

## Introduction

Thank you for your interest in the SANS Technology Institute's master's degree programs. The application process typically requires several hours of work to prepare the necessary documents, write the required outcomes statement and leadership essays, and create the short admissions video presentation. This document leads you through the required steps in the process, and may be used as a checklist for completion.

## Minimum Program Requirements

Before you complete the application materials, please confirm you meet the minimum criteria required of all applicants:

- Have at least 12 months of professional work experience in information technology, information security, or audit
- Be employed or have current access to an organizational environment that allows you to apply the concepts and hands-on technical skills learned during the master's program
- Have earned a baccalaureate degree from a recognized accredited college or university, or the international equivalent, with a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.8

## Preferred Admissions Deadlines

Submit Complete Application By:	Receive Admissions Decision No Later Than:	Target Program Start Date:
February 1	March 1	May 2018
May 1	June 1	August 2018
August 1	September 1	November 2018
November 1	January 1	February 2019

- If admitted, students will be eligible to join the next available [New Student Orientation](#) (NSO), which begin the first of each month. Only after a student completes New Student Orientation will they be allowed to register for their first course.
- Applications submitted after the preferred deadlines will be accepted but may take up to 90 days to review.

Example Admissions Timeline: For applications submitted by May 1<sup>st</sup>, applicants will be notified of an admissions decision within 30 days, on or before June 1<sup>st</sup>. If submitted after the deadline, on May 8<sup>th</sup> for example, an application review may take up to 90 days. In this case, the applicant would receive an admissions decision no later than August 8<sup>th</sup>.

## Application Requirements

All application materials, with the exception of the application fee and official transcripts, will be submitted online at [apply.sans.edu](https://apply.sans.edu). All applicants must submit the following:

- A. Application Form
  - To log into the graduate application portal, you must create a SANS account at <https://www.sans.org/account/create>. If you already have an account, please log into the graduate application using your SANS account credentials.
  - The application can be found online at [apply.sans.edu](https://apply.sans.edu) and you will be guided through each step. The application will not be reviewed for admission until all supporting documents are submitted.
- B. Current Résumé
- C. Letter of Recommendation
  - Request a Letter of Recommendation from your employer, or one of your customers or partners if you are self-employed. Applicants will request this through the application portal and you will need the recommender's email address. See below for further instruction.
- D. Essays and Writing Samples
  - Goals and Outcomes Statement. See page 3 for further instruction.
  - Leadership Essay. See page 3 for further instruction.
- E. Video Presentation
  - Students should record and submit a video presentation. See page 4 for further instruction.
- F. Official Transcripts
  - Students must submit official transcripts from all colleges or universities where a degree was conferred. See page 4 for further instruction.
- G. Application Fee
  - See page 4 for further instruction.

## Application Details

### Submit a Current Résumé

Highlight your current experience and showcase your career history. Make sure to include all industry certifications and your educational background.

### Letter of Recommendation Overview

The letter of recommendation is required to provide a candid viewpoint of an applicant's personal characteristics, performance and experience, strengths, capabilities, and professional promise. The optimal recommendation is written by someone who has supervised your work, served as a mentor, or worked closely with you, and has been in a position to observe your performance. In lieu of writing a separate letter of recommendation, you will submit an electronic request through the application portal. Your recommender will receive an email with a form to complete.

## Application Essays Overview

Applicants to the master's programs are required to submit two short essays. In the first essay, the applicant should describe his/her desired goals for applying to the program. In the second essay, the applicant should describe his/her management skills and past demonstrations of leadership. These topics will enable us to evaluate the match between your goals and skills and the type of graduate we seek to develop: a person who seeks to design and implement security defenses in their organization, and has the technical proficiency, along with the team management, communication and persuasion skills, to be effective.

In addition to allowing us to learn more about you, the review of these essays is an essential tool in our ability to evaluate the quality of your writing, including your ability to organize unstructured information, to frame an argument, and to persuade others of your point of view. Our evaluation of your application essays ensures that we admit students only when we believe they are sufficiently prepared for the multiple applied research papers in the master's programs, and that they have or can develop the writing skills necessarily required of an effective manager.

**Requirement:** Please list at the top of the first page the relevant title (above), your name, and the date. Please use single-spaced paragraphs with a double space between them. Font should be 11-point, in Times New Roman, or Calibri, or Arial. Of course, be mindful of grammar, spelling, punctuation, and syntax, which are essential fundamentals to our evaluations.

**Goals and Outcomes Statement:** Provide an organized and thoughtful Outcome Statement in one to two pages detailing your expectations for a return on your investment in earning master's degree in information security. What drives you to pursue this degree program? Your goals should be specific, realistic, time-related, and if possible, measureable. Integrate how your professional and/or personal background and experiences led to this choice, and how they relate to the desired outcomes. This should be 1-2 pages in length.

**Leadership Essay:** We aspire to develop engineers and managers who can be leaders in our industry. To help ground so broad a term, the Past President of the SANS Technology Institute, Stephen Northcutt, wrote a Leadership Essay (<http://www.sans.edu/research/management-laboratory/article/leadership-essay>) to help characterize and expand upon our definition of leadership. Please read his essay and explore some of the resources he suggests. Then describe your own preferred definition(s) of leadership, some competencies where you believe you have strengths, and also the competencies you would most like to develop. Relate each competency to personal and/or professional experience, or discuss how you intend to use the master's program and your work experience over the next three years to further your leadership goals. Include a discussion of why 'leadership', rather than just 'engineering' or 'management', is particularly important in the information security field at this time. This should be 2-3 pages in length.

## Video Presentation Overview

An important part of developing leaders to strengthen enterprise and global information security is ensuring the ability to communicate. The SANS Technology Institute graduate curriculum is designed to improve a candidate's verbal communication skills (both written and oral) while providing a strong, hands-on technical base.

The video presentation requirement is designed to give the admissions committee insight into the applicant's oral presentation skills, especially the applicant's ability to communicate powerfully and convincingly.

Please prepare and record a 3 to 5-minute video on one of the following prompts-

**Option One:** What is something that you do well? Tell us about a skillset you possess (technical or non-technical). Create a video that is somewhat educational. This can be a tutorial or a how-to video.

**Option Two:** Please summarize and expand upon (without reading) your Goals and Outcomes Statement.

When complete, please upload the video into Vimeo and submit the appropriate URL and password for viewing. Please see the Vimeo website for acceptable video recording parameters.

*TIPS: Reading directly from a prepared script or document is discouraged and is viewed negatively by the Admissions Committee.*

- *Candidates should speak to the camera as if they are presenting to a room of graduate school faculty.*
- *Professional recording equipment is not required. Applicants may use a phone or computer webcam.*
- *Slide presentations are neither required nor encouraged.*

## Official Transcripts

Please have your college/university submit official transcripts directly to [transcripts@sans.edu](mailto:transcripts@sans.edu). If electronic delivery is not an option, please mail official, sealed copies to:

SANS Technology Institute  
Attn: Graduate Admissions  
11200 Rockville Pike, Ste. 200  
North Bethesda, MD 20852

IMPORTANT: If submitting a transcript from a college /university outside of the United States, please first review the requirements for international students (<https://www.sans.edu/admissions/international>).

## Submit the Application Fee

In order to complete the application process, students must submit the non-refundable \$100 application fee. The fee can be paid online through our [payment suite](#).

## Additional Instructions for International Students

Please review the full set of additional application requirements at <https://www.sans.edu/admissions/international>.

### **Additional Instructions for Student Veterans**

Please review the full set of additional application requirements at <https://www.sans.edu/veterans/admissions>.

### **Conclusion**

The SANS Technology Institute aspires to be the preeminent graduate institution translating contemporary information security practice and scholarship into effective educational experiences. Attracting and selecting the very best candidates for our program are critical elements to achieve this goal. We thank you for your interest, and wish you success with your application. Should you have questions during the application process, please email [info@sans.edu](mailto:info@sans.edu).