

The Full-time MBA Program Admissions Chat September 7, 2017

Chat with Berkeley-Haas

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Lizzy_Moderator:

Welcome to the Berkeley MBA Admissions chat. My name is Lizzy Hazard, Admissions Marketing Manager, and I will be moderating the chat today. Joining us are Morgan Bernstein, Executive Director of Admissions; Andrea Brougher, Admissions Manager; Sandra Cruz-Lezama, Admissions Manager; and Jamie Hayden, Assistant Director of Financial Aid. Please send us your questions!

Morgan_Berkeley:

Greetings from Berkeley and thanks for being here today! We're excited to answer your questions as you wrap up your Round 1 applications.

Sandra_Berkeley:

Good Morning! I am Sandra Cruz-Lezama and I look forward to chatting with you all today.

Andrea_Berkeley:

Hi, looking forward to answering some of your questions!

Jamie_Berkeley:

Hello, I'm Jamie Hayden and am an Assistant Director of Financial Aid. Please feel free to submit any questions you have regarding scholarships, loans, etc.

Moe:

I see that Haas offers a study abroad semester in the second year. Is this designed for a selective set of students based on achievement? Or are all MBA students able to partake?

Morgan_Berkeley:

Moe - Thanks for your question. All students are eligible to study abroad. However, our abroad opportunities are a 1:1 exchange with our peer schools. For example, if 5 people from LBS want to come to Haas, then we can send 5 to LBS. The good news is a lot of students generally want to come to the Bay Area for a semester, so most students who have an interest in going abroad can do so!

Sz610:

Hi all, thank you for your time today. **Do you prefer resumes in the Haas resume template or have no preference?**

Morgan_Berkeley:

sz610: We don't have a particular preference. We provide the Haas format so that you get a sense of how to organize your information onto one page in a clear, easy-to-follow format.

Christina:

Good morning! Quick question-- **what kind of weight do GMAT IR and AWA scores carry?**

Morgan_Berkeley:

Christina - These scores are considered in parallel with the quant and verbal subscores. We'll look at them all when reviewing your GMAT, and if they are particular outliers (namely on the low end) we'll look for evidence of writing/verbal and/or analytical skills elsewhere in the application.

Dexter:

Hello Lizzy. **How is Berkeley Haas full time MBA for a career change to consulting and /or entrepreneurship in the health care sector?**

Morgan_Berkeley:

Dexter - Berkeley-Haas as a strong partnership with the School of Public Health and about 15-20 students annual enroll in our dual MBA/MPH degree. Several other students pursue courses in this field without following the degree path specifically. There are several opportunities to pursue consulting roles with a healthcare focus, such as at Deloitte, ZS, or other top firms in the sector.

Omair:

Could you let us know more about any opportunities to take classes with other departments - particularly languages (i.e. for those who want to study Chinese/Spanish, etc.)

Morgan_Berkeley:

Omair - As a Haas student you can take courses at any of the 51 other graduate programs on campus, as well as undergraduate courses in language (to specifically answer your question). This is very common and available to you.

Juliana:

Thanks so much for hosting today! **Are interviews conducted by admissions, current students, or alumni?**

Sandra_Berkeley:

Hello Juliana, this is a great question. Our on campus interviews are conducted by current students. The off campus interviews are conducted by alumni. All interviews regardless of locations are weighted equally.

Bikesh:

Can the B-school connect me to current students?

Andrea_Berkeley:

Hi Bikesh, we encourage prospective applicants to connect with current students for a firsthand account of the program. Our Haas Student Ambassadors are the student arm of admissions. You can see their profiles and reach out via email here: mba.haas.berkeley.edu/admissions/hsateam.html

Adamg: Hi! **What would be the best way to frame non-job related accomplishments in the application and resume? What's the core info you'd look for? (like apps we've made, independent projects, websites etc.)**

Morgan_Berkeley: adamg - You can include other extracurricular activities/achievements in the extracurricular section of the application and/or on your resume. If you feel that these accomplishments are important enough to discuss at length, I'd recommend incorporating them into one of your essay responses.

Shirin: Hello and thanks for your time. **If you have international work experience that you would like to highlight, how would you suggest highlighting it in addition to the resume? What aspects of the international work experience should we highlight in particular that MBA programs find most appealing/important?**

Morgan_Berkeley: Shirin - The resume and work experience section of the application are the best places to convey your international work experience. If it is important enough to your candidacy and/or supports your story and career goals, then you may want to consider including it in one of your essays.

Jason: Hi, thanks for taking the time to chat with us today. **Quick question regarding essay prompt - "How have your experiences prepared you to pursue your goal?" - is it good to mention how the resources (i.e. courses and clubs) at Berkeley will help achieve them or should a focus be solely place on past experiences?**

Morgan_Berkeley: Jason - As with every essay question, I would encourage you to answer the prompt as written. In this essay we're most interested in understanding your past experiences and motivations for pursuing your career goals.

Vivian: Hello, my question is related to The Consortium. **Are Consortium applicants notified they have received the fellowship at the same time as admittance?**

Morgan_Berkeley: Vivian - Assuming you are applying in Round 1, some fellowship awards will be communicated at the time of admission in December. Additional fellowships will be communicated in mid/late March.

Mriganka: Hi, **how does Berkeley weigh GRE versus GMAT scores?**

Morgan_Berkeley: Mriganka - We do not "weigh" test scores. They are considered equally.

- Bikesh:** Hello and thanks for hosting... **could you talk about technology and consulting a little more?**
- Morgan_Berkeley:** Bikesh - Happy to help, but this is a very broad question as about 35-40% of our graduates pursue a career in technology and 20-25% consulting. Could you please be a little more specific?
- LChanoux:** Thanks for hosting this! **If an applicant is selected to interview, what are the options for off-campus interviews? Do you work with Haas alumni in the applicant's area?**
- Sandra_Berkeley:** Hello LChanoux, thank you for your question. If an applicant is selected to interview, the application will have the option to select on or off-campus. If you choose an off-campus, you will need to select your preferred city. From there, we will connect you with the Haas alumni to schedule a date and time.
- Nataliia:** Hi. **A question on references. The first will be provided by my current manager. Second - either by my ex-manager or a person describing my community involvement. Would you have any preference for either both professional or a mix of professional and community involvement?**
- Morgan_Berkeley:** Nataliia - Great question, and in this scenario we wouldn't have a preference since one recommendation is from a current supervisor. I would suggest you think about how this recommendation fits into your overall application package when deciding which person to write it. What have we already learned about you in the application... do you need this rec to support that information with more examples, or do you want to highlight/showcase a different aspect of your background or achievements? It's up to you.
- Taguirresaravia:** Hi! Thank you for your time and attention. **For us who live outside the US, when would you consider it's the best time to visit campus? Before or after the interview?**
- Morgan_Berkeley:** Taguirresaravia - It's entirely up to you. We do not penalize candidates for not visiting campus, as we know it can be prohibitive financially. If you are admitted, we would strongly recommend joining us for one of our two admit weekends (in March and April) as that will be the best opportunity to meet future classmates and experience life as a student here.

Jatin: Hi, I am particularly interested in pursuing an MBA at Haas because of Goldman school of Public Policy at Berkeley. **I am interested in working in policy consulting space post MBA. Is there a possibility to do cross learning at Goldman School while being a student at Haas?**

Morgan_Berkeley: Jatin: Yes. Haas students can take courses at Goldman, or any of the other 51 graduate programs on campus, and receive credit towards graduation. We have many students interested in public policy who are doing just this!

Juliana: Thanks! **Are any interviews conducted via Skype or are there usually alumni in most major cities?** I'm in San Diego.

Andrea_Berkeley: Hi Juliana, interviews are offered both with current students on campus and with alumni in cities around the world. There is no preference given between interviewing on-campus or off-campus.

Vivian: **Do interviewers interview "blind" or are they given our information beforehand?**

Morgan_Berkeley: Vivian - Interviewers only have your resume. And, occasionally the admissions committee may ask them to follow-up on a particular element from your application. However, they have not read your application/essays etc.

Sarah: Thank you for your time today. **I was recently married and my undergraduate transcript shows my maiden last name. Do I need to submit a copy of my marriage license to show that my last name has legally changed, and prove the transcripts I'm submitting are mine?**

Sandra_Berkeley: Hello Raney. In the Personal Data section of our application, you will enter your maiden last name. No other documentation is needed.

Vivian: **If we visit campus, can we request an interview or are interviews invite-only?**

Andrea_Berkeley: Hi Vivian, interviews are conducted solely at the invitation of the admissions committee, and only after the initial review of your application. Therefore, we ask that you please refrain from contacting us to request an interview. Receiving an invitation should be taken as a sign of interest on the part of the admissions committee. However, if you visit campus, we do offer a Class Visitation program (<http://mba.haas.berkeley.edu/admissions/visit.html>) as well as drop-in advising between the hours of 9am-4pm, Monday to Friday.

Akash:

Hi - thanks a lot for hosting! **Can you please explain a bit on the global opportunities that are available at Haas for the healthcare domain?**

Morgan_Berkeley:

Akash - We don't have international opportunities that are exclusively healthcare related. Rather, we have a number of international opportunities that may have a healthcare angle to it. For example, as part of our International Business Development course you may be staffed on a project with a healthcare focus. Similarly, we are part of the Global Network for Advanced Management (GNAM) with other top global business schools which gives our students access to virtual courses across a variety of disciplines with students from global locations, as well as an opportunity to study abroad for a one week immersion. The curriculum for GNAM may include healthcare related courses.

JMalashevich:

Hello! **If we are looking to elaborate on our quant skills in the optional essay, how much info are you looking for? How long are the optional essays typically?**

Morgan_Berkeley:

JMalashevich - Optional essays are typically very short, and often in bullet format. If you feel you want to highlight quant skills, this is a good place to do it.

Annie:

For off campus interviews, if we are based in a rural community internationally and unable to attend an international alumni interview in person, is there the option for Skype interviews?

Sandra_Berkeley:

Hello Annie! If an applicant is invited to interview and they are not able to connect in person, the applicant will need to connect with our alumni in order to set a date and time for a skype interview.

Moe:

In your opinion, **would it be a mistake to omit early work experience from my resume? I typically exclude my first job after undergrad when applying professionally. Would you recommend including all past professional experience - or is a tailored approach fine?**

Morgan_Berkeley:

Moe - If you do not include a job on your resume, the admissions committee may start asking "why" and think there is a gap or perhaps a mistake. I would recommend including all full-time jobs post undergrad. Typically, most applicants can fit their resume onto one page. If you have worked for more than 8 years then two pages might be considered/appropriate.

Dexter: Are loans available to international students for full time MBA, and if yes, how much of tuition and other personal costs such as accommodation, meal plans, etc. would they cover?

Jamie_Berkeley: Hello Dexter! Yes, Haas is happy to offer our international students a few different loan options. We have risk-share loans where Haas has contractual agreements with two different lenders acting as a sort of cosigner for our students. These loans are currently capped at \$64k per year which is cover most of the tuition and fees assessed by the University. Living expenses would not be covered through these types of loans. There is also another lender, not associated with Haas, Prodigy Financial, who lends to international students for a maximum of 80% of the Cost of Attendance for the Full-Time Program. More information is available here:
<http://www.haas.berkeley.edu/finaid/MBA/international-loans.html>

Jatin: Thanks a lot for answering the last question. I also wanted to know if I am at a particular disadvantage if the majority of my experience is in non-profit sector and I have worked primarily on policy-related issues. What is the percentage intake from non-profit profiles?

Morgan_Berkeley: Jatin - You're not at a disadvantage at all! There is no "right" industry background for pursuing an MBA at Haas. We appreciate diversity of experience as it helps to enrich the conversation in our community. You can get more information on our class profile here:
<https://mba.haas.berkeley.edu/admissions/class-profile.html>

Radhikac: Hi there -- I noticed that Haas does not ask for extracurricular activity information in the application. Is it frowned upon to submit this as additional information?

Morgan_Berkeley: Radhikac - We do have an extracurricular section for you to share your involvement during undergrad and since graduating.

Queensland1990: I am planning to retake the GMAT, therefore, GMAC can't send the report score to Haas on time in round 1; can I send my scanned unofficial score report in my application package?

Sandra_Berkeley: Hello Queensland1990. For the first initial application review, we only go off self-reported scores. It is important to make sure that the test is taken on or before our application deadline. If you are waiting for test results, you can go ahead and indicate zero scores. Once you receive your official test scores, please forward that report to us as soon as you can.

Bikesh:

I am interested in tech consulting. Should I focus on consulting primarily or tech? I have a tech background.

Morgan_Berkeley:

Bikesh - I'm not sure I entirely understand your question. Are you asking what you should write about in your career goals essay? If so, I would recommend writing about whatever is the most true and authentic to you, right now. If you are interested in tech consulting then write about that and tell us why this field is of interest to you in particular.

Vivian:

Hi Jamie. **Are all Haas applicants considered for scholarship/fellowship opportunities as part of the admissions process, or do applicants apply for these separately?**

Jamie_Berkeley:

Hello Vivian! Almost all of our scholarships and fellowships require that you submit an application after having been accepted into the program. Once you receive your acceptance notification, you will soon receive information on how to access our online scholarship application. At that time, you may apply for any opportunities for which you feel you are a strong candidate. You will then be informed of your scholarship results prior to your deposit deadline. More information on this process is available here:
<http://www.haas.berkeley.edu/finaid/MBA/entering-students.html>

Aria:

Hi, thanks for answering the questions. **I noticed that in Essay #2 I can choose one of the questions to answer. However, the 3 questions are quite different from each other and asking for different things. May I know what you're looking for in Essay #2 please?**

Morgan_Berkeley:

Aria - There is nothing in particular we are looking for here. We are giving you the option so that you can choose what you would like to highlight about your background, experience, etc. Think of how your response to this question will complement everything else we have learned about you in your application.

Kelly:

This has been very helpful so far, thank you! **If selected to interview and the applicant chooses on campus, will there be an opportunity to spend the day on campus shadowing a student, sitting in on classes, etc.?**

Morgan_Berkeley:

Kelly - As a visiting student you can register for a class visit in advance, and also join current students for a lunch and Q&A session. These are not directly tied to the interview though, and registration is available here
<https://mba.haas.berkeley.edu/admissions/visit.html>

Bikesh:

Does Haas waive the application fee based on need?

Sandra_Berkeley:

Hello Bikesh. The Berkeley Haas FT MBA program offers an Application Fee Waiver to U.S. citizens and U.S. Permanent Residents based on two criteria. One is based on participation in specific programs, and the other is a financial need-based criteria.

http://mba.haas.berkeley.edu/community/FTMBA_Fee_Waiver.pdf

Jatin:

Are international scholarships preferably given to only R1 applications or even R2 applications have an equal chance?

Morgan_Berkeley:

Jatin - We do not differentiate US vs. international scholarships. All applicants have an equal opportunity to receive funding, and yes, there will be scholarships awarded in both rounds 1 and 2.

Sarah:

Hi Jamie! Thank you for your time today. **When do you suggest applying for Haas scholarships and financial aid if you're applying in round 1?**

Jamie_Berkeley:

Hi Sarah! You will be able to apply for our scholarships after you have been admitted. Consequently, you will receive the results of your application prior to your deposit deadline. Information on dates and the available opportunities is listed here: <http://www.haas.berkeley.edu/finaid/MBA/entering-students.html>

Aria:

Good morning, thanks for hosting this. **I chose not to waive the rights to see the recommendation letter, simply because I would love to see and learn from the feedback my recommenders gave me. Would the choice hurt the credibility of my recommendation letter?**

Morgan_Berkeley:

Aria - No, it will not hurt your application.

Sz610:

With the new Chou Hall, are there plans to continue increasing the student body class size for next year to around 300?

Morgan_Berkeley:

Sz610 - Yes, we anticipate increasing the class size to approximately 290-300.

Queensland1990:

Hi administration team. **I am from Vietnam. Can you show me how to connect with Vietnamese alumni who currently study in Berkeley?** I cannot come to visit school, so I really want to connect with VN students here.

Morgan_Berkeley:

Queensland - Thanks for your interest! I'd recommend reaching out to our Haas Student Ambassadors (hsa@haas.berkeley.edu) or our Student Region Reps (<https://mba.haas.berkeley.edu/admissions/student-region-reps.html>) and ask them to connect you with a current student from Vietnam.

Joshua:

Thanks again for taking the time to host this! **Is it possible to be considered for both the Full-Time and Part-Time programs?**

Sandra_Berkeley:

Dear Joshua, an applicant can only submit one application at a time. If an applicant is not admitted into our program, they are welcome to apply one of our other MBA programs.

Radhikac:

Hi Morgan - Thanks for answering. However, I'm a bit confused - **when I log into my application I do not see a section for Extracurricular Activities. Is it nested under one of these: Personal Data Personal Data II Academic History Test Scores Employment Upload Resume Recommendations Essays Signature Review?**

Morgan_Berkeley:

Radhikac: It is included under the Essays section. There is a question in there asking you to list/describe your involvement.

Sarah:

In the employment section of the application, is it appropriate to list full-time co-op positions held during undergrad?

Morgan_Berkeley:

Sarah - We are primarily interested in positions held after graduation, so I would not list jobs held during undergrad. There is a separate section under the Supplemental Essays where you can describe jobs/activities during college.

Bikesh:

Can interviewers ask me about current events and my opinions, or is it simply on my resume?

Morgan_Berkeley:

Bikesh - While some of the interview questions will overlap across all interviews, others will be at the interviewer's discretion. So yes, they could ask about current events.

Ben: Hi Haas admissions team. Thank you again for your time. **Is there any sort of "early decision" admission for Haas?**

Morgan_Berkeley: Ben - No, there is not.

Mayank: Hi, **can you please tell us the difference between Round 1 & Round 2? Can we apply in Round 2 directly?**

Morgan_Berkeley: Mayank: I'm not sure I follow your question. The difference is the application deadline date of September 21 vs. January 4. You can apply in either round, directly. Can you be more specific with your question?

Bikesh: **Can I work part time during my first year?**

Morgan_Berkeley: Bikesh - It is not advised for students to work part-time during their first year, and particularly not during your first semester. Some students may take on part-time on-campus responsibilities that include a modest stipend or salary, but for the most part the summer internship is the first time that students are able to pursue a job. In the second year, many do pursue additional part-time jobs either on campus or related to their internship/career interests.

Dexter: **Is it possible for an international applicant to be granted an application fee waiver for the Full-time MBA application? If yes, under which conditions?**

Sandra_Berkeley: Hello Dexter brave, the Berkeley Haas FTMBA program only offers an Application Fee Waiver to U.S. citizens and U.S. Permanent Residents.

Mayank: Thanks Morgan! **I wanted to understand whether the Round 2 gets into the picture if any seats are left after Round 1, or whether both the rounds have their separate seat quota. Also, is there any disadvantage of applying in Round 2 as compared to round1?**

Morgan_Berkeley: Mayank - There is no seat quota in the rounds. We will admit students in all of our three rounds.

Bikesh: **Does a high TOEFL score improve my candidacy, or is simply clearing the cut-off what the panel looking for?**

Morgan_Berkeley: Bikesh - Generally the TOEFL gives us assurance that you'll be able to engage in English across all dimensions of the program (classroom, career, social, etc).

Sarah: Hello again :) I have another really specific transcript question. **Can I submit an official Student Academic Achievement Report from UC Berkeley Extension for a class I recently took in the transcripts section of the application?**

Sandra_Berkeley: Hello Sarah, thank you for your question. Please submit a copy of your official transcript.

JMalashevich: **I'm interested in strategy at an entertainment tech company like Netflix or Hulu - does Haas have recruiting relationships with companies in that field?**

Morgan_Berkeley: JMalashevich - Yes, we do. Many of our students pursue digital media and entertainment. I would encourage you to learn more about DMEC (our student club in this area) and Play conference that the students put on. You can also see a list of recent employers here <http://haas.berkeley.edu/groups/careercenter/hireanmba/employment-reports.html>

Mayank: Also, **What is the eligibility criteria for scholarships?**

Jamie_Berkeley: Hi Mayank, I encourage you to review our online list of scholarship opportunities as we list the criteria for each scholarship as well as the required essay prompt of applicable. Criteria for our awards ranges from need, to industry, to diversity and more!
<http://www.haas.berkeley.edu/finaid/MBA/entering-students.html>

Bikesh: **Do I receive a feedback in case I am not selected, highlighting the reasons?**

Andrea_Berkeley: Hi Bikesh, due to the volume of our applicants and limited staffing, we're unable to provide individual feedback. We encourage you to review our class profile and the student testimonials on our website to see where you may be lacking, and work to address those areas should you decide to reapply.

Sarah: Thank you for your help. Just to clarify, **is the Student Academic Report from UC Berkeley Extension considered an official transcript?** I was able to download one from the UC Berkeley Extension website and want to be sure this is the correct transcript to submit.

Sandra_Berkeley: Hello again Sarah. The UCB Extension does provide an official transcript. You will need to connect with them on how to request this transcript.

Lizzy_Moderator: Hi everyone, thank you for joining us. We'll be wrapping up our chat soon. Please send us your final questions!

Kelly:

If one grew up in California (birth through high school) though now lives in another state, is he/she considered as an in-state or out of state candidate?

Andrea_Berkeley:

Hi Kelly, on our application, residency data is collected by country of birth, city you were born in, and whether you expect to be a California resident by the beginning of the term to which you apply. In many cases, U.S. citizens or Permanent Residents may qualify for California Residency by their second year of graduate school. For more detailed information, please consult the Financial Aid resource for residency -

<http://www.haas.berkeley.edu/finaid/MBA/residency.html>

Eva:

Hello, **would it be appropriate to enter awards in the "responsibilities/accomplishments" section of the employment submission form? For example, a company award for "employee of the year" or industry awards for marketing campaigns I have led? Or do you prefer to see those on our resume?**

Morgan_Berkeley:

Eva - There is no right or wrong answer here. The word space on your resume is limited, particularly when trying to keep it to one page, so perhaps the employment section of the application is better. That said, if it is a substantial award/accomplishment and should be highlighted, then perhaps add to your resume. Ultimately, it's up to you.

Elisa:

Hi, thank you for answering questions! I asked one earlier but think it didn't go through. **In career goals essay section, if my future function is a cross-disciplinary mix of several of the options in the drop-down, is it better to choose one or just select "other"?**

Morgan_Berkeley:

Elisa - Please choose one that best aligns with your interest.

Sarah:

Thank you so much, Sandra and team! I will follow up with UCB Extension. Last question for you... **what is one thing you wish every applicant knew going into the Haas application process?**

Sandra_Berkeley:

Great question Sarah. I would say that it is important for applicant to know that we are here to help you in your application journey. We like to provide our applicants with a variety a resources that will help them make this process as fun and helpful. Feel free to reach out to us if there are any additional questions.

Lizzy_Moderator:

Thanks again for joining us! Our chat is wrapping up and shutting down. We really appreciate your questions and apologize if we didn't get to all of them. You should receive a follow-up email within the next week with a transcript of today's chat. If you have any further questions, please feel free to reach out to us at mbaadm@haas.berkeley.edu. Go Bears!

Morgan_Berkeley:

Thank you for chatting with us today. I look forward to reading your applications. Best of luck!

Jamie_Berkeley:

Thank you for joining us today! If your question regarding financial aid was not answered or if you have more, please feel free to contact the Haas Financial Aid Office directly at finaid@haas.berkeley.edu.

Sandra_Berkeley:

It was great chatting with you all today. Best of luck and Go Bears!

Andrea_Berkeley:

Wishing you all the best for this upcoming application season!