

Master's Programs in International Business and Trade

Key questions to ask to evaluate master's programs in international business and trade



Graduate education is a major investment. There are many factors to consider when evaluating and selecting a master's program in international business and trade that is right for you.

The business and academic experts behind the Hinrich Foundation Guide to Master's in International Business and Trade have developed the following questions to ask to help you select a quality master's program.

These questions cover the trade program content that must be taught for you to develop the knowledge and skills you need for a successful career in international business and trade. Further questions will help you to understand important trade program attributes, a program's international focus, program costs and availability of financial aid.

A. TRADE CONTENT FOCUS QUESTIONS

1. Core trade program curriculum

Does the program curriculum specifically address international business and trade topics?

Ask questions to ascertain that these core trade program content areas are reflected in the master's program you are considering – before you enrol.



Cross-border trade

Courses that develop skills in market entry, sales, sourcing and marketing across international borders or territories.



Cross-border trade policy

Courses that develop your understanding of how trade agreements, regulations and practices imposed by governments and trade bodies affect cross-border business.



Cross-border logistics & supply chain management

Courses that prepare you to build resilient and efficient global supply chains, including topics such as manufacturing management, logistics, big data analytics and trade documentation.



Cross-border trade finance

Courses relating to the financial instruments, accounting and legal frameworks used by companies to facilitate international trade and commerce, and manage the associated assets, liabilities and risks.



Cross-border leadership & soft skills

Courses that lay the foundation for developing strong leadership and soft skills in cross-border and cross-cultural environments.



Future skills for cross-border trade

Courses preparing you to adapt to technologies that are changing the way trade is conducted that will be required knowledge for future trade leaders.

Refer to the [Hinrich Foundation Guide criteria](#) for more details.

2. Specialization

Does the program offer specialization tracks in international business or related fields that align with your trade career aspirations?

3. Capstone project / thesis

Can students focus their capstone project or thesis on international business or trade topics? Are there opportunities to work on developing solutions for companies engaged in cross-border business?

B. TRADE PROGRAM ATTRIBUTES QUESTIONS



Industry aligned curriculum & engagement

Does the program prioritize industry engagement through guest speakers, collaborative research and internships to blend academic theory with real-world practice? Confirm that programs embed strong industry engagement initiatives to equip you for success in international commerce.



Practitioner professors

Confirm that the program is taught by professors with real-world experience in global trade to offer students insights, case studies and industry connections. This experience enhances learning by connecting theory with practice and providing relevant skills and networks.



Career services & employer recruitment

Ascertain that the program offers career advising, employer recruiting, job portals, recruitment fairs and mentorship programs. Are there reputable international trade companies actively recruiting graduates from the program?



Alumni support & network

A strong program is reflected in the leadership success of its graduates and a robust alumni network, offering lifelong connections and opportunities. Does the university offer ongoing alumni services, including mentorships, career workshops and international networking events?



International exposure

Ask if the program features a diverse student body from multiple countries and if it offers overseas study opportunities. This fosters cultural adaptability, global understanding and self-awareness, crucial to prepare you to work effectively in multicultural teams, build international professional networks and develop cross-cultural leadership skills.



Leading research

Confirm the faculty's research covers topics such as trade policy, logistics, finance and technology, and is published and cited in reputable international journals. Strong publication records attract top scholars, providing students with research collaboration opportunities and mentorship.

C. COST & FINANCIAL AID QUESTIONS

1. Tuition & fees

What are the total costs associated with the program, including tuition, fees, subscriptions, field trips, labs, international travel, exchanges and other expenses? What are the costs based on your student status: international, local, resident, national or exchange?

2. Cost of living

What is the estimated cost of living in the city where the university is located?

3. Availability of scholarships or fellowships

Does the program or institution offer scholarships or fellowships specifically for master's students in international business programs?

4. Financial aid

Does the university or program offer financial aid or provide access to scholarships for local and/or international students?

5. Return on Investment (ROI)

How do graduates perceive the ROI of the program in terms of career advancement and salary increase?

In addition to the key questions presented here, we acknowledge that there are other factors that individuals must take into consideration when evaluating and selecting a master's program for international business and trade.



For further support to help you select the master's program that is best for your study and career goals, refer to the complete Hinrich Foundation Guide to Master's Programs in International Business and Trade which includes:

- [Why a master's degree and career in global trade?](#)
- [12 criteria of a great master's program](#)
- [Key questions to ask for the right program fit](#)
- [20 leading masters' programs in international business and trade](#)
- [Global Trade Leader Scholarship Program](#)
- [Exploring careers in global trade](#)

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