Master of Molecular Science and Software Engineering

Fall 2023
Application Guide
Checklist

- Request 2 letters of recommendation
- Upload your unofficial transcripts. Official transcripts will be required if admission is offered.
- Submit your resume/CV
- Write (and submit) your Statement of Purpose
- Write (and submit) your Personal History Statement
- Pay your application fee

APPLICATIONS DUE: 1/27 BY 8:59PM PT
Step-by-Step

Applying to graduate school doesn't have to be hard. Follow the steps outlined in this guide and get your MSSE application submitted in no time.

Go to msse.berkeley.edu/apply to get started or continue working on your application.
When you log into the online application system, you will see a long menu running down the left side of your screen. We will go through each tab in order and give some **tips and tricks** as well as **MSSE-specific instructions**.

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**Biographical Information**

Follow the extensive directions on this tab of the application. This tab simply covers basic biographical information. **TIP**: Fill out this section immediately (especially your phone number!) so that we can keep in contact and send you important application reminders.

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**Personal Background**

**MSSE-specific instructions**: The first question in this section asks for your residency or visa status. Non-US citizens do not need a visa to complete the MSSE program - if you are planning to complete the MSSE program while living in another country, you should select "OT - Other visa type."

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**Educational Background**

For this section, you can simply follow the instructions in the application. No tips or tricks or special MSSE instructions here.
#4 Academic History

**MSSE-specific instructions:** Unofficial transcripts are fine, especially if you're still in school. Official transcripts will be required if admitted and you decide to attend.

**TIP:** International applicants should include academic records issued in the original language accompanied by an English translation.

#5 Grades

The MSSE program has no special instructions related to GPA calculation. You should follow the directions in this tab.
**Recommendations**

**MSSE-specific instructions:** Our program only requires **two** letters of recommendation, though the application system requires three. You should enter the information of at least two recommenders (and no more than four) and, if necessary, enter your own information as the "third recommender." You can then ignore any instructions sent to your email address for completing the recommendation.

**Who to ask?:** Recommendations may be either professional or academic. The best recommendations are given by those who can give their personal impressions of your intellectual ability, your aptitude in research or professional skills, your character, and the quality of your previous work and potential for future productive scholarship. We have found the most helpful letters to be recent, relevant, and written specifically for this application. A strong professional recommender may be a direct supervisor or another individual with whom you have had significant professional interaction. We discourage letters of recommendation from subordinates, family, or friends.

**TIP 1:** Ask early, and give a deadline.

**TIP 2:** While you can't control what your recommender writes about you, you can provide input into the specific examples, stories, experiences, or skills that you'd like them to highlight. Give your recommenders an outline or list of your achievements, career goals, areas for improvement, and information about what you hope to get out of grad school.
**Employment**

**MSSE-specific instructions:** Please enter the information of all previous employers in this section. You can skip the "starting compensation" and "ending compensation" sections if you'd rather not share that information.

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**Test Scores**

**MSSE-specific instructions:** The MSSE program does not require applicants to submit GRE scores.

**TIP:** Students who do not speak English as their first language may be required to submit proof of English language proficiency in the form of TOEFL or IELTS test scores. For the TOEFL, Berkeley requires a minimum score of 90 on the IBT or 570 on the PBT. For the IELTS, Berkeley requires a minimum score of 7 on a 9-point scale. Not all students who speak English as a second language are required to submit test scores - to learn more about exceptions, visit https://grad.berkeley.edu/admissions/steps-to-apply/requirements/.
Statement of Purpose

**TIP:** This essay question was created to provoke honest, thoughtful responses to help us get to know you. The admissions committee is interested in learning how your professional and academic experiences and achievements equip you and motivate you to enroll in our program. At a minimum, the Statement of Purpose should indicate, with clarity and focus, your purpose for entering the Master of Molecular Science and Software Engineering program. While you are not required to directly answer this question, a good starting point for approaching your statement of purpose is to ask yourself – “How does earning the Berkeley Master of Molecular Science and Software Engineering reinforce your future professional and personal goals?”

**TIP 2:** The suggested length for each essay is around 1-2 pages.

Personal History Statement

**TIP:** The Personal History statement provides an opportunity for the admissions committee to get to know you better on a personal level. Anything that can give reviewers a sense of who you are belongs here; especially experiences that show your promise, initiative, and ability to persevere. If you have faced any obstacles or barriers in your education, or if part of your academic record is not ideal, this is where you can explain and direct the reviewers’ attention to the evidence of your promise for higher education. Ask yourself "What do I contribute to my community, and how would I contribute to the UC Berkeley community?"

**TIP 2:** You can read more about the Graduate Division's guidelines for statement writing at https://grad.berkeley.edu/admissions/steps-to-apply/requirements/.
While we would like to know which format you intend on pursuing (part- or full-time), you can change this option once you've been accepted, so don't fret too much. **TIP:** If you'd like to be considered for the MSSE Opportunity Grant, please fill out the Grant Essay section.

**MSSE-specific instructions:** In this section, you are only required to upload a resume/CV - the other fields are optional.

**TIP:** You may qualify for a fee waiver through the Graduate Division. To learn more, visit msse.berkeley.edu/apply.

**TIP 2:** The MSSE program waives our application fee for applicants who fulfill our prerequisite requirements and hold, or will hold, a bachelor's degree or higher from UC Berkeley at the planned time of enrollment. Please email us before submitting your application at msse@berkeley.edu if you qualify.
Questions?
We're here to help.

msse@berkeley.edu
(510) 545-9746
Timeline

**ASAP**
Visit msse.berkeley.edu/apply to **begin your application**.

**Immediately after beginning your application**
Request at least **two letters of recommendation (#7)**. Make sure to give your recommenders ample time. We must receive your recommendations by January 27, 2023.

**Fill in the easy sections.** These 9 sections should only take you around an hour to complete.

- #1 Biographical Information
- #2 Personal Background
- #3 Educational Background
- #4 Academic History
- #5 Grades
- #6 Languages
- #8 Employment
- #9 Test scores
- #11 MSSE Program Page

**Between now and January 27th**
Update and submit your **resume/CV (#12)**.

Draft, review, edit, and submit your **Personal History Statement** and **Statement of Purpose (#10)**.

**January 27, 2023**
Submit your application. The earlier, the better. If you qualify for a fee waiver, be sure to reach out to msse@berkeley.edu with ample time for processing.

**Late March**
Receive your admissions decision for Fall 2023!