

PMG Cover Sheet

Policy name and number: **Previously Earned Graduate Credit**

- AP.6.5 Previously Earned Graduate Credit
- AP.6.5.1 Graduate Transfer Credit Earned at an External Institution
- AP.6.5.2 External Exam Credit
- AP.6.5.3 Graduate Credit Earned at George Mason
 - AP.6.5.3.1 Graduate Credit Earned in Degree-Seeking Status
 - AP.6.5.3.2 Graduate Credit Earned in Non-Degree-Seeking Status
 - AP.6.5.3.3 Graduate Credit Earned in Undergraduate Status (Non-Accelerated Programs)

Minor updates to related Academic Policies as necessitated by changes to AP.6.5:

- AP.6.4.1 Non-Degree Status Students
- AP.6.5.4 Permission to Study Elsewhere
- AP.6.7 Bachelor's/Accelerated Master's Degrees
 - AP.6.7.1 Application and Admission
 - AP.6.7.2 Coursework Requirements
 - AP.6.7.3 Timeline Requirements
- AP.6.8 Requirements for Graduate Certificates
- AP.6.9 Requirements for Master's Degrees
 - AP.6.9.6 Individualized Dual Master's Degree Programs
- AP.6.10 Requirements for Doctoral Degrees

Responsible office or committee: Graduate Division, Office of the Provost

Type of policy:

- University Catalog
- University Policy
- Faculty Handbook
- Code of Student Conduct
- Other policy or guidelines (e.g., graduate hiring guidelines, etc.)

University Policy Type (if a numbered University Policy)

- Academic Policies
- Computing
- Financial
- General Policies
- Human Resources
- Research
- Risk, Safety, & Resilience
- Student Policies

Policy proposal type:

- New policy
- Substantial revision
- Minor revision
- Renewal with no changes
- Rescind policy

Emergency approval requested:

- Yes (must include compelling reason in the “why” paragraph below)
- No

If you are submitting a revised policy, you should submit them with changes tracked in a Microsoft Word document.

Why is this policy or revision being proposed?

In Fall 2024, George Mason implemented a significant revision to graduate credit application policies by eliminating the former Reduction of Credit (ROC) category and consolidating all previously earned graduate credit under a single Transfer of Credit (TOC) framework. Historically, ROC applied only to credits from a previously conferred degree while TOC applied to eligible graduate coursework not used toward a conferred degree.

Although this consolidation simplified the policy structure, implementation revealed operational and definitional challenges. Multiple types of previously earned credit are currently being processed through the “transfer” mechanism, even when they are not typically considered transfer credit. Additionally, workflow changes following the policy merger shifted processing responsibilities, creating inconsistencies in how credits are reflected in the degree audit and requiring additional unit-level intervention.

The proposed revisions aim to clarify the policy by more clearly defining the distinct categories of previously earned graduate credit that may be applied to a degree. Rather than relying on internal processing mechanisms to determine classification, the revised structure focuses on transparent, academically grounded distinctions. This will improve shared understanding among faculty, staff, and students; support consistent application across units; and create a more seamless and sustainable process moving forward.

The remaining proposed revisions are intended to reduce duplication and communicate policy through clear, direct language. Please note: Links to Academic Policies mentioned in this policy will be added at the final stage of the process.

Who has been involved or consulted with in the creation/revision of this policy already?

Graduate Division, College/School Associate Deans (or equivalent), Office of University Registrar, Graduate Council, Faculty Senate Academic Policies Committee, Policy Management Group.

Questions and feedback raised in and after PMG (to be added after PMG review):

Signature Routing Form

(to be created by PMG co-chairs for numbered University Policies only)

Reviewers & date of review:

- **Policy Management Group** Upcoming — 2/24/26
- **Graduate Council** Upcoming — Introduced on 2/25/26
- **Faculty Senate** Anticipated March 2026
- **University Counsel** Anticipated March 2026
- **Compliance and Ethics** Vin Lacovara, Institutional Compliance Leader, 2/25

Senior approving officials- signatures and dates

- **Signature 1**
- **Signature 2**

PREVIOUSLY EARNED CREDIT REVISIONS

AP.6.5 Previously Earned Graduate Credit

Previously earned graduate-level credit may be applied toward a George Mason graduate degree or certificate. Such credit may originate from external institutions, external examinations, or coursework completed at George Mason University prior to admission to the current program.

AP.6.5.1 Graduate Transfer Credit Earned at an External Institution

Relevant graduate course credits earned at an institution accredited by a George Mason-recognized U.S. institutional accrediting agency, international equivalent, or at another institution and recommended for graduate credit by the American Council on Education may be transferred and applied towards George Mason graduate degree or certificate programs.

This may include credits used for a previously conferred graduate degree or certificate. More than half of the required minimum credits applied to the George Mason degree must be earned at George Mason. Graduate credits earned at an external institution count towards credit hours only and are not included in the calculation of the George Mason grade point average (GPA).

Students must supply official transcripts and other information as requested, including an official transcript evaluation and translation for transcripts from outside the United States if not supplied during the admission process. The student's program is responsible for reviewing transcripts or other requested information to determine, in compliance with academic policies, whether credits are applicable to current graduate program requirements and eligible for transfer. Appeals of adverse decisions are not reviewed beyond the college or school's leadership unit and their published criteria.

Provisionally admitted students must fulfill the conditions of their admission and have the provisional qualifier removed from their records before graduate credit earned at an external institution will be processed.

The applicability of previously earned credit depends on factors including, but not limited to, source, age, grade, academic level, and alignment with program requirements. All students applying previously earned graduate credit must enroll in at least one credit after admission to the degree or certificate program. Students must meet institutional and any applicable unique credit requirements for their graduate program. Individual programs may have more restrictive policies and requirements. This policy does not supersede the requirements under University Policy 3007 Dual Degree Program Arrangements. See also AP.6.9.5 Embedded Master's Degree.

Requests to apply previously earned graduate credit to a degree or certificate program must be submitted within the following timeframes and must be approved and recorded prior to the student applying for graduation from the graduate degree or certificate program:

- 1 semester after admission to a certificate program;
- 1 year after admission to a master's degree program; or

- 2 years after admission to a doctoral program.

All previously earned credit requests must be:

- listed as a graduate-level course on the student's official transcript;
- earned as an admitted degree or non-degree status student;
- graded a minimum of B- or higher; and
- earned within 10 years of admission to the George Mason degree or certificate program unless an exception is approved by the student's school or college.

Courses graded "pass/fail" or "satisfactory/no credit" are acceptable if the grade is pass or satisfactory. Courses that follow another non-standard grading format will be evaluated by the student's program on a case-by-case basis. Extension and in-service courses not applied to a graduate degree or certificate program are not eligible.

AP.6.5.2 External Exam Credit

Degree credit for satisfactory completion of an external exam is limited to those exams and achievement levels specifically approved by the Graduate Council.

AP.6.5.3 Graduate Credit Earned at George Mason

The applicability of previously earned graduate-level credit depends on factors including, but not limited to, source, age, grade, academic level, and alignment with program requirements. All students applying previously earned graduate credit must enroll in at least one credit after admission to the current degree or certificate program.

All previously earned credit must be:

- listed as a graduate-level course on the student's official transcript;
- earned as an admitted degree-seeking or non-degree status student;
- graded a minimum of B- or higher; and
- earned within 10 years of admission to the George Mason degree or certificate program unless exception is approved by the student's school or college.

Courses graded "pass/fail" or "satisfactory/no credit" are acceptable if the grade is pass or satisfactory. Courses that follow another non-standard grading format will be evaluated by the student's program on a case-by-case basis. Extension and in-service courses not applied to a graduate degree or certificate program are not eligible.

Students must meet both institutional and applicable unique credit requirements for their graduate program. Individual programs may have more restrictive policies and requirements. This policy

does not supersede requirements under University Policy 3007 Dual Degree Program Arrangements. See also AP.6.9.5 Embedded Master's Degree.

AP.6.5.3.1 Graduate Credit Earned in Degree-Seeking Status

Graduate-level credits previously earned at George Mason in graduate degree-seeking status will be included in the calculation of the graduate cumulative GPA for subsequent George Mason graduate programs. These credits will apply to subsequent equivalent graduate program requirements and be included in the calculation of the degree GPA for a subsequent George Mason graduate program unless excluded from the degree audit program requirements by the subsequent program. If a program does not approve the application of credits, they must submit a request for exclusion of previously earned credits from the program requirements within one year of the student's enrollment as an admitted student in the subsequent program.

AP.6.5.3.2 Graduate Credit Earned in Non-Degree-Seeking Status

Graduate credits previously earned at George Mason in non-degree-seeking status may be applied to graduate program requirements with program approval. Approved requests must be applied prior to applying for graduation from the specific graduate degree or certificate program. No more than 12 non-degree credits may count towards a George Mason degree or certificate. Applied credits are included in the calculation of the graduate cumulative and program GPA. See AP.6.4.1 Non-Degree Student Status for more information.

AP. 6.5.3.3 Graduate Credit Earned in Undergraduate Status (Non-Accelerated Programs)

Graduate-level credits taken as an undergraduate student may apply towards a George Mason graduate degree or certificate program with program approval. See AP.1.4.4 Graduate Course Enrollment by Undergraduates. This does not apply to students enrolled in a Bachelor's/Accelerated Master's (BAM) Degree program (See AP.6.7).

No more than 12 graduate course credits may count towards both an undergraduate degree and a graduate degree or certificate program. Approved requests must be applied prior to applying for graduation from the specific graduate degree or certificate program.

RELATED PREVIOUSLY EARNED CREDIT POLICIES

AP.6.4.1 Non-Degree Student Status

Students may pursue graduate study in non-degree status at George Mason. Such students who wish to pursue a degree or certificate program are encouraged to apply for program admission as soon as possible. All program admission requirements must be met.

All students must enroll in at least one credit after admission to the degree or certificate program. A maximum of 12 non-degree credits can be applied toward a degree or certificate. Graduate credits taken in non-degree status may not count towards more than two George Mason degree and/or certificate programs. See AP.6.5.3 Graduate Credit Earned at George Mason.

AP.6.5.4 Permission to Study Elsewhere

Students enrolled in a degree program may take graduate courses at another accredited institution and apply these credits to a master's or doctoral degree with prior approval. Approval must be secured in writing from the director of the graduate program and the dean or director of the school, college, or institute, and submitted to George Mason's Office of the University Registrar before registering at the other institution. Upon completion of the course, students must arrange for an official transcript to be submitted to Mason so that the credits may be transferred into their George Mason degree program. These credits are subject to all the other conditions given above for transfer credit, including limits on numbers of credits that can be taken elsewhere. Note that credits accepted for transfer do not compute into any George Mason GPA. Permission to take a course elsewhere does not exempt a graduate student from satisfying the degree requirements.

Enrolled, degree-seeking graduate students may be eligible to take a limited number of courses through the Consortium of Universities of the Washington Metropolitan Area. See [AP.1.4.2 Permission to Study Elsewhere](#) for more information. Credits earned through the consortium are considered resident, not transfer, credits, and are therefore not subject to transfer of credit conditions or limitations.

AP.6.7 Bachelor's/Accelerated Master's Degrees

George Mason offers combined bachelor's and accelerated master's degree programs for academically strong undergraduate students committed to advancing their education in a specialized field of study. Accepted students may obtain both a bachelor's and a master's degree after satisfactory completion of at least 138 credits (total number may vary based on requirements of both the undergraduate and graduate programs).

Once matriculated into the master's program, students are assessed graduate tuition and are subject to all graduate academic policies as detailed in the University Catalog. Students receiving, or planning on receiving, financial aid in their undergraduate or intended accelerated master's degree program should consult with the [Office of Financial Aid](#) to determine any financial impact prior to application.

Accelerated pathways totaling less than 150 credits must cover all competencies in both the undergraduate and graduate degrees. In cases where pathways allow for the substitution of undergraduate elective credits by graduate-level elective credits, the graduate-level elective credits must align with the requirements of the graduate program while maintaining the breadth of knowledge imparted by the undergraduate degree program.

See AP.1.4.4 Graduate Course Enrollment by Undergraduates for undergraduate students who want to enroll in graduate courses and are not in an accelerated pathway. Each pathway must offer a curated list of courses in the University Catalog that are consistent with the requirements of this policy and maintain the integrity of both the undergraduate and graduate degree programs. Completion of the accelerated master's degree requires that all university requirements for the master's degree are met, including the institutional credit requirement, the unique credit requirement, and graduate time limit to degree requirement.

AP.6.7.1 Application and Admission

Application to the accelerated master's degree program pathway should be made once the student has earned at least 60 credits. The graduate application fee is waived. Acceptance into the degree pathway program is competitive and must be approved by the designated administrator(s) or equivalent within both the student's undergraduate and graduate degree programs.

AP.6.7.2 Coursework Requirements

After acceptance and successful completion of 75 undergraduate credits, accelerated master's pathway students shall complete a minimum of 3 to a maximum of 12 credits of approved advanced standing graduate courses in their field of study. Approved advanced standing credits apply to both the undergraduate and graduate degrees. Advanced standing credits apply to the undergraduate degree as graded credits and count towards the undergraduate cumulative GPA. Advanced standing credits apply to the master's degree as credit hours only and are not included in the graduate GPA. All required graduate course prerequisites must be completed prior to enrollment in the advanced standing course.

Moreover, accelerated master's pathway students may earn up to 6 additional reserve credits of graduate coursework while in undergraduate status. Eligible reserve credits apply to the master's degree program as graded credits and count towards the graduate cumulative and program GPA, but do not apply to the undergraduate degree program. Students must earn a minimum grade of B- in each approved graduate course, although programs and/or colleges or schools may require a higher minimum to proceed in the accelerated degree pathway. Any grade that does not meet the minimum grade in an approved advanced standing or reserve graduate course will not apply towards the intended graduate degree. It will only display on the undergraduate degree transcript and will count toward the undergraduate GPA.

Accelerated master's pathway students who do not attain a final 3.00 cumulative GPA in their undergraduate degree may have their admission to the master's program revoked at the discretion of the college or school. Accelerated master's pathway students who do not successfully transfer into the master's program may file a new admissions application to a master's program and, after admission and enrollment, eligible credits for any graduate

coursework previously taken as an undergraduate student may be applied towards the new master's program with permission of the program and in alignment with applicable policies and procedures.

No more than 12 graduate credits may count towards both an undergraduate degree and a graduate degree or certificate. See AP.6.5.3 Graduate Credit Earned at George Mason for further information.

AP.6.7.3 Timeline Requirements

Accelerated master's pathway students must apply to graduate and have their undergraduate degree conferred in the semester during which their final undergraduate degree requirements are fulfilled. Advanced standing and reserve graduate credit courses must be completed by the term of undergraduate graduation specified on their transition form for the accelerated degree program. Students must submit their transition form to their undergraduate program by the last day to add classes of their final undergraduate semester. Transition forms must be timely approved and submitted by the school or college.

Students are expected to enroll in the related master's program in the academic term immediately following undergraduate degree conferral. Students who do not enroll in that term may request a 1-semester deferral of admission, subject to the constraints of their master's program and timely filing of an updated transition form. Such deferrals must be approved by the graduate program director. Students must also adhere to all timelines specified in AP.6.5.3 Graduate Credit Earned at George Mason and AP.6.9.2 Time Limit.

Students who do not adhere to the timeline requirements outlined above may lose eligibility for admission to the master's program through the accelerated degree program pathway. In such cases, students may submit a new application for general admission to the master's program. Following admission and enrollment, students may request to apply any graduate coursework completed as an undergraduate to the new graduate program.

AP.6.8 Requirements for Graduate Certificates

Candidates must satisfy all applicable university requirements and all requirements established by the graduate certificate program faculty. Individual departmental graduate certificate requirements are listed under their academic departments in this catalog. Note that the following are university minimum requirements; individual programs may have higher standards and/or more restrictive requirements.

- **Admission.** Program acceptance is subject to all applicable admissions requirements.
- **Credit Hours.** Graduate certificate programs require a minimum of 12 and a maximum of 24 graduate credits.

- **Credit Level.** Only graduate-level courses, including previously earned credits, may apply toward the graduate certificate.
- **Institutional Credit.** More than half of the minimum required credits applied to the certificate must be earned at George Mason. In the case of a certificate offered through consortia arrangement, at least one-third of the credits applied to the certificate must be earned at George Mason.
- **Quality.** Candidates must have a minimum GPA of 3.00 in coursework presented on the certificate application for graduation. The GPA calculation excludes previously earned credits from an external institution. See AP.6.5 Previously Earned Graduate Credit.
- **Unique Credit.** Certificate students who satisfy the degree requirements of more than one certificate at Mason may apply coursework from multiple certificates towards a Mason master's or doctoral degree program. No credits can be applied to more than two certificates and/or degrees. The graduation application for any graduate certificate must include a minimum of 12 credits that apply only to that certificate and not to another certificate.

AP.6.9 Requirements for Master's Degrees

Candidates must satisfy all applicable university degree requirements and all requirements established by the master's program faculty. Individual departmental degree requirements are listed under the respective master's programs in this catalog. Programs may impose more stringent requirements.

- **Admission.** Candidates must have been officially admitted into degree status.
- **Credit Hours.** Candidates must earn a minimum of 30 graduate credits. Previously earned coursework may be applied towards this. See AP.6.5 Previously Earned Graduate Credit.
- **Credit Level.** Only graduate level courses may apply toward the degree.
- **Institutional Credit.** More than half of the required minimum credits applied to the degree must be earned at George Mason. Or, in the case of programs offered through joint, cooperative, or consortium arrangements, at the participating institutions, at least one-third of the credits applied to the master's degree must be earned at George Mason.
- **Thesis/Project Limits.** A maximum of 6 credits of master's thesis research or master's project may be applied to the degree.

- **Quality.** Candidates must have a minimum degree GPA of 3.00 in coursework when submitting an application for graduation.
- **Unique Credit.** At least 6 credits of the master's degree program must be applied only to that degree meaning they cannot be used to fulfill the requirements of another degree or certificate program. This requirement does not apply to doctoral students pursuing an embedded master's degree under AP.6.9.5 Embedded Master's Degree.

AP.6.9.6 Individualized Dual Master's Degree Programs

George Mason graduate students have the option to pursue two master's degrees simultaneously. Graduate students who wish to pursue two degrees and/or certificate programs outside of a dual master's arrangement as stated herein are referred to University Policy 3007, AP.6.8 Requirements for Graduate Certificates, AP.6.9.5 Embedded Master's Degree, and AP.6.11 Requirements for Specialist Degrees.

For purposes of administration, if a different rate of tuition is assessed for each program, the student will be assessed at the higher rate. The program with the higher rate will be considered the primary program. The 6-year time limit for completion of each program component of the dual master's programs derives from the admission date for that program component. Students will have a cumulative GPA while pursuing both programs. A degree for each program component shall be conferred upon completion based upon student application for graduation and students shall have a degree GPA for each program component. See AP.6.6 Graduate Academic Standing for more information.

Previous George Mason credits that were subsequently applied towards the initial program in this arrangement will be removed from the student's record upon matriculation into the second program.

Students are not eligible to pursue two master's degrees until they have completed one semester in their initial master's program. Additional requirements:

- **Admission.** A full admissions application must be submitted for both programs. Students must apply and be accepted to the second master's degree within one year of matriculation in the initial program. The application must include a written statement explaining the intellectual or pedagogical purpose behind the degree program, and the academic symmetries that exist between the fields of study.
- **Shared Credit.** An Individualized Dual Master's Degree Program of Study form, approved by directors of both programs, must be submitted to the [Office of the University Registrar](#) upon matriculation in the second program. This will determine the maximum number of credits and specific courses that may be shared across programs. Credits that are shared between programs may need an approved

Substitution/Waiver form signed by the appropriate college or school's leadership unit.

- **Unique Credit.** A restricted number of credits may be shared across certain dual degree programs. See University Policy 3007 to determine the maximum number of credits that may be shared across master's degree programs. Credit may be shared across two George Mason programs only. See University Policy 3007 for more information on credit-sharing limitations.

AP.6.10 Requirements for Doctoral Degrees

Candidates must satisfy all applicable university degree requirements and all requirements established by the doctoral program faculty. Programs may impose more stringent requirements. Departmental degree requirements are listed under the respective doctoral programs in this catalog.

- **Admission.** Students must have been fully admitted into degree status.
- **Credit Hours.** Candidates must earn a minimum of 72 graduate credits. Previously earned coursework may be applied towards this. See AP.6.5 Previously Earned Graduate Credit.
- **Credit Level.** Only graduate courses may apply toward the degree.
- **Institutional Credit.** More than half of the required minimum credits for the doctoral degree must be earned at George Mason. Or, in the case of programs offered through joint, cooperative, or consortium arrangements, at the participating institutions, at least one-third of the credits applied to the doctoral degree must be earned at George Mason.
- **Quality.** Candidates must have a minimum degree GPA of 3.00 in coursework presented on the degree application.
- **Unique Credit.** At least 24 credits of the doctoral degree program must be applied only to that degree meaning they cannot be used to fulfill the requirements of another degree or certificate program.
- **Advancement to Candidacy.** Candidates must meet the written and/or oral doctoral candidacy requirements set by the candidate's degree program.
- **Dissertation.** Candidates must complete a minimum of 12 credits of doctoral proposal (998) and doctoral dissertation research (999), including at least three credits of 999. A maximum of 24 credits of 998 and 999 may be applied to the degree.

- **Defense.** Candidates must pass a final public defense of the doctoral dissertation.

PREVIOUSLY EARNED CREDIT REVISIONS (02/10/26) [TRACKED CHANGES]

AP.6.5 Previously Earned Graduate Credit by Exam

Previously earned graduate-level credit may be applied toward a George Mason graduate degree or Transfer certificate. Such credit may originate from external institutions, external examinations, or coursework completed at George Mason University prior to admission to the current program.

AP.6.5.1 Graduate Transfer Credit by Earned at an External Exam Institution

Relevant graduate course credits earned at an institution accredited by a George Mason-recognized U.S. institutional accrediting agency, international equivalent, or at another institution and recommended for graduate credit by the American Council on Education may be transferred and applied towards George Mason graduate degree or certificate programs.

This may include credits used for a previously conferred graduate degree or certificate. More than half of the required minimum credits applied to the George Mason degree must be earned at George Mason. Graduate credits earned at an external institution count towards credit hours only and are not included in the calculation of the George Mason grade point average (GPA).

Students must supply official transcripts and other information as requested, including an official transcript evaluation and translation for transcripts from outside the United States if not supplied during the admission process. The student's program is responsible for reviewing transcripts or other requested information to determine, in compliance with academic policies, whether credits are applicable to current graduate program requirements and eligible for transfer. Appeals of adverse decisions are not reviewed beyond the college or school's leadership unit and their published criteria.

Provisionally admitted students must fulfill the conditions of their admission and have the provisional qualifier removed from their records before graduate credit earned at an external institution will be processed.

The applicability of previously earned credit depends on factors including, but not limited to, source, age, grade, academic level, and alignment with program requirements. All students applying previously earned graduate credit must enroll in at least one credit after admission to the degree or certificate program. Students must meet institutional and any applicable unique credit requirements for their graduate program. Individual programs may have more restrictive policies and requirements. This policy does not supersede the requirements under University Policy 3007 Dual Degree Program Arrangements. See also AP.6.9.5 Embedded Master's Degree.

Requests to apply previously earned graduate credit to a degree or certificate program must be submitted within the following timeframes and must be approved and recorded prior to the student applying for graduation from the graduate degree or certificate program:

- 1 semester after admission to a certificate program;

- 1 year after admission to a master's degree program; or
- 2 years after admission to a doctoral program.

All previously earned credit requests must be:

- listed as a graduate-level course on the student's official transcript;
- earned as an admitted degree or non-degree status student;
- graded a minimum of B- or higher; and
- earned within 10 years of admission to the George Mason degree or certificate program unless an exception is approved by the student's school or college.

Courses graded "pass/fail" or "satisfactory/no credit" are acceptable if the grade is pass or satisfactory. Courses that follow another non-standard grading format will be evaluated by the student's program on a case-by-case basis. Extension and in-service courses not applied to a graduate degree or certificate program are not eligible.

AP.6.5.2 External Exam Credit

Degree credit for satisfactory completion of an external exam is limited to those exams and achievement levels specifically approved by the Graduate Council.

AP.6.5.3 Graduate Credit Earned at George Mason

Relevant graduate credits earned from an institution accredited by a Mason-recognized accrediting agency, earned at another institution and recommended for graduate credit by the American Council on Education, earned as a former Bachelor's/Accelerated Master's Degree student, or earned at Mason in non-degree graduate student status may be transferred towards doctoral or master's degree or certificate program requirements in accordance with the requirements set forth below. Transferred graduate courses earned at another institution count only as credit hours and are not included in the calculation of the Mason cumulative or degree GPA.

3 Graduate credits earned at Mason in graduate status can be used to fulfill a subsequent Mason graduate degree or certificate program requirement, as specified in the University Catalog. If shared with a subsequent graduate program, these credits are included in the calculation of the cumulative and degree GPA, and do not require a transfer of credits. Any request for exclusion of such credits must be submitted by the local academic unit (LAU) within one year of the student's enrollment as an admitted student in the subsequent graduate program. Doctoral students must still provide a program of study. See AP.6.10.3 for further information. **Credit Earned at George Mason**

This policy does not supersede the applicability of previously earned graduate-level credit depends on factors including, but not limited to, source, age, grade, academic level, and alignment with program requirements under University Policy Number 3007 Dual Degree Program Arrangements which includes dual master's and dual (secondary) master's/doctoral program arrangements.

Mason undergraduate. All students attempting to earn Mason graduate course credit for use towards a applying previously earned graduate program are referred to AP.6.7 Bachelor's/Accelerated Master's Degrees or AP.1.4.4 Graduate Course Enrollment by Undergraduates, as appropriate.

In all transfer of credit applications:

- graduate credits may not count towards more than two earned Mason degrees and/or certificates.
- no more than 12 graduate credits may count towards both an undergraduate degree and a graduate degree or must enroll in at least one credit after admission to the current degree or certificate program.
 - no more than 12 non-degree credits may count towards a Mason degree or certificate.

AP.6.5.2.1 General Requirements

The credits accepted for transfer may include those used for a previously earned degree or certificate program. In all cases, students must meet the institutional credits requirement and any applicable unique credits requirement for their program.

The transfer credit(s) All previously earned credit must have been:

- listed as a graduate-level course on the institution where the student took the courses, student's official transcript;
- earned as an admitted degree-seeking or as a non-degree status student;
 - graded a minimum of B- or higher; and
- earned within ten 10 years prior of admission to first enrollment as an admitted student in the specific George Mason degree or certificate or degree program unless exception is approved by the student's school or college.

Courses graded 'pass/fail' "pass/fail" or 'satisfactory' "satisfactory/no credit" credit are acceptable for transfer credit if the grade is pass or satisfactory. Graduate courses from another university Courses that follow another non-standard grading format will be evaluated by the student's program on a case-by-case basis to meet Mason graduate degree requirements.

Any transfer of credits to a Mason graduate degree or certificate should occur no later than:

- One semester after admission to the specific Mason certificate program; or
- One year after admission to the specific master's degree program; or
- Two years after admission to the specific doctoral program.

In all cases, the transfer of credits must be completed prior to the student applying for graduation from the specific graduate certificate or degree program. Application of transferred graduate credits toward required degree or certificate credits requires the approval of the LAU. The LAU, in compliance with all applicable academic policies, will determine if the credits are relevant and applicable to the current degree program or certificate. Transfer credit can only be given for

those credits that are applicable toward a comparable degree or certificate at the institution that offered the courses. Extension and in-service courses not intended by the institution offering the courses to be applied to a graduate degree or certificate program are not eligible for transfer credit toward graduate degree or certificate programs at Mason.

Note that LAUs may have more restrictive policies and requirements. Appeals of transfer of credit decisions are not reviewed beyond the college or school's leadership unit.

AP.6.5.2.2 Transfer of Credits earned at another institution

The number of transferred credits earned at another institution cannot exceed one credit less than half of the maximum number of credits required by the doctoral or master's degree or certificate program.

Students must supply official transcripts and other information as requested. Official transcripts are required before any transfer of credits can be approved by the LAU. For transcripts from outside the United States, students must supply an official transcript evaluation and an official translation for transcripts not in English if these documents were not supplied in the admission process. The acceptance of transfer credits from students who are admitted provisionally are not considered until they have fulfilled the conditions of their admission, and the provisional qualifier has been removed from their records.

AP.6.5.2.3 Other Provisions

All students transferring credits must enroll in at least one credit after admission to the certificate or degree program.

Doctoral students completing a secondary master's degree must indicate on their program of study which courses apply to the doctoral degree.

For further information, as applicable, see [AP.6.10 Requirements for Doctoral Degrees](#), [AP.6.9 Requirements for Master's Degrees](#), [AP.6.8 Requirements for Graduate Certificates](#) and/or [AP.6.4.1 Non-degree Student Status](#). Students must meet both institutional and applicable unique credit requirements for their graduate program. Individual programs may have more restrictive policies and requirements. This policy does not supersede requirements under University Policy 3007 Dual Degree Program Arrangements. See also [AP.6.9.5 Embedded Master's Degree](#).

AP.6.5.3.1 Graduate Credit Earned in Degree-Seeking Status

Graduate-level credits previously earned at George Mason in graduate degree-seeking status will be included in the calculation of the graduate cumulative GPA for subsequent George Mason graduate programs. These credits will apply to subsequent equivalent graduate program requirements and be included in the calculation of the degree GPA for a subsequent George Mason graduate program unless excluded from the degree audit program requirements by the subsequent program. If a program does not approve the application of credits, they must submit a request for exclusion of previously earned credits from the program requirements within one year of the student's enrollment as an admitted student in the subsequent program.

AP.6.5.3.2 Graduate Credit Earned in Non-Degree-Seeking Status

Graduate credits previously earned at George Mason in non-degree-seeking status may be applied to graduate program requirements with program approval. Approved requests must be applied prior to applying for graduation from the specific graduate degree or certificate program. No more than 12 non-degree credits may count towards a George Mason degree or certificate. Applied credits are included in the calculation of the graduate cumulative and program GPA. See AP.6.4.1 Non-Degree Student Status for more information.

AP. 6.5.3.3 Graduate Credit Earned in Undergraduate Status (Non-Accelerated Programs)

Graduate-level credits taken as an undergraduate student may apply towards a George Mason graduate degree or certificate program with program approval. See AP.1.4.4 Graduate Course Enrollment by Undergraduates. This does not apply to students enrolled in a Bachelor's/Accelerated Master's (BAM) Degree program (See AP.6.7).

No more than 12 graduate course credits may count towards both an undergraduate degree and a graduate degree or certificate program. Approved requests must be applied prior to applying for graduation from the specific graduate degree or certificate program.

RELATED PREVIOUSLY EARNED CREDIT POLICIES (02/10/26) [TRACKED CHANGES]

AP.6.4.1 ~~Non-degree~~ Degree Student Status

Students may pursue graduate study in non-degree status at [George Mason](#). Such students who wish to pursue a degree or certificate program are encouraged to apply for [program](#) admission ~~to a degree or certificate program at George Mason~~ as soon as possible. All program admission requirements must be met.

~~If the student intends to apply eligible graduate credits earned in a non-degree status from George Mason or another institution towards a George Mason degree or certificate, the credits must be approved on a Transfer of Credit form. A maximum of 12 credits taken in non-degree status can be applied toward a degree or certificate program. However, all~~ All students must enroll in at least one credit after admission to the degree or certificate or degree program. ~~A maximum of 12 non-degree credits can be applied toward a degree or certificate.~~ Graduate credits taken in non-degree status may not count towards more than two ~~earned~~ George Mason certificates degree and/or degrees certificate programs. See [AP.6.5.2 Transfer of Credits](#) for further requirements. [AP.6.5.3 Graduate Credit Earned at George Mason](#).

AP.6.5. ~~34~~ 3 Permission to Study Elsewhere

Students enrolled in a degree program may take graduate courses at another accredited institution and apply these credits to a master's or doctoral degree with prior approval. Approval must be secured in writing from the director of the graduate program and the dean or director of the school, college, or institute, and submitted to [George Mason's](#) Office of the University Registrar before registering at the other institution. Upon completion of the course, students must arrange for an official transcript to be submitted to Mason so that the credits may be transferred into their [George Mason](#) degree program. These credits are subject to all the other conditions given above for transfer credit, including limits on numbers of credits that can be taken elsewhere. Note that credits accepted for transfer do not compute into any [George Mason](#) GPA. Permission to take a course elsewhere does not exempt a graduate student from satisfying the degree requirements ~~given below~~.

Enrolled, degree-seeking graduate students may be eligible to take a limited number of courses through the Consortium of Universities of the Washington Metropolitan Area. See [AP.1.4.2 Permission to Study Elsewhere](#) for more information. Credits earned through the consortium are considered resident, not transfer, credits, and are therefore not subject to transfer of credit conditions or limitations.

AP.6.7 Bachelor's/Accelerated Master's Degrees

~~The university~~ [George Mason](#) offers ~~a number of~~ combined bachelor's and accelerated master's degree programs for academically ~~strong~~ undergraduates with a commitment undergraduate students committed to ~~advance~~ advancing their education in a specialized field of study. ~~Admitted~~ Accepted students may obtain both a bachelor's and a master's degree after satisfactory completion of at least 138 credits (total number ~~of~~

~~required credits depends on the~~ may vary based on requirements of both the undergraduate and graduate programs).-

Once matriculated into the master's program, students are assessed graduate tuition and are subject to all graduate academic policies as detailed in the University Catalog. Students receiving, or planning on receiving, financial aid in their undergraduate or intended accelerated master's degree program should consult with the Office of Financial Aid to determine any financial impact prior to application.

AP.6.7.1 Application and Admission

~~Application to accelerated master's degree programs should be made once the student has earned at least 60 credits. The graduate application fee is waived. Admission is competitive and must be approved by the designed administrator(s) or equivalent within both the student's undergraduate and graduate degree programs.~~

AP.6.7.2 Coursework Requirements

~~After admission and successful completion of 75 undergraduate credits, accelerated master's students shall complete 3 to 12 credits of approved advanced standing graduate courses in their field of study. These approved advanced standing credits apply to both the undergraduate and graduate degrees. All required graduate course prerequisites must be completed prior to enrollment. Moreover, accelerated master's students may earn up to 6 additional reserve credits of graduate coursework while still in undergraduate status. These reserve credits apply to the master's degree program, but do not apply to the undergraduate degree program. Students must earn a minimum grade of B- in each approved graduate course, although LAUs may require a higher minimum. Students who earn unsatisfactory grades in any approved graduate course or who fail to attain a 3.0 cumulative grade point average by the time of undergraduate degree conferral may not be admitted to the master's program through the accelerated degree program pathway. Students may file a new admissions application to the master's program and, after admission and enrollment, request a transfer of credits for any graduate coursework previously taken as an undergraduate student. See AP.6.5.2 for further information.~~

Accelerated pathways totaling less than 150 credits must cover all competencies in both the undergraduate and graduate degrees. In cases where pathways allow for the substitution of undergraduate elective credits by graduate-level elective credits, the graduate-level elective credits must align with the requirements of the graduate ~~level~~ program ~~while maintaining the~~ while maintaining the breadth of knowledge imparted by the undergraduate degree program.-

See AP.1.4.4 Graduate Course Enrollment by Undergraduates for undergraduate students who want to enroll in graduate courses and are not in an accelerated pathway. Each pathway must offer a curated list of courses in the University Catalog that are consistent with ~~these~~ the requirements of this policy and ~~that maintain the~~ maintain the integrity of both the undergraduate and graduate degree programs. Completion of the ~~bachelor's~~ accelerated master's degree requires that all university requirements for the master's degree are met, including the institutional credit requirement, the unique credit requirement, and graduate time limit to

degree requirement. ~~For more information on undergraduate students who want to enroll in graduate courses, see AP.1.4.4 Graduate Course Enrollment by Undergraduates.~~

AP.6.7.1 Application and Admission

Application to the accelerated master's degree program pathway should be made once the student has earned at least 60 credits. The graduate application fee is waived. Acceptance into the degree pathway program is competitive and must be approved by the designated administrator(s) or equivalent within both the student's undergraduate and graduate degree programs.

AP.6.7.2 Coursework Requirements

After acceptance and successful completion of 75 undergraduate credits, accelerated master's pathway students shall complete a minimum of 3 to a maximum of 12 credits of approved advanced standing graduate courses in their field of study. Approved advanced standing credits apply to both the undergraduate and graduate degrees. Advanced standing credits apply to the undergraduate degree as graded credits and count towards the undergraduate cumulative GPA. Advanced standing credits apply to the master's degree as credit hours only and are not included in the graduate GPA. All required graduate course prerequisites must be completed prior to enrollment in the advanced standing course.

Moreover, accelerated master's pathway students may earn up to 6 additional reserve credits of graduate coursework while in undergraduate status. Eligible reserve credits apply to the master's degree program as graded credits and count towards the graduate cumulative and program GPA, but do not apply to the undergraduate degree program. Students must earn a minimum grade of B- in each approved graduate course, although programs and/or colleges or schools may require a higher minimum to proceed in the accelerated degree pathway. Any grade that does not meet the minimum grade in an approved advanced standing or reserve graduate course will not apply towards the intended graduate degree. It will only display on the undergraduate degree transcript and will count toward the undergraduate GPA.

Accelerated master's pathway students who do not attain a final 3.00 cumulative GPA in their undergraduate degree may have their admission to the master's program revoked at the discretion of the college or school. Accelerated master's pathway students who do not successfully transfer into the master's program may file a new admissions application to a master's program and, after admission and enrollment, eligible credits for any graduate coursework previously taken as an undergraduate student may be applied towards the new master's program with permission of the program and in alignment with applicable policies and procedures.

No more than 12 graduate credits may count towards both an undergraduate degree and a graduate degree or certificate. See AP.6.5.3 Graduate Credit Earned at George Mason for further information.

AP.6.7.3 Timeline Requirements

Accelerated master's pathway students must apply to graduate and have their undergraduate degree conferred ~~from their undergraduate program~~ in the semester during which their final undergraduate degree requirements are fulfilled. Advanced standing and reserve graduate credit courses must be completed by the ~~semester or~~ term of undergraduate graduation specified on their ~~transition form for~~ transition form for the accelerated degree program. Students ~~in the accelerated programs~~ must submit their ~~transition form to~~ transition form to their undergraduate ~~local academic unit~~ program by the last day to add classes of their final undergraduate semester. Transition forms must be timely approved and submitted by the ~~student's intended graduate program, school or college.~~

Students ~~should~~ are expected to enroll in the related ~~master's~~ master's program in the academic ~~semester or summer session that term~~ immediately ~~follows the term of~~ following undergraduate degree conferral. ~~If students elect to delay enrollment in the chosen master's program, they can defer for up to one semester following the~~ Students who do not enroll in that term of undergraduate degree conferral may request a 1-semester deferral of admission, subject to the constraints of their master's ~~program and timely filing~~ program and timely filing of an updated transition form. ~~Such~~ Such ~~deferrals must~~ deferrals must be approved by the graduate program director. Students must also adhere to all timelines specified ~~in AP.6.5 and AP.6.9.2. Students who fail to follow the above in~~ AP.6.5.3 Graduate Credit Earned at George Mason and AP.6.9.2 Time Limit.

~~Students who do not adhere to the~~ Students who do not adhere to the ~~timeline requirements shall not be admitted outlined above may lose eligibility for admission~~ timeline requirements shall not be admitted outlined above may lose eligibility for admission to the master's program through the accelerated degree program pathway. ~~Students~~ In such cases, students may ~~file~~ submit a new ~~admissions~~ admissions application ~~for general admission~~ for general admission to the master's program ~~and, after.~~ Following admission and enrollment, ~~students may request a transfer of credits for to~~ students may request a transfer of credits for to ~~apply~~ apply any graduate coursework ~~previously taken completed~~ previously taken completed as an undergraduate ~~student.~~ See AP.6.5.2 for further information to the new graduate program.

AP.6.8 Requirements for Graduate Certificates

Candidates must satisfy all applicable university requirements and all requirements established by the graduate certificate program faculty. Individual departmental graduate certificate requirements are listed under their academic departments in this catalog. Note that the following are university minimum requirements; individual programs may have higher standards and/or more restrictive requirements.

- Admission. Program acceptance is subject to all applicable admissions requirements.

☒ **Credit Hours.** Graduate certificate programs require a minimum of 12 and a maximum of 24 graduate credits.

☒ **Credit Level.** Only graduate-level courses, including previously earned credits, may apply toward the graduate certificate.

• ~~Credits can be transferred into a graduate certificate program. See AP.6.5 Credit by Exam or Transfer for further information.~~

• **Institutional Credit.** More than half of the minimum required credits applied to the certificate must be earned through direct instruction at George Mason.

☒ In the case of a certificate offered through consortia arrangement, at least one-third of the credits applied to the certificate must be earned through direct instruction at George Mason.

☒ **Quality.** Candidates must have a minimum GPA of 3.00 in coursework presented on the certificate application for graduation, which may include no more than 3 credits of C. The GPA calculation excludes transfer credits brought in through AP.6.5 Credit by Exam or Transfer. The GPA calculation excludes previously earned credits from an external institution. See AP.6.5 Previously Earned Graduate Credit.

• ~~Certificate students are subject to graduate termination policies.~~

☒ **Unique Credit.** Certificate students who satisfy the degree requirements of more than one certificate at Mason may apply coursework from multiple certificates towards a Mason master's or doctoral degree program. No credits can be applied to more than two certificates and/or degrees. The graduation application for any graduate certificate must include a minimum of 12 credits that apply only to that certificate and not to another certificate.

• ~~Program acceptance is subject to all applicable admissions requirements.~~

AP.6.9 Requirements for Master's Degrees

Candidates must satisfy all applicable university degree requirements and all requirements established by the master's program faculty. Individual departmental degree requirements are listed under the respective master's programs in this catalog. Programs may impose more stringent requirements.

- Admission. Candidates must have been officially admitted into degree status.
- Credit Hours.-Candidates must earn a minimum of 30 graduate credits, which Previously earned coursework may be decreased on the basis of suitable, approved transfer work. (applied towards this. See AP.6.5 Credit by Exam or Transfer) AP.6.5 Previously Earned Graduate Credit.
- Credit Level.-Only graduate level courses may apply toward the degree.

- Institutional Credit.- More than half of the required minimum credits applied to the degree must be earned at [George Mason](#). Or, in the case of programs offered through joint, cooperative, or consortium arrangements, at the participating institutions, at least one-third of the credits applied to the master's degree must be earned ~~through direct instruction~~ at [George Mason](#).
- Thesis/Project Limits.- A maximum of 6 credits of master's thesis research ~~(799)~~ or master's project may be applied to the degree.
- Quality. Candidates must have a minimum [degree](#) GPA of 3.00 in coursework ~~presented on the degree when submitting an application, which may include no more than 6 credits of C- (Grades of C+, C-, or D do not apply to graduate courses. The GPA calculation excludes all transfer courses and Mason non-degree studies credits not formally approved for the degree.)~~ graduation.
- Unique Credit. At least 6 credits of the master's degree program must be applied only to that degree, ~~i.e., meaning~~ they cannot be used to fulfill the requirements of another degree or certificate program. This requirement does not apply to doctoral students ~~also~~ pursuing an embedded master's degree under AP.6.9.5 [Embedded Master's Degree](#).

AP.6.9.6 Individualized Dual Master's Degree Programs

George Mason [graduate](#) students have the option to pursue two master's degrees simultaneously. [Graduate students who wish to pursue two degrees and/or certificate programs outside of a dual master's arrangement as stated herein are referred to University Policy 3007, AP.6.8 Requirements for Graduate Certificates, AP.6.9.5 Embedded Master's Degree, and AP.6.11 Requirements for Specialist Degrees.](#)

For purposes of administration, if a different rate of tuition is assessed for each program, the student will be assessed at the higher rate. The program with the higher rate will be considered the primary program. The ~~six~~6-year time limit for completion of each program component of the dual master's programs derives from the admission date for that program component. ~~Students will have a cumulative GPA while pursuing both programs.~~ A degree for each program component shall be conferred upon completion based upon student application for graduation. ~~Students and students~~ shall have a degree GPA for each program component. [See AP.6.6 Graduate Academic Standing for more information.](#)

~~Students in dual master's degree programs are not eligible for transfer of credits based on a previously earned relevant post-baccalaureate degree earned prior to admission. Any transfer of credits that was granted upon admission to the initial program~~ [Previous George Mason credits that were subsequently applied towards the initial program in this arrangement](#) will be removed from the student's record upon matriculation into the second program.

Students are not eligible to pursue two master's degrees until they have completed one semester in their initial master's program. ~~Interested students should know:~~[Additional requirements:](#)

- **Admission.** A full admissions application must be submitted for both programs. Students must apply and be accepted to the second master's degree within one year of matriculation in the initial program. The application must include a written statement explaining the intellectual or pedagogical purpose behind the degree program, and the academic symmetries that exist between the ~~underlying~~ fields of study.
 - ~~A restricted number of credits may be shared across dual degree programs. See University Policy 3007 to determine the maximum number of credits that may be shared across component degree programs.~~
- ☐ **Shared Credit** ~~may be shared across two Mason programs only. Credit may never be applied to three or more Mason programs. See University Policy 3007 for more information on credit-sharing limitations. An Individualized Dual Master's Degree Program of Study form, form, approved by directors of both programs, must be submitted to the Office of the University Registrar upon matriculation in the second program. This will determine the maximum number of credits and specific courses that may be shared across programs. Credits that are shared between programs may need an approved Substitution/Waiver form signed by the appropriate Academic Affairs Office college or school's leadership unit.~~
- **Unique Credit.** ~~A restricted number of credits may be shared across certain dual degree programs. See University Policy 3007 to determine the maximum number of credits that may be shared across master's degree programs. Credit may be shared across two George Mason programs only. See University Policy 3007 for more information on credit-sharing limitations.~~

AP.6.10 Requirements for Doctoral Degrees

Candidates must satisfy all applicable university degree requirements and all requirements established by the doctoral program faculty. ~~Programs may impose more stringent requirements.~~ Departmental degree requirements are listed under the respective doctoral programs in this catalog. ~~Programs may impose more stringent requirements.~~

- **Admission.** Students must have been fully admitted into degree status.
 - ~~Credit Level. Only graduate courses may apply toward the degree.~~
 - ~~Credit Hours. Candidates must earn a minimum of 72 graduate credits, which. Previously earned coursework may be decreased on the basis of suitable, approved transfer work. (See AP.6.5 Credit by Exam or Transfer)~~
- **Unique Credit.** ~~At least 24 credits of the doctoral degree program must be applied only to that degree, i.e., they cannot be used to fulfill the requirements of another~~

~~degree or certificate program towards this. See AP.6.5 Previously Earned Graduate Credit.~~

- Credit Level. Only graduate courses may apply toward the degree.
- Institutional Credit.- More than half of the required minimum credits for the doctoral degree must be earned at George Mason. Or, in the case of programs offered through joint, cooperative, or consortium arrangements, at the participating institutions, at least one-third of the credits applied to the doctoral degree must be earned ~~through direct instruction at~~ George Mason.
- Quality. Candidates must have a minimum degree GPA of 3.00 in coursework presented on the degree application.
- Unique Credit. At least 24 credits of the doctoral degree program must be applied only to that degree meaning they cannot be used to fulfill the requirements of another degree or certificate program.
- Advancement to Candidacy.- Candidates must meet the written and/or oral doctoral candidacy requirements set by the candidate's degree program.-
- Dissertation.- Candidates must complete a minimum of 12 credits of doctoral proposal (998) and doctoral dissertation research (999), including at least three credits of 999. A maximum of 24 credits of 998 and 999 may be applied to the degree.
- Defense.- Candidates must pass a final public defense of the doctoral dissertation.
 - ~~Quality. Candidates must have a minimum GPA of 3.00 in coursework presented on the degree application, which may include no more than 6 credits of C. (Grades of C+, C-, or D do not apply to graduate courses.) The GPA calculation excludes all transfer courses and Mason extended studies or non-degree credits not formally approved for the degree.~~