

HOW TO APPLY

For admissions consideration to the Certificate programs in Architecture, Building Science, Heritage Conservation, Landscape Architecture, Heritage Conservation, and Sustainable Design, all applicants are required to submit the items listed below.

USC Graduate Online Application ([USC CAS](#))

You will receive your 10-digit USC ID number via email within two to three business days after you submit your online application. It is important to remember that this ID number is different from the one that appears on your USC CAS application. Please keep this ID on record and make sure to include it in all your communication with USC. You will also need to include it when mailing any documents to the university. Start your USC online graduate application [here](#).

Application fee

The \$90 nonrefundable application fee must be paid before an application is processed. We accept payments via Visa, MasterCard and Discover card.

Fee Waivers: Students who qualify for a fee waiver must make the appropriate selection on their application and submit supporting documents to demonstrate their qualification. Please click [here](#) to check if you are eligible for the fee waiver.

Transcripts

Make sure to upload a copy of your university-issued transcripts (i.e. issued on official letterhead) on the graduate online application. Please note unofficial transcripts from university student portals are not acceptable. Additionally, you must also send an official copy of your transcripts in a sealed envelope.

Please click [here](#) for detailed guidelines for sending your official transcripts to USC.

IMPORTANT: To avoid a delay in the processing of your application, you are encouraged to send your transcripts well in advance of the deadline. It is recommended that you send all official transcripts to USC's Office of Graduate Admissions at least 3 weeks prior to the application deadline.

Official hard-copy transcripts should be mailed to:

University of Southern California
USC Office of Graduate Admission
3601 South Flower Street, Room 112
Los Angeles, CA 90089-0915

You may also have transcripts sent electronically from your domestic institution to etrans@usc.edu. Do not send any materials or correspondence to this email address yourself.

Resume and/or Curriculum Vitae

Please upload this document detailing your employment, education, extra-curricular collegiate and community activities, honors, awards, publications, professional organizations, hobbies, travel, and any other relevant information you would like to include directly into the graduate online application.

Statement of Intent

Please clearly describe your study intentions and interests. Upload this document directly into the graduate online application. There are no minimum or maximum length requirements.

Three (3) Letters of Recommendation

Applicants are required to submit three letters of recommendation from academic references preferably. Applicants who have been out of school for several years may request letters from employers or mentors who can evaluate their professional abilities and academic potential. The School of Architecture does not have a separate form for the recommenders to fill out but there is an optional form found on the graduate online application. Recommenders will receive instructions via email once the applicant has designated their recommenders and their email addresses through the graduate online application. Letters of recommendation must be submitted through the graduate online application system. We will not accept letters of recommendation through postal mail.

Portfolio and/or Writing Sample

Portfolios are not required of applicants to the following certificate programs: Architecture, Building Science, Landscape Architecture and Sustainable Design. A writing sample (essay, article, published work, or nomination) is required of the Certificate in Heritage Conservation. Any additional portfolio items are not required but will be reviewed if submitted.

*Please note: Certificate programs differ from Masters Programs. Masters programs require a completely separate admissions review process.

In addition to the items listed above, International applicants must also submit the following items:

English Proficiency Requirement

International applicants must demonstrate adequate English-language proficiency by submitting either TOEFL or IELTS scores by the listed deadlines found on the department website. Scores are considered valid only if earned within two years of your intended first term at USC.

(For example, no earlier than August 1 two years prior if applying for the fall term.)

The School of Architecture is interested in reviewing scores above the university's minimum requirements. The following scores are the department's minimum requirements.

TOEFL: 95 or above, with 20 or above in each section.

The scores must be submitted electronically to USC from ETS to be considered official. Photocopies or paper copies of scores are not acceptable as official submission.

USC Institution code: 4852 (no department code is required).

Information may be obtained from TOEFL, Educational Testing Service:

<https://www.ets.org/toefl/ibt/about>

IELTS: 6.5 or above, with 6 or above on each band.

The scores must be submitted electronically to USC from the testing service to be considered official. Photocopies or paper copies of scores from the testing service are not acceptable. Select "University of Southern California" from the list of available institutions when you register to take the IELTS test. Alternatively, provide this information to your testing center after you have taken the test. Contact information for the USC department to which you are applying is not required.

In addition to the above submission requirements, upload a copy of either your TOEFL or IELTS score to the graduate online application for preliminary reviews.

Information may be obtained from IELTS: <https://www.ielts.org/>

IMPORTANT: To avoid a delay in the processing of your application, you are encouraged to take all required exams at least one month ahead of the application deadlines. It takes time for ETS or IELTS to send to the university and USC Admissions Processing to upload to your applicant file.

Financial Document(s) and Passport Copies

Admission to the School of Architecture is based on merit rather than ability to pay. The U.S. government, however, requires that all international applicants provide proof of adequate financial support and passport copies for you and any applicable dependents before a formal letter of admission and an I-20 or DS-2019 can be issued.

It is not necessary to submit your financial documents and a copy of your passport for your program to review your application. However, doing so early in the application process will help prevent possible delays in processing your I-20/DS-2019 after you certify your intent to enroll. To learn more about our costs, financial document submission guidelines and immigration procedures, please click [here](#).

It is possible that you do not need an F-1 or J-1 visa to attend USC. Please click [here](#) to determine if you are exempt from these visa categories.