

International Applicants - Required Documentation to be submitted to the Office of Admissions

[PLEASE NOTE: Student must have a paid application in Slate]

Admission Recommendation - must have two submitted forms.

- Department Head, Committee, or Graduate Program Director.
- College Dean.

Degree Granting Transcript and Diploma – Original Language.

- Transcripts and diplomas are considered official if they are sent directly from the institution in a sealed envelope, and/or if the student brings them into the office in a sealed envelope from the institution.
- Students who apply prior to completing their degrees should submit transcripts to date. An official final transcript and diploma will be required after the degree has been conferred.
- *Important:* Please note that the *envelopes* in which the applicants' transcripts and diplomas were contained *must be sent* to the Office of Admissions along with the documents. All academic records, envelopes, and documentation received WILL NOT be returned, so applicants should NOT send their only copies.
- If a degree waiver is required, the department must submit a waiver request to the Dean of the Graduate School (approvals@grd.msu.edu), and the approved waiver sent to the Office of Admissions with the required documentation on this checklist. https://grad.msu.edu/four_year_degree
- Please also review country and region-specific international transcript guidelines, located on the Graduate School website: <https://grad.msu.edu/internationalapplicants>
- Please see section below, Proof of Degree Award.

English Translations of Transcript and Diploma (*with envelopes*).

Test Scores or English Language Proficiency Waiver.

- TOEFL scores must be sent to MSU electronically by ETS.
- IELTS (International English Language Testing System) and other English proficiency test scores must be sent to MSU electronically directly from the testing agency.
- If there are no test scores in Slate/Campus Solutions, or if the student's test scores are below the requirement for provisional admission, the department must submit an **English Language Proficiency Waiver Request** to the Dean of the

Graduate School for approval. The approved waiver should be submitted with the required documentation on this checklist. See <https://grad.msu.edu/english-language-competency> for English language competency information, including the waiver procedure.

- Some automatic English proficiency waivers may be granted by the Office of Admissions. Please refer to the URL above for details.
- Test scores are valid for up to two years prior to the start of the enrollment semester.

Affidavit of Support.

- Must be the signature of the sponsor.
- Dollar amount must meet the current I-20 funding requirement.
- The form is valid for up to a year prior to the start of the enrollment semester.

Financial Proof – Bank Statement.

- The account holder's name must be in English.
- The account holder's name must match the sponsor's name on the Affidavit of Support.
- The dollar amount on the account holder's statement must meet the current I-20 funding requirement.
- The bank statement is valid for up to a year prior to the start of the enrollment semester.

Supplement to Department Checklist – Proof of Degree Award

MSU requires proof of degree award to be fully admitted to graduate programs. In the United States, most institutions include this information on final, official, copies of the transcripts. However, internationally, many institutions do not. Instead, a final diploma is often issued which MSU accepts as proof of degree award. The final diploma must include the name of the degree, the fact it was awarded, and the date of award in the original language (if applicable) and English.

To expedite the admissions process, to ensure our credential policies are met, and to minimize confusion, we ask MSU international graduate applicants to request **ALL their postsecondary transcripts, marks sheets, certificates, and diplomas.**

These should be mailed as hardcopies in official, sealed, issuing-institution envelopes, directly to MSU. Guidance on which international transcripts students should request, based on country or region, is listed on the Graduate School website: <https://grad.msu.edu/internationalapplicants>

All academic records not issued in English must be accompanied by a word-for-word, line-by-line, official, English translation. Translations may be done by **ONE** of the following, and arrive to MSU as hardcopies in an official, sealed envelope:

1. The institution that issued the academic records.
2. An official, certified translator in the country of study.
3. If done in the US, an official, certified, American Translators Association translator or translation agency. See atanet.org for lists of individuals and agencies who are affiliated to them. Often applicants and departments use 7clingo.com in Lansing.

Keep in mind MSU requires international graduate applicants hold the equivalent of four-year, US bachelor's degrees. Applicants who attended postsecondary study in Europe (under the Bologna Process) or India, and earned three-year undergraduate degrees, will need to hold two-year master's degrees as well. Both degrees must be earned from recognized higher education institutions.

In many instances, international graduate applicants will not have yet completed their programs during the admissions cycle. They should arrange to have their latest available academic records directly to MSU. If admitted, a hold will be placed on

their accounts for final, official copies of their degree-granting, academic records - meaning final transcripts and diplomas. Once this requirement is satisfied, the hold will be removed. Please note that the due date for the final academic records is early in their first semester of enrollment. Holds that remain in place will impact their ability to register for their second semester courses. Flexibility with academic records and holds will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

In challenging situations, if an applicant or admitted student is struggling to request an official, hardcopy of the diploma to be mailed to MSU in an official/sealed envelope, the department should be sure the individual (or friends/relatives) has recently called or gone in-person to the university to see if arrangements can be made. If this doesn't work, the following may be backup options:

1. If the student graduated and was previously awarded a diploma, they might contact their university's registrar/records/examinations office to request an official, hardcopy letter, clearly indicating the name of the degree, the fact it was awarded, and the date of award, in the original language (if applicable) and English. This should be mailed to us in an official/sealed envelope.
2. If the student is already in the US, they might contact the nearest embassy or consulate of the country of study and see if they can provide them with a scan or photocopy of the original diploma, that embassy staff can confirm, stamp official, place in an official/sealed embassy envelope and mail to MSU.
3. If the student has a personal copy of the original diploma, they might email a PDF of it to the Senior International Credential Analyst (Patrick Leahy – leahypat@msu.edu) and the name and email address of an appropriate contact in the Registrar/Records/Examinations Office of the issuing university who could confirm the diploma is official, via email. The applicant/student might call the university to explain our diploma requirement, see if this form of verification is acceptable, and to find out the best contact to use. Once they provide the credential analyst with the PDF and contact information, he will research to determine legitimacy. If all okay, he will try to verify this way. **THIS IS A LAST RESORT BACKUP OPTION IF A STUDENT CANNOT REQUEST AN OFFICIAL COPY OF THE DIPLOMA USING THE METHODS DESCRIBED ABOVE.**

If none of these methods work, please work with the international credential analyst to determine if flexibility is warranted, and what options may be pursued, such as allowing for additional time to submit the final diploma.

IMPORTANT COUNTRY INFORMATION:

China – A graduation certificate does not satisfy our final diploma requirement. The final “degree” is what is needed. The degree should be in Chinese and English OR an applicant can request a CSSD/CHESICC electronic degree verification report (in Chinese or Chinese/English) to be sent electronically to the MSU Admissions Office through the CSSD/CHESICC website via Parchment.

India – It typically takes one to two years between the time of graduation and final diploma to be issued. If an applicant applies during their studies, or soon after completion (within one or two years of graduation), we will accept a graduation certificate as proof of degree award. For applicants who graduated more than two years ago, an official, attested, hardcopy of the final diploma in an official, sealed envelope is required.

Iran – In rare cases, a certificate of completion of undergraduate studies will suffice as proof of degree award. Cases where an applicant/student cannot obtain an official copy of the diploma in Farsi and English should be referred to the international credential analyst, to determine acceptability of records.