

# ADMISSIONS

The following sections describe the application procedures, application deadlines and admissions procedures. For more information, see the School of Public Health Admissions (<https://sph.uth.edu/application/>) website.

## Application Procedures and Deadlines

### Application Procedures

All applications to UTHealth Houston School of Public Health are received and processed by the centralized application service, School of Public Health Application Service (SOPHAS) (<https://sophas.aspph.org/>) or SOPHAS Express (<https://sophasexpress.liasoncas.com/applicant-ux/#/login>). This application service is intended to streamline the application process as applicants are able to upload one set of application materials, including institutional transcripts, reference letters, statement of purpose and objectives and standardized test scores, if applicable. All supporting documentation detailed below is required of those applicants submitting their applications through either SOPHAS or SOPHAS Ex-press, unless otherwise noted.

### Degree-seeking Students

The degree-seeking application process is used for students seeking admission into one of the UTHealth Houston School of Public Health degree programs. All degree-seeking applications, including supporting documentation, are received and processed by SOPHAS (<https://sophas.aspph.org/>). Detailed instructions for submission of applications using SOPHAS are described on the SOPHAS (<https://sophas.aspph.org/>) website.

Applicants to dual degree programs must apply to each institution independently of the respective complementary dual degree program. More information about dual degree programs can be found in the Dual Degree Programs (<https://catalog.uth.edu/public-health/programs/dual-pathway-programs/>) section of this catalog.

Applicants seeking readmission should refer to *Policy 403 Readmission to a Degree Program* under the Academic Standards, Policies and Procedures (<https://catalog.uth.edu/public-health/academic-affairs-student-services/academic-standards-policies-procedures/>) section of this catalog.

### Non-degree Seeking Students

The non-degree application process is used for students seeking admission into one of the UTHealth Houston School of Public Health non-degree programs, non-degree graduate certificate programs, or pre-approved re-admission. All non-degree applications are received and processed by SOPHAS Express (<https://sophasexpress.liasoncas.com/applicant-ux/#/login>). All supporting documentation is received and processed by UTHealth Houston School of Public Health Admissions Office staff. Detailed instructions for submission of applications using SOPHAS Express are described on the SOPHAS Express (<https://sophasexpress.liasoncas.com/applicant-ux/#/login>) website.

### Required Application Materials for All Applicants

The following contains the elements of the application materials required when submitting materials to either SOPHAS (<https://sophas.aspph.org/>) or SOPHAS Express ([https://sophasexpress.liasoncas.com/applicant-](https://sophasexpress.liasoncas.com/applicant-ux/#/login)

[ux/#/login](https://sophasexpress.liasoncas.com/applicant-ux/#/login)). More information about required application materials can be found on the Admissions website.

### 1. Personal Statement and Objectives

Applicants should describe their interests in public health in the personal statement and objectives section of the application. The essay should address educational goals specific to the chosen program of study. Applicants should also describe career goals as well as any experience relating to the health field, research, community service, and leadership positions. Applicants are encouraged to describe how significant life experiences have influenced their motivation, qualifications, or academic record. The personal statement and objectives are central to the admissions decision and are read by the admissions committee. *\*Note: Personal statement and objectives are screened for plagiarism. Evidence of plagiarism will result in an automatic denial of admission.*

### 2. Application Fee

Students apply through either SOPHAS (degree-seeking applicants) or SOPHAS Express (certificate or non-degree-seeking applicants). The application fee through SOPHAS is based upon a sliding scale determined by the number of schools and programs to which the applicant intends to apply. The cost for a SOPHAS application is \$150 for the first school or program to which the student applies. Any additional schools or programs to which a student chooses to apply will cost \$60 per designation. The cost for a SOPHAS Express application is \$60 per program. More information about SOPHAS fees can be found here ([https://help.liasonedu.com/SOPHAS\\_Applicant\\_Help\\_Center/Starting\\_Your\\_SOPHAS\\_Application/Getting\\_Started\\_with\\_Your\\_SOPHAS\\_Application/03\\_Application\\_Fees](https://help.liasonedu.com/SOPHAS_Applicant_Help_Center/Starting_Your_SOPHAS_Application/Getting_Started_with_Your_SOPHAS_Application/03_Application_Fees)) and SOPHAS Express fees found here ([https://help.liasonedu.com/SOPHAS\\_Express\\_Applicant\\_Help\\_Center/Starting\\_Your\\_SOPHAS\\_Express\\_Application/Getting\\_Started\\_with\\_Your\\_SOPHAS\\_Express\\_Application/03\\_Application\\_Fees#:~:text=SOPHAS%20Express%20charges%20a%20processing,and%20how%20to%20pay%20it](https://help.liasonedu.com/SOPHAS_Express_Applicant_Help_Center/Starting_Your_SOPHAS_Express_Application/Getting_Started_with_Your_SOPHAS_Express_Application/03_Application_Fees#:~:text=SOPHAS%20Express%20charges%20a%20processing,and%20how%20to%20pay%20it)).

### 3. Official Transcripts

Transcripts must include both grades and credit hours. International applicants are required to submit World Education Services (WES) evaluations of their transcripts to SOPHAS. See *Transcript Credential Evaluation* for more information.

*Degree-seeking applicants:* Applicants should submit official transcripts covering all periods of postsecondary enrollment in all accredited institutions of higher education attended. Copies of transcripts sent by the applicant are not considered. Applicants should request that all institutions attended send official, original transcripts electronically or by mail to SOPHAS.

SOPHAS Transcript Processing Center  
P.O. Box 9111  
Watertown, MA 02471-9111

Information on sending official US transcripts electronically can be found online here ([https://help.liasonedu.com/SOPHAS\\_Applicant\\_Help\\_Center/Sending\\_Your\\_Official\\_Transcripts\\_and\\_Test\\_Scores\\_to\\_SOPHAS](https://help.liasonedu.com/SOPHAS_Applicant_Help_Center/Sending_Your_Official_Transcripts_and_Test_Scores_to_SOPHAS)).

*Non-degree seeking applicants:* Applicants should upload unofficial transcripts covering all periods of postsecondary enrollment in all accredited institutions of higher education to their application. In the event the applicant is admitted, they will also need to provide official transcripts directly to the UTHealth Houston Office of the Registrar.

#### 4. Transcript Credential Evaluation

Transcripts for an educational credential evaluation and determination of United States equivalency is required from applicants who hold degrees from institutions outside of the United States. The minimum requirement is to submit a credential evaluation that demonstrates the applicant holds, at a minimum, the equivalent of a bachelor's degree or a professional degree from an accredited institution from the foreign country. A Course-by-Course International Credential Advantage Package (ICAP) with a GPA calculation is required. This can be accomplished by submitting transcripts to:

World Education Services (WES)  
WES Global Documentation Centre  
PO Box 2008 STN Main  
Newmarket, ON, L3Y 0G5

World Education Services Contact Information:  
Phone: (212) 966-6311  
Email: [info@wes.org](mailto:info@wes.org)  
World Education Services Website (<http://www.wes.org/>)

Final transcript credential evaluation results must be submitted directly to SOPHAS by WES.

#### 5. Letters of Recommendation

Applicants are required to submit letter(s) of recommendation from individual(s) qualified to evaluate the applicant's academic or professional performance, ability, motivation, and character. Academic letters of reference are preferred. All submitted letters should be on official letterhead.

*Degree-seeking applicants:* At least three letters of recommendation are required.

*Non-degree seeking applicants:* At least one letter of recommendation is required.

#### 6. Entrance Examinations

*Degree-seeking applicants:* Entrance exam scores (GRE/GMAT/MCAT) are optional for all MPH and MS programs. For all doctoral programs, students are encouraged to submit entrance exam scores; however, the following programs require applicants to submit GRE scores:

- DrPH in Community Health Practice
- PhD in Epidemiology
- PhD in Environmental Sciences, Environmental Disease Prevention Track
- PhD in Environmental Sciences, Total Worker Health® Track
- PhD in Health Economics and Health Services Research
- PhD in Healthcare Management and Policy

Entrance exam scores are but one of several factors considered in the aggregate during the admission process. The GRE is administered at many universities across the United States and in many foreign cities. Only scores received directly from the Educational Testing Service (<https://www.ets.org/>) will be considered. Applicants should submit GRE or GMAT scores to SOPHAS using the reporting code 4479.

*Non-degree seeking applicants:* Non-degree applicants applying through SOPHAS Express are not required to submit entrance examination records.

*Exemptions to the Entrance Exam requirement:*

- Applicants holding previously-earned doctoral-level degrees from accredited U.S. universities may request an exemption;
- Applicants to dual degree programs that have a doctoral component (e.g., MD/MPH, PhD/MPH, Pharm D/MPH, or JD/MPH) are exempt from the GRE requirement, provided they hold an offer of admission to the partnering participating medical, graduate, pharmacy or law school.
- Applicants holding an international medical degree and holding Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates certification may request a waiver provided they are currently practicing medicine or in an active residency program in the United States at the time of applying.
- MPH applicants who previously completed the UTHealth Houston School of Public Health General Public Health Certificate with a cumulative UTHealth Houston School of Public Health GPA of 3.4 or higher.
- Doctoral (DrPH or PhD) applicants who previously completed a UTHealth Houston School of Public Health master's program (MPH or MS) with a cumulative UTHealth Houston School of Public Health GPA of 3.4 or higher.

Waivers and exemption inquiries can be emailed to [SPHAdmissionsTestWaivers@uth.tmc.edu](mailto:SPHAdmissionsTestWaivers@uth.tmc.edu); requests should include supplemental documentation for consideration.

#### 7. Additional Supporting Materials

Any published papers, reports, or other materials believed to provide information on an applicant's capability and performance should be included in the application.

*Degree-seeking applicants:* Degree-seeking applicants should submit any additional supporting documents to SOPHAS and should follow the SOPHAS application instructions for guidance.

*Non-degree-seeking applicants:* Non-degree-seeking applicants should submit any additional supporting documents to SOPHAS Express and should follow the SOPHAS Express application instructions for guidance.

### **Additional Required Materials for International Applicants**

#### 8. English Proficiency Exams

International applicants are required to take the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) (<https://www.ets.org/toefl.html>), the International English Testing System (IELTS) (<https://ielts.org/ielts-usa>), or the Duolingo English Test (DET) (<https://englishtest.duolingo.com/> applicants) unless specifically exempted.

*Exemptions to the TOEFL, IELTS or DET exam requirement:*

- If you are a Permanent Resident or Citizen of the United States;
- If you earned a bachelor's, master's or doctoral degree from the United States;
- If the degree reviewed by the World Education Services (WE) Transcript Evaluation indicates that the mode of instruction was in English (3 or more years).
- If you earned a degree from an English-speaking country – Graduation with a diploma or degree (attended for at least 3 years or a standard period of attendance as required by the country; Bachelor's, Master's or Doctoral degree) from an accredited school from a recognized English-speaking country as listed below:

- Antigua
- Australia
- Bahamas
- Barbados
- Bermuda
- British Virgin Islands
- Canada
- Cayman Islands
- Falkland Islands
- Gambia
- Ghana
- Grenada
- Guyana
- Ireland
- Jamaica
- Kenya
- Liberia
- New Zealand
- Nigeria
- Sierra Leone
- St. Helena
- St. Kitts & Nevis
- St. Vincent
- Trinidad & Tobago
- Turk & Caico Islands
- Uganda
- United Kingdom (UK)
- US Virgin Islands
- Zambia
- Zimbabwe

Additional exemptions may be granted on a case-specific basis for those who do not meet the above criteria. Waivers and exemption inquiries can be emailed to SPHAdmissionsTestWaivers@uth.tmc.edu; requests should include supplemental documentation for consideration.

#### *Minimum scores required:*

For admission consideration, a minimum acceptable score on the internet-based TOEFL is 95, a minimum acceptable overall score on the IELTS is 7.0, and a minimum acceptable score on the DET is 130. Test scores are considered valid for two (2) years from the test date and be sent directly to SOPHAS. Information on how to send official TOEFL, IELTS, or DET scores to SOPHAS can be found here ([https://help.liasonedu.com/SOPHAS\\_Applicant\\_Help\\_Center/Sending\\_Your\\_Official\\_Transcripts\\_and\\_Test\\_Scores\\_to\\_SOPHAS/Sending\\_Official\\_Test\\_Scores\\_to\\_SOPHAS](https://help.liasonedu.com/SOPHAS_Applicant_Help_Center/Sending_Your_Official_Transcripts_and_Test_Scores_to_SOPHAS/Sending_Official_Test_Scores_to_SOPHAS)).

## **Application Deadline Dates for All Applicants**

*Degree-seeking applicants:* Completed applications, with all supporting documents, must be received by:

- October 1 – Spring semester priority deadline for scholarship consideration & final deadline
- December 1 – Fall semester priority deadline for scholarship consideration

- February 1 – Fall semester deadline for Dietetic Intern applicants
- April 1 – Fall/ Summer semester, all other applicants' final deadline

*Non-degree seeking applicants:* Completed applications, with all supporting documents, must be received by:

- November 1 – Spring semester
- April 1 – Summer semester
- July 1 – Fall semester

Applicants will be notified by e-mail of the Admissions Committee's decision within approximately 2-8 weeks of the date the application is completed and verified via SOPHAS, provided that all supporting materials are received by the application deadline.

## **Admissions Process**

Applicants are required to elect a single degree program designation when applying. Designations are listed by available program modality and location. The faculty or faculty subcommittee of the appropriate program and location review each application and all supporting documentation. Factors believed to contribute to the academic success of students and their subsequent contributions to the knowledge base and practice of public health are considered in each admissions action. The following criteria are evaluated through the application, transcripts, letters of recommendation, essay/personal statement, and CV/Resume. These criteria include:

- Career goals: particularly the intent to practice public health in underserved and vulnerable communities
- Community service: particularly service to diverse communities in need
- Educational goals: should be consistent with the chosen area of study
- Motivation: description of any special obstacles or challenges that have been overcome to achieve goals thus far
- Prior academic preparation: depth, breadth, and performance
- Relevant work experience: particularly public health practice or research related to underserved and vulnerable communities
- Official scores on entrance exams and English proficiency exams (if needed)
- Theses, publications, and other scholarly works: supplemental documents provided by applicant

Applicants may be contacted for personal interviews, and prospective students are encouraged to visit the School and discuss their proposed program with faculty and staff. The School's contact information can be found on the UTHealth Houston School of Public Health (<https://sph.uth.edu/campuses/houston>) website. Admissions inquiries can also be emailed directly to SPHAdmissions@uth.tmc.edu.

applyUTH (<https://uthidp.uth.edu/nidp/saml2/sso?id=Campus-Affiliate-LOA2-DUO&sid=0&option=credential&sid=0>) is available for applicants to check on the status of their application and supporting documents.

## **Direct Admission to a PhD Program**

The School offers direct admission to the PhD in Biostatistics and Data Science and the PhD in Epidemiology programs. Additional admission requirements for these programs can be found in the PhD in Biostatistics and Data Science, Direct Admission (<https://catalog.uth.edu/public-health/programs/public-health-phd/biostatistics-phd-direct-admission/>) and PhD in Epidemiology, Direct Admission (<https://catalog.uth.edu/>)

public-health/programs/public-health-phd/epidemiology-phd-direct-admission/) sections. Students are required to meet all other admission requirements for a PhD program.

### **Conditional Admission to Doctoral Programs**

With the exception of applicants admitted directly to a PhD program, applicants to doctoral programs are expected to hold a master's degree in the relevant discipline. Applicants with a prior master's degree, but with deficits (i.e., no MPH or lack of master's level discipline courses for a PhD) may be admitted with the conditions of completing required leveling courses. Once a student has completed the required leveling courses listed in the admissions letter, with a grade of at least a "B," the conditions will be removed from the student's record. Conditions must be met by the timeline mentioned in the admissions letter. Students who fail to complete the conditions will be discontinued from the doctoral program. Credit hours toward a doctoral degree program's graduation requirement begin to accrue at the time of enrollment in the degree program as follows:

- No credit hours for the leveling courses will be applied toward a doctoral degree but will be listed on the student's official transcript.
- DrPH students must have previous evidence of all five core MPH courses.