UNIVERSITY OF AMSTERDAM

Graduate school of Social Sciences

Documents Explained

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This guide is meant for students wishing to apply for one of the Master's programmes offered by the Graduate School of Social Sciences. It explains the required documents that need to be part of your application in detail and how to submit these documents in SIS.

Working with SIS

SIS application
To apply for admission to one of the Master's programmes of the Graduate School of Social Sciences, you will first need to register for your Master's programme in Studielink. Within a few working days after registration, you will receive your UvAnetID and the link to SIS where you can submit your application.

Save your work
Your progress will be saved automatically so that you return later to continue your application.

Uploading your documents
Please refer to Required documents for a quick reference overview of documents. Please make sure to give your documents a clear name that explains the contents of the document. For instance, your transcripts should be named 'academic transcripts'. The file name may not be longer than 60 characters.
If you have several scans or documents, put them together into one document before uploading.
If you come across a document that you do not need to upload, please make sure to upload an empty document.

Formats allowed: .pdf
Maximum size: 10 MB

Updating your documents
If your documents need to be updated, you will need to delete the uploaded file and replace it with the new version that you have edited on your computer. Do this ***before submitting*** your application.

Complete applications

Please note that the Admissions Board will only evaluate complete applications. A complete application means that you have uploaded all the required documents and have submitted a complete application file. Incomplete applications will not be forwarded to the Admissions Board and your application will be cancelled.

Documents

So you will need to submit a variety of documents along with your application. Please refer to our website for a quick reference overview of Required documents. We will explain the documents in more detail here below:

Curriculum vitae

Please submit an extensive CV, preferably based on the Europass CV format.

Statement of motivation

Please describe in about 750 words why you wish to attend the programme and provide detailed information on how you meet the (entry) requirements. This might include: outlining your motivation, information on courses taken in the field of the (Research) Master's programme you are applying to, training in social science research methods, experience with academic research (i.e. project thesis, research term papers, research assistant positions), and any additional context to the submitted documentation (such as your grade average). In addition, please list a number of research questions (see: Research questions).

Transcripts of all higher education grades and credits obtained

The Admissions Board will need to have a clear idea of all higher education grades and credits you are aiming to obtain before enrolment in the intended Master's programme.

UvA students

Please upload a print-screen of your results listed in SIS, mentioning the course names, credits and grades already obtained.

Non-UvA students

Please upload higher education transcripts (intermediate or final if already available), listing course names, credits and grades obtained.

After admission, you must ask your university to send official and final higher education transcript(s). We prefer to receive these transcripts by e-mail (sent by your university) directly to apply-gsss@uva.nl or through an online verification system. If this is not possible, please ask us by e-mail (to apply-gsss@uva.nl) about other options.

Courses currently enrolled in

Courses you are currently enrolled in but are not listed on the transcripts, should be mentioned in your CV, indicating the credits to be obtained.

Study abroad transcripts

If the results are not mentioned on the transcript of the home university itself, you must submit additional transcripts of the results obtained during a semester or year of studying abroad.

Explanation of the local grading and credit system

If you follow(ed) non-Dutch higher education and if an explanation of the local grading and credit system is not mentioned on the transcript, please upload this in addition.

Higher education diploma(s)

UvA students

If you have already graduated and you have the diploma at your disposal: please upload a scan. If you have not yet graduated: your degree will be checked in SIS after (conditional) admission. It needs to be recorded in SIS as completed before the start of the Master's programme.

Non-UvA students
If already obtained and not mentioned on the transcripts with degree title and date of graduation, please upload scans of all higher education diplomas already obtained. After (conditional) admission and if the degree is not mentioned on the transcript, you must ask your university to send us an e-mail with a certified (stamped and signed) copy of your diploma or make the diploma available through an online verification system. If this is not possible, please ask us by e-mail (to apply-gsss@uva.nl) about other options.

Translation(s)
If the transcripts and diploma(s) mentioned above are not in Dutch, English, German, or French, they should be submitted along with official translations in English, made by a sworn translator. Self-translated documents cannot be accepted.
Please ask us by e-mail (to apply-gsss@uva.nl) how we wish to receive this translation.

If you attend(ed) more than one higher education institute
You will need to submit transcripts and diplomas of all higher education that you completed or will complete. Please make sure that you mention all relevant information that the admissions board might need for assessing your application in your CV.

Course descriptions
Literature, theory and practice vary considerably around the world. What is exactly meant with "political theory" at your university for example, might differ considerably from the theory teachings at our university. To be able to assess whether or not your educational background will be optimal enough for direct entry to our Master's programme, detailed course descriptions will be quite helpful for the Admissions Board.

If you are not a student of the UvA College of Social Sciences: please upload detailed course descriptions (in English or Dutch) of all courses you have done or will be completing in:
- Social sciences research methodology
- Field related theory
- The same field as the Master's programme that you are applying for.

The course descriptions should give the Admissions Board an idea of the contents of the course, literature studied, credits and learning outcomes.

You can find the course descriptions in the course catalogue.
Please copy and paste only the descriptions of the courses you have completed or will be completing into one document. Do not upload complete course catalogues and do not upload links to external websites.

If you have any other (hands-on/field) experience with social sciences research methodology, please include this information in your CV.

Research questions
Please make sure to include in your motivation letter examples of research questions and fields of interest you have and wish to address during the Master's fieldwork or thesis seminar. The purpose of the research questions is that the academic staff gets an idea of the topics of research their future students are interested in. Please formulate 3 or 4 research questions related to the subject of the Master's programme.

Language test
All students must be able to read textbooks, understand lectures, take part in classroom discussions and

undertake extensive written work. All Master's programmes are taught entirely in English, and some are taught in English with the possibility of handing in written work in Dutch.

If you are not from a majority English speaking country, you are required to submit an English language test score prior to enrolment. Please see our website, under each Master's programme, which English tests we accept and for possible exemptions of the English language test requirement.

Please upload a test score **at the time of applying**. An English test score report is a required document. We can only evaluate your application if you have submitted all the required documents (see: *Complete applications).*
Please also note that tests tend to be fully booked and the testing organizations also tend to take quite a while before they send the test results, so it is strongly recommended that you book a place with the testing organization well in advance.

Chinese students are strongly recommended to take either the IELTS test or the TOEFL iBT test, as one of these tests is also required for their visa application.

Description of relevant language experience
If a language test score is required and your test score is more than two years old, please upload a description of any relevant experience, showing that you have been practicing your English since the time the test was taken. The Admissions Board will then decide whether a waiver of this requirement can be granted or whether a new test score needs to be submitted before enrolment.
Please note that we must receive this official request at least 1 month before the official Master's programme application deadline (please see our website for the actual deadlines) to allow the Admissions Board enough time to review your request (a waiver requests may take up to 4 weeks to process).

Sample of academic writing
Please refer to the table below to find out for which programmes a sample of academic writing in English needs to be uploaded and what kind of writing sample it will need to be. The writing sample is used to assess whether you can identify and produce quality academic writing in English, whereby the criteria of clarity and coherence stand central. Please clearly state the title of your writing sample, the course this was written for and the year of study.

Programme name	What kind of writing sample
Conflict Resolution and Governance International Development Studies Political Science (all tracks) Sociology (all tracks) Human Geography (all tracks) Urban and Regional Planning (all tracks) Cultural and Social Anthropology (all tracks)	Your best academic writing sample in English of 3 to 5 A4 pages maximum. If you do not have any writing sample in English, we advise you to write a paper especially for application purposes. The paper should not exceed 5 pages and you may choose your own subject matter. You may want to write about the subject you wish to explore for the Master's thesis. If your writing sample exceeds the maximum number of pages, please submit a part of it, such as the opening or concluding chapter, together with a summary and the table of contents of the paper.

Medical Anthropology and Sociology	A social sciences essay in English of 400 words maximum about a current subject in the field of health and health care.
International Development Studies (research) Social Sciences (research) Urban Studies (research)	Your complete Bachelor's thesis and a detailed summary in English. If your Bachelor's studies were not concluded with a thesis or if your thesis is not finished yet, please upload a substantial piece of academic writing in English (more or less 5 A4 pages). If your thesis is not written in English, please upload the introduction of your thesis and a summary of your thesis translated to English, or a substantial piece of academic writing in English (more or less 5 A4 pages).

Portfolio

Students need to submit a portfolio for **our track Visual Anthropology** only. It is important that you make your portfolio (which can be photographs or film material) available in your online application in SIS. In order to do this you will have to upload your (audio-)visual material to a website. You can then add the link(s) to your online application for Visual Anthropology**, in your motivation letter**, so that the admissions board can view your work. You cannot send this portfolio separately via e-mail**.**

Letters of reference

If the admissions board deems it necessary to receive reference letters, we will contact the referees, which is why we ask for the names and contact details of two referees. It might be that we do not need to contact them at all. So you do not need to upload the letters of reference when submitting your application, but if you already have reference letters at your disposal, you may upload them to your application.

Certificates of awards and honours

Please mention relevant awards and honours in your CV. Please mention all relevant information that the admissions board might need for assessing your application in your CV.

Questions and contact

Technical support whilst filling in the application form or uploading your documents

If you are in need of technical support whilst filling in the application form or uploading your documents, you can contact the Education Desk Social Sciences (EDSS).

Questions about the programme(s) and application procedure

If you have any questions about the programme(s) and/or the application procedure, please contact the Admissions Office.

GSSS Admissions Office
E-mail: apply-gsss@uva.nl

Disclaimer

We have tried to make the application form and instructions as accurate as possible. Nevertheless the information may not be exhaustive. Please check our website regularly for updates. Please notify us if the information seems to be incorrect or incomplete.

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