



Young Applicants

"Megaron, as a young applicant (24 years old), I was wondering what is the minimum number of years of experience necessary to apply for a Top MBA Program in the US. What are the tradeoffs involved in being a young candidate?"



It is worth mentioning a new trend in accepting students right after their college graduation. See [HBS 2+2 Program](#). Nevertheless, few applicants (2-3%) get acceptance right after graduating from college. Most MBA (US) students have on average four years of professional experience.

B-School	Average Age	Average Work Experience (months)
Stanford	n/a	52
Harvard	27	54
Chicago	29	57
Columbia	28	58
Duke	28	60
Tuck	28	60
Kellogg	28	62
Michigan	28	64
MIT Sloan	28	65
Wharton	29	83
INSEAD	29	58
LBS	28	61
IMD	31	87

Classes of 2005



But the information "years of experience" varies from student to student.



Sure. The number of years of experience does not say much about the kind of experience - if you can reveal exceptional impact in your assignments and show progression and increasing on-the-job responsibility, you can apply before accumulating four years of experience. Also, you should consider how unique a candidate you are. If, for example, you are a physician, probably a couple of years will do.



Sure.



The age of MBA students is an area in which the approach varies from school to school. Older students usually bring in more business experience. Younger students, on the other hand, often have better GMAT scores and undergraduate records. Some schools hope that the former will help increase the school's GMAT average, which would consequently make them go from attractive to strong applicants. Younger students also have less to lose by choosing a two-year rather than a one-year program. Other schools deliberately seek older applicants: "We could not run our program," says Mr. Lorange, "if there was not all this experience" (the average IMD student is 31, info 2005).