

Application Package

DBA Program



The Global Knowledge Hub in Tokyo

Academic Year 2025-2026
Hitotsubashi University Business School
School of International Corporate Strategy



Application Package for the DBA Program (2025-2026)

Program Overview

Hitotsubashi ICS has offered since 2002 a doctoral degree program aimed at developing scholars who can serve as “one bridge” between the worlds of scholarship and practice. The Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) program is conducted in English at Hitotsubashi ICS’s campus in Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo.

The DBA program places particular emphasis on business problem-solving and its practical implications, while providing a theoretical and scientific foundation that adds academic rigor to research. DBA candidates combine insights from their own business experience with new knowledge gained through a rigorous program of independent research and exposure to state-of-the-art ideas discussed at business schools. DBA candidates are required to produce distinctive, original output at the leading edge of applied management research. Successful DBA theses combine original theories and methods as well as offer practical relevance and insights that will influence how managers think about business issues.

The DBA program relies heavily on individual initiative. Each DBA candidate spends a minimum of three years designing and executing a research project under the academic supervision of Hitotsubashi ICS faculty. This work results in a thesis targeting publication as an academic paper or a research-oriented management book. DBA candidates are required to complete three mandatory courses (two required and one special lecture) and seminar, and can choose from among a range of elective courses as many as which support implementation of their research. A candidate’s academic milestones in the program include A) successful defense of their thesis proposal at a hearing, and B) successful completion and defense of their doctoral thesis. DBA candidates are permitted to audit MBA courses with the approval of their advisor and the course instructor. During the program, there are opportunities to work as a research assistant (RA) or teaching assistant (TA) for their advisor or other faculty members.

Successful applicants to the DBA program must have two or more years of full-time work experience. While an MBA degree or other master’s degree is generally required for admission, the Admissions Committee may grant waivers for exceptionally qualified applicants.

The types of qualified applicants Hitotsubashi ICS seeks to attract to its DBA program include:

- (1) Professionals with a master’s degree seeking an early career change into academia as a faculty member of a business school. As standards for academic performance continue to rise among hiring business schools, more rigorous academic training is required for full-time faculty positions. Hitotsubashi ICS strongly recommends that candidates seeking a career in academia

enroll in the program full time and contact the school one or two years prior to applying to the DBA program. This course of action improves the likelihood of a full-time doctoral student securing funds from their first year via external research fellowships such as the Research Fellowship for Young Scientists of the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS).

- (2) Faculty members and instructors at other business schools currently not holding a doctoral degree (e.g., *Jitsumuka-kyoin* at Japanese business schools) and seeking to develop their research, education and academic careers at a higher level as doctoral degree holders.
- (3) Experienced senior management practitioners who have already formulated clear research ideas through their own work experiences and are envisioning the DBA degree as an integrated part of their business careers.

DBA candidates must maintain residency in Japan while enrolled at Hitotsubashi ICS in order to participate in the program's courses and meetings with faculty members.

Professor Satoshi Akutsu is the DBA Program Director. Students may request any member of the DBA faculty to be their thesis advisor, contingent on obtaining approval from the DBA Program Committee and the faculty member concerned.

Admissions Policy

The DBA Program in School of International Corporate Strategy, Graduate School of Business Administration at Hitotsubashi University (hereafter referred to as the DBA Program) is designed for students who wish to engage in research or education in the fields of commerce and business administration as instructor, researcher, or practitioner in the future. Students must: (1) demonstrate genuine interests in the field of commerce and business administration through their professional experience, (2) be motivated to formulate and respond to their own research questions, (3) possess the literacy (in-depth academic knowledge in their discipline and high level of language competence) and clarity to start research project in the field of their choice, (4) possess a high level of research ethics to contribute to the sound development of social sciences, and (5) demonstrate a strong motivation to contribute to the development of academia and industry as a DBA holder.

In order to select our candidate, we evaluate the ability and motivation of candidate based on dossier which includes research plans, and by conducting interview to attest their clarity and research plans, in addition to TOEFL (exempted for native English speakers and those who have obtained a bachelor's degree or higher in an English language program) and GMAT or GRE scores. One important prerequisite for the admission is to have at least two years of professional experiences and a master's degree in a related field, such as an MBA, or equivalent experience and knowledge.

Application and Admissions Procedures

(1) Maximum number of students to be admitted for 2025

Four (4) students

***If the number of applicants reaches the enrollment capacity in the first round, the second round will not be held.**

(2) Qualification of applicants

- An MBA or other master's degree is required for admission. Applicants requesting an exemption must seek approval from the DBA Program Committee beforehand. Please inquire before the following deadline if seeking an exemption.

1st Round: Thursday, August 1, 2024 2nd Round: Thursday, January 24, 2025

- Two or more years of full-time work experience, or approval for exemption from the DBA Program Committee.
- A good command of English, with a score above 109 in TOEFL iBT or 7.5 in IELTS Academic or equivalent (see Section 3 below).
- GMAT score or GRE score is **mandatory for all applicants**.
GMAT score of 600 or higher, or GRE score of 160 or higher on Quantitative Reasoning and 150 or higher on Verbal Reasoning.

GMAT scores and GRE Scores are valid for up to five years after the exam date.

We accept score(s) of GMAT Focus Edition or GRE with shorter overall test time.

(3) Required application documents

All documents must be submitted via the Hitotsubashi ICS Online Application System. You can start uploading documents once these are available. It is also possible to re-upload documentation in the event of you needing to update contents but please note that documentation uploading/re-uploading MUST be done **by the application deadline**.

Please refer to "How to apply": <https://www.ics.hub.hit-u.ac.jp/admissions/dba/apply.html>

Documents	Details
Master's degree certificate	Degree certificate or certified copy of a diploma signed by the president or dean of the university. *Successful applicants must submit copies of original documents to the Hitotsubashi ICS Admissions Office within the enrollment period.
Official transcript of MBA or master's degree	Official or certified copy of transcript signed by the president or dean of the university. *Successful applicants must submit copies of original documents to the Hitotsubashi ICS Admissions Office within the enrollment period.

<p>Essay (Career accomplishments, Personal statement)</p>	<p>Please download the format at “How to apply”: https://www.ics.hub.hit-u.ac.jp/admissions/dba/apply.html</p>
<p>Official TOEFL or IELTS score report</p>	<p>Scores must be dated within two years after the exam date.</p> <p>(1) Applicants are to have their test takers score report uploaded to the online application system.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>(2) Applicants are to have the ETS/IELTS test centre send the official score report directly to Hitotsubashi ICS.</p> <p>- TOEFL University Code No.: 8682</p> <p>- IELTS Organization Name: School of International Corporate Strategy (ICS), Hitotsubashi University Department: Hitotsubashi ICS Admissions Office University: Hitotsubashi University Address: National Center of Sciences, 2-1-2 Hitotsubashi, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 101-8439, Japan</p> <p>(3) Hitotsubashi ICS strongly recommends that candidates take the TOEFL/IELTS at least one month before the application deadline to ensure that the official score report is received in time.</p> <p>*The following applicants are not required to include this item.</p> <p>(4) Applicants whose native language is English</p> <p>(5) Applicants who graduated with a bachelor’s or higher degree from a program conducted entirely in English (Applicants who graduated with a bachelor’s or higher degree from a program conducted entirely in English in a country other than Australia, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, the UK or the US must notify the Hitotsubashi ICS Admissions Office by email (chiyoda-info@hub.hit-u.ac.jp) no less than ten days before the application deadline.)</p> <p>(6) Applicants who have worked for over three years in an English-speaking country</p>

Official GMAT or GRE score report	<p>Scores must be dated within five years after the exam date.</p> <p>(1) Applicants are to have their following document uploaded to the online application system.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - GMAT: test takers score report or screenshot of the scores on GMAC portal - G R E: test takers score report <p>AND</p> <p>(2) Applicants are to have GMAC/ETS send the official score report directly to Hitotsubashi ICS.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - GMAT University Code No.: F6R-Q5-52 - GRE University Code No.: 1617 <p>(3) Hitotsubashi ICS strongly recommends that candidates take the GMAT or GRE at least one month before the application deadline to ensure that the official score report is received in time.</p> <p>(4) We also accept following versions of GMAT and GRE score(s).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - GMAT Focus Edition: https://www.mba.com/exams/gmat-focus-edition - GRE with shorter over all test time (started from September 22, 2023): https://www.ets.org/gre/test-takers/general-test/prepare/test-structure.html
Proof of application fee payment (JPY 30,000)	<p>See page 10 for payment procedures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The application fee is exempted for the following individuals. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Individuals who graduated from a master’s program of Hitotsubashi University after September 1, 2024. (2) Individuals who are expected to graduate from a master’s program of Hitotsubashi University after September 1, 2024. • Japanese government-sponsored students (<i>Kenkyusei</i>) are not required to pay the application fee; please enclose the government scholarship certificate issued by the enrolled university.
Identity document	<p>Photocopy of the relevant page(s) of the applicant’s identity document indicating applicant’s name, photograph, passport number or Japanese driver’s license number, date of birth, etc.</p>

<p>Up to two letters of reference (Optional)</p>	<p>Hitotsubashi ICS highly recommends that applicants submit one or two reference letters to enable the school to learn more about the applicant via the objective evaluations provided by referees.</p> <p>A reference should be from a person who has been directly responsible for assessing the applicant’s work and/or academic performance. It is desirable that a reference be from a supervisor within the applicant’s current company/employing organization.</p> <p>Applicant must register the referee(s) on the online application system. The Hitotsubashi ICS Online Application System will send the form to the applicant’s referees directly by email after completion of online registration.</p>
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Notes:

- All documents must be written in English. For any documents or certificates written in another language, please attach an English translation.
- Only complete applications will be considered. Incomplete applications at the time of the application deadline will not be considered.
- **The online application system’s ‘Submit’ button becomes available for selection ONLY when ALL mandatory documents above have been uploaded.**
- As the online application system can accept individual documents whenever they are ready and is also able to accept uploading of the same document multiple times, **please start uploading individual documents to the online system as soon as these are available.** In the case of needing to update an already-uploaded document, applicants may simply upload the document again. **Please be sure to upload all documentation by the specified application deadline.**
- Applicants wishing to support their application with a reference letter/reference letters should ensure that their nominated referee(s) have uploaded the reference letter(s) to the online system before the application is submitted. **Reference letter(s) must be uploaded before the applicant clicks the ‘Submit’ button in order for the reference letter(s) to be included as application documents.**
- Maximum of 10 items can be uploaded and stored in each section.

(4) Admissions Schedule

For the 2025 intake, please note the following:

- **If the number of applicants reaches the enrollment capacity in the first round, the second round will not be held.**
- The selection process involves two screenings. The first screening consists of a review of the written application documents, including the research proposal. The second screening consists of an interview.

1 st Round	2 nd Round	Note
Application period		
Thursday September 12 2024 to Wednesday September 25 2024	Thursday March 13 2025 to Wednesday March 26 2025	<p>Applications must be submitted via the Hitotsubashi ICS Online Application System.</p> <p>An application is regarded as officially received if the applicant has pressed the 'Submit' button on the system no later than <u>14:59 JST</u> on the respective deadline date.</p>
Announcement of first screening result		
Friday October 11 2024	Friday April 11 2025	<p>Screening criteria include the candidate's level of academic aptitude and writing ability.</p> <p>Applicants will be communicated by email whether they have passed the first screening and are eligible to proceed to the second screening (interview) and, in the event of being invited to interview, the exact time of the interview, shortly after this date.</p>
Second screening (interview)		
Friday October 25 2024	Friday April 25 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 minutes per applicant • Interview based on the application documents • Location: Hitotsubashi University Chiyoda Campus (National Center of Sciences) or online • The interview method and location are subject to change depending on circumstances.
Announcement of final result		
Friday November 22 2024	Thursday May 29 2025	<p>Applicants will be notified of the admissions decision by email and by post on the dates shown on the left.</p> <p>Decisions will not be communicated by telephone or fax.</p>

1 st Round	2 nd Round	Note
Periods for completion of enrollment		
<p style="text-align: center;">Monday November 25 2024</p> <p style="text-align: center;">to</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Friday November 29 2024</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Monday June 2 2025</p> <p style="text-align: center;">to</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Friday June 6 2025</p>	<p>Successful applicants must remit the non-refundable matriculation fee and submit the original documents in accordance with instructions from the Hitotsubashi ICS Admissions Office within the relevant enrollment period.</p> <p>(a) Matriculation fee: JPY 282,000 (preliminary estimate)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The matriculation fee is exempted for the following individuals. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Individuals who graduated from a master’s program of Hitotsubashi University after September 1, 2024 (2) Individuals who are graduates of a master’s program of the Graduate School of Business Administration, the Graduate School of International Corporate Strategy, or the Graduate School of Commerce and Management. • For all other applicants, the matriculation fee must be paid through a bank transfer using the prescribed method provided by Hitotsubashi University. • For applicants in Japan, a transfer request form will be sent with an acceptance letter. <p>(b) Degree certificate and Official transcript: <u>Copies of original documents must be sent in one envelope to the following address by either registered mail or courier service, within the enrollment period.</u> Please write “DBA Application Documents” in red on the envelope. Both documents must be originals; photocopies are not acceptable. Applicants should NOT send your original diploma, as documents will not be returned to applicants.</p> <p>Address: Admissions Office Hitotsubashi University Business School School of International Corporate Strategy National Center of Sciences, 5th Floor 2-1-2 Hitotsubashi, Chiyoda-ku Tokyo 101-8439, Japan</p>

(5) Notes

(a) Admissions enquiries should be made only by email (chiyoda-info@hub.hit-u.ac.jp) or fax (+81 (0)3-4212-3006).

(b) The annual tuition fee is **JPY 642,960**, payable in two installments of **JPY 321,480** each in October 2025 and May 2026 for AY2025-2026 (preliminary estimate).

The tuition fees above are preliminary estimate. Should the actual amount become subject to revision at the time of admissions or during enrollment, the new revised amount shall be applied and go into effect from the time of revision.

(c) Applicants who have disabilities or special needs that require accommodating in the application process and/or once they start their program of study at Hitotsubashi ICS should notify the Hitotsubashi ICS Admissions Office by **Thursday, August 1, 2024** prior to submitting their DBA Program application. Although the Hitotsubashi ICS Admissions Office will accept such notifications after this date, it may not be possible to make arrangements necessary to accommodate disabilities/special needs in time for the screening and/or the program starting date.

Requesting such accommodation for the application process as per the above does not constitute an obligation to apply to Hitotsubashi ICS. A person who is undecided about whether to apply for the DBA Program may still submit such accommodation requests.

Note: Depending on the type(s) of accommodation requested, it may take some time for the Hitotsubashi ICS Admissions Office to respond.

(d) Please be aware that a health examination taken at the Chiyoda Campus or submission of a certificate (copy) of a health examination taken within one year from October 2024 is mandatory for all students newly enrolled at Hitotsubashi ICS in the autumn term of 2025.

Please read the information at the link below from the Hitotsubashi University Health Center regarding medical requirements while staying in Japan:

<http://www.hit-u.ac.jp/hoken/healthexam.html>

Application Fee

Applicants are to pay the application fee of JPY 30,000 **during the application period.**

Applicants in Japan

■ Payment at a convenience store / Payment via Pay-easy, internet banking or credit card

Instructions can be found at the following link:

<https://www.hit-u.ac.jp/faculties/graduate/examfee.html>

*Please select “経営管理研究科” > “博士後期課程” > “国際企業戦略専攻” > “DBA プログラム” when selecting the category.

■ Payment by bank transfer

Payment can be made by bank transfer to the account below.

Bank name: Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation
 Branch: Kunitachi Branch
 Account name: Hitotsubashi University
 Savings A/C no.: 7761795

*Applicants are to upload the “入学検定料・選考料・取り扱い明細書” or “収入証明書” (printed “result” page) to the online system.

Applicants outside Japan

■ Payment by credit card

Instructions can be found at the following link:

<https://www.hit-u.ac.jp/faculties/graduate/examfee.html>

*Please select “Graduate School of Business Administration” > “Doctoral Programs” > “School of International Corporate Strategy” > “HUB ICS DBA Program” when selecting the category.

*Applicants are to upload the printed “result” page to the online system.

Notes:

- The application fee of JPY 30,000 is **non-refundable**.
- Japanese government-sponsored students (*Kenkyusei*) are not required to pay an application fee; please submit a government scholarship certificate issued by the enrolled university.
- Bank cheques are not an acceptable form of payment.
- In the event of the full amount of the application fee not being transferred within the application period, the application will not be accepted.

Contact Us

Email address: chiyoda-info@hub.hit-u.ac.jp

Location and address

Hitotsubashi ICS is housed within the *Gakujutsu Sogo Center* (National Center of Sciences).

Hitotsubashi University Business School
 School of International Corporate Strategy
 National Center of Sciences
 2-1-2 Hitotsubashi, Chiyoda-ku
 Tokyo 101-8439 JAPAN
 Admissions Office: 5th Floor

Getting to Hitotsubashi ICS by Train

From Takebashi Station

Take the Tokyo Metro Tozai line to Takebashi Station. Approximately a four-minute walk from Exit B1.

From Jimbocho Station

Take the Tokyo Metro (Hanzomon line) or Toei Subway (Shinjuku or Mita lines) to Jimbocho Station. Approximately a three-minute walk from Exit A8.



International Arrival

From Narita Airport

Take the Narita Express train to Tokyo Station (approx. 60 minutes), walk to Otemachi Station (approx. 5 minutes), then take the Tozai line to Takebashi Station.

Alternatively, take the Mita line from Otemachi Station to Jimbocho Station.

From Haneda Airport

Take the Keihin Kyuko line to Mita Station (approx. 28 minutes), then change to the Toei Mita line and get off at Jimbocho Station.

