1. **Do you pay commissions?**

Yes, we have paid commissions to our agencies.

2. **Will you authorize me to become an exclusive agent in my country or region?**

Our preference is to work with various agents and provide you with an opportunity to be successful in working with the University of Southern Maine (USM).

3. **Will you waive the application fee for students applying through my agency?**

No, we are unable to waive the application fee.

4. **Are the students who apply through my agency guaranteed admission to the University of Southern Maine?**

No, all applicants and their documents will be equally reviewed and are required to meet the admissions academic requirements.

5. **If I e-mail or fax you my student’s transcript, can you tell me if they might be accepted to USM before he/she applies?**

Upon receipt of your student’s transcript and relevant test score results we would be able to have a discussion about the likelihood of their acceptance at USM.

6. **To make the process go faster can I submit my student’s transcript and other application materials by e-mail or fax?**

Our preference is to receive originals documents, however we will accept scanned or faxed copies for the decision making process. **We do require** that you follow up by sending the original documents via the post.

7. **Since I am an agent, are there any special items that I must include with applications that I send to you?**

Yes, please be sure to add a completed [Agent Processing Checklist](#) to the top of your application packet. You should also include the USM waiver form signed by the student which allows us to work with you directly on the student’s behalf.

8. **How long will it take to process a student’s application?**

Once the application is complete it takes approximately 2 weeks to process the application and review it in order to make a decision. Once a decision is made the agency should receive the acceptance packet in approximately 10-14 days from the decision date. Please keep in mind that admissions decisions for some
graduate programs will take longer since the individual academic departments will be reviewing each application.

9. Where will the I-20 be sent and by what type of mail?

We can mail the I-20 to the agency address or the student’s home address. You should specify the address where you would like us to send the documents as part of your application package. We mail documents via International Express Mail which takes 7-10 days and allows you to track the estimated delivery date of the package. If students want the package to be sent via Federal Express they must include a check or money order in US dollars made payable to the USM International Office in the amount of $75.00 US.

10. Do you offer “conditional” admission to students who have not taken the TOEFL or IELTS? What about students who do not meet your English requirements?

**Undergraduate:** Yes, if a student meets our requirements for admission but cannot supply a TOEFL or IELTS score we will issue an I-20 for conditional admission. The I-20 will be issued for 5 years in order to allow the student to enroll in up to one year of ESOL and complete their 4 year degree. The I-20 will list the major as “general studies” since the student cannot formally be admitted to the major of their choice until they have obtained English proficiency.

**Graduate:** Graduate students cannot be admitted without documenting an appropriate TOEFL score. (Graduate admissions will also accept IELTS scores, but prefer TOEFL scores when possible.) We do not offer conditional admission to Graduate Students at USM.

**Bridge Program (ELB):** USM also has a “Bridge Program” for non-native speakers who have met USM’s admission requirements except that their TOEFL or SAT scores fall below the required level. All ELB students meet with an academic advisor to select courses which offer key elements to aid in the student’s academic success. Classes for new ELB student include a mixture of ESOL courses as well as other academic courses. Once an ESL student has achieved English proficiency they may apply to move into the major of their choice.

**Intensive English for Speakers of Other Languages Program (ESOL):** For students who need more focused English Language instruction, USM has a full time Intensive English Language Program. Students may apply directly for the ESOL program for a semester or a year and then apply to move into an undergraduate or graduate degree program. For more information on our Intensive English Language Program please visit [http://usm.maine.edu/esol](http://usm.maine.edu/esol).

**USM’s TOEFL Score requirements for Undergraduates are as follows:**

For regular admission students must receive a 79 ibt/ 213 computer / 550 paper TOEFL Score. Or a 6.5-7.0 IELTS.

Undergraduate students who receive lower scores may still be eligible for admission into USM’s ESOL Intensive program or USM’s Undergraduate Bridge Program.
All TOEFL scores must be sent to the University of Southern Maine directly from the TOEFL office (USM TOEFL Institutional Code 3691) or the IELTS Testing Center. We cannot accept score reports sent to us from the student or from our agents.

11. What are USM’s application requirements & MAJORs?

Our website includes instructions on how to apply and what is required. You will also find that the Agent Processing Checklist is helpful in ensuring that you have included all the necessary application components.

Undergraduate or Graduate: http://usm.maine.edu/admissions
English as a Second Language: http://usm.maine.edu/esol

12. How does a student get transfer credit for course work taken at another institution? Will you consider transfer credit for courses taken at international colleges and/or universities?

All transfer students are required to submit a transcript evaluation through one of three USM approved transcript analysis agencies. Students need to request both a course-by-course AND a document-by-document evaluation. Once a student has been admitted to USM the Transfer Affairs office will compete a credit evaluation in order to determine the credits transferring in. To find an appropriate credit evaluation agency visit: http://usm.maine.edu/office-of-admissions/international-transcripts

13. Does USM accept 3 year Bachelor degrees?

USM will accept documentation from one of their US based credential evaluators that the student has the equivalent of a US Bachelor’s degree.

14. What are the deadlines to apply to USM? Can students apply after the deadlines?

Admission decision are made on a rolling basis, however, international students must be diligent to submit all of the necessary documentation by the final deadline in order to ensure appropriate time for visa processing.

The Fall (September) deadline is July 1st
The Spring (January) deadline is November 15th

Individual graduate programs may have earlier deadlines or only admit once per year so please be sure to ask if you have a question.

15. How much does it cost to attend the University of Southern Maine? How do I document funding?

International students who wish to attend USM must show liquid funds for year #1. They must also provide a source of funding for the additional years they will need to complete their degree. For undergraduate students we estimate they will need an additional 3 years, graduate students will need one additional year. More information on the documentation of funding process as well as cost breakdowns can be found online at http://usm.maine.edu/international/documenting-funding
**Undergraduate**: For the 2015-16 Academic Year international undergraduate students must document access to $34,300 for one year.

**Graduate**: For the 2015-16 Academic Year international undergraduate students must document access to $36,600 for one year.

**ESOL**: Students who wish to attend the ESOL program must document access to $12,340 for one semester. A full cost breakdown for the ESOL program may be found online at [http://usm.maine.edu/eap/esl/international/dates.html](http://usm.maine.edu/eap/esl/international/dates.html)

If you have questions about the documentation of funding process please contact Kimberly Sinclair, Interim Director of International Programs at ksinc@usm.maine.edu

**16. Does the University of Southern Maine offer any scholarships?**

USM offers a limited number of merit based scholarships for international undergraduate students. Student who apply before April 1st are automatically considered. At the graduate level USM offers both a limited number of international merit scholarships and graduate assistantships.

**17. Are international students allowed to work on campus?**

Yes, according to US visa regulations for international students in F-1 status, students are allowed to work up to 20 hours per week on campus. Students may work on campus full time during the summer and winter breaks. However, on campus work is very limited at USM so it cannot be counted on as a source of funding.

**18. How many international students attend the University of Southern Maine?**

USM currently hosts approximately 80 students from 32 different countries. One of the best features of USM is that we do not have large groups of students from any one location.

**19. Does the University of Southern Maine have on-campus housing? Does USM offer home-stay options? Can you help me find an apartment off campus?**

USM does not have a home stay program. The University does have several housing options located on the Gorham campus. The majority of our international students prefer to live in Philippi Hall.

USM does not have a housing office so students who prefer to live off campus must locate their own housing. If you need to make temporary arrangements at a local hotel prior to your arrival the International Office can assist you with that task.

On campus housing is recommended at least for the first year for all ESOL and Undergraduate degree candidates.