



## Interview with HBS Admissions

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**Q:** What is special about your MBA program? In addition to its' excellent reputation, what differentiates it from other Top MBA programs?

**A:** The combination of the general management curriculum based on real-world challenges, the opportunity to learn through the case method where students become a better decision makers and leaders, and the HBS brand together will give our graduates the knowledge, experience and credibility to have a seat at the table to address some of the world's most pressing problems. The general management perspective is important because no business decision is ever made in a silo, instead it is important for a leader to have a broad understanding of all elements of an organization to make it run successfully. At HBS, students have the opportunity to be in the shoes of a leader making a decision as they prepare 500 cases, consider 500 problems and discuss 500 relevant business topics. Through this experience students broaden their perspective on the world. Students develop technical business skills as well as softer leadership skills including business instinct, judgment, listening and taking a stand, as they refine their general manager's toolkit. This all takes place on a residential campus of 40 acres where 2/3 of the student body lives. Students get the chance to live where they learn with the belief that the daily interactions of residential life only increase the potential for learning.

**Q:** Are there any recent changes in the programs or in the admission process?

**A:** There are no changes to the admissions process at this time. We would like to point out a change in the size of the MBA program. We decided to allow incoming students in the Class of 2022 to defer their offer of enrollment, given the challenges and uncertainties they were facing at the onset of Covid. We are delighted that 732 students joined us this past fall. Moreover, the composition of the students who joined is similar to those who chose to defer, which means the Class of 2022 has the diversity we strive for and the critical mass to carry on all of our usual curricular and extracurricular activities. We want to ensure there are roughly the same number of spots available in the next few classes so as not to disadvantage those of you applying this year. In that regard, HBS has been approved to expand its class size to about 1,000 for the next two years (Class of 2023 and 2024) to accommodate those deferrals. We will be keeping section size to its regular size of around 93. To accommodate the larger class, we will likely be adding an additional section which will allow for our continued diversity across many dimensions. At this time, our strict deferral policy from previous years is what we are following. Although we are not certain what next fall will look like, we are confident that we will be able to offer an engaging and incredible experience for all our students.

**Q:** Has the COVID-19 situation have an impact on getting accepted to the programs at your school? Is there any other impact candidates should be aware of?



**A:** COVID-19 had no impact on acceptance to any of our programs. The largest impact Covid has had on HBS is on the delivery of instruction. HBS was able to operate in a hybrid model this past academic year to allow for appropriate social distancing in the classroom. We do not yet know what the classroom experience will look like for the fall as we will follow CDC guidelines at that time. While this was not the experience our students were accustomed to or had hoped for, students were still able to find the hybrid classroom a success and still managed to experience a similar version of the regular classroom experience thanks to IT department pulling off miracles!

**Q:** Can you share some details about the atmosphere in the school? Amongst the students? Between students and faculty? How do students spend their free time?

**A:** The Harvard Business School MBA program was the first ever MBA program and now is over 100 years old. The school has experienced a lot of growth and change over time but the underlying mission of the school has always been the same – “to educate leaders who make a difference in the world.” This mission permeates everything we do at HBS – not only is it the basis for how we structure our curriculum, or a guide for how we select applicants, it is also why many of our students and alumni have chosen to attend HBS- because they want to make an immediate impact in something greater than themselves.

The world desperately needs more leaders to address its most urgent and challenging problems, and virtually none of these problems can be addressed without business leaders playing a vital role. Our graduates are located all over the world and they are using their HBS MBA education to follow their passion and make impact in the areas that are of most importance to them. This includes our alumni who are creating or growing businesses, employing millions of people, leading government or nonprofit organizations, and serving on boards of or benefactors to non-profit organizations and philanthropies.

HBS is the only top business school in the United States with a residential, self-contained campus that forms its own vibrant community in the heart of one of the world's great cities. 65% of our students live on campus in either dorms or Harvard affiliated apartments. This environment offers students countless opportunities for interaction with one another and with faculty beyond the classroom, easy access to a range of on-campus activities and resources, socializing, and building lasting relationships. Community members are drawn together by a commitment to a set of core values, including integrity, honesty, respect for others, personal accountability, and dedication to excellence – qualities that play a key role in developing the teamwork and sound judgment that are central to our educational mission. At its core, HBS student life is built around an intense [section experience](#) that's invigorated with School-wide club events, [student organizations](#), guest speakers, seminars, sports, conferences, and more. In fact, many of our [student profiles](#) share a common theme: how MBAs have found not only a community of support, but a close-knit network of friendships that last a lifetime. Everything on the HBS campus—from our



multimedia classrooms to our gourmet-quality dining facilities—is designed to encourage community collaboration for a richer learning experience.

**Q:** Can you share some details about the area the school is located in?

**A:** HBS is located right across the Charles River from Harvard College, technically in Boston proper. A cosmopolitan and sophisticated city renowned for its vibrant nightlife, Boston is also a university town with great bars and places to eat. With so much going on, the only challenge you'll have is deciding what you want to do. You will find many students choosing to go across the bridge to Harvard Square which is a place of bookstores and coffee houses, of fine dining, eclectic shopping, folk music and old theaters, world-class music, street-performers, and public art. At Harvard Square you can catch the train into downtown Boston as well. Boston is also a city known for its connection to higher education with opportunities to meet and connect with students at MIT, Tufts, Boston College, and Boston University to name a few!

**Q:** Can you share some details regarding job opportunities and summer internships for students in your school?

**A:** HBS is not a final destination, and the HBS MBA is not just a 2-year proposition. It is a community you are connected to for your life. Most students come to HBS with the purpose of furthering themselves in their career or switching careers. Every student's journey is different, which is why the Career & Professional Development Office provides personalized career resources to help you make an impact for years to come. Career & Professional Development works to provide [resources](#) tailored to each individual's need. With our help, you'll not only have the tools you need for both your internship and full-time search, but also an array of resources geared toward your professional development post-HBS.

**Q:** What is it that you are looking for in a candidate? Who will especially enjoy this school? who will be a good fit to the school?

**A:** We hope you embody a habit of leadership, analytical aptitude and appetite, and engaged community citizenship. We want you to be authentic with the admissions board in what you are bringing to the classroom. We want leaders who want to make a difference in the world and we want to see that desire in your application.

**Q:** One most important piece of advice for an applicant based on your experience?



**A:** The biggest piece of advice is to be authentic. We are truly trying to get to know you and see how you would fit here in our program. There are no hidden tricks. We have people tell us what they think we want to hear and that is a big mistake. Be honest about who you are.

**Q:** What NOT to do in the admissions process?

**A:** Do not select yourself out of applying. Be confident in what you bring to the table and have to offer. Do not sell yourself short. HBS is full of a wide variety of individuals. No matter your background or experience, there is a place for you here. That is what makes HBS so great. The more diverse our community is, the better it is. Don't compare yourself to other people because there is no one person exactly like you.

**Q:** Are later rounds worth considering?

**A:** There is no difference between applying in Round 1 or Round 2. You have an equal chance of getting in either round. Apply in whichever round you feel your application is strongest.

**Q:** GMAT and importance as a % of the candidacy? What is the minimum GMAT you are looking for?

**A:** The GMAT or GRE (we truly do not care which exam you take. Please take the one you are most comfortable with) is just one part of the application process. We have a holistic review process. We have no minimum scores for either test.

**Q:** Is there anything you'd like our candidates to know regarding the admissions process?

**A:** It is important to remember that our process is a holistic one. We take everything into account when reviewing your application. Each application received is reviewed in depth by the Admissions Board. When selecting students we put an emphasis on a habit of leadership, an analytical aptitude, and appetite, and community engagement. In each class, we create a dynamic environment that mirrors the breadth and depth of our world economy. We want you to be authentic with the admissions board in what you are bringing to the classroom. We want leaders who want to make a difference in the world and we want to see that desire in your application

**Q:** Any tips for Israeli applicants considering applying to your school?

**A:** As in the previous question, our process is a holistic one. We take everything into account when reviewing your application and recognize that many of our applicants from Israel have military experience as well. We continue to look for a habit of leadership, analytical aptitude and appetite and community engagement.

**Q:** Can you tell us more about funding – scholarship/fellowship options in your school?



**A:** Financial aid at HBS is [need-based](#). The application process is need-blind. We are not aware of your financial situation when reviewing your application. You apply for financial aid once you have been admitted to the program. Financial aid is available to both domestic and international students. 50% of students receive a need-based scholarship that averages at \$42,000 a year. We also have additional [complementary fellowships](#), which are available to students if they meet certain criteria laid out by the fellowship. This aid program requires an enormous commitment, and we are fortunate to have an alumni community that believes so strongly in HBS that they have made our exceptionally generous aid programs possible by donating \$43 million a year to support this program and other aid.

**Q:** Can you share some information about partners who are joining the student- Employment options for him/her? What are the visa requirements?

**A:** HBS is very [partner friendly](#)! Partners are integrated into all facets of HBS. They become an extension of their student's section and are invited to all activities including social events, group dinners, club sports, and retreats. As a partner you will have access to the gym, library, 2 career coaching appointments with the Career and Professional Development Office, and have the ability to sign up for any student club including the Partners' Club. Partners essentially have all the perks of being a student except no classwork and homework to worry about! International students and their partners will work with the Harvard International Office to obtain the appropriate visa.