

Understanding the Application Timeline:

MPH Programs

SOPHAS:

Most schools of public health accredited by the Council of Education for Public Health utilize SOPHAS, a central application service for master of public health programs. Applicants are strongly encouraged to apply as early as possible.

SOPHAS' Suggested Timeline:

At least 3 months before the deadline:

Begin SOPHAS application, inform references of the process and ensure they have agreed to participate. Complete Colleges Attended and Recommendations immediately so that SOPHAS can receive letters and transcripts.

At least 4 weeks before the deadline:

Monitor your application for receipt of transcripts and letters of recommendation. Follow up with SOPHAS about missing items.

At least 8 weeks before the deadline:

Request official transcript(s) be sent to SOPHAS and confirm references have received an online reference request. Request a copy of your transcript(s) for yourself to fill in coursework on SOPHAS. Begin drafting your personal statement for each program.

At least 2 weeks before the deadline:

Complete and submit application. Make sure your official transcripts and letters have posted. Check that your application has been "Verified."

Please note:

The above timeline represents SOPHAS' recommendations for completing each step. Processing times vary throughout the cycle and each school's requirements may differ. Therefore, the timeline may not apply to every applicant's situation. Also, keep in mind that there are fall, spring, and summer program start dates that vary from school to school.

The GRE:

While unofficial scores are available immediately after taking the exam on a computer, official scores are available about 10-15 days after the test date. Some MPH programs will not require any standardized test scores. Applicants should be aware of the standardized test requirements of each school to which they are applying and take the exam at the appropriate time. It is safe to take the GRE approximately one year before an applicant plans to start graduate school. This allows enough time to retake the exam if necessary.

In general, it is advantageous to complete the above steps even earlier than the SOPHAS' recommended timeline.