

5 Questions You Must Ask Yourself Before Pursuing A Degree Abroad

5 Tips Before Choosing a Graduate School

Do you want to pursue your dreams of studying abroad?

Like several other aspiring youths, you must have nursed the thought of pursuing your dream masters degree abroad because of the immense opportunities that you stand to gain. You, like many others, are however stuck on the right steps to take.

Applying for a graduate school without any form of experience or guidance can be daunting and frustrating. At The Guide, we know exactly how stressful this process can be but after helping hundreds of aspiring seekers like you get their dream programs, we've got some really helpful tips for you.

By correctly answering the questions below, we believe you're just one step away from securing admission to the great program you truly want and deserve.

1. Are You Really Ready For Graduate School?

Before applying to a school, I presume you already have a course and degree you would like to enrol for, be it MBA, MA, MS or PhD. If not, you're still on track. You need to ask yourself if you really need to further your study. However, this is dependent on your long term career goal.

For example, depending on the program, you necessarily don't need to have a Masters degree if your goal is to be a well-known academic or researcher. You can apply directly with your Bachelor degree provided you've got great grades. For a professional career, considering a Masters is the better option.

2. Is Funding Available?

The most important factor after your personal dedication and achievements is funds, then, funds, then, funds. In short, your dream depends on this. If you're rich enough to pay your tuition and additional fees, Good luck! Else, you have to take your time and think about it. The average student loan debt in the US

and U.K is about \$32,000. You should have an idea of how long it will take to clear such debt. Besides, immigration officials like to see that you're funded and you won't be a liability during your program.

Luckily, you don't have to opt for a loan. A lot of graduate programs offer partial or full funding to their admission seekers. Work towards securing a scholarship or graduate assistantship that can offer a tuition waiver, some with additional stipends that cover your living expenses. Once you've decided on how to fund your studies, you can now think about choosing a school.

3. Do You Have All The Required Documents?

To apply for graduate school, there are documents you should have readily available if you want a smooth graduate admission application process.

Some of these documents are:

- i. Academic Transcripts
- ii. Degree certificate*
- iii. Transcript Evaluation (By a reputable international credential evaluation body e.g NACES - National Association of Credential Evaluation Services or WES - World Education Services)*
- iv. CV/ Resume
- v. Test scores (GRE/ GMAT/TOEFL/IELTS)*
- vi. Statement of purpose, SOP/ Personal statement/ Research statement/ Motivation letter
- vii. Letter of recommendation, LOR
- viii. Sponsor reference letter**
- ix. Bank statement**

* - Optional for some schools

** - Avoid schools that request for them if you don't have funds or a sponsor with sufficient amounts.

4. Have You Checked The Requirements Of The Program?

Check the requirements of the program and details of the school. Each program has its own requirement. Basically, you are to check if your CGPA is up to the required one. You might need to convert your CGPA to the school's format. Other requirements as stated in question 2 would be listed too. You should compare them all before deciding if you're a good fit. Should you find any information

missing, kindly contact the program coordinator. There's always an email address available and their help goes a long way in making your decision. Although it might take time, you'll surely get a response.

When drafting an email inquiry, you can provide an overview of your profile and ask if you're a good fit. You can also ask about the availability of scholarships and financial aids too.

Also, each school has its own reputation. Some are excellent in engineering, some in biological sciences and so on. A school's reputation can trigger your decisions. They are also tougher to get admitted in than others, so you have to put in your best.

5. Do You Have A Guide/Mentor?

Have a good, experienced guide(s) or mentor(s) to facilitate your applications. Going through the whole process can be tasking and frustrating so having someone who has gone through such a process before can be really helpful. If you have difficulty finding one, there are tons of resources built for this purpose.

Connect with like minds, join group chats, and always ask questions when in doubt. Always.

Finally, do not relent!

At The Guide, we're committed to connecting international students to amazing opportunities that help them achieve their career and immigration goals. And as an aspiring student, we care about you.

We're building a product that would help you efficiently track your admission applications, discover amazing resources and guides, track your admission applications and lots more.

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