

International Students

Applications

Prospective graduate students apply electronically at <http://www.grad.msstate.edu>. Effective January 2013, applications will not be processed until the application fee has been paid. The statement of purpose is also submitted electronically, as well as the résumé, if one is required by the academic department. To fulfill the recommendation requirement, the applicant will submit the names and email addresses of three people who have agreed to submit a recommendation and these individuals will receive an email request from the Graduate School. Their timely response is critical to the student's application process.

An applicant must request an official transcript from the bachelor's degree 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, an official transcript from the previous institution(s) is required as well. The department 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 Escript. Electronic transcripts sent by Escript should be sent to Mississippi State University, Graduate School.

Some departments may have different deadlines; please refer to the departmental listings in this publication for degree specific admission deadlines. Because of anticipated delays in obtaining visas, applicants are encouraged to submit admission materials by January 1 for consideration for the fall semester. Applicants should request official transcripts from all institutions where undergraduate or graduate coursework has been completed. 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.

Completed applications received after the final deadline dates will not be guaranteed admission consideration for the desired academic terms. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that all supporting materials are received. Graduate applicants must apply online and can access the application at <http://www.grad.msstate.edu>. All required materials not submitted electronically must be mailed to:

Office of the Graduate School
Box G
Mississippi State, MS 39762

International Application Checklist

- Application
- \$60.00 non-refundable application fee
- Statement of Purpose
- Names and email addresses of three academic references
- GRE or GMAT scores if required by academic department
- Official Academic Records (in native language along with translated copies if appropriate)
- Document of Support Form must be completed, including all required signatures (not required if applying for a distance program)
- Bank Letter or other Document of Financial Support (not required if applying for a distance program)
- TOEFL or IELTS Score

English Language Test Score Requirements

An international student holding one or more degrees (baccalaureate or higher) from a college or university in the U.S. is not required to submit English language test scores for admission.

An international student 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**, and who holds one or more degrees (baccalaureate or higher) from a college or university where English is the first language is not required to submit English language test scores. However, the student's academic department may require the student to schedule one or more ESL (English as a Second Language) courses.

An international student whose primary language is not English, as described above, must submit **either** a TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) score or an IELTS (International English Language Testing Systems) score (per Graduate Council, January 2008). A total of two TOEFL or IELTS scores will be accepted per application, and **both must be submitted prior to course registration in a graduate program at Mississippi State University**. If two test scores are submitted, the higher score will be the valid score to determine if the student qualifies for regular admission or must complete ESL courses to gain full admission (per Graduate Council, August 2010). The applicant can submit only one type of test score (TOEFL **OR** IELTS).

An international applicant to Unclassified graduate status (non-degree-seeking) who is not from a country where English is the first language or who does not hold a baccalaureate or higher degree from a college or university where English is the first language must submit an appropriate TOEFL or IELTS score.

A minimum TOEFL score of 477 PBT (Paper-Based Test) or 153 CBT (Computer-Based Test) or 53 iBT (Internet-Based Test) is required for admission to Mississippi State University. The required IELTS score is 4.5. Some degree programs require higher test scores. Exceptions to the University required score include the following programs:

- The **College of Veterinary Medicine** requires a minimum TOEFL score of 500 PBT or 173 CBT or 61 iBT or an IELTS score of 5.5.
- The **College of Education** requires a minimum TOEFL score of 550 PBT or 213 CBT or 79 iBT or an IELTS score of 6.5 for admission to master's and doctoral level programs.
- The **College of Business** requires a minimum TOEFL score of 575 PBT or 233 CBT or 84 iBT or an IELTS score of 7.0.

The applicant should check the requirements of the specific department.

Effective January 1992, the following requirements were established to satisfy the English language proficiency for international graduate students. A student admitted to the University with a national TOEFL or IELTS 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.

I. An international applicant whose English-language test score falls within the following ranges is eligible for admission and award of a graduate assistantship.

- An applicant who attains a national TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) score of 550 PBT or 213 CBT or 79 iBT or an IELTS (International English Language Testing System) score of 6.5 is considered **proficient in English**. If the academic department requires a higher test score, the applicant must attain the higher score or be admitted contingent on satisfying this University requirement. **The applicant can be considered for admission for Spring, Summer or Fall terms.**
- An applicant with either a TOEFL score **between** 547-523 PBT or 210-193 CBT or 78-69 iBT or an IELTS of 6.0 will be required to enroll in ESL 5323 Academic Research and Writing. This course is designed for international graduate students whose test score indicates a need for assistance in English writing, research, and editing skills. The course is graded on a Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory basis. The student required to take ESL 5323 can also enroll in up to 6 credit hours in his/her graduate program. (Change of EN 1103 to ESL 5323 effective January 2005 per Graduate Council.) **The applicant can be considered for admission for Spring, Summer or Fall terms.**

II. An international applicant whose English-language test score falls within the following ranges is eligible for admission but is not eligible for award of a graduate assistantship until the English-language requirements of ESL 5110 and/or ESL 5120 are satisfied.

- An applicant with either a TOEFL score **between** 520-500 PBT or 190-173 CBT or 68-61 iBT or an IELTS score of 5.5 is required to enroll in **ESL 5120**, a 9-hour intensive English course designed by the English as a Second Language Center. This course is graded on a Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory basis. The student cannot register for courses in his/her graduate program while completing this required course. A student enrolled in ESL 5120 will complete the course when he/she passes the English Proficiency Exam consisting of grammar, reading, writing, oral, and aural skills; has attended the English immersion class regularly for at least one semester; and has done satisfactory work. The student is then eligible to enroll in ESL 5323 Academic Research and Writing.
- A qualified student with either a TOEFL score between 497-477 PBT or 170-153 CBT or 59-53 iBT or an IELTS score of 5-4.5 is required to enroll in ESL 5110, an intensive English language course especially designed by the English as a Second Language Center. This course is graded on a Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory basis. The student cannot register for courses in his/her graduate program while completing this requirements. A student enrolled in ESL 5110 will complete the course when he/she passes the English Proficiency Exam consisting of grammar, reading, writing, oral, and aural skills, has attended the English immersion class regularly for at least one semester, and has done satisfactory work. Such student must then complete ESL 5120 (a 9-hour immersion course) and, subsequently, ESL 5323. **The applicant can be considered for admission for Fall term only.**

III. An applicant whose TOEFL score is below 477 PBT or 153 CBT or 53 iBT or whose IELTS score is 4.5 is not eligible for admission to the Graduate School.

This individual can enroll in the ESL Center on a non-credit basis after which he/she can retake the English-language test in preparation for another application to graduate study at MSU.

The Dean of the Graduate School will monitor the students' progress and certify each graduate student as he or she fulfills the English proficiency requirements. A hold is placed on the student's record and is released when the required ESL coursework is completed. Until release of the hold, the student must meet with his/her advisor to establish a semester schedule of courses. This schedule must immediately be submitted to the Office of the Graduate School by the student or major professor using the TOEFL-Hold Registration Form found at http://www.grad.msstate.edu/forms/pdf_forms/TOEFL.pdf. The OGS will ensure that the student is registered for all classes. Once the hold is released, the student can self-register for classes.

English-Language Test Scores and Requirements

Score	Requirement
550 PBT or 213 CBT or 79 iBT (TOEFL) or 6.5 (IELTS) ¹	Eligible for regular admission; no ESL course required. Assistantship can be awarded.
547-523 PBT or 210-193 CBT or 78-69 iBT (TOEFL) or 6 (IELTS) ²	Eligible for admission; ESL 5323 required. Assistantship can be awarded.

520-500 PBT or 190-173 CBT or 68-61 iBT (TOEFL) or 5.5 (IELTS) ³	Eligible for admission; ESL 5120 and ESL 5323 required. Assistantship cannot be awarded.
497-477 PBT or 170-153 CBT or 59-53 iBT (TOEFL) or 5-4.5 (IELTS) ⁴	Eligible for admission; ESL 5110, ESL 5120, and ESL 5323 required. Assistantship cannot be awarded.
ESL 5110 Below 477 PBT or 153 CBT or 53 iBT (TOEFL) or 4.5 (IELTS) ⁵	Ineligible for admission.

- ¹ Eligible for Regular Admission for Spring, Summer, or Fall terms.
- ² Eligible for Admission with TOEFL/IELTS Hold. May be considered for Spring, Summer, or Fall terms.
- ³ Eligible for Admission with a TOEFL/IELTS hold. May be considered for Spring or Fall terms only.
- ⁴ Eligible for Admission with TOEFL/IELTS hold. May be considered for Fall term only.
- ⁵ Ineligible for admission.

International Transfer Students' Test Score Requirements

An international student not holding a U.S. degree (baccalaureate or higher) who desires to transfer to Mississippi State University from another U.S. college or university and does not have a current (less than two years old) national test score must retake the test and score a minimum of 477 PBT or 153 CBT or 53 iBT on the TOEFL or 4.5 on the IELTS.

Conditional Admission Policy for International Applicants Who Do Not Meet English Language Test Score Requirements

A prospective international applicant who meets all requirements but has no TOEFL or IELTS score may be admitted conditionally into Graduate School if, after one year of ESL study at MSU, the student passes the required language test and attains full admission to the graduate program. Students accepted under this conditional admission policy would have been admitted by a department by meeting all other requirements for admission. These students are initially allowed to take only ESL classes and are placed on hold to prevent registration for other courses. The applicant can only receive full admission to the Graduate School after completing the ESL requirements (per Graduate Council, November 2010). **Conditionally-admitted students can be admitted only for a Fall semester to ensure completion of the required ESL within one academic year.**

English as a Second Language (ESL) Center

The ESL Center, part of the International Institute, is responsible for the administration of the English language courses. The courses offered by the ESL Center are taught by faculty members of Mississippi State University. International applicants who complete all levels at the MSU ESL Center may submit a certificate of completion with their Graduate School application in place of English language test scores (per Graduate Council, February 2008).