

GPS Division Graduate Program Admissions Rubric

		High	Medium	Low
Application component	Sub-components			
<p>Personal statement (and criteria)</p> <p>The statement should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • applicant’s motivation for graduate research and goals; • potential research interests and areas of focus in the doctoral program and why they are interested in the specific graduate program and/or faculty; • applicant’s prior experiences in science or science education (e.g., relevant classes, research experience, and any teaching, outreach or other educational experiences). 	Content	<p>Statement of Purpose contains:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • motivation and interests, well-aligned with pursuit of a Ph.D.; • candidate articulates interest in the specific graduate program and how it aligns with personal goals; • evidence of previous coursework, independent activities, outreach or research experience that supports goals. 	Statement contains most but not all of the criteria for high ranking.	Statement is unfocused and lacking in criteria of high ranking.
	Writing	Well written and engaging; grammar and organization consistent with strong writing ability.	Few grammatical errors; easy to read.	Poor grammar; a challenge to read and understand.
	Program alignment	Mentions one or more faculty members in the Division and makes clear link with interests.	Background is appropriate for the graduate program but vague statement about research priorities.	No alignment evident with specific graduate program.
Official transcripts		High GPA in all courses with transcript indicating selection of rigorous and relevant courses.	Overall strong GPA, but a few courses with weaker grades, or lacking in rigorous courses.	Weak GPA, especially in core STEM courses.
<p>C.V. / Resume (and criteria)</p> <p>This document should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all previous university degrees, programs, certificates, with emphasis on science or science education; • prior experiences in science education (e.g., relevant formal/informal teaching or other educational experiences); • prior experiences with research activities. 	Shows experience as a researcher and/or highlights development as a student and geoscientist	Strong background and experience; this may include published research/writing, research in progress, field work, relevant teaching or outreach experience, self-taught skills, etc.	Limited experience, but shows development and potential for research.	Little relevant experience through classes, research, or independent activities

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<p>Positive attributes (expressed in CV, personal statement, or letters)</p> <p>We value demonstrable non-academic qualities that support the candidates' potential for success in the program. Evidence of engagement, curiosity, success, and collaboration outside of academia are considered as part of our holistic assessment of applications.</p>	<p>Examples of positive attributes may include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • energy to use talents fully, demonstrated via extracurricular activities, employment and/or service; • clarity of purpose; • involvement and leadership in academic institutions, community, athletics, outreach, or other groups; • perseverance when encountering obstacles or failure. <p>Not all of these need be addressed.</p>	<p>May show one or two of these qualities; application may only focused on academic components.</p>	<p>Application raises concerns that student may be missing key attributes (such as those listed) that will limit success in the program.</p>
<p>Letters of recommendation</p>	<p>Directly addresses qualifications for the program; letters speak to applicant's abilities as high or exceptional in quality.</p>	<p>Letters are general in nature without specific comment on ability to succeed in a graduate program; applicant's abilities described as good or average.</p>	<p>Letters describe applicant's abilities as low or below average in quality.</p>