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Admissions

Will I qualify for admission with a three-year undergraduate degree?

The Admissions Office accepts applications from candidates with a three-year degree. Those applications are reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

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May I submit my application if I have not yet taken the GMAT and / or TOEFL?

Self-reported GMAT and TOEFL scores must be submitted with the application by the deadline. Scores will be verified after admission to the program.

GMAT scores are valid for five years. Your GMAT score must be valid up through the start of your MBA studies at Columbia Business School. For example, for January 2011 entry, GMAT scores must be dated January 9, 2006, or more recently. For September 2011 entry, GMAT scores must be dated August 21, 2006, or more recently.

TOEFL scores are valid for two years. Your TOEFL score must be valid up through the start of your MBA studies at Columbia Business School. For example, for January 2011 entry, TOEFL scores must be dated January 9, 2009, or more recently. For September 2011 entry, TOEFL scores must be dated August 21, 2009, or more recently.

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How do I schedule an interview?

Interviews are conducted by invitation only; they cannot be requested by applicants. Invitations may be extended at any point in the application review process. The Admissions Office will contact you if you are selected for an interview.

Interviews are usually conducted by an alumnus or alumna in or near your hometown. If one is not available, you will be invited to interview via telephone with a current student in the School's Hermes Society. Please be aware that your interviewer will not be familiar with the details of your application.

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My transcript(s) and / or letter(s) of recommendation are not in English. What should I do?

Materials that are not in English must be transcribed by an official transcription agency and notarized. The School does not provide referrals to such agencies. Please submit both the original documents and the translations to the Admissions Office.

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After submitting my application, when will I receive a decision?

In a given application season, the Admissions Office will begin reviewing January and September Early Decision applications once all required materials have been received, and will begin reviewing September Regular Decision applications in December, again, once all required materials have been received. We work to release decisions in a timely manner and decisions can be rendered at any time. Please note that an invitation to interview may extend the review process beyond our 8-12 week goal.

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After admission, can I request deferral to a future term?

As a matter of policy, Columbia Business School does not defer admitted students to a future term.

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If I've been denied admission, may I receive feedback on my candidacy?

The admissions office does not offer individual feedback on denied applications. The Admissions Committee understands well the enormous commitment of time and energy that applying to business school represents. For a self assessment of your application you can look [here](#).

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If I've been denied admission, may I appeal the decision?

Columbia Business School is well aware of the depth of investment applicants make while participating in our selection process. Accordingly, the Admissions Committee reviews each candidacy with great care and thoughtful consideration. The review process is extremely thorough, and all decisions are final. There is no process for appeal.

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Do you have any advice for reapplicants?

Please note that candidates may only apply **once** for each term of entry. *Candidates may not apply twice to the same term of entry.* Before reapplying, candidates are urged to seek to strengthen their applications in any way possible. If you are considering a reapplication, please review the entering [class profile](#) (PDF) and consider the ways in which you might strengthen your candidacy. Consider the following:

- Significant change in your responsibilities at work
- Improved GMAT and / or TOEFL scores
- Refinement of your career goals
- New recommendations
- New interests pursued outside of work

If you are planning to reapply at or before the one-year mark, you may use our [reapplication checklist](#) to guide your process.

If you are planning to reapply after the one-year mark, please be aware of the following:

- You must file a complete application, including all transcripts, score reports, recommendations, essays, etc.
- GMAT scores are valid for five years; TOEFL scores are valid for two years.
- The Admissions Office will not be able to pull your file or any parts of your file from an archive.

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I cannot obtain a financial guarantee statement. What do I need it for?

It is optional until you are admitted, but it will be required to obtain your I-20 (visa).

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Do you offer an Executive MBA?

Yes. Please visit the [Executive MBA Programs](#) website for more information.

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Do I need to take the TOEFL?

International students whose native language is not English must take the TOEFL. You may be exempted from the TOEFL if you have earned a degree from an institution based in a country in which English is the sole official language **and** at which the official language of instruction is English. For example, if you earned a degree from an institution in India where the language of instruction was English, you still must take the TOEFL since, according to the Indian government, the primary official language in India is Hindi. Please see http://india.gov.in/knowindia/official_language.php.

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May I request a fee waiver?

Fee waivers are available to full-time students, military personnel, and to members of the Peace Corps and Teach for America who are currently in service. When applying, applicants requesting a fee waiver should select the "Check" payment option when submitting the application. Applicants who qualify for a fee waiver should fax a fee waiver request letter to 212-662-6754 and should explain their need for a fee waiver in the Optional Essay. Please allow up to three weeks for an update to your online status confirming that your fee waiver has been approved.

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Academics

Do you accept transfer credits?

Columbia Business School does not accept transfer credits. During new-student orientation enrolling students may elect to take exemption exams for core courses. Students who pass an exemption exam are permitted to choose an elective in place of the corresponding core course, but each student must complete at least 60 credits of course work at Columbia Business School.

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How many credits are required to complete the MBA program?

Students must complete a total of 60 Credits in order to graduate from the MBA Program at Columbia Business School. Students typically enroll in 5 classes each semester for 4 semesters of study. Each full term course is worth 3 credits; half term courses are worth 1.5 credits.

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Tuition / Financial Aid

What are my financing options?

Financing options refer to the money to help you pay for your graduate

education. Your primary source of funding will be through federal and/or credit-based education loans. Typically, a Columbia Business School financial aid package will include a combination of federal and/or private loans and, if eligible, fellowship and scholarship support.

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What types of financial aid are available, and who is eligible to apply?

Columbia Business School offers need-based scholarships, merit-based fellowships, and federal and private loans. Domestic students (US citizens and permanent residents) are eligible to apply for need-based scholarships, merit fellowships, and all loans. International students are eligible to apply for merit-based fellowships, need-based scholarships, and private loans with a creditworthy US cosigner.

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Is graduate education affordable?

Yes, but the affordability of a graduate education is a personal decision. While financing is available, loans are more readily accessible than grants or scholarships.

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What is the cost of attendance?

The cost of attendance is the maximum amount of financial aid and other aid a student can receive during the academic year. The number includes the cost of tuition, fees, and moderate living expenses. You can find an up-to-date breakdown of our cost of attendance (or budget) in the [Financial Aid](#) section of our website.

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How are fellowships awarded at Columbia Business School?

Columbia Business School fellowships for first-year students are merit-based and awarded on the strength of a candidate's entire application. Merit fellowships can be awarded at the time of admission or at any point thereafter. No special application forms are required.

Fellowships are awarded only to students who begin the MBA Program in the fall term; students in the School's January MBA Program are not eligible for fellowship support. All admitted students who apply by the [fellowship deadline](#) and who select the fellowship consideration option in their application are considered. One may not apply for individual fellowships.

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Is there an income limit for need-based consideration?

There is no set limit; however, need parameters are very stringent and include consideration of all available resources (including cash, savings, investments, IRA and 401(k) accounts, trust funds, real estate equity, G.I. and Social Security benefits, income of student and spouse, and income tax refunds), as well as prior educational debt levels.

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Is there financial aid available to international students?

International students may be considered for merit-based fellowships for the September entry. To be considered for a fellowship, you must submit a complete admissions application by the [fellowship deadline](#) and select the fellowship consideration option in the application. There is a limited amount of financial aid available in the form of fellowships. Awards are given on the basis of merit, and competition for fellowships is significant.

Need-based scholarships are also available to those who qualify. Amounts can range between \$4,000 - \$10,000 per academic year. Additional information on how to apply is located on the Admitted Students website.

Foreign citizens can apply for a private loan to cover the cost of attendance with a creditworthy US or permanent resident co-borrower ONLY.

Teaching assistantships are not a part of the financial aid package and are not available to incoming students. Most international students rely on family funds, personal savings, government or company sponsorships, and / or loans secured in their home countries. For more details, see the [Financial Aid](#) section of our website.

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When do I apply for loans and scholarships?

You should apply for loans and scholarships after you are admitted to the MBA Program. Based on your admission date, you will have a specific deadline for

scholarship applications. To expedite the application process, we encourage you to prepare your tax return early and complete the FAFSA (domestic applicants only) as soon as possible.

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If I get a scholarship for my first year, will it renew automatically for the second year?

No, most merit awards are renewable but all need-based grants must be applied for annually. The deadline for continuing students is April 15.

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What is Columbia Business School's Title IV FAFSA code?

Our school code is 002707.

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What is the FAFSA used for?

The [FAFSA \(Free Application for Federal Student Aid\)](#) is a required supporting document for the scholarship application, as well as any federal loan applications. It is used to determine eligibility for the subsidized portion of the Federal Direct Loan.

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What is the average amount of need-based scholarships?

Scholarship amounts vary for each student; however, the award is typically in the \$4,000-\$10,000 range.

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Are grants or scholarships taxable?

The Tax Reform Act of 1986 states that grant assistance is taxable income to the extent that it exceeds tuition, required education fees, and course-related expenses. Course-related expenses are defined as those for books, supplies, and equipment required for your courses. For nonresident aliens, the University is required to withhold federal income tax on grants received in excess of the expenses described above.

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Are there any other outside sources that I should consider?

You should determine whether any organization to which you belong might have aid funds available. Support is often available from religious, fraternal or athletic organizations, clubs, veteran groups, ethnic groups, unions, employers, rotary clubs, etc. For your convenience, the School has identified several [outside scholarship sources](#) as well as [other resources](#) on our website.

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Once admitted, how do I defer my outstanding student loans?

Columbia Business School is a member of the National Student Clearinghouse. Once you are a registered student, your information will be sent directly to the clearinghouse and reported to your lender(s). You can also obtain a certificate of registration from the Columbia University Registrar's Office to forward to your lender.

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Other questions?

If you have other questions, please [contact us](#).

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