

USA Grad School Oct 2017

Notes from session on applications

### Selecting the university and programme

- Fewer UK students are currently studying in the US, so schools will offer funding to attract suitable candidates
- Consider what degree you'd like to study. For example, some PhD programmes don't require a Masters first
- For certain subjects, you may be able to do a joint degree e.g. MBA & PhD
- Avoid courses with large online elements – these won't meet the visa requirements
- If you target an institution with a lower GPA entry qualification than you hold, you have a better chance of funding as you will be a "high flier" there
- Once you've done some research, if you find a professor who is working in a field you're interested in studying then email them and make contact, particularly for PhD study
- Talk to your academics about who is doing work in your field – ask them where they would recommend

### Application process

- There is no centralisation – even within an institution – all programmes are unique with different requirements and different (although similar) processes
- If asked for a CV, this is an academic CV not a work CV – it should detail any academic awards, projects, if you've helped an academic etc.
- Think about the academic fit and make sure you highlight this in your application – why this programme at this school. If you are pursuing a research interest, don't be afraid to name-drop – e.g. this particular professor at your institution is doing work in this field which interests me
- Show extracurricular activities which might relate to your area of research e.g. societies or volunteering
- **DO NOT** list your qualifications in terms of GPA, even if asked for this on the form. List your UK qualifications – all US institutions know the UK grade system and will be able to convert. The Fulbright website shows a conversion table to assist you at <http://www.fulbright.org.uk/going-to-the-usa/postgraduate/educationusa-advice/choosing/academics>

### Tests

- For most programmes, it will be the GRE test. (GMAT for business, MCAT for Medicine etc.)
  - GRE is computer-based – you can sit this at a centre in Glasgow or Edinburgh
  - Covers verbal reasoning, quantitative reasoning and analytical writing
  - Check out the test format and make sure you're familiar with how questions are worded
  - There are sample tests on the GRE website
  - You'll get scores for verbal and quantitative right away, analytical a few days later

- If you're concerned, find out what the course looks for in terms of scores and then practice until you are consistently scoring in that range
- Scores are valid for 5 years
- You can resit if necessary to increase your score, so take the test early enough to give you time for this should you need it
- Extra funding may be available if you score very highly

### **Personal Statements**

- Give a sense of your passion for the field
- Show your personality
- Address your "fit" for the programme
- It's okay to talk about what you're aiming to learn

JK

6/10/17