does not require an applicant to go back through admissions review. A reconsideration is not an automatic admission and an applicant must go through admissions review again, regardless of previous decision.

Offers of funding are not guaranteed for deferrals or reconsiderations and are at the discretion of the program of admission.

All requests for deferral or reconsideration must be submitted using the directions in the Self-Service Center by the enrollment deadline listed in the student's offer of admission. Deferral or Reconsideration is granted only for a period of one full academic year (Ex. Fall to Fall) or less, with some programs having specific term restrictions for delaying enrollment. These restrictions, along with program by program information on deferrals and reconsideration, are listed online (<https://www2.gmu.edu/admissions-aid/how-apply/graduate/frequently-asked-questions>).

Reopening Incomplete Applications

The Office of Graduate Admissions will allow applicants to reopen submitted, but incomplete applications that never received an admission decision for the term of original application. An application may only be reopened for the original program to which the student applied. The reopened application must meet deadlines and requirements for the new term. This reopen is offered as a one-time courtesy without fee. Applications may be moved no further than one full academic year forward from the term of original application (Ex. Fall to Fall), with some programs having specific term restrictions for reopening an application. These restrictions are listed online (<https://www2.gmu.edu/admissions-aid/how-apply/graduate/frequently-asked-questions>). To request a

reopen the applicant may either email masongrad@gmu.edu or submit the request form in their Self-Service Center.

Records Maintenance and Disposal

All admissions documents, including academic records sent from other institutions, become part of the official university file. Admission credentials are retained for only 12 months. They are subsequently destroyed if applicants do not register for courses within the period for which the offer of admission is valid, have been denied admission, do not respond to requests for additional information, or fail to submit complete applications, including all official transcripts and test results.