

E-BOOK FOR GRADUATE APPLICANTS

A Plus Prep Offering



Plus Prep

About:

This e-book is a handy guide for all your application related queries, the contents will help you understand the basics of applying and can be a good starting point towards your application journey.

Contents:

- Introduction to Study Abroad
- Application Components
- Generic Deadlines
- What makes a Winning SOP & Sample SOP
- The Letter of Recommendation

Education Abroad - Options

- Canada
- **Australia**
- New Zealand
- **Europe Mainland**
- Singapore



Myths

- Studying abroad is expensive.: Not True, you have multiple Schools and options, with proper planning and research you will find a school for your budget
- Only academically brilliant students get admission: Universities normally look at multiple factors and not just your academic scores
- Discrimination: There are Thousands of Students Studying abroad and discrimination is often very rare
- Limited Options: Untrue!
- There are No Scholarships: False, you will find multiple options to obtain financial aid both before and after an admit
- Visa is difficult: Obtaining a Student Visa is probably the easiest!

Competition

India

1,94,000 students
took CAT competing
for about 3335
seats in 13 IIMs

< 20% Clear
Qualification for
IIT's, more than
8 Lac GATE
aspirants

Abroad

Harvard MBA
intake: 903

INSEAD MBA
intake: 937

Stanford, MIT, U
PENN etc.. All admit
more than 1000
students each year

Standardized test

GRE	GMAT
For MS or any technical PG's, PHD's	For Management related education MBA, MS management etc.,
Can be taken anywhere in India, with a valid passport	Can be taken anywhere in India, with a valid passport
2 Quant sections, 2 verbal sections, 1 experimental section (can be either)	One each of Quant, verbal and Integrated reasoning
2 Essay writing tasks	1 Essay writing task
Score ranges between 260-340	Score ranges between 200-800
Accepted by more than 9000 programs across world	More than 3000 business schools accept GMAT score
Accepted by some Asian Schools aswell	Also accepted in ISB, and few IIM's

GRE: Test & Structure

GRE

AWA

2 essays – 30 minutes each :
*Analysis of an **Argument** and Analysis of an **Issue***

Maths

Two sections 35-min, 20-question,
Content- Problem Solving, Quantitative Comparison and Data Interpretation

Verbal

Two sections 30-min, 20-question,
Content - Text Completion, Sentence Equivalence and Reading Comprehension

Unscored

Either a Verbal or a Maths

A standardized test, the **Graduate Record Examination** measures *Verbal, Mathematical and Analytical Writing skills*

The test intends to primarily aid Graduate Schools to assess the potential of the applicants for **MS** and **PhD**

The test is scored on a maximum of **340**: a separate score of 170 each for *Maths* and *Verbal*. **AWA is scored out of 6**

Language Tests

IELTS & TOEFL

- TOEFL conducted by ETS, IELTS by British council and Cambridge Language testing centre.
- IELTS is a must for any one seeking Visa's in UK, Aus, NZ. TOEFL is impressive for most US universities.
- IELTS is also accepted across Canada and many universities in US.

Funding your Education

- Working on-campus- Student can earn up to **\$500/month**.
- Scholarships- Universities offer upto **100% tuition waivers**.
- Research Assistantships available after 1st year/semester(for MS and PhD).
- For MBA, some of the top US colleges, offer **100% loan at 6-7% rate of interest**.
- Loans- Abundance of Loan Option from Private and Public Banks

Placements

- Excellent Placement record
- Placements opportunities in
 - Academic world
 - Research and development
 - Corporate world
 - **Entrepreneurship**
- Placements across the globe

<i>Salary per Annum</i>	Best Case	Average Case
Immediately	\$ 130000	\$ 70000
After 3 years	\$ 210000	\$ 100000

Admissions Requirements for MS

Standardized Tests

GRE

TOEFL / IELTS

Academic Record (GPA , CGPA or Percentage)

Stream of Choice (Some streams are more competitive)

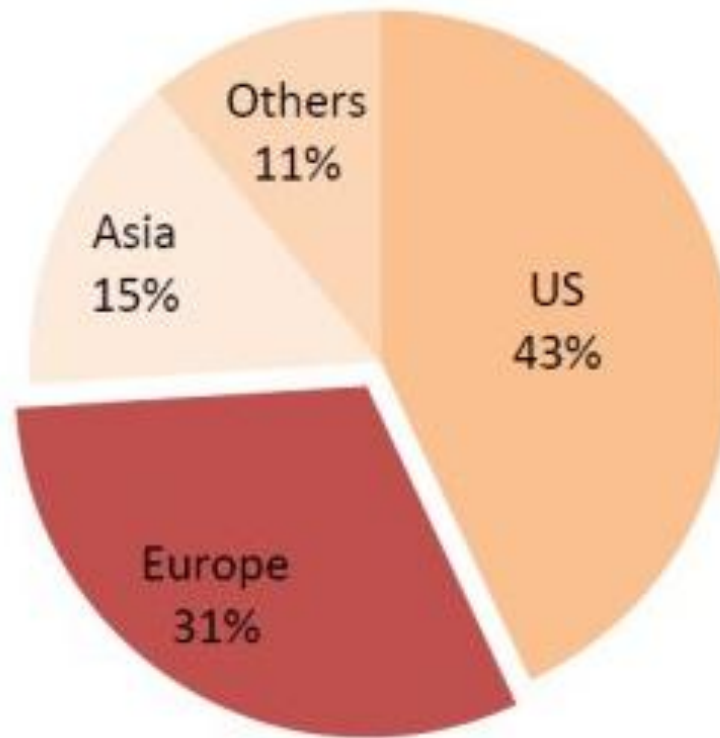
Research Work

Extracurricular Activities

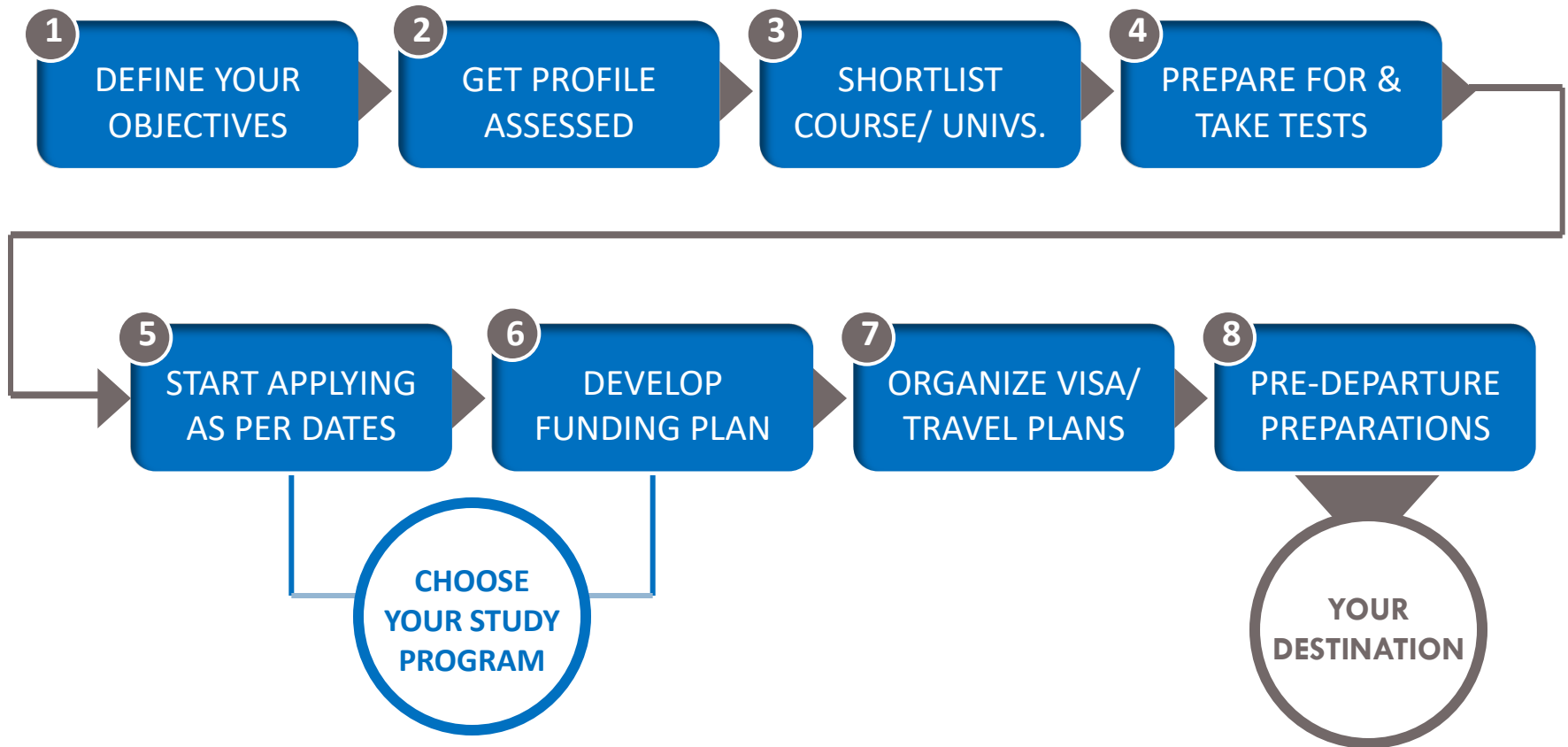
Personal Documents (SOP, LOR's and CV)

Application Timing

Geographical distribution of the Top 100 Universities



Roadmap



Application Components

Application Components

What does the Application Consist of?

You've Shortlisted the Universities to apply for and ready to apply, now what would your application consist of? Let's take a look:

- ❑ Online Application:
- ❑ Most Schools (If not all Schools) accept the application online, to apply you must first visit the Website of the School and Look for a link to apply, it'd mostly be under "Future Applicants" or "Prospective students".
- ❑ To apply Create the Application (It can be saved), fill in the details such as Personal Information, Academic Details, Professional Details.
- ❑ Application Documents:
- ❑ Essays / SOP
- ❑ CV
- ❑ Recommendation Letters (Enter the Details of the Recommenders) / If Offline it is to be sent via post

Application Components

- Other Documents as Specified

Transcripts :

- Some Schools require the transcripts to be sent offline while some would accept a soft-copy, check the requirement and follow the requirement

Financial Documents:

- Some Schools would require you to send Financial Documents / Proof of Support at the time of the application itself (Online or Offline Varies from School to School)
- Test Scores: Reporting Official Scores is a must and it has to be initiated via the test conducting agency (GMAC/ ETS / Collegeboard etc..)

Important:

- Identify your recommenders well in advance.
- Collect all your Documents such as Transcripts, Marksheets , Financial docs.
- Make a list of Documents for each school you are applying to.
- Ensure the application deadlines are met

Generic Deadlines

There are normally 2 sessions often called as :

- Fall (Aug/Sep) Intake
- Spring (Jan/ Feb) Intake

Fall is a preferred session due to number of options, availability of programs and in some cases financial aid.

Deadlines are as follows:

FALL DEADLINES

FALL	UK, Europe (classes start in Sep/Oct)	US, Canada (classes start in Aug/Sep)	Asia (classes start in Aug/Sep)	Aus, NZ (classes start in Feb)
Masters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Some colleges like Oxford, Cambridge, LSE, HEC Paris, etc. have deadlines by Jan 15 * other colleges have rolling deadlines; students should apply by April /May 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Most schools have deadlines between Jan 1 and Jan 15 * The deadlines of the remaining including some top schools, lie between Jan 15 and May 1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Deadlines get over by Feb- End or March 1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * In Australia, Fall session starts in Feb. Deadlines go on till oct
PhD	Apply Before Jan End	* Apply Before Jan-15 (Earlier the better)	* Apply Before Jan-15 (Earlier the better)	Apply Before Sep-1
MBA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Usually, there are 5+ Rounds * Can apply as late as March (ie, R3 or R4 deadline) for most top colleges like Manchester, Oxford, LBS, HEC Paris, IE, ESADE, etc. * For other top colleges like Imperial, Cass, Lancaster, etc., can apply in April/May as well 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Usually, there are 3-4 rounds * For top 50 B schools, have to apply by R2 (ie, Jan 1st-2nd week) if the school has 3 rounds. * For top 50 B schools, have to apply by R3 (ie, Feb-March) if the school has 4 rounds. * In non Top 50 schools, can apply as late as April/May 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Usually, there are 2 rounds * Okay to apply in R2 as well (ie, March) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Usually, there are 2 rounds * Okay to apply in R2 as well (ie, September)
Undergrad	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Top 10 schools have deadlines by Sep 15 * Other schools' deadlines get over by Jan 15 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Most deadlines are between Dec 1 and Feb 1 * Take SAT latest by January 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Most deadlines happen between Dec 1 and Feb 1 * Students HAVE to take SAT latest by January 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Rolling deadlines; need to apply by Oct

Spring Deadlines

Spring	UK, Europe (classes start in Jan)	US, Canada (classes start in Jan)	Asia (classes start in Jan)	Aus, NZ (classes start in July/Aug)
MS	* 90% of the colleges do not have a spring intake & The remaining 10 % of the colleges that do have spring intake have deadlines in Aug-Sep	* 50% of the colleges do not have a spring intake *The remaining 50 % of the colleges, including a lot of top colleges, that do have spring intake have deadlines in August/September	* No Spring intake	* In Australia, Spring session starts in July/Aug. Deadlines go on till Jan/Feb
PhD	* No Options / Limited Options	* No Options / Limited Options	* No Options / Limited Options	* No Options / Limited Options
MBA	* Of the top schools, only INSEAD and HEC Paris have Spring intake. For these, apply by May/June * The other average colleges which take students in Spring have deadlines in October	* Few Options * In non Top 50 schools which have Spring intake, applications should be completed by Septemeber	* No Spring intake	* No Spring intake
Undergrad	No Options/ Limited Options	* Most deadlines happen between July 1 and Sep 1 *Very Few Schools	* Hardly any options	* Rolling deadlines; need to apply by Feb

What Makes a Winning SOP?

What is an SOP?

SOP (Statement of Purpose) in short is your life story presented to the admission committee as part of your application, it is usually a 1-2 page statement on everything you've done so far, your strengths, interests and why you are applying to that particular University & Program, the SOP is probably one of the most important aspects of your application, the SOP is a means to present your case to the admission committee virtually.

Key Points to be addressed in the SOP:

- ❑ Your Introduction : Stay away from boring introductions, the opening needs to be strong and create an interest to the evaluator
- ❑ Academic Background
- ❑ Technical Ability: Your Research work & capabilities, Projects, Papers, Presentations etc...
- ❑ Achievements: Be it work related or academic or even personal achievements need to be mentioned, ensure these are significant and not mediocre
- ❑ Why Masters: Your reasons to apply to the University needs to be clearly defined
- ❑ Why this specialization & University: In addition to writing why Masters, you can also go a step ahead and close the loop by stating your interest in the particular specialization & University, do keep in mind it has to be in sync with your interest
- ❑ Conclusion: Close your Statement of Purpose with a strong and non-clichéd ending.

What Makes a Winning SOP?(Contn)

Questions to be covered:

Once you have a rough idea on what your SOP will include, you need to make sure the following questions are covered, these are the specifics:

- ❑ What are your Strengths?
- ❑ How did you fare in your core subjects and what prompted you to opt the projects?
- ❑ What did you learn from your projects, subjects, industrial visits etc..?
- ❑ What aspects of the specialization attract you, why do you think it is your best choice?
- ❑ What do you want to do in Short term and long term after your Degree?
- ❑ What will you add to your class?
- ❑ Which professors / labs would you want to work with and why?

What Makes a Winning SOP?(Contn)

Good Statement vs. Bad Statement:

A Good statement is defined as a statement which gives clarity, data and representation in a crisp and well defined manner, have a look at a few examples below:

Bad Statement:

I was a Topper in My class

Good Statement:

I topped my class in 2nd Year of college which had over 80 Students

Bad Statement:

I want to pursue my Degree in XYZ University since it is a Top Ranked college

Good Statement:

I want to pursue my Degree in XYZ University; I am impressed by the research conducted by Prof. ____ in the ____ lab. I also understand the facilities such as ____ & ____ at your university helps students to not only learn but also excel....

Bonus Tips:

- ❑ Read, Check and Recheck your SOP Before Submission
 - ❑ Research Thoroughly about the program, labs, clubs, subjects etc...
 - ❑ Understand the requirement before drafting your SOP
 - ❑ Do not repeat data in multiple sources of the application
 - ❑ Get someone else to read your SOP and avail feedback
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Sample SOP

"The biggest problem in the world could have been solved when it was small." —Witter Bynner

These words have been proved to be prophetic in the context of the present century. While technology has moved at an astonishing pace, the field of information technology propelled by developments in the area of computer sciences has witnessed some very fascinating changes, thanks to the one word-**miniaturization**. I was both fascinated and overawed at the process of miniaturization, and concepts like VLSI prompted me to pursue a course that would enable me to someday contribute to the field. This would put my candidature in the right perspective. No amount of words can express my gratitude towards my school which played a vital role in shaping my character during my formative years. It is there that I learnt the basic lessons of team work and comradeship. It was largely due to my Alma matter that I could develop holistically as an individual.

An innate acumen towards mathematics and logic drove me to a career in engineering. It was my hard work and commitment towards achieving the best that enabled me to gain admission in the premier institute of the country. At XYZ, I received the right academic milieu to build a long and sustained career. I was exposed to the various nuances of the area during my graduate level course. I was particularly drawn to subjects like Microprocessors, Digital Electronics & Computer organization, Transducers, Analog and digital VLSI design. Apart from the regular course, I also participated in workshops related to new trends in embedded technology conducted by corporate firms like, abc & xyz.

Sample SOP

I supplemented my academic learning with live projects (details in my C.V). My internship at IIT was a valuable learning experience and apprised me of recent technical advancements in the area. I also successfully completed a final year project related to application of embedded systems for biomedical application using labVIEW. The technical experience combined with strong academic fundamentals enabled me to join ____ as a project trainee in my final year. During this tenure, I had the opportunity to work in different domains like R&T and Aerospace. It was a great learning experience as it gave me a chance to apply my knowledge into practical applications. I was awarded the Team excellence award for my work towards Test coverage analysis of Flight control computer and establishing positive customer relations from the US. I gained hands on experience in performing analog/digital circuit analysis by using tools like PSpice & circuitmaker Working in an industry helped me to not only sharpen my technical skills but also to focus on the soft skills like teamwork, leadership that are indispensable for a holistic career development. It also apprised me of the need to acquire advanced skills to give the necessary fillip to my career.

My choice of pursuing an M.S. in embedded systems was prompted by the fact that it perfectly blends both academic and applied aspects of the area, while incorporating interdisciplinary research. A sound technical knowledge combined with hands on job experience skills makes me an ideal candidate for this course. My immediate objectives are to assimilate the various nuances of my subject and master the various concepts of the same.

Sample SOP (Contrn..)

Post master's, I would like to join the industry and work in multi faceted domains and applications that include Biomedical electronics, consumer electronics and telecommunications. With world class faculty and infrastructure, University X emerged as the top destination for my future endeavors. I plan to delve deeper into the areas of embedded systems and VLSI, by taking up courses like A, B, C and D.. Further, I found that the research areas of Professors A, B and C perfectly mirror my research interests. I would be honoured if I can get an opportunity to work in their research groups & I hope will be considered positively.

The Letter of Recommendation

The LOR is probably the most difficult piece of the application since you have very little control over what goes into it, the Letter of Recommendation (LOR) is a Letter from either your Supervisor/ Teacher/ Project Guide. The Purpose of the LOR is to know you (the applicant) better and a good LOR can act as a testament to your claims / projections in the application.

Who can be the recommender?

- Professor
- H.O.D/ Principal
- Project Guide
- Internship Guide
- Supervisor

*Whoever you pick must know you well and picking a recommender who has not taught you or supervised you needs to be avoided.

The Letter of Recommendation

How to ensure your LOR is Strong?

- ❑ Identify 3-4 People who can provide you an LOR and talk to them about your application plans
- ❑ Show them your SOP and CV
- ❑ Assess their interest in helping you
- ❑ Indicate your willingness to share info on your profile
- ❑ Provide Information on the colleges you are applying to
- ❑ Add Diverse Recommenders, for e.g instead of taking LOR's from 3 Prof's , mix it up by adding a Project Guide / HOD/ Intern Guide etc..

The Letter of Recommendation

What to avoid?

- ❑ Personal Recommendations
- ❑ Taking an LOR based on designation: Note the college is admitting you and not your recommender, if the recommender has a great profile but barely knows you the content will be weak and hampers your application
- ❑ Copy-Paste: Some Recommenders may just use a template and replace your name, ensure you steer away from such LOR's it does more harm than helping your case
- ❑ Never create a Fake LOR

Tips:

- ❑ Most Schools Require 3 LOR's
- ❑ Most LORs are Online, some require Offline LORs
- ❑ Ensure your LORs reach in time (Deadline)
- ❑ Approachability & availability of your recommender is also important
- ❑ Always have a back-up

Plus Prep Offerings

60 Hours of Classroom Training (Online Mode also Available)

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Multiple Sectional Tests

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Unlimited Doubt Clearing Sessions

Unlimited Lab Access

Small Class Size

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Free Sessions of " Mind Power" (By IIT & Univ of Maryland Alumni)

Free University Shortlisting for test day

Score Improvement Guarantee*

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Admission Counselling

Plus Prep's Admission Counselling Services Include:

- ❑ Personalized Shortlisting Services- Based on Profile, Requirement, Chances and preferences
- ❑ University Finalization
- ❑ Dedicated Single Point of Contact
- ❑ Unlimited Edits / Drafting of all necessary documents
- ❑ Application Review
- ❑ Visa Counselling
- ❑ Unlimited University's

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