

【About the Program】

Q: What is a “global leader in social design and management”?

A: Global leaders in social design and management are professionals with the specialized and broad-spectrum knowledge to identify social problems from a global perspective, design comprehensive solutions that unite innovative technology with effective public policy, and collaborate with diverse stakeholders from various sectors to put those solutions into action.

Q: What is “comprehensive coursework”?

A: Comprehensive coursework is a selection of courses offered by participating departments, chosen for their relevance to the program’s aims, that give students an opportunity to develop cross-disciplinary knowledge. The courses are grouped into three core areas: “global society and public policy courses,” “advanced science and technology courses,” and “issue solving courses.” Students are required to earn a certain number of course credits in each core area in order to complete the GSDM program.

Q: What is the International Project? Do student have to find their own project?

A: The International Project is an international internship, joint research project, or other program, held outside the student’s native country, in which the student participates for a given length of time with the aim of developing communication skills and other competencies needed to work effectively with diverse stakeholders. Students are expected to design their own project, although they may seek information and advice on placement from faculty members or other sources. [LEARN MORE](#)

Q: Can I remain in the GSDM program if I enroll in a doctoral course at another university?

A: Students who enroll in a doctoral course other than one of those offered by GSDM’s [participating departments](#) will lose their status as GSDM students.

Q: What is the Qualifying Examination?

A: The Qualifying Examination is an assessment for students who enrolled in GSDM as master’s students. After one year in the program, we assess these students to gauge their determination to proceed to the doctoral course and their motivation to become global leaders in social design and management. The QE assesses overall student achievement on the basis of such factors as progress in their research work, their grades in comprehensive coursework and their group work. [LEARN MORE](#)

Q: What is the Research Design Workshop?

A: The Research Design Workshop is a kind of examination used to gauge students' progress in their research and their potential as global leaders in social design and management.

Q: What is the role of secondary advisors?

A: Secondary advisors are faculty members who provide guidance in areas outside of the main faculty advisor's field of expertise. For example, a law student doing crossover research in the area of medical law might be assigned a secondary advisor in the Faculty of Engineering to offer technical assistance concerning medical devices. Students meet and consult with their secondary advisors when planning and preparing their supplementary paper, a component of the Final Examination. Upon entering the doctoral course, each student is assigned two secondary advisors by a GSDM faculty member, with the student's own requests taken into consideration.

【Applying to the Program】

Q: I don't have a faculty advisor in the Graduate School of Public Policy. Who should I ask to fill out my Supervisor's Recommendation Letter?

A: Visit the GSDM Office as soon as possible, and we will arrange for you to request a letter of recommendation from a GSDM faculty member related to your field of research.

Q: Can I apply to GSDM if I'm currently enrolled in another Program for Leading Graduate Schools? Can I apply to more than one Program at the same time?

A: You are free to apply to more than one Program. However, if you are accepted into both, you must choose one and complete that program's admission procedures. If you are currently enrolled in a different Program and are accepted into GSDM, you must choose one program or the other. You cannot be enrolled in two Programs simultaneously.

Q: I applied to GSDM once before, but my application was rejected. Can I submit another application at some point?

A: Yes, repeat applications are permitted.

Q: What should I write under "Relevance of your research in relation to practical issues in public policy or other areas"?

A: After describing the research you are conducting in your own field, explain how that research could help solve a particular social problem and discuss the institutional and policy issues that must be addressed for such a solution to work.

Q: I'm not sure whether I want to pursue my doctoral degree after I finish my master's. Am I eligible to apply to GSDM?

A: The GSDM is a combined master's and doctoral program. Only students committed to pursuing their doctoral degree should apply.

【Grant Assistance】

Q: I can't quit my part-time job immediately. Can I start receiving grant assistance after I quit?

A: Grant assistance is disbursed on a monthly basis. At any time during the standard residency period (three years), after submitting a certificate of resignation issued by your employer you may receive grant assistance for the remaining months.

Q: I have enrolled in a study-abroad program. What happens to my grant assistance, and what should I do about the Qualifying Examination while I'm overseas?

A: Grant assistance is not disbursed to students while they are abroad. If you are studying overseas at the time when you were originally scheduled to take the QE, you may take the examination upon your return. Grant payment will not be resumed until you take the QE.

Q: I am receiving financial aid from another source, so I'm ineligible for grant assistance under the program. Is it still possible for me to enroll in GSDM?

A: Yes.

Q: I have been selected for a JSPS (Japan Society for the Promotion of Science) Research Fellowship for Young Scientists. Am I eligible to participate in GSDM?

A: Yes.

Q: I have been assigned as a teaching assistant (TA) for a course in my department. Will that put me in conflict with the rules governing grant assistance?

A: You are permitted to work up to five hours a week as a TA in a program-related course and still receive grant assistance under the program. However, to ensure that the courses you are assigned to are relevant to the program's curriculum, you will need to submit a [TA Assignment Report](#) and get the program's approval before starting to work as a TA.

Q: How does grant assistance work for a student with an extended timeline for doctoral program completion?

A: Students may receive no more than three years worth of grant assistance for the duration of the program. [Working professionals who are pursuing a degree under an extended timeline and resign from their position before the end of that timeline may be](#)

eligible for a portion of the grant. [A1]Please visit the GSDM Office for details if this is your situation.

【Admission Interviews】

Q: What happens at the admission interview?

A: At the admission interview, applicants talk about their research and its relevance to social issues and then answer questions from faculty members.

Q: I won't be in Tokyo during the period when admission interviews are being held. Is it possible in such a case to schedule a Skype interview?

A: Yes.

【Comprehensive Coursework】

Q: Do I need to complete all 10 credits of comprehensive coursework after I enroll in GSDM?

A: If you have already taken courses on the list of comprehensive coursework, the program will typically accept those credits. However, please check with the GSDM Office, as course content can change from year to year.

Q: Can the credits I earn for completion of the GSDM program also be counted toward my department's degree requirements?

A: The credits will be recorded, but each department has its own rules regarding the number of external credits that can be applied toward the degree. Please check with your graduate school.

Q: I see that students are required to take at least two credits in each of the three core areas in order to pass the QE. Does the compulsory course Social Design and Global Leadership count toward the comprehensive coursework requirement?

A: The compulsory course required to pass the QE also counts for two credits of "issue solving courses" within the comprehensive coursework requirement.