Appendix A
Admissions Guide

Foreign Language Teaching
Graduate Programs Handbook
Michigan State University

Last updated: January 2023
Admissions Guide

➢ Master of Arts in Foreign Language Teaching
➢ Graduate Certificate in Foreign Language Teaching

For Admissions requirements and policies, refer with the Admissions section of the main FLT Handbook, starting on p. 18.

Please read the following instructions carefully! The instructions below reflect official MSU policies and program-specific requirements. For any other MSU program, you will need to contact that program for their own procedures and recommendations.

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Your Application in the MSU System

This guide describes the various elements that you must submit in order to be admitted to the MAFLT Program or the FLT Certificate. The process will go more smoothly if you have an active application in the system when we start to receive materials such as your transcripts. You can click Help in the application system if you have technical issues, and you may contact the MAFLT Program with questions about the application process.

Before you start your application

It helps to begin your application at least a month before the deadline. Before you begin, you should update your resume or CV, begin working on your personal and academic essays, find out how to request a transcript from your prior educational institutions, and identify three or more supervisors, professors, colleagues, etc. who can write recommendation letters. It is polite to contact these people two or three weeks in advance to ask if they are willing to write the letter and to give them information about this program and a copy of your resume.

Applications are due by the following dates:

- March 15 for Summer semesters
- June 15 for Fall semesters
- October 15 for Spring semesters

**Letters of recommendation, transcripts, and score reports** from the GRE or English proficiency tests (as needed) must be submitted directly to the university, not uploaded by the applicant. If these materials are not received AND verified within two weeks following the application deadline, the applicant may be required to defer admission and begin coursework in a later semester.

**If any part of your application is coming from outside the U.S.,** please note that documentation from academic institutions outside the U.S. can take several weeks to arrive and will also take longer to verify. You should begin your application early and expect it to take several weeks after the admissions deadline to hear that your materials have been approved.

Creating and submitting your application

Begin your application in the MSU application system. Note that there are separate applications and program numbers for the Master of Arts and the Graduate Certificate. You will be asked to state the semester in which you intend to start the program.

[https://explore.msu.edu/apply](https://explore.msu.edu/apply)
If you are already a graduate student at MSU, you can apply for the FLT Certificate without submitting an application. Contact the Program Director for steps to take.

Once you log in and create your application, both you and we will be able to review the status of your application. The system retains records of our communication, and you can log in and out at any time.

**Documents that You Create and Submit**

You will provide (a) through (d) below by entering information in the application system or uploading documents. PDFs or Word documents are accepted. Remember to consider revision and formatting. At minimum, include your name, the semester you intend to begin, and your email address on each document you submit.

Note that your **personal statement** (a) and **academic statement** (b) will be uploaded before you click “Submit” in the application system, and your **resumé or CV** (c) and optional **supplemental documents** (d) will be submitted as additional documents after you click “Submit.” You should prepare all of them ahead of time, and they are all required for a complete application.

a. **Personal Statement**

Your personal statement primarily focuses on your career as a language teacher, past and future. It should include information about how your background and life experiences, including social, economic, cultural, familial, educational, or other opportunities or challenges have prepared you to pursue a graduate degree in this field. We encourage you to discuss how you have acquired your proficiency in the language you plan to teach, as well as other experience and aspirations that have motivated you to apply to this program. Aim for 300-500 words.

b. **Academic Statement**

Your academic statement primarily focuses on your preparation to participate and thrive in graduate school. Please provide a concise summary of your academic and professional experience, your plans for graduate study, and how MSU’s graduate program will help you meet your personal and professional objectives. Additionally, please discuss how the distance-based format of this online learning format fits your goals and characteristics as a learner. MAFLT applicants are not required to have a BA in a language, area studies, linguistics, world language education, or a related field. If your background is not in one of these fields, however, you should address other ways in which your background, education, and experience have prepared you to study foreign language education. Aim for 300-500 words.
c. Resume or Curriculum vitae

Under “File Uploads” in the grad portal, select Document Type “Resume” and upload your Resume (or CV). The format should be appropriately professional, and the dates of employment and education should continue up to the present. If you have been primarily employed in the home or otherwise out of the workforce recently, please note that in your resume and explain it in one of your essays.

d. Supplemental Documents

Optionally, you may submit under “File Uploads” a few additional, highly relevant pieces of evidence that you believe will help the admissions committee understand your unique strengths or promise as a graduate student in this program.

If you are applying for a Linguistic Diversity Fellowship and/or a waiver of English Language Proficiency test scores, locate those forms on the Admissions page, follow the instructions on the form, and upload it as additional documentation.

- Relevant certifications or credentials not related to degree-granting programs.
- Writing Sample (a senior thesis, class paper, or other writing sample). Most people requesting a waiver of English Language Proficiency test scores will be required to submit a writing sample using the form we provide.
- Examples of your prior work with technology, e.g., website link; link to an electronic portfolio, etc. You can type the URL(s) and a short description of the website(s) in a Word document and submit that document under “Other.”
- Evidence of curriculum or assessment design. Please do not submit individual lesson plans or syllabi, but you may submit other materials that relate to your personal or academic statement if you wish.

e. Transcripts or diplomas – should you upload a copy?

Transcripts or diplomas must come directly to us from the institution that granted your degree. You can upload scanned copies of transcripts or diplomas, but these documents will not be considered official. Admissions will not use them to admit you to MSU.

If they need to be translated, they must come from that institution to the translator and then directly from the translator to us. Equivalency reports cannot substitute for official transcripts.

The only benefit to uploading transcripts or diplomas yourself is that we may run into challenges with obtaining and verifying your official documents, and having unofficial copies may help us to understand your educational background and what documents you are trying to send to us. Further details on transcripts below.
Letters of recommendation

Enter contact information for people who will write your three (3) letters of recommendation (LORs). Your recommenders will upload their own letters. In order to request these letters, you will provide the names and email addresses for your recommenders in the admissions system. These individuals should be familiar with your academic and professional accomplishments and your potential for success in graduate-level courses. At least one recommendation letter should be from a former professor, academic advisor, or other individual familiar with your academic background and abilities. The letters of recommendation must be current and written specifically for this program.

You should contact your recommenders directly before you submit their information to the system and ask them if they are willing to write the recommendation and if they can do so by the deadline. Aim to give them at least two if not three weeks to write the recommendation.

After you submit your online application, the system will send an email to each of your references containing a link so they can upload their letters of recommendations directly into your application file. You will be asked if you want to waive your right to see these letters, and the best answer is Yes.

If you have submitted your application by the deadline, including contact information for your recommenders, but the letters have not been received, we will notify you that the letters are missing. You should contact your recommenders to remind them. As with the transcripts and test scores, if the LORs still have not been received two weeks after the admissions deadline, your application will not be considered until the following semester.

Official Transcripts from Prior Schools

Request transcripts from institutions where you earned a higher education degree. You must demonstrate to University Admissions that you have a bachelor’s degree (undergraduate) from a recognized institution. This transcript must be official according to MSU Admissions criteria. If it was issued in a language other than English, it must be translated according to the official process by an approved translator. See below for details.

Transcript review will take longer if any of your prior institutions is outside the U.S. If you are an international student or if you completed your bachelor’s degree before moving to the U.S., please request your transcripts as soon as possible and email us so that we will expect them.

It is a good idea to save the confirmation email or take a screenshot of the confirmation page when you submit the request in case we need to know when and how you submitted the request.
Electronic submission of transcripts

Most U.S. institutions and many overseas institutions will be able to send electronic transcripts directly to MSU through an official system. You should be able to find instructions for requesting transcripts on the Registrar’s page for your school. If your prior university sends electronic transcripts, direct your e-transcript to:

MAFLT Program Director:  Dr. Amanda Lanier
Email address: maflt@cal.msu.edu

Submission by mail of official transcripts

If your prior institution is not able to send a transcript electronically, we can accept transcripts by mail IF they are provided in a sealed envelope from the registrar’s office of your institution. Contact information is provided at the end of this guide.

How do you know if a transcript is official?

Your transcripts must come to MSU directly from the institution. According to MSU policy, copies of transcripts that you submit and transcripts sent as email attachments will not be accepted as official. MSU does not accept equivalency reports such as ECE or WES. You can submit them, but you will still need to submit official transcripts also.

Which transcripts do I actually need for admission?

Only the credentials showing your bachelor’s (undergraduate) degree will be required for admissions. This documentation must pass verification by MSU Admissions. If you have completed other degrees (more than one undergraduate degree or a graduate degree), request those transcripts also.

If you have taken courses at other institutions, but did not complete a degree, the transcript is optional for admissions. However, you may be able to transfer those courses to MSU. If you hope to transfer courses from another institution to MSU, you may submit transcripts during the admissions process. You can also submit them after you have been admitted. Transfer of courses for credit is discussed in the Graduate Programs Handbook.

If your transcript will be issued in a language other than English

Official transcripts and any other documents not issued in English must be submitted together with a word-for-word English translation. If your university does not issue transcripts in English, you must have your university send your official transcript directly to a professional translator. The translator should then send your official transcript, the envelope in which it came, and the translation directly to us using the mailing address below.
Translations should be prepared by an authorized translator from the American Translators Association (ATA): see http://www.atanet.org. In Lansing, Michigan, or electronically, you can request a translation through 7Clingo (see http://www.7clingo.com).

If you completed your education in China

MSU requires an additional step to verify transcripts for applications for admission from students from China. If you are accepted to the program and your degree is from a Chinese university, you must request a verification report of your university academic records from the China Academic Degree and Graduate Education Development Center (CDGDC).

China Academic Degree and Graduate Education Development Center
Verification Division
B-17, Tongfang Scientific Plaza
No.1 Wangzhuang Road, Haidian District, Beijing, 100083, P.R. China
Tel: +86-10-82379480
Fax: +86-10-82378718 (24 hours)
Email: cqv@cdgdc.edu.cn
Website: www.chinadegrees.cn / https://www.cdgdc.edu.cn

The report must be mailed directly to the Program Director of the MAFLT, by the CDGDC, rather than by you or any third party. Your acceptance to the program will be conditional on us receiving this verification report within two months after you enroll in classes. More information about this is found here: https://grad.msu.edu/cdgdc. Please note that the MAFLT Program cannot reimburse students for the verification. No other equivalency reports or verifications, such as ECE or WES, can substitute for CDGDC.

Test Scores or Waiver Requests

The following test scores are requested as evidence of your preparation to participate in graduate school. The requirements vary depending on whether your undergraduate education took place at an English-medium institution.

GRE (Graduate Record Exam) scores

For students who have a bachelor's or master's degree from a U.S., Canadian, British, Australian, or New Zealand institution: Submit a request to ETS to send in your GRE Scores. MSU institution code=1465. Information on sending in your GRE scores can be found here: http://www.ets.org/gre/revised_general/about/scoreselect/.
**GRE score waiver requests**

Students who fit the following criteria may request a waiver for the GRE: more than two years of foreign language teaching experience; extensive experience in another field and evidence of high language proficiency; or prior completion of at least one graduate-level course, with a GPA of 3.5 or higher. An additional writing sample may be requested. If you believe you qualify for the waiver as a non-traditional student, you can submit your waiver request using this form: [GRE Waiver Request Form](maflt.cal.msu.edu/admissions).

**English language proficiency test scores**

For students whose first language is not English and who have not completed a degree in an English-speaking country (United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Australia, or New Zealand):

You must provide evidence of English language proficiency that is sufficient to participated in graduate-level courses. The most widely accepted scores will be the [TOEFL](https://www.ets.org) exam from ETS or an [IELTS](https://www.ielts.org) exam from Cambridge. In some cases, other scores may be accepted. The test must have been taken within two years of the application. See this page for information about MSU expectations for graduate students: [English Language Competency](maflt.cal.msu.edu/admissions).

Your English proficiency test results must be sent from the testing agency directly to the Office of Admissions at Michigan State University. **MSU institution code = 1465.**

Hannah Administration Building  
426 Auditorium Road, Room 250  
East Lansing, MI, 48824-2604

More information on sending in your TOEFL score can be found here: [TOEFL Test Scores](maflt.cal.msu.edu/admissions). Information on sending in your IELTS score can be found here: [IELTS Test Scores](maflt.cal.msu.edu/admissions).

**English language proficiency waiver requests**

Under certain circumstances, a waiver may also be requested for ELP scores. If you believe that you should qualify for a waiver, send an email with "TOEFL Waiver Request" in the subject line to [maflt@cal.msu.edu](mailto:maflt@cal.msu.edu). You should also discuss your proficiency in each of your languages in your personal statement.

We have a [Writing Sample Form for ELP waivers](maflt.cal.msu.edu/admissions) that includes a prompt and instructions for writing the essay. In some cases, we do not need this form. If we do, it will be added as a required item in the application portal, and you will get a notification through that portal.
Contact Information & Mailing Address

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