

Application Process

A prospective applicant who has researched admissions requirements of the Graduate School at Mississippi State University and of the academic program of interest can apply online at <http://www.grad.msstate.edu/>.

Once all the required materials are received, the application is sent to the program for review. The Graduate Coordinator of a department/program recommends to the Graduate School that an applicant be admitted or rejected. The Academic Dean reviews admission decisions pertaining to applicants that do not meet the admission requirements of the University or program and the admission decision is forwarded to the Graduate School. The Dean of the Graduate School will review these cases and may consult the Academic Dean and program before a final admission letter is sent to the applicant. The Graduate School sends a letter to the applicant communicating the decision. Only a written notice of admission from the Graduate School to the applicant is valid proof of admission. Beginning in the Summer 2020 semester, decision letters will be posted to the applicant status portal.

An additional application for graduate admission, including the application and other requirements listed, must be submitted in the following instances:

- An individual admitted to a graduate degree program who wants to pursue a second graduate degree (requires approval from both Graduate Coordinators);
- An individual enrolled in a graduate degree program who decides to change to a different program (unless the change is allowed via the Change of Program Status Form); Note: An exception may be made if both degree programs are within the same department and the change is supported by the graduate coordinator of each program;
- An individual who was admitted to a program but did not enroll within three semesters (including semester of admission); or
- A student who has graduated with a degree and wishes to take another course or earn another graduate degree;
- An individual who has applied to a graduate degree program and decides to change to a different program before the application has been reviewed or before the Graduate School has released a decision;
- An individual who has applied for unclassified admission and decides to change to a graduate degree program (or vice versa).

New recommendation letters are generally required for students who are applying to a different program at MSU or reapplying to a program from which they have previously been rejected. Programs may waive the requirement for new letters of recommendation if desired. In this case, graduate coordinators may request that the Graduate School waive the requirement for new recommendation letters.

Applicants must also request any required test scores be sent to the Graduate School electronically. Additional information on TOEFL/IELTS requirements is presented in the English language Test Scores Requirements section.

It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that all supporting materials are received. The Graduate School requires applicants to use the online application process. All required materials not submitted electronically must be mailed to the following address:

Mississippi State University
The Graduate School
Box G
Mississippi State, MS 39762

University Application Deadlines

University deadlines are listed in the table below. All deadlines are at 11:59 PM (CST) unless otherwise stated. All dates and deadlines are subject to change. Some departments have different deadlines. Please refer to the departmental listings in this publication or the department's website for degree-specific admission deadlines. Because of anticipated delays in obtaining visas, international applicants are encouraged to submit admission materials by January 1 for consideration for the fall semester.

Semester	International Applicants Applying for Degree Programs or Unclassified Admission on Starkville and Meridian Campuses	Domestic Applicants Applying for Degree Programs on Starkville Campus	Domestic Applicants Applying for Degree Programs on Meridian Campus	Domestic Applicants Applying for Distance Degree Programs	International Applicants Applying For Distance Degree Programs	International-Distance Unclassified only; Domestic Unclassified on all Campuses
Fall	May 1	August 1	August 1	August 1	August 1	11:59 PM (CST) before the first day of class: see University Calendar for class dates

Spring	October 1	December 1	December 1	December 1	December 1	11:59 PM (CST) before the first day of class; see University Calendar for class dates
Summer	March 1	May 15	May 15	May 15	May 15	11:59 PM (CST) before the first day of class; see University Calendar for class dates

Application

The applicant is responsible for completing the application online at www.grad.msstate.edu/admissions (<http://www.grad.msstate.edu/admissions/>) and paying the non-refundable application fee (not required for full-time benefits-eligible MSU employees). The application process cannot be completed until the application fee has been paid. Applicants must also provide the names and e-mail addresses of three individuals who have agreed to recommend the applicant to graduate study. These individuals will subsequently receive an e-mail request from the Graduate School to submit their letter of recommendation through an online portal. Their timely response is critical to the application process.

Applicants must request an official transcript from the bachelor's degree granting institution and from each college or university attended following the bachelor's degree. If fewer than 60-70 hours were completed at the institution which awarded the bachelor's degree, official transcripts from previous institution(s) are required as well. The program may require previous transcripts to verify prerequisites. The official transcript must be in a sealed envelope bearing the institution's return address with the Registrar's signature or stamp across the flap. The Graduate School will accept electronic transcripts directly from Parchment or National Clearinghouse. Electronic transcripts sent by Parchment or National Clearinghouse should be sent to Mississippi State University, Graduate School.

International applicants must provide their transcripts in their native language with translated copies. Receipt of these transcripts must follow the same requirements as above. Additionally, a Documentation of Support Form and a Bank Letter or Document of Financial Support must be completed and sent directly to the MSU International Services Office, including all required signatures (these are not required if the applicant is applying to an online program). If admitted, students will be sent instructions for uploading financial documents through the International institute's online portal.

All international applicants must submit TOEFL or IELTS scores unless they are from a TOEFL/IELTS exempt country provided below:

TOEFL/IELTS Exempt Countries

Anguilla
Antigua and Barbuda
Australia
Bahamas
Barbados
Belize
Bermuda
British Virgin Islands
Canada (except Quebec)
Cayman Islands
Christmas Island
Dominica
Gambia
Ghana
Gibraltar
Grenada
Guyana
Northern Ireland
Republic of Ireland
Isle of Man
Jamaica
Liberia
Malawi
Malta
Micronesia
Montserrat
New Zealand
Nigeria

Pitcairn Islands
 Saint Helena, Saint Kits, and Saint Vincent
 Sierra Leone
 Swaziland
 Tanzania
 Trinidad and Tobago
 Turks and Caicos Islands
 Uganda
 England/Wales/United Kingdom

English-Language Test Score Requirements

An international student is not required to submit English language test scores, unless required by the program, if they meet one of the following criteria:

1. Holds one or more degrees (baccalaureate or higher) from a U.S. institution,
2. Holds one or more degrees (baccalaureate or higher) from a college or university in a country where English is the first language, or
3. Is from a country where English is the first language (as documented by a statement on the high school graduating certificate that English is the official [first] language of the country).
4. Holds one or more degrees (baccalaureate or higher) from a college or university where English is the medium of instruction (as documented by an official statement from the college or university).
5. The Graduate School will accept English proficiency scores taken within the past five years to process international students' applications. However, official scores must be provided directly from the TOEFL, IELTS, and PTE testing company. The Graduate School will also accept official scores provided by students' previous institution as a copy of the original score report or reported in a letter on an official letterhead. Those scores should be emailed directly to the Graduate School (gradapps@grad.msstate.edu). If student is unable to provide these scores, he/she will need to retake the English proficiency exam and provide new official scores. If the new scores are less than the required English proficiency, the student will be required to enroll in required ESL classes. **Note: The five year English language score policy is temporary and subject to change.**

An international applicant whose primary language is not English, and is not exempted by reasons above, must submit evidence of English language proficiency by means of an approved assessment. The two main assessments accepted by MSU are the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) score and IELTS (International English Language Testing Systems). Other assessments or proof of language proficiency, such as the PTE (Pearson Test of English), may be considered (contact the International Institute to determine if an English language proficiency test is acceptable). If more than one test score is submitted, the highest score will be the valid score used to determine if the applicant qualifies for regular admission or must complete ESL courses to gain full admission. The scores submitted must be from an official assessment taken no more than two years prior to application. If an applicant has submitted an official score and takes the test again to improve his or her score, that official score must be received by the Graduate School no later than five business days before the first day of class and **prior to course registration in a graduate program at Mississippi State University.**

A minimum TOEFL score of 53 iBT (Internet-Based Test) or IELTS score of 4.5 is required for admission to Mississippi State University. The following degree programs require higher test scores than the University requirement:

- The **College of Veterinary Medicine** requires a minimum TOEFL score of 61 iBT or IELTS score of 5.5.
- The **College of Education** requires a minimum TOEFL score of 79 iBT or IELTS score of 6.5 for admission to master's and doctoral level programs.
- The **College of Business** requires a minimum TOEFL score of 84 iBT or IELTS score of 7.0.

Applicants must check the requirements of the specific department offering the program for which he or she is applying to determine if there are other requirements. A student not holding a U.S. baccalaureate or higher degree must submit English proficiency scores that are not older than two years.

The following table describes the English language proficiency requirements for international graduate applicants. A student admitted with a score less than the proficient-level equivalencies must enroll in the specified English as a Second Language (ESL) course requirement(s) beginning with the initial enrollment period.

Mississippi State University does not accept ESL transfer work from another college or university. All required ESL courses must be taken at MSU.

A student admitted with less than the required English language proficiency will have a "hold" placed on their account that limits their ability to register for courses. The International Institute/English Institute (II/ELI) is responsible for managing English language holds. Students with a hold will complete a "TOEFL Hold" registration form with the help of their major professor/advisor and then submit it to the II/ELI each semester they are enrolled in ESL classes in order to be registered. The II/ELI will release the hold when the student has successfully completed all their ESL requirements. Once the hold is released, the student can register for courses through MyState.

English Language Test Score Requirements

TOEFL iBT	IELTS	Admission Eligibility	Outcome
79 and above	6.5 and above	Eligible for admission for any term and a graduate assistantship	Considered proficient in English. Applicant is not required to enroll in an ESL course unless his/her academic program requires a higher test score.
69-78	6.0-6.4	Eligible for admission for Fall, Spring, or Summer and a graduate assistantship.	Scores indicate a need for assistance in English writing, research, and editing skills. Applicant must enroll in ESL 5323 Academic Research and Writing (graded on a Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory basis). Student may enroll in up to 6 credit hours in his/her graduate program.
61-68	5.5-5.9	Eligible for admission for the Fall term only. Not eligible for a graduate assistantship until ESL requirements are met.	Applicant is required to enroll in ESL 5120, a 9-hour intensive English course (graded on a Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory basis). The student must complete this course prior to registering for courses in his/her graduate program. The student must pass the English Proficiency Exam consisting of grammar, reading, writing, oral, and aural skills, and must attend the English immersion class for one semester. The student must then enroll in ESL 5323.
54-60	4.6-5.4	Eligible for admission for the Fall term only. Not eligible for a graduate assistantship until ESL requirements are met.	Applicant is required to enroll in ESL 5110, an intensive English course (graded on a Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory basis). The student cannot enroll in courses in his/her program until ESL 5110 and ESL 5120 have been successfully completed. The student completes the course once he/she passes the English Proficiency Exam, has attended the English immersion class regularly for at least one semester, and has done satisfactory work. The student must then complete ESL 5120 before proceeding to enroll in ESL 5323.
53 and below	4.5 and below	Not eligible for admission to the Graduate School.	Applicant can enroll in the English Language Institute on a non-credit basis after which he/she can retake the English-language test in preparation for submitting another application to graduate study at MSU.

Required Measles/Rubella Immunization

In cooperation with the Mississippi State Department of Health and for the protection of our University community, Mississippi State University requires new students, including transfers, born after 1956 to provide proof of immunity of measles and rubella. A student will not be allowed to register for classes until this requirement has been met. Prior enrollment at MSU does not automatically clear a student from immunization updates. This proof consists of **one** of the following:

1. Documented history of *two* doses of measles vaccine and one of rubella, usually given as MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella). The first of these immunizations **MUST** have been given **AFTER** 12 months of age and **AFTER** 1968. Immunizations given prior to the age of 12 months or before 1968 are not valid.
2. Serologic confirmation of immunity to measles AND rubella (must be confirmed by laboratory report).
3. Documented history of physician-diagnosed measles and rubella.

Temporary waivers are available for pregnant women with a physician's letter of confirmation and expected date of confinement, or women suspecting pregnancy.

Permanent waivers are given for the following groups of students.

1. Born before January 1, 1957, or
2. Provide documented proof of a significant life-threatening allergic reaction to this particular vaccine (requires documentation of reaction), or
3. With a disease that will cause a permanent contraindication to immunization (requires documentation of disease).

A student can confirm his/her status with Longest Student Health Center by emailing health@msstate.edu or by calling 662-325-0706. Additional information regarding this requirement is available at <http://www.health.msstate.edu> (<http://www.health.msstate.edu>).