Thank you for your interest in our graduate programs!

We receive a number of applications from international candidates. To help ensure our international applicants are fully aware of our application requirements along with scholarship criteria, we are sharing the following answers to questions we frequently receive, for your reference.

1. **What are the advantages for international students applying for STEM programs?**

International students pursuing STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) degrees benefit from eligibility for the Optional Practical Training (OPT) program. This program allows them to work in the United States for up to three years after graduation. During this time, their employers may sponsor them for work visas, opening the door to long-term employment opportunities in the U.S. Therefore, STEM programs are highly attractive to many international students, enhancing their education and vastly improving their career prospects in the United States.

1. **Do we offer waivers for the application fee?**

The $75 application fee is a mandatory requirement set by the Graduate School, and all applicants are expected to pay this fee for their applications to be processed and considered. While we occasionally have promotional periods that may include application fee waivers, these are not the norm.

1. **Do international candidates qualify for** **scholarships?**

Yes, all applicants for our Full-Time programs are considered for a scholarship.

1. **Do we offer full scholarships?**

No, the maximum scholarship we offer represents approximately 15% of tuition for international candidates.

1. **Can I work on campus?**

International students are permitted to work up to 20 hours per week on campus while enrolled for full-time coursework. So you may also seek employment on campus once school starts. Most on-campus jobs pay $12-$20 per hour. The student employment center assists students in finding job opportunities on campus. More information:   [https://ukjobs.uky.edu](https://nam04.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fukjobs.uky.edu%2F&data=05%7C01%7Crickmason%40uky.edu%7Cf1b589b5e6b8425124b008daf32504b9%7C2b30530b69b64457b818481cb53d42ae%7C0%7C0%7C638089637566089320%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=7imE2TDl743vrXbzcvWmvpgLVt5IoM4neqBiXikoS2A%3D&reserved=0)

1. **Is English proficiency required?**

Yes, all international applicants are required by the Graduate School to provide proof of English proficiency unless he/she has graduated from a 4-year US institution. Acceptable tests that can be considered to meet the English proficiency are: TOEFL (79), IELTS (6.5) and Duolingo (115). To learn more please visit the Graduate School website, <https://gradschool.uky.edu/admissions>. If you have taken the TOEFL, IELTS, or Duolingo exam, you need to have your test scores sent directly from the official testing center to the Graduate School of the University of Kentucky.

1. **Can the English proficiency test be waived?**

Waivers for the English proficiency test requirement may be granted to candidates who have obtained their bachelor's degrees from U.S. universities or institutions where all instruction was conducted in English. To be considered for a waiver, the institution (rather than the individual applicant) must submit a formal letter confirming that English was the language of instruction throughout the candidate's studies. Candidates should arrange for their institution's registrar's office to send this letter of attestation directly to the University of Kentucky Graduate School at gradtranscripts@uky.edu, with copies forwarded to yingnan.song@uky.edu and the applicant themselves.

1. **What educational background is required?**

Applicants must have obtained a bachelor’s degree that is equivalent to a US four-year institution prior to the start of the program from a fully credited US institution of higher learning or from a recognized foreign institution which is determined by the University of Kentucky’s Graduate School.

1. **Do I have to be enrolled full time?**

The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) requires you to be enrolled full time (9 credits) each academic semester, except during the semester you are graduating, when you need to enroll only for the credits still needed.

1. **What if my GPA is not on a 4.0 scale? Should I re-calculate my GPA so it is on a 4.0 scale?**

Our admissions process requires a minimum GPA of 2.75 on a 4.0 scale. For students unsure about how to convert their GPA to the US grading system, we recommend using the GPA calculator available at <https://www.scholaro.com/> for self-reporting purposes. Upon receiving an offer of admission and deciding to enroll, you will be obliged to provide official transcripts to the Graduate School.

Alternatively, your transcripts can be submitted to [WES.org](https://www.wes.org/) or [SPANTRAN](https://spantran.com/about-us#:~:text=As%20a%20member%20of%20NACES,field%20of%20foreign%20credential%20evaluation) (both are NACES approved organizations). These services will verify your academic records and provide us with an evaluation of your transcripts according to the US grading scale. We accept evaluation reports from WES or SPANTRAN, organizations committed to assisting international students, immigrants, and refugees in the United States and Canada.

Should you obtain an official evaluation from WES or SPANTRAN, please ensure it is sent directly from their official websites to the University of Kentucky Graduate School. It is important that the evaluation includes a copy of your transcripts. Additionally, please verify with your Admissions Officer that they have received your report. Admissions Officers are assigned according to the applicant's last name, and you can find their contact information here: <https://gradschool.uky.edu/admissions-officers-0>

1. **Is there a specific number or percentage of students admitted from each country?**

We embrace a global perspective in our admissions process and do not adhere to a fixed number or percentage of students from any particular country. Our vibrant classes typically include 10-30% international students, reflecting our commitment to a diverse and inclusive academic community.

1. **How many students on campus are from my country?**

https://international.uky.edu/global-footprint/international-student-enrollment

1. **Do you have** **conditional acceptance letter for international students?**

Yes, we do issue a conditional acceptance letter to international students when the Graduate School has not yet received your official transcripts. To convert your conditional offer to a full offer, it is essential that you submit your official transcripts to gradtranscripts@uky.edu. After submitting your transcripts, please notify the admissions officers of your intention to change your conditional offer to a full offer. The admissions team will then proceed with the necessary adjustments.

1. **What type of visa do I need?**

When an international student is admitted to the University, our international center issues a document called the I-20. The student uses this document to apply for the F-1 visa at the U.S. Consulate nearest to them. Some students who already have a visa (such as an H or L visa) may choose not to change to the F-1 visa.

1. **How to apply I-20 and when will I receive it?**

I-20 forms are issued only after a student has been admitted and has confirmed their enrollment in the academic program. To initiate the issuance of your I-20, you are required to demonstrate proof of funding sufficient to cover the cost of the first year of your academic program. To request your I-20/DS-2019, please log into icat.uky.edu using your LinkBlue credentials and complete the "[New Student Information Checklist](https://icat.uky.edu/istart/controllers/start/StartEngine.cfm)."

After you have submitted all the required information through the checklist, the International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) will process and issue your I-20 via email within 10 days. Make sure to check your UKY email account for this important document.

Should you have any questions about the I-20 form or require further assistance, please feel free to reach out to [John Honeycutt](https://international.uky.edu/people/john-honeycutt), our Student Immigration Specialist.

1. **When will I go through orientation and register for classes?**

Incoming international students are required to attend both the international student orientation and their academic program orientation. You will receive more information about these events once you confirm your enrollment. We recommend that students arrive on campus 10-15 days before the start of classes to ensure they have enough time to settle in and participate in all necessary orientation activities.

1. **When is tuition paid at the University of Kentucky? Is it possible to pay in installments?**

Tuition is due at the beginning of each semester, and the amount you owe depends on the number of courses you are registered for. You are not required to pay the entire tuition all at once at the start. Instead, you can pay for the individual courses you're enrolled in each semester. Additionally, the university offers the option to pay tuition in [installments](https://www.uky.edu/studentaccount/content/installment-payment-plan), allowing for a more manageable financial plan over the course of the semester.

1. **What is safety like at UK?**

The University of Kentucky has been consistently ranked as one of the safest campuses in the United States. We have an incredible Police Department at UK, also known as UKPD, with highly-trained and capable police officers who are ready to deal with a variety of incidents that could arise. Additionally, we employ a number of safety measures, such as our Safety Cats ride program that drives students back to their residence halls late at night. Also, our ‘Live Safe’ app provides students amazing ways to stay safe, like allowing a friend to track you via GPS and anonymously reporting a crime.

All U.S. universities annually publish their campus crime statistics due to a regulation called the Clery Act. UK's safety statistics can be found here:  <http://www.uky.edu/EM/annual-security-report.html>

1. **How to apply for housing?**

On-campus graduate housing offers a variety of options: [Greg Page Stadium View](https://www.uky.edu/housing/graduate-housing/greg-page-stadium-view), [LTS 625 South Limestone](https://www.uky.edu/housing/graduate-housing/lts-625-south-limestone), [LTS 633 Maxwelton Court](https://www.uky.edu/housing/graduate-housing/lts-633-maxwelton-court), [Roselle Hall](https://www.uky.edu/housing/graduate-housing/roselle-house), [Shawneetown](https://www.uky.edu/housing/graduate-housing/shawneetown) and [University Flats](https://www.uky.edu/housing/graduate-housing/university-flats).

[Apply for Housing](https://www.uky.edu/housing/about-graduate-family-housing)

There are also many [off-campus apartments](https://www.apartments.com/off-campus-housing/ky/lexington/university-of-kentucky/) close to the campus for you to choose from.

1. **Do we have airport pick-up service?**

Yes, plan your trip to Lexington and complete the [airport pick up request](http://ukihp.engr.uky.edu/AirportPickupForm.aspx).

1. **If I have questions about a new student account/password/activation, who should I contact?**

Please use one of the below options for contacting ITS Customer Services:

* For urgent technical assistance, please contact us at 859-218-4357.
* For non-urgent matters, [chat with an agent](https://uky.service-now.com/techhelp?id=kb_article&sysparm_article=KB0012778) or fill out the [Customer Services Assistance Request form](https://uky.service-now.com/ss?id=sc_cat_item&sys_id=5f296f0a1b92b850e4c86571604bcbd9). Other methods of contact can be found at  [Where can I get tech help?](https://uky.service-now.com/techhelp?id=kb_article&sysparm_article=KB0011425)
* Requests for IT services (e.g., network, phone, estimates) can be submitted via the appropriate form in Tech Help Center [Self Service](https://uky.service-now.com/ss).
* Meet our IT staff online: <https://outlook.office365.com/book/UniversityofKentucky4@l.uky.edu/>