



EAST TENNESSEE STATE
UNIVERSITY

**Graduate School Accelerated Bachelor's
to Master's Program**

Policy Name: Graduate School Accelerated Bachelor's to Master's Program

Policy Purpose

This policy specifies the requirements for the Accelerated Bachelor's to Master's (ABM) Degree Program.

Applicability

This policy is applicable to undergraduate students who desire to start a graduate program before completing their bachelor's degree. This policy does not apply to ETSU undergraduates starting a graduate program after completing their bachelor's degree, students completing a BS in Pharmacy Studies who desire a PharmD degree, or students who are exclusively enrolled in Quillen College of Medicine or the Gatton College of Pharmacy.

Responsible Official, Office, and Interpretation

The Dean of the Graduate School and Graduate Council are responsible for the review and revision of this policy. For questions about this policy, please contact the Dean of the Graduate School. The Provost in consultation with the Office of University Counsel, has the final authority to interpret this policy.

Defined Terms

A defined term has a specific meaning within the context of this policy.

Cumulative GPA

Cumulative GPA is the average of all undergraduate or graduate grades taken at ETSU.

Program of Study.

Courses required for completion of a degree and the timeline during which the courses will be completed.

Matriculation Limits

Matriculation limits are established under the Graduate School's [Matriculation \(Time\) Limits Policy](#).

Policy Effective Date: 01/06/2020 • **Policy Revised Effective Dates:** 06/30/2021; 06/12/2025
Procedures Effective Date: 01/06/2020 • **Procedures Revised Effective Dates:** 06/30/2021; 06/12/2025

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Policy

1. General Statement.

High performing undergraduate students may complete both a bachelor's and a master's degree at an accelerated pace. Students may apply as many as twelve (12) credits (or have an exception) of graduate-level coursework toward both of their degrees.

2. Eligibility for Accelerated Bachelor's to Master's Program.

To be eligible for the accelerated Bachelor's to Master's (ABM) program, students must have:

- 2.1. A minimum ETSU undergraduate GPA of 3.25 (individual programs may impose higher GPA requirements); and
- 2.2. Earned 75 undergraduate credits, including credits earned from dual enrollment or advanced placement, by the time the ABM program will start; and
- 2.3. Completed 24 credits at ETSU by the time the ABM will start.

3. Admission to Accelerated Bachelor's to Master's Program.

Admission to an accelerated program is contingent upon meeting requirements of the respective master's program and the Graduate School (see [Admission for Degree or Certificate Seeking Students Policy](#)). The ABM admission process requires the student to:

- 3.1. Submit an ABM Proposal (see Section 4 below); and
- 3.2. Apply to the appropriate graduate program; and
- 3.3. Be offered admission to the graduate program.

Students applying to the graduate program through the Accelerated Bachelor's to Master's Degree Program will not be required to take standardized admissions tests or submit letters of recommendation.

4. ABM Proposal.

The student must develop an ABM proposal with the undergraduate advisor and graduate program coordinator.

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An ABM proposal consists of three (3) parts:

- 4.1. A list of graduate courses (up to 12 credits) that will apply toward both degrees and the rationale for each substitution in the bachelor's program of study. (Exceptions to the limit may be allowed for courses that are four-credits.) The rationale should be based on an analysis of course objectives, competencies, or other objective measures; and
- 4.2. The program of study for completion of the master's degree; and
- 4.3. The program of study for completion of the bachelor's degree.

The undergraduate advisor, the graduate coordinator, and the Dean (or Designee) of the Graduate School must approve the proposal.

If a modification to the list of double-counted graduate courses or the timeline for completion of either degree is needed, before the student completes the Bachelor's degree, the student must submit a revised proposal via the same mechanism that the student used to submit the original proposal. As with the original proposal, the undergraduate advisor, the graduate coordinator, and the Dean (or designee) of the Graduate School must approve these changes.

5. Classification and Tuition Rates.

Students accepted into the Accelerated Bachelor's to Master's Degree program will be classified as undergraduate students until they have received their bachelor's degree. Tuition will be billed at the undergraduate rate for all courses, including the double counted graduate level courses, on the bachelor's degree Program of Study.

After completion of the bachelor's degree, students will be classified as graduate students. All courses, except the double counted courses, on the master's degree Program of Study will be billed at the graduate tuition rate. The student must also complete the residency process and Eligibility Verification for Entitlements Act (EVEA) verification as a graduate student.

6. Academic Good Standing Requirements.

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Students must receive a grade of B or better in the courses to be applied toward both the bachelor's and master's degrees. If a student's undergraduate and/or graduate Cumulative GPA falls below the 3.0 required minimum to remain in the ABM program, the individual will need graduate program and Graduate School approval to continue in the accelerated program. Written approval from the program for the student to continue must be sent to the Graduate School.

7. Matriculation Limits.

Because of the nature of the Accelerated Bachelor's to Master's Program, students must meet the timeline specified in the Programs of Study for completion of both degrees. The Graduate School's [Matriculation \(Time\) Limits Policy](#) will apply for the Master's degree. The master's degree matriculation limit will apply and this limit starts from the date of the first course taken that will apply toward the master's degree.

In a rare instance of significant impediment, a revised ABM timeline may be approved.

8. Withdrawal.

A student who wishes to withdraw from the Accelerated Bachelor's to Master's Program may do so by notifying the appropriate undergraduate advisor and graduate coordinator in writing (email), copying the Dean of the Graduate School. Staff in the Graduate School will work with the ETSU Office of the Registrar to amend the student's records. Students who withdraw from the Accelerated Bachelor's to Master's program are still eligible to complete the degree requirements for the undergraduate degree; the student is eligible to apply for a graduate program at ETSU in the future.

A student who withdraws or is administratively withdrawn from the accelerated program may not subsequently count courses for both degrees; the student may count eligible courses towards one degree only.

9. Graduate Assistantship Eligibility.

Students in the Accelerated Bachelor's to Master's program are not eligible to hold a Graduate Assistantship (GA) as an undergraduate student. Once students are classified as graduate students, they may hold a GA position.

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Procedures

The procedures for applying to the Accelerated Bachelor's to Master's Degree Program are as follows:

1. Developing an ABM Proposal.

A student should schedule a meeting with the appropriate graduate program coordinator and undergraduate advisor to create an ABM proposal. Once the proposal is agreed upon by the student, the undergraduate advisor, and the graduate coordinator, the student may apply to ABM.

2. Applying to Accelerated Bachelor's to Master's Program.

The procedure for a student to apply to the Accelerated Bachelor's to Master's Program is as follows:

- 2.1.** Submit an ABM application in the ABM application portal during which the student will provide the list of double-counted courses and rationale for each;
- 2.2.** The undergraduate advisor will be contacted via email to submit the bachelor's degree Program of Study and indicate their consent to the student being part of ABM;
- 2.3.** The graduate coordinator will be contacted via email to submit the master's degree Program of Study and indicate their consent to the student being part of ABM;
- 2.4.** The Graduate School Dean (or designee) will review the submitted documentation and determine if the ABM proposal is acceptable.

If acceptable,

- 2.5.** The student must submit a regular graduate application (along with all required documentation) for the master's program and pay the graduate application fee.

3. Review of Applications.

After submission of the graduate application, a Graduate Program Specialist reviews the application and documentation to confirm the minimum requirements are met. If met,

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the master's program admission committee reviews the application and documentation, and makes a recommendation to the Dean of the Graduate School or the designee. Notification of admission or denial follows the same procedures as the Graduate School's Admission for Degree or Certificate Seeking Students Policy. This notification includes that an award of the graduate degree will be contingent upon meeting the stated ABM program requirements.

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Applicable Forms and Websites

ABM Portal: <https://etsu.my.site.com/abm>

Graduate Application Portal: <https://etsu.my.site.com/app>

Authority and Revisions

Authority: TCA § 49-8-203, et seq.

Previous Policy: Previously part of the Graduate Degree and Certificate Requirements Policy 3.24.17

The ETSU Board of Trustees is charged with policy making pursuant to TCA § 49-8-203, et seq. On March 24, 2017, the Board delegated its authority to ETSU's President to establish certain policies and procedures for educational program and other operations of the University, including this policy. The delegation of authority and required process for revision to this policy can be found on the [Policy Development and Rule Making Policy webpage](#).

To suggest a revision to this policy, please contact the responsible official indicated in this policy. Before a substantive change to the policy section may take effect, the requested changes must be: (1) approved by the responsible office; (2) reviewed by the Office of University Counsel for legal sufficiency; (3) posted for public comment; (4) approved by either Academic Council or University Council; and (5) approved by ETSU's President.