

SCAD admission information

International graduate students admission information



A bachelor's degree or its equivalent

Unofficial and official transcripts

Graduate applicants may receive a preliminary offer of admission based upon unofficial transcripts/mark sheets from their last degree-bearing institution. If an offer of admission is made, official transcripts/mark sheets from their last degree-bearing undergraduate institution should be received prior to Aug. 1 for fall enrollment. Prior to enrollment at SCAD, proof of completion of the bachelor's degree (or its equivalent) must be received by SCAD.* All transcripts/mark sheets must be in English or accompanied by a certified English translation. The office of admission must receive official degree-conferred transcripts prior to the first day of class. Failure to comply with this requirement may prohibit the student from attending classes for that quarter.

SCAD reserves the right to verify all documents submitted in an application for admission. Offers of admission are contingent upon receipt of official documentation and SCAD reserves the right to revoke any offer of admission should discrepancies be found. Any falsification of admission documents, portfolio, or audition materials constitutes grounds for termination of application procedures or dismissal from SCAD.

* SCAD uses the standards established by the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers to determine the equivalent academic achievement of a bachelor's degree. Transcripts are evaluated to determine the conferment of bachelor's degrees from institutions that are approved by the U.S. Department of Education and hold appropriate institutional accreditation, or have appropriate specialized or programmatic accreditation, or have been evaluated and proven to have comparable course content and level of instruction to SCAD, or are recognized by the ministry of education or equivalent agency in the applicant's home country. Course content is evaluated by comparing the curricula of other institutions with that of SCAD and assessing whether or not foundation studies, general education, and major discipline courses are comparable to those offered at SCAD.



Portfolio, audition, or writing submission

The portfolio should be specific to the intended course of study, should represent the applicant's best work examples, and should demonstrate a high level of craft presented as professionally as possible. The portfolio, audition, or writing submission is scored according to a rubric relevant to the intended course of study and type of submission.

View the graduate portfolio, audition, and writing guidelines at <https://www.scad.edu/admission/portfolio-and-writing-guidelines/graduate-portfolios>.



Recommendations

Two letters of recommendation should be provided by professors, advisers, supervisors, or community leaders who have had immediate contact with the applicant, and who have knowledge of the applicant's level of commitment and history of achievement.

Recommendations should provide relevant information about the applicant's creativity, initiative, motivation, character, and achievements, thus assessing the applicant's reasonable potential for success as a student at SCAD. Recommendations may not come from friends or family members.



Résumé

The résumé should document educational credentials as well as professional and other employment such as internships or field experience in the intended area of graduate study, and should list commissioned works, exhibitions, performances, publications, honors, memberships, interests, and activities, including volunteer work.



Statement of purpose

The statement should be a 500- to 750-word overview of the applicant's academic and professional accomplishments and should demonstrate a high level of interest in and a highly developed understanding of the discipline. The applicant should describe knowledge of the discipline, approach to past work, qualifications for graduate study and intended focus, as well as personal and professional goals.



Evidence of English proficiency for students whose first language is not English

English proficiency requirements

English is the language of instruction for all classes at SCAD. Students are required to demonstrate their current level of proficiency to receive an ESL waiver or take a placement test administered by the SCAD Language Studio during international orientation.

ESL waiver

ESL courses may be waived upon successful performance on the ESL proficiency test or if one of the following conditions is met and supporting documentation is provided:

- The student's native language is English.
- The student has Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL iBT) minimum scores (SCAD does not accept TOEFL MyBest scores) as follows:
 - For tests taken before Jan. 21, 2026, an overall band score of 85, with a minimum score of 20 on each section.
 - For tests taken on or after Jan. 21, 2026, an overall band score of 4.5, with a minimum score of 4.0 on listening and speaking and at least 4.5 on reading and writing.
- International English Language Testing System (IELTS) composite score of at least 6.5 with a score of at least 6.5 in both reading and writing.
- SAT reading score of at least 550 or ACT reading and writing scores of at least 22 and 8, respectively.
- Transcripts show extensive study (attended all high school years) at an institution at which English is the language of instruction.
- The graduate student has earned an undergraduate or graduate degree from a college or university where English is the official language of instruction. Documentation of the official language of instruction is required. (Requires approval from SCAD or additional proof of proficiency will be required.)
- The transferring student has completed a year of potential transferable credits in an institution where English is the primary language of instruction with an average GPA of 3.0/4.0 scale in significant academic coursework. Final decisions are considered at the discretion of the SCAD review committee.
- Graduate Record Examination (GRE) verbal section score of at least 153.
- Students who completed SCAD Language Studio less than two years before starting their degree program.
- Duolingo overall band score of 120 with Listening: 115–120, Speaking: 115–120, Reading: 120–125, and Writing: 120–125.

The student must meet the minimum English proficiency benchmarks from a single test

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administration. SCAD does not accept TOEFL MyBest scores, combined subscores from multiple Duolingo English Tests, or any other form of superscoring. Students who meet the minimum required composite score but who do not meet the minimum section scores are evaluated on a case-by-case basis for possible exemption. No exceptions are made if the minimum composite score is not met. All decisions are final.

Any student who has provided an ESL waiver or exemption and fails any single course due to language deficiencies (as determined by the director of the SCAD Language Studio and the academic department chair) will be required to take SLS English language placement test. Results of the English language placement test will be used to determine what level or levels of ESL instruction, if any, are required.

ESL placement test

Otherwise-qualified applicants who do not meet the minimum scores for an ESL waiver may be considered for admission to SCAD. These students must take a placement test administered by the SCAD Language Studio, regardless of other test scores.

The SLS Placement Test assesses student skills and determines the necessity of ESL classes and placement into the appropriate level of ESL upon enrollment. The two-hour test consists of listening, structure, reading, vocabulary, and writing questions. Additionally, there is an interview with each student to determine proficiency.



Interview (if applicable)

Optional personal or telephone interview

While not required, graduate applicants may elect to participate in a personal or telephone interview to help bolster the overall strength of their application. Interested applicants may schedule an admission interview by contacting the admission department or their admission adviser by logging in to MyAdmission.



GRE scores (if applicable)

GRE scores strongly recommended for applicants to certain programs

While not required of most applicants, submission of GRE scores is strongly encouraged for applicants to architectural history, art history, and creative business leadership. Performance on the GRE may assist in demonstrating adequate educational preparation and ability to succeed in academic coursework at the graduate level.

Applicants whose bachelor's degrees are conferred by institutions that are not approved by the U.S. Department of Education and/or do not hold appropriate institutional accreditation, or do not have appropriate specialized or programmatic accreditation, or have not been evaluated and proven comparable in course content and level of instruction to SCAD, or are not recognized by the ministry of education or equivalent agency in the applicant's home country, are required to take the GRE and submit official scores to SCAD.



Documents for visa application

In order to enter the United States as a student, applicants must first obtain a U.S. visa.

To apply for a U.S. visa, international students must gather the appropriate personal and financial information to submit to government officials. This will include a certification of financial support and additional forms specific to your personal situation.

View more details on <https://www.scad.edu/life/international-student-life/prepare-life-scad/travel-us>.



Additional materials

Additional admission materials for international applicants

In addition to the requirements relevant to first-year, undergraduate transfer, or graduate applicants, international applicants should submit the following information with their admission materials.

Proof of medical insurance

In order to protect students from unexpected costs of health care, SCAD requires all enrolled international students on F-1 visas to have adequate medical insurance. These students must enroll in the SCAD international health insurance plan, and the charges are automatically added to the student account. Visit the health care page on <https://www.scad.edu/life/student-services/international-student-information/health-care-international-students> for additional information and fee structure. Exemptions may be granted for students who are already covered under certain government- or embassy-sponsored plans.

Additional documentation

SCAD reserves the right to verify all documents submitted in an application for admission. Any falsification of admission documents or portfolio or audition materials constitutes grounds for termination of application procedures or dismissal from SCAD. A copy of the first page of each international applicant's passport is requested, though not required. A copy of the first page of the passport for any dependent accompanying the international applicant also is requested. These documents are used to verify correct spelling of names, correct birth dates, and other information vital to student registration.