

Frequently Asked Questions: April 15 Resolution

There have been several changes to our processes regarding the April 15 Resolution, starting in Fall 2020. These changes are marked with a line in the left-hand margin of this FAQ document.

Can a program establish a deadline for acceptance of an offer of admission to a graduate program before April 15, if there is no offer of financial support?

If there is no offer of financial support stated or implied by the offer of admission (such as the promise to be considered for a teaching assistant position), an admission offer deadline before April 15 is permissible. The April 15 Resolution only applies to offers of financial support.

If a signatory institution requires acceptance of an offer of admission and financial support before April 15 for the Fall term, what should an applicant or other program that may also have extended an offer of admission to the applicant do?

Advice for applicants:

- Typically, graduate programs will include a statement in any letter of admission with financial support that they adhere to the terms of the April 15 Resolution. If there is no statement in the letter of admission, applicants should ask the program if they abide by the April 15 Resolution.
- Not all graduate programs adhere to the April 15 Resolution. For example, there could be some Master's or PhD programs that are not within the purview of the Graduate School and its Dean (for example, MBA programs in some Schools of Business or other professional schools) and those programs may or may not adhere to expectations of the April 15 Resolution.

Advice for graduate program directors: Applicants may advise your program that they have received offers of admission with financial support from another program but with a deadline for acceptance prior to April 15. Ask them to send you a copy of the offer letter/email with the earlier deadline, then contact your graduate dean's office. Graduate deans are encouraged to communicate with the non-compliant university's graduate dean directly to inform them of the violation. The graduate dean at the non-compliant university should then address the problem with the department in violation of the terms of the resolution.

NOTE: if the university is not a signatory to the April 15 Resolution, it is not in violation to have a deadline before April 15.

What if an applicant accepts an offer of financial support and then wants to accept an offer from a different program or institution?

There has been a change in our process for students who want to withdraw from an offer of acceptance of financial support, starting with Fall 2020 admissions. In some situations, an applicant may accept an offer of financial support from one graduate program and then may receive an offer from a program at a different institution whose program better aligns with their career goals and aspirations. **In that case, the applicant must first inform the program that they are withdrawing or resigning from the offer of financial support that they previously had accepted. Starting in Fall 2020, applicants are**

no longer required to obtain a formal release from the program whose offer was accepted, either before or after the April 15 deadline. Once they have informed the program that they are withdrawing, they then can accept any other offers.

Where can a list of the institutions that adhere to the April 15 Resolution be found?

https://cgsnet.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/CGS_April15_Resolution_Oct2020Revision.pdf

Does the April 15 Resolution apply to all graduate programs within an institution that adheres to the Resolution?

No, not necessarily. There may be programs even within a signatory institution that do not adhere to the April 15 Resolution. Such programs generally fall outside of the oversight of the Graduate School and the Graduate Dean. The most common examples of exceptions to the resolution are MBA programs in Schools of Business and graduate programs in Medical or other professional schools. Graduate programs in these schools may offer financial support or scholarships to students but may not adhere to the April 15 Resolution.

If you have a question about the acceptance of an offer of admission that also includes financial support but whose deadline is not April 15, you should contact the admissions staff of that specific graduate program for further information.

Does the April 15 deadline apply to medical or law school admission?

No.

Does the April 15 deadline apply to spring or summer admissions and funding?

No, the April 15 Resolution only applies to offers of financial support for academic year offers beginning in Fall term. Admission to graduate programs that start in the Winter, Spring, or Summer terms are not bound by the resolution.

What is the process by which institutions sign on to the April resolution?

The resolution is reviewed and reaffirmed by the CGS Board of Directors every five years. It was last renewed in October 2019 and will be renewed again in October 2024. Prior to reaffirmation, CGS surveys member institutions to determine how many of them support the continuance of the resolution and whether the April 15 date is the optimal date for applicant decisions. Upon review of the survey data and approval by the CGS Board, the resolution is then sent to institutions with a request to reaffirm their signatory status. An updated list of signatory institutions is included in the current resolution https://cgsnet.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/CGS_April15_Resolution_Oct2020Revision.pdf

How are faculty and admissions staff informed of the April resolution?

Each year, the graduate dean (or equivalent administrator) at each institution distributes information about the April 15 Resolution, in order to make faculty, directors of graduate programs, and other interested members of their academic community aware of the goals and provisions of the resolution. Alternatively, interested parties can go to the CGS website to obtain more information: <https://cgsnet.org/get-involved/current-prospective-graduate-students/april-15-resolution/>

Who is responsible for enforcement of the April 15 Resolution?

The resolution is an agreement among signatory graduate schools to provide applicants appropriate time to consider which of their offers from graduate programs best aligns with the applicant's career goals and aspirations. Graduate deans should communicate the expectations of the resolution to graduate programs, both those under their administrative oversight as well as those in other schools within their institution. Graduate deans should also adjudicate any conflicts that may arise from offers of financial support made to applicants.

How should graduate programs publicize their commitment to the expectations of the April 15 Resolution?

Graduate deans should encourage their graduate programs to place information about the resolution on their individual program websites and in any letters containing offers of financial support to accepted applicants.

What if April 15 falls on a weekend?

Acceptances received by end of day on April 15 (even if it occurs on a Saturday or Sunday) should be honored, even if the university cannot process these acceptances until the following business day (typically Monday of the following work week). For example, in 2018, April 15 fell on a Sunday.

What time on April 15 is the deadline?

The deadline should be 11:59 pm of April 15 in the time zone of the school offering financial support.