



National
Association of
Graduate
Admissions
Professionals

The Leader in Graduate Enrollment Management

Standards

This statement serves as a guideline to ensure that high standards are applied in the development of graduate/professional school admission-related policies and practices.

Value systems, human resources, and belief in intellectual potential are integral to the fabric of higher learning. Graduate admissions professionals serve academic institutions in developing programs and activities related to the admission, counseling, and financial support of students. Each student is treated as an individual in developing a fundamental educational plan. Fairness and non-discrimination are essential components of the recruitment, admission, and retention process. Therefore, the following standards for graduate admissions personnel are recommended.

I. Recruitment

It is suggested that members strive to:

- A. Represent their academic institutions ethically and professionally in all interactions with students and colleagues.
- B. Present their institutions accurately and comprehensively when developing written materials, issuing correspondence, making presentations, and speaking with prospective candidates and other interested persons. To the greatest extent possible, a member's responsibilities are to:
 1. state clearly and accurately the requirements for graduate/professional school admission, including any necessary forms, academic records, letters of reference, and standardized tests;
 2. share correct information about the admissions calendar, including application deadlines, decision and notification dates, deposit/refund policies, required candidate reply dates, and waiting list placement, as applicable;
 3. offer precise information about institutional costs, academically related opportunities for financial assistance, and general financial packages, including appropriate deadlines.
 4. use pictures and descriptions of the campus and surrounding areas that are current and realistic;
 5. provide accurate information about graduate student housing options, if available; and
 6. inform students of any special programs or support services.
- C. Ensure that all persons directly supervised who are involved in graduate/professional school recruitment, promotional activities, or admissions (including alumni, students, faculty, and other representatives) receive proper training and current information regarding institutional policies and practices.
- D. Avoid any subjective or disparaging comparisons of graduate/professional school programs with similar offerings at other schools.
- E. Establish appropriate policies which address the applicant's rights to privacy during any pre-admission period.
- F. Avoid making any guarantee of program placement to prospective candidates and any other persons making inquiry on behalf of a candidate during any pre-admission period.
- G. Refuse unethical or unprofessional requests from agencies or organizations related to recruitment, program promotion, or acceptance of students. Refuse any remuneration from such groups or their clients.
- H. Periodically review all recruitment and promotional materials to ensure their accuracy, efficiency, and objectivity.

II. Admissions Procedures

Members whose responsibilities include or affect the acceptance of graduate/professional school students should strive to:

- A. Appropriately carry out any assigned tasks related to admissions decisions, including proper notification to candidates about the outcome of such decisions, as applicable.
- B. Receive information about applicants in confidence and respect the private nature of this data consistent with federal, state, or local statutes.
- C. Accept and consider official only those transcripts issued by the registrar's office of the institution(s) or other agencies the candidate attends or has attended.
- D. Inform candidates promptly and in writing if they are clearly inadmissible.
- E. Withhold any offers of admission when candidates have not submitted an application to the graduate/professional school program, passed in required credentials, and met admission standards established by the institution.
- F. Establish waiting lists, when choosing to do so, which are:
 1. reasonable in length;
 2. maintained for the shortest possible periods of time; and
 3. not dependent upon a deposit being received nor an enrollment commitment being made until an official offer of admission is issued.
- G. Inform students promptly about new or changed admission requirements, especially those which may adversely affect applicants who have complied with all necessary deadlines, made deposits, and met commitments according to the original information they received from the institution.
- H. Encourage applicants to expedite their responsibilities in the admission process, including:
 1. complying with requests for information in a timely way; and
 2. responding to institutional deadlines when required to do so, including housing reservations, financial aid arrangements, submission of health records, and course scheduling, as applicable.

III. Use of Standardized Tests in Graduate/Professional School Admissions

It is advisable to consider implementation of additional practices that eliminate discrimination, provide equal access, and treat tests as a single component of the admission procedure since test scores are not the sole measure of potential success. Members whose admission portfolios require consideration of standardized tests are advised to:

- A. Use test scores and related data as discrete items and in accordance with the examiner's published and validated recommendations for their interpretation.
- B. Provide candidates with accurate and complete information about required standardized tests and their use in the admission process.
- C. Use test scores along with other materials such as academic records, references, personal interviews, and any additional data when making acceptance decisions.
- D. Ensure the periodic review of standardized tests used in the admission process at your institution.
- E. Educate those involved with the acceptance of students as to the interpretation and use of test results.
- F. Maintain the confidentiality of test scores.
- G. Publicize clearly any policies (such as admission, placement, or credit transfer) which relate to test results.
- H. If requested, provide accurate information for previously enrolled classes of students only. A minimum to maximum score range of those accepted may be used as a reporting guidelines.
- I. Seek to alleviate a candidate's test-related anxiety through careful advising and by expressing concern for the whole student. Inform students about test preparation programs and discuss alternative approaches and available materials for assistance.

IV. Financial Aid Policies and Procedures

Members will strive to:

- A. Provide candidates with factual information about their institution's costs and financial aid opportunities, programs, and practices.
- B. Inform financial and candidates about required forms and supplemental documents needed by the institution before a decision will be made.
- C. Ensure that no applicant will receive a financial aid offer unless the student has been admitted to the institution.
- D. Make sure that each candidate receives notice of the financial aid decision prior to the admission deposit deadline.
- E. State clearly any policies concerning the renewal of financial aid.

V. Policies for Awarding Credit and Advanced Standing

Members should strive to:

- A. Define and publish policies and procedures for awarding credit and/or advanced standing in the institution's pre-admission information.
- B. Ensure that these policies are implemented fairly.

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