

2026 Academic Year

Graduate School of Business Administration
Kobe University
Special Entrance Examination
PhD Program

Application Procedure

Graduate School of Business Administration
Kobe University

The Admission Policy of the Graduate School of Business Administration's Doctoral Program,
Kobe University

The Graduate Program of the Graduate School of Business Administration provides students with in-depth knowledge and advanced professional skills in the fields of management, accounting, and commerce, and enables the students to develop into outstanding internationally-minded researchers and professionals who excel in humanity and creativity, through a five-year program, consisting of a two-year master's course and a three-year doctoral course.

The Doctoral Program aims to foster researchers and professionals who will contribute to the progress and development of humanity through their research achievements. During the program, the students can gain exceptional research opportunities that allow them to acquire advanced and specialized knowledge in management, accounting, commerce, and related academic fields, which helps them develop the ability to conduct original research using scientific methods. After the completion of the program, students should be able to engage in high-level research and education; playing leading roles in their respective fields at universities and research institutions.

The Doctoral Program seeks students with the qualities and abilities that fit our aim. For this purpose, we accept those with exceptional abilities from various universities and diverse academic backgrounds.

- Applicants are sought with the following qualities and abilities:
 1. Students with a strong desire to explore the principles of management, accounting, and commerce. [Required competences: knowledge and technique; critical thinking, good judgement, and expression; initiative and cooperativeness; interest and motivation]
 2. Students who possess the basic capabilities to obtain the required scientific methodology for resolving research questions in management, accounting, and commerce. [Required competences: knowledge and technique; critical thinking, good judgement, and expression; interest and motivation]
 3. Students with the imagination and insight to translate into new scientific knowledge their research outcomes in the fields of management, accounting, and commerce. [Required competences: knowledge and technique; critical thinking, good judgement, and expression; initiative and cooperativeness]
- Basic Policy for the Selection of Students:

To select students with the abilities mentioned above, we examine the competences of the applicants in the areas listed below, based on the diploma policy and the curriculum policy of the Graduate School of Business Administration's doctoral degree program.

Through the appropriate entrance examination (General entrance examination, Recommendation-based entrance examination, or Special entrance examination for working adults), we assess each student's knowledge and technique; critical thinking and good judgement, and expression; initiative and cooperativeness; interest and motivation.

The doctoral program at the Graduate School of Business Administration, Kobe University, conducts a special entrance examination for a full-time professor, associate professor, assistant professor, lecturer, or research associate at a university; a researcher at research institute who is recognized by our graduate school as having high ability. A qualified candidate may apply for the examination on the basis of the screening of the application documents without paper or oral examination provided that he/she obtains a letter of recommendation from a faculty member of our graduate school.

1. Number of Students to Be Admitted

Limited number

2. Applicant Qualifications

Applicants must fulfill at least one of the following requirements (a)-(c) at the time of application.

- (a) Be a full-time professor, associate professor, assistant professor, lecturer, or research associate at a university.
- (b) Be a researcher at a private or national research institute, provided that the Graduate School of Business Administration recognizes that he/she has ability equivalent to those listed in (a).
- (c) Hold a master's degree or an MBA degree and have written an excellent master's thesis or academic paper on business administration or related subjects. The candidate must also be deemed a competent researcher by the Graduate School of Business Administration.

In addition, applicants must fulfill at least one of the following requirements (1)-(8):

- (1) Have received a master's degree or an MBA degree.
- (2) Have received a degree equivalent to a master's degree or an MBA degree in a foreign country.
- (3) Have received a degree equivalent to a master's degree or an MBA degree from a foreign school by completing correspondence courses administered in Japan.
- (4) Through separate enrollment eligibility screening, be recognized by the Graduate School of Business Administration, Kobe University to possess academic ability equivalent to or higher than a master's degree holder or an MBA degree holder. The applicant is required to be 24 years of age by March 31, 2026.
- (5) Have completed a course and have received a degree equivalent to a master's degree or an MBA degree from a foreign graduate school in Japan. The school must be recognized as an educational institution by the home country's education system, and approved by the Minister of the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology.
- (6) Have completed a course and have received a degree equivalent to a master's degree from the United Nations University, which was established under the United Nations General Assembly's resolution of December 21, 1972, based on the provision in Paragraph 2, Article 1 of the Act on Special Measures Law (Law No. 72, 1976) concerning the Implementation of the Agreement between the United Nations and Japan relating to the Headquarters of the United Nations University.
- (7) Have completed a course at a foreign school, an institution specified in the above (5) or the United Nations University; have satisfied requirements equivalent to an examination and screening specified in Article 16-2 of the Graduate School Establishment Standard (under the Ministry of Education Notification No. 28, 1974); and is recognized as possessing abilities equivalent to a master's degree holder or higher.
- (8) Have been specially designated by the Minister of the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (under the Ministry of Education Notification No. 118, 1989).

3. Application Period for Eligibility Screening

Applications must be received between Friday, August 15 and Thursday, August 21, 2025.

If you are applying based on meeting the requirement listed in qualification (4) above, please obtain an Application form for Eligibility Screening from the Academic Affairs Section. Please enclose a self-addressed envelope (Standard size 23.4 cm×12 cm) with a postal stamp of JPY 84 if inside Japan.

4. Application Period

Applications must be received between Friday, September 26 and Friday, October 3, 2025.

All applications must be sent by registered express mail. Please write "Application for Special Entrance Examination of PhD Program of the Graduate School of Business Administration" in red ink on the front of the envelope. Applications submitted in person will not be accepted.

5. Application Procedure

Enclose the required application documents listed below in an envelope and send them to the Academic Affairs

Section by registered express mail. Please use the documents marked with “◆” by downloading from the website: (<https://b.kobe-u.ac.jp/admission/phd/>)

Address: Academic Affairs Section,
Graduate School of Business Administration, Kobe University
2-1, Rokkodai-cho, Nada-ku, Kobe-shi
657-8501, Japan

(1) **Application Form and Curriculum Vitae ◆**

Please use the Graduate School's designated format. (A4 size, printed on both sides)

Please refer to the GSBA faculty list for 'Research Field' and 'Supervisor'.

(2) **Examination Fee**

In case you pay the examination fee from the bank in Japan, please pay the fee (JPY 30,000) by bank transfer (through Automated Teller Machine or internet banking is recommended) and submit the transfer bill. Please attach the receipt on a blank A4-size paper. Printed screen shot of the completed bank transfer of the internet banking is also acceptable. Account balance shall be blacked out.

If you wish to remit the fee from overseas, please contact the Academic Affairs Section for details.

*Transfer destination account: 三井住友銀行六甲支店 (普通) 4165080 国立大学法人神戸大学

Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation, Rokko Branch, Savings Account 4165080, National University Corporation Kobe University

*Payer's name: Must be "K4504○○○○" (○○○○ is the name of the applicant. Name in Katakana is also acceptable).

*Please make sure to input the applicant's name instead of the account holder's name if the account does not belong to the applicant.

*Bank Transfer fee should be borne by the payer.

International students on a MEXT Scholarship should submit a copy of their MEXT Scholarship Certificate instead of the examination fee.

*Note 1 applies.

(3) **Letter of Recommendation from a Faculty Member of Our Graduate School**

Submit a letter of recommendation written by a faculty member of the Graduate School of Business Administration, Kobe University. No specific format is required. The faculty member must attach his/her signature and seal the envelope.

(4) **Master's or MBA Thesis**

(a) Summary of Thesis (8 copies)

Submit copies of your master's or MBA thesis summary (maximum 3 pages of A4-size paper). If your thesis is written in a language other than Japanese, you may submit your thesis summary written in English (around 3,000 words).

(b) Thesis (8 copies)

Submit copies of your master's or MBA thesis. You may attach your other research papers for reference.

* If your master's degree does not require a thesis, you must submit 8 copies of your research summary during the master course that exceeds more than 10 pages of A4-size paper. You may write it in English (around 10,000 words).

(5) **Research Plan (8 copies) ◆**

Please use the Graduate School's designated format. (A4 size, printed on both sides)

(6) **Academic Transcript (Master's degree)**

Submit an original transcript issued by the president (or dean) of the graduate school from which you graduated.

*Notes 1 and 2 apply.

(7) **Certificate of Graduation**

Submit an original certificate of graduation issued by the president (or dean) of the graduate school from which you graduated.

*Notes 1 and 2 apply.

If you graduated from a foreign university, you must also submit a certificate for your master's degree (e.g., a copy of your diploma).

(8) **Academic Transcript (Bachelor's degree)**

Submit an original transcript issued by the president (or dean) of the university from which you graduated.

*Notes 1 and 2 apply.

(9) **Photograph (4cm x 3cm)**

Two (2) passport-sized photographs (4 x 3 cm) for Application Form and Examination Admission Slip. Your photographs must show your full face, without a hat, and be taken within the past three months.

(10) **Certificate of Employment**

Submit a certificate of employment issued by the relevant university, research institute, company, or government.

(11) **Examination Admission Slip ◆**

Please use the Graduate School's designated format. (A4 size)

(12) Certificate of Residence or Copy of Residence Card (Foreigners only)

Foreign applicants residing in Japan should submit an official document indicating their Japanese residency status as issued by the head of their residential city/ward/town/village, such as a Copy of Resident Record (must be issued within the past 30 days). A photocopy of both sides of Residence Card is acceptable.

(13) Address Slip (2 slips printed on an A4 size paper) ◆

Please fill in your name, address, and zip code in the Graduate School's designated form. These slips are used to mail the Examination Admission Slip and enrollment procedure documentation.

(14) Self-Addressed Stamped Envelope

Please enclose a standard size (23.4 cm×12 cm) self-addressed envelope with your name, address, and zip code and postal stamps attached for return postage (express mail postage of JPY 410 if in Japan).

(15) Check List ◆

Please check the required application documents with this list before sending.

Note 1: Each certificate must be the original.

Note 2: As for documents such as certificates prepared in languages other than English, please attach a Japanese or English translation with a certificate of translation issued by a public institution such as the relevant consulate or embassy (The certificate in Chinese should be translated at a public institution in China). Please prepare and attach your own translation (English or Japanese) for research papers or related documents in languages other than English or Japanese.

Note 3: Specify a contact person in Japan if you are applying from a foreign country.

Note 4: If one of the following situations applies to you, please submit the specified documents at the time of enrollment.

- (a) If you will continue to work for the current company or civil service after enrollment, submit a letter of approval by your supervisor to enroll in the graduate school.
- (b) If you will retire from the current company or civil service to enroll in the graduate school, submit a certificate of retirement.

6. Obtaining the Application Forms

Please download the application forms from the website below.

<https://b.kobe-u.ac.jp/admission/phd/>

7. Screening Method

Admission selection will be made on the basis of the screening of the application documents, letter of recommendation, research plan, and master's or MBA thesis in order to evaluate an applicant's ability to write a high-quality doctoral dissertation. All documents must be written in either Japanese or English.

8. Announcement of Results

Friday, November 21, 2025, 2:00 p.m. (Tentative)

The admission results will be posted on the web site of the Graduate School of Business Administration (<https://b.kobe-u.ac.jp/>). The official letter for successful applicants will be sent by post as well. No telephone or email inquiry is accepted.

9. Admission Fees

(1) Admission fee: JPY 282,000

(2) Tuition fee (first semester): JPY 267,900 (annual amount JPY 535,800)

(The above admission and tuition fees apply for the academic year 2025. These fees are subject to change for students enrolling in the academic year 2026. If the tuition fee changes while students are enrolled, the new tuition fee will be applicable from the date of revision.)

10. Handling of Personal Information

- (1) Personal information obtained by the Kobe University will be handled in the strictest confidence, in compliance with the Protection of Personal Information Act and other related laws and regulations, as well as Kobe University Guidelines on Personal Information Protection.
- (2) Personal information used in applicant selection, such as examination results, shall be used for applicant screening, announcement of examination results, enrollment procedures, and the creation of study materials for the purpose of improving future applicant screening and education program. No individual can be identified in any form of publication.
- (3) Personal information provided during the application process shall be used for student support services including health management, exemption from tuition fees, and scholarship applications, as well as for purposes such as academic instruction and other administrative procedures.
- (4) Some work may be commissioned to a third party (hereafter referred to as a contractor). When commissioning work, all or part of the personal information shall be provided to the contractor to the extent necessary to conduct the work, after imposing a confidentiality agreement.

11. Important Notes

- (1) Changes to information included in application documents are not accepted after submission. The examination fee is non-refundable and no application documents will be returned after submission.
- (2) An offer of admission may be subsequently rescinded where false information is provided by the applicant in the application or other related documents.
- (3) An academic year begins in April and ends in March of the following year at Kobe University.

12. Inquiries about Obtaining and Submitting Application Forms

For further inquiries, please contact the Academic Affairs Section.

Academic Affairs Section,

Graduate School of Business Administration, Kobe University

2-1, Rokkodai-cho, Nada-ku, Kobe-shi

657-8501, Japan

Tel: +81-78-803-7260

Fax: +81-78-803-7294

E-mail: bkyomu@b.kobe-u.ac.jp

【Number of successful applicants in the past】

	2022	2023	2024
Applicants	17 (8)	21(7)	15(10)
Examinees	17 (8)	21(7)	14(10)
Successful applicants	13 (7)	15(7)	12(10)
Enrollees	13 (7)	15(7)	12(10)

The figures indicate the total number of doctoral program.

() indicates the number of Special Entrance Examination.