

DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS - GRADUATE PROGRAMS

1. Whom should I contact for application forms/information?

You can obtain information and forms on the Internet at www.dalgrad.dal.ca/admissions/ and www.registrar.dal.ca/apps/.

You can request a paper copy of the forms from the Registrar's Office at admissions@admreg.registrar.dal.ca or (902) 494-2156. Please allow 2-3 weeks for delivery; 6-8 weeks for overseas requests.

2. When should my application be in?

- **Canadian students.** Your application for admission to the Graduate Studies program should normally be received by the University no later than June 1 for a September start date (all supporting documents must be received by this deadline). However, if you are applying for scholarships and departmental funding, your application (including application, fee and all supporting documents) should be completed by January 31.
- **Non-Canadian students.** Your application for admission to the Graduate Studies program should normally be received by the University no later than April 1 for a September start date (all supporting documents must be received by this deadline). However, if you are applying for scholarships and departmental funding, your application (including application, fee and all supporting documents) must be completed by December 31.

3. What are the admission requirements?

All applicants to the graduate programs must satisfy the general requirements for admission to the Faculty of Graduate Studies as indicated at the Faculty website, www.dalgrad.dal.ca/ . In addition, the requirements for individual programs are

- Entrance to a one-year **MA program** requires an Honours BA (or BSc) in Economics (not Business) with an average of at least B+ (upper second-class) at Dalhousie standards. For international degree equivalencies refer to www.dalgrad.dal.ca/admissions/ide and for selected international GPA equivalences (currently just China) refer to www.dalgrad.dal.ca/forms/gc/gpa . Students who meet the grade requirements but who do not have an Honours degree in economics may be considered for a qualifying year or a two year MA. (See Questions 5 and 6)
- The department will consider applications for the two-year **MDE program** from candidates possessing an undergraduate degree with an academic average of at least B+ (upper second-class) at Dalhousie Standards. Because of its interdisciplinary nature, applicants may possess a BA, BSc or BComm degree,

but all candidates must normally have at least two classes in economics beyond the introductory level, plus a basic class in statistics. Applicants who have advanced degrees in other fields (e.g. law, MPA, MBA) may be considered for a one-year MDE. Applicants with substantial relevant experience in policy and/or project management fields also may be considered for a one year program.

- Entrance to the **PhD Program** normally requires completion of course requirements for an MA in Economics with an average of at least A- at Dalhousie standards. Students normally prepare for their PhD comprehensive exams in two years.

Candidates whose native language is not English are required to demonstrate English language competency (see Question 4) and PhD candidates from a non-Canadian institution are required to submit the results of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) in Economics.

4. What are the English language competency requirements?

Candidates whose native language is not English are required to demonstrate English language competency. The standard test is TOEFL. The minimum acceptable score is 580 for the written TOEFL, 92 for the internet based test, and 237 for the computer based test. (Consult the Faculty of Graduate Studies www.dalgrad.dal.ca/regulations/ii/#2.4 for other acceptable tests)

The TOEFL requirement is waived if the applicant has completed a degree at a recognized institution in which the language of instruction is English.

5. I don't have a BA in Economics. Can I still apply for the MA?

Students who meet all other entry requirements (including grades) but who do not have a BA in economics may be admitted to a Qualifying Year in the Faculty of Graduate Studies to permit them to complete key undergraduate economics courses. No funding is possible for qualifying year students. The student must then reapply in the following year for admittance to the MA.

6. I don't have an Honours in Economics. Can I still apply?

Students who have an Economics degree and meet grade and language requirements but who do not have an Honours degree will be considered for a two-year MA.

6. Can I obtain funding? How much is available?

The University and Department offer, on a competitive basis, a number of scholarships, teaching assistantships, and research assistantships. You are encouraged to apply early enough to be nominated by the Department for these scholarships (Canadian students: January 31; non-Canadian students December 31). Applicants are automatically considered for these scholarships.

7. What is the tuition fee? What are the living expenses?

Please visit Dalhousie's Student Accounts site: www.dal.ca/studentaccounts

for up-to-date information regarding tuition and other fees.

8. Can I apply for and start the program in January?

Graduate programs in economics are designed to begin in September. Classes that begin in January may have prerequisites that are offered only during the Fall term so it is not generally possible to arrive in January and compose a coherent full-time schedule of classes for the MA and PhD programs.

Under some circumstances, students may begin the MDE program in January.

Applications for admission in January will be considered by the Department on a case by case basis. Canadian applicants for January admission should submit complete applications by November 15. Non-Canadian applicants should submit complete applications by August 31.

9. Can I do a one-year MDE program?

The MDE is normally a two-year program. While circumstances differ by student, applicants with an MA or MSc or a professional degree (such as MPA, MBA, LLB or MES) may be eligible for a one-year program. Relevant experience in formulating or implementing development policies will be considered.

10. Are part-time programs available for graduate students?

Part-time registration is available for Master's programs. It is not possible to register as a part-time student during the first two years of a PhD program, though one could pay full-time fees and take a part-time schedule of classes. See the current graduate calendar, at www.dalgrad.dal.ca regarding part-time studies.

11. Can I write a thesis (MA or PhD) in a specific area?

There are fields of specialization that you can choose from.

- For MA: development economics; econometrics; industrial organization; labour economics and social policy; microeconomic theory; macroeconomic theory; monetary theory; public finance; resource economics.
- For PhD: econometrics; income distribution; labour economics; microeconomic theory; macroeconomic theory; resource economics; social policy.

The thesis must be written in one or more of those general areas. However, there is a certain amount of flexibility in that the specific topic you are interested in may fit within one of the broad areas of specialization and overlap with a separate field (for example, international trade/finance may be within macroeconomics and/or econometrics).

Ultimately, faculty interest and availability, neither of which is guaranteed, are the determining factors.

The Department has recently introduced a “course plus essay” option for the MA program. MA “with thesis” will continue to be available. The non-thesis option consists of eight (8) semester-course requirements plus the completion of a research paper of between 7,500 and 12,500 words. This paper may build on a term paper originally written in one of the graduate field courses in economics taken by the student but, in this case, must demonstrate substantial differences and improvements over the original paper.

The MDE requires a thesis as an important integrating aspect of the program. A thesis usually does not exceed 60 pages and might build around a relevant case study, internship experience, and so on.

- 13. I have a letter from the Department of Economics saying the Department has recommended to the Dean of Graduate Studies that I be offered admission and funding (or admission only), and advising that a letter from the Dean will follow. May I consider the letter from the Department an official offer from Dalhousie University?**

No. Official offers come only from the Dean of Graduate Studies. It is possible for the Dean not to accept recommendations from departments. The offers should not be taken for granted. Of course, we are very much interested in attracting good students to our programs. If you have alternatives to consider and have not received an official offer from Dalhousie, please contact us as soon as you can.

- 14. I have a letter from the Dean of Graduate Studies saying that I am offered admission and funding (or admission only). What is the latest date to respond to this letter?**

You should contact the Department as soon as you decide whether you are accepting the offer or not. Typically, the offer for funding will be open for one month; if we have not received a formal response from you by that time, the funds may be reallocated.

- 15. I cannot arrive on campus until after classes begin. Will I encounter problems because of this?**

Registration after **September 4** is considered late. Most graduate students register online by Web before they arrive on campus but select classes after arrival. In 2007/08, classes begin on September 6. Late registration and selection of classes is possible until the Registry closes on **September 21**. The current fee for late registration is **\$50.00**. Also note that it may be difficult to find housing if you arrive on campus after classes start.

- 16. Can I defer my admission and funding (or admission only)?**

Provided you instruct us to do so in a timely manner, we can request deferral up to one year from the Faculty of Graduate Studies. However, scholarships cannot be deferred.

- 17. What is the application fee?**

The admissions fee is **Cdn. \$70**.

Please note: The information provided on this page can change without notice. It is intended to help applicants obtain concise answers to some of the "frequently asked questions" we receive. Applicants should consult the Faculty of Graduate Studies website at www.dalgrad.dal.ca for detailed general program definitions and admission requirements.