



Methodology for 2012 Application Trends Survey

From early June to late July 2012, the Graduate Management Admission Council® (GMAC®) conducted the *Application Trends Survey*, its annual survey of business school admission professionals worldwide to assess how application volume at MBA and other graduate management programs compared with that from the same period in 2011. This study is the 13th in the series of GMAC surveys that monitor application trends.

To represent a cross section of the graduate management industry worldwide, GMAC invited 3,418 graduate business schools and faculties to participate in this year's survey. This included all its member schools—the majority of Graduate Management Admission Test® (GMAT®) score-receiving schools—plus other institutions that do not use the GMAT exam in their admission process. A total of 359 graduate business schools and faculties participated in this survey and submitted data for 744 graduate management programs, including 527 MBA, 193 specialized master's, and 24 doctoral programs. The MBA is represented by 145 full-time two-year, 98 full-time one-year, 137 part-time or professional, 63 executive, 55 flexible MBA, and 29 online or distance-learning programs. Master's programs are represented by several majors, including Master in Management (33), Master of Finance (39), Master of Accounting (45) programs, Master in IT Management (14), and Master in Marketing/Communication (18).

Overall, 492 programs from 229 responding schools were in the United States; 114 programs from 62 schools were in Europe; 50 programs from 27 schools were in the Asia-Pacific region; 34 programs from 18 schools were in Canada; 24 programs from 4 schools were in Latin America; 13 programs from 11 schools were in Central Asia, and 17 programs from 10 responding schools were in Middle East/Africa. Geographically, the survey sample represents 46 countries worldwide and 42 states and the District of Columbia in the United States. Combined, participating programs received more than 484,385 applications during the 2012 application cycle.

The survey questionnaire consisted of one main section with 29 questions which respondents were required to complete in order to qualify as a survey participant. All survey questions might not have been applicable to all responding programs. The survey was conducted online. By the response cut-off date, 744 graduate management programs from 359 business schools participated in the survey. Each school or faculty reported, on average, for 2 graduate management programs.

All application numbers and trends discussed in this report refer to complete applications that contained all documents needed for making an admission decision, which were received on or about July 27, 2012 for the 2012–2013 incoming class.

Data Analysis

Survey data were analyzed and tabulated using SPSS. The following broad classification of graduate management programs was used in this report:

- Full-time MBA programs
 - Two-year full-time MBA programs
 - One-year full-time MBA programs
- Part-time, professional, or weekend MBA programs
 - Part-time lockstep MBA programs
 - Part-time self-paced MBA programs
- Executive MBA programs
- Flexible MBA programs (combination of full- and part-time options, primarily delivered on campus)
- Online/distance MBA programs (including hybrid programs)
- Master in management (generalist and global/international) or in business administration
- Master of accounting (or taxation)
- Master of finance
- Master in information technology (IT) management
- Master in marketing/communications
- Master-level programs in other specialized business disciplines
- PhD in business or management and DBA programs

Other specialized master's programs included the following fields: economics (6 programs), engineering management [1 program], entrepreneurship [4 programs], human resource, industry relations, or organizational behavior [7 programs], project management [1 program], public administration or public policy [1 program], real estate management [1 program], supply chain management, logistics, or operations [5 programs], other business master's degrees [14 programs], other nonbusiness masters degrees [3 programs] and one non-MBA joint degree program.

The reader should note that these classifications might not perfectly fit each of the reporting programs. With the need to accommodate people with various backgrounds, career paths, and lifestyles, new program types emerge continuously. Such program types are classified according to the closest match available.

Regional Location of Survey Respondents, 2012

World geographic classification used in this report is based on the following categories:

- **Asia and Pacific Islands (APAC):** Australia, China, Hong Kong (SAR of China), Japan, Korea (Republic of, South), New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, Vietnam
- **Canada:** Canada
- **Central Asia:** India and Pakistan

- **Europe:** Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Netherlands, Portugal, Russian Federation, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, United Kingdom
- **Latin America:** Brazil, Columbia, and Peru
- **Middle East/Africa:** Egypt, Kenya, Lebanon, Morocco, Nigeria, South Africa, Turkey
- **United States:** United States of America and its territories

In addition, US graduate management programs were grouped geographically using the following regional classifications:

- **Northeast (NE):** Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, and Rhode Island
- **Middle Atlantic (MA):** Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia
- **Midwest (MW):** Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, Wisconsin
- **South (S):** Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee
- **Southwest (SW):** Arizona, Oklahoma, Texas
- **West (W):** California, Colorado, Hawaii, Oregon, Utah, and Washington.

Findings reported in this publication are based on survey responses of participating programs and are not based on a census of all graduate management programs; therefore, the data may be subject to error, including sampling error and item-nonresponse error.

Percentages in tables may not add to 100, due either to multiple responses provided by respondents or to rounding. Averages are not reported if the number of observations in a cell is less than 10. Percentages are not reported if the number of observations in a column is less than 10. Unless otherwise specified, responses “don’t know,” “prefer not to say,” or “not applicable” are not included.

For reader convenience, some percentage distributions (based on original survey response categories) are collapsed into broader categories at the bottom of a table. For example, responses “up significantly,” “up moderately,” and “up slightly” are grouped into the “up” category. (See *Key Survey Definitions* below for breakdown of percentage distributions.)

The opinions and evaluations contained in this report represent those of individual contributors and are not necessarily the views of the Graduate Management Admission Council.

Participant Profile

The reporting programs included 243 full-time MBA, 137 part-time or professional MBA, 63 executive MBA, 55 flexible MBA, and 29 online/distance MBA programs, as well as 193 master-level programs in business fields, and 24 doctoral programs in business (Table 1).

Overall, 492 programs from 229 responding schools were in the United States, 114 programs from 62 schools were in Europe, 50 programs from 27 schools were in the Asia-Pacific region, 34 programs from 18 schools were in Canada, 13 programs from 11 responding schools were in Central Asia, 24 programs from 4 schools were in Latin America, and 17 programs from 10 schools were located in the Middle East/Africa (Table 2).

More detailed participant profiles of full-time, part-time, executive, flexible, and online MBA programs as well as master's programs in management, finance, and accounting are presented in the corresponding sections of the report.

	United States	Asia-Pacific	Europe	Canada	Central Asia	Middle East/Africa	Latin America	Total
Full-time two-year MBA	108	14	2	7	10	3	1	N = 145
Full-time one-year MBA	37	10	38	8	3	2	0	N = 98
Part-time MBA	107	5	6	8	0	3	8	N = 137
Flexible MBA	45	5	2	1	0	2	0	N = 55
Executive MBA	35	3	15	3	0	3	4	N = 63
Online/distance MBA	26	0	2	1	0	0	0	N = 29
All MBA programs	358	37	65	28	13	13	13	N = 527
Master in management	11	2	15	2	0	1	2	N = 33
Master of accounting	39	2	4	0	0	0	0	N = 45
Master of finance	22	3	12	0	0	1	1	N = 39
Master in IT management	12	1	0	0	0	0	1	N=14
Master in marketing/communications	9	3	3	0	0	0	3	N=18
Other master's programs	27	1	12	0	0	0	4	N = 44
All master's programs	120	12	46	2	0	2	11	N = 193
PhD/DBA	14	1	3	4	0	2	0	N = 24

	Number of Schools
United States	N = 229
Canada	N = 18
Europe	N = 62
Asia-Pacific	N = 27
Central Asia	N = 11
Middle East/Africa	N = 10
Latin America	N = 4
Total	N = 361*
*Total N exceeds 359 due to one university reporting data for programs located in three world regions: Asia-Pacific, Europe, and the United States.	

Key Survey Definitions

The following definitions appeared in the survey questionnaire and analysis:

Academic profile includes undergraduate GPA (UGPA), GMAT score, essays, and other indicators of academic quality used by a particular program in the admission process.

Acceptance rate is calculated as the number of acceptance offers divided by the number of total completed applications times 100.

The term *domestic* refers to applicants who are citizens of the country where the program is located.

Enrollment rate is calculated as the number of accepted applicants who enroll divided by the number of all accepted applicants times 100.

The term *entrepreneurs* refers to individuals contemplating or currently running their own businesses that schools may specifically recruit as potential applicants.

Flexible MBA programs combine full-time and part-time course delivery options for students and are delivered primarily on campus.

The term *foreign* is defined by applicant citizenship and refers to any applicant whose citizenship differs from that of the country where he/she applies. For example, US citizens applying to UK programs would be considered foreign in the United Kingdom, and UK citizens applying to US programs would be considered foreign in the United States.

The term *international* is defined by applicant residence, *not* by citizenship. For the 2012 survey, European programs were asked to classify international applications based on whether applicants were citizens of countries within Europe or outside of Europe.

The term *LGBT community* includes lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals.

Lockstep part-time or professional programs require students in the same year (cohorts) to advance together taking specific courses in a particular order.

The term *occupational specialties* refers to individuals working in particular professions such as engineering, technology, or other occupational categories that schools may target for special recruitment activities.

The term *residence* refers to an applicant's current residence and *not* to his or her citizenship.

The term *underrepresented nationalities* may include those born in a country where another nationality constitutes the majority and migrants. For example, in Belgium, all nationalities other than Belgian, which is the majority, would be considered underrepresented nationalities.

The term *underrepresented population* refers to racial or ethnic minorities that include the following groups of US citizens: Hispanic American or Latino, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, and American Indian or Alaska Native. The category does not include Asian Americans.

Percentage distributions based on original survey response categories are often collapsed into broader categories "Up", "Flat", or "Down" at the bottom of a table or figure for reader convenience. The category "Up" includes up significantly (21% or higher), up moderately (11% to 20%), and up slightly (1% to 10%). "Flat" means there was no (0%) change from the previous year. "Down" includes down slightly (-1% to -10%), down moderately (-11% to -20%), and down significantly (-21% or lower).

Postgraduate program (PGP) is the Indian version of the MBA. Based on the length of the programs, the responses were aggregated within full-time one- or two-year MBA program data.

Self-paced part-time or professional programs allow students flexibility in the pace or sequence in which they choose to complete their courses.

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