

Application portfolio
“International Master in Comparative Social Research”
School of Sociology

International candidates should apply via the HSE International Admission Office
(<https://admissions.hse.ru/en/graduate-apply/step1>)

PORTFOLIO

Admission of Russian applicants to the master's program "Comparative Social Research" (CSR) is carried out in accordance with the following package of documents and assessment of each element of portfolio (Table 1).

Table 1. Criteria for Portfolio Evaluation

Criteria	Maximum points
Basic education and GPA	10
Curriculum vitae (in English)	10
Author’s original analytical essay (in English)	40
Motivational letter (in English)	10
Two letters of recommendation (at least one should be academic)	10
Publications, certificates, participation in conferences, Olympiads, etc.	10
Certificates/other documents confirming knowledge of a foreign language	10
Total	100

Basic education and GPA

Applicants provide diploma or up-to-date transcripts with their marks even if education is not completed yet. These documents should be official copies, stamped or approved by the study programme's Director. Students with another higher degree (such as another MA or PhD), should provide all these transcripts.

If the original documents are in Russian, they do not need to be translated into English.

This element of portfolio implies assessment of the average score of the diploma (GPA) and the direction of previous education of the applicant (the closer the direction to comparative social studies, the higher the score).

Curriculum vitae (in English)

Candidates should submit a standard CV in English, including: achievements in study and research; work, research, volunteer and other extracurricular experience; publications and conferences participation (if any); foreign experience and foreign language proficiency.

Author's original analytical essay (in English)

An original essay should be written on any topic which is relevant to applicant's interests and concerns comparative perspective. The essay assesses the level of applicant's methodological and theoretical preparation to the study at the master's programme.

The essay must be written in English. Volume is 600-1000 words excluding cover page, abstract and reference list.

The essay should be structured in accordance with academic standards: the title of the paper including topic and the author's name and surname, abstract (100-150 words), introduction, main part, conclusion, reference list.

The text must be written personally by the applicant, contain correct bibliographic references and must not contain compilation or plagiarism. Citation and self-citation with the correct links to the sources is allowed.

Motivational letter (in English)

Motivational letter must be written in English. Volume is 300-500 words.

The motivational letter is addressed to the members of the examination committee of the programme. In the letter, the applicant explains the reasons for choosing the master's programme in comparative studies; lists his/her obtained skills and knowledge that will help to successfully study at the programme; describes how a given master's degree is embedded in his/her career path.

The motivational letter should contain at least one paragraph describing the applicant's research interests and another one describing his/her experience with research projects and in using different social science research methods (such as regression analysis, cluster analysis, factor analysis, expert interviews, narrative interviews, focus groups, experimental design, etc.).

Two letters of recommendation (at least one should be academic)

Each letter should specify how and how long the reference knows the applicant and should address the applicant's study and research qualification for this programme and for further career development.

At least one of these letters must be from a current or former teacher (or senior academic colleague) of the student. Preferably, both letters should be submitted in English (such letters will get a higher mark).

Each recommendation should be certified by the signature of the recommending person indicating his/her name, position, degree, place of work, phone number and e-mail.

Publications, certificates, participation in conferences, Olympiads, etc.

If applicable, candidates may provide copies of publications in scientific journals, in collections of student works, conference proceedings, etc. A copy of the publication should include all pages of the scientific article or conference abstracts, a bibliographic list, a copy of the page with the bibliographic information of the scientific publication, a copy of the title page and table of contents.

Candidates may also provide information on their educational or other achievements relevant to a selected area of study such as: diplomas of winners and laureates of competitions for scientific

work of students, certificates of participants in Olympiads of various levels, information on participation in conferences, schools, internships, etc., with a description of participation in the mentioned events.

Certificates/other documents confirming knowledge of a foreign language

Certificates confirming proficiency in English are not a mandatory element of the portfolio, but if there are valid international certificates or diplomas, the commission will accept them for consideration.

The level of English proficiency of an applicant will be assessed based on the essay, motivational letter, and most importantly, an interview. During the interview, the commission will ask the applicant general questions and those which concern academic and research issues. Commission assesses the possibility of an applicant to study at the English-language master's program.

An assessment for this portfolio element below 4 points inclusive out of 10 is blocking and does not allow admission to the program.

Interview

Applicants who gained 30 points inclusive or more for the above portfolio elements will be invited to an online interview. The interview will not be evaluated, but it serves as a way of confirming the interests, skills, achievements stated in the portfolio documents and the level of proficiency in English.

ADDITIONAL POINTS

During the academic year, CSR programme and the Faculty of Social Sciences hold events which provide bonus points to the portfolio (to the elements "CV" and "Publications").

Some diplomas of the competitions and Olympiads can automatically provide to an applicant 100 points for a portfolio and the possibility of obtaining the budget place without a competition.

The listed below opportunities are reserved for applicants for three years after receiving them:

Olympiad "Higher League"

- Winners with diplomas of all levels and medals in sociological directions, as well as in the field of "Mathematical methods in Sociology" – 100 points for portfolio, if they pass an interview in English with a score above 5 points inclusive out of 10 for proficiency in English
- Read more: <https://ma.hse.ru/profes>
- Participation in the "Higher League" in any sociological direction and in the direction of "Mathematical methods in Sociology" without victory – 10 points

Olympiad "I am a professional"

- Winners in sociological directions – 100 points for portfolio, if they pass an interview in English with a score above 5 points inclusive out of 10 for proficiency in English
- Winners in sociological directions without victory – 10 points

Competition "Your Project"

- Winners in CSR direction (1st-3rd place) – 100 points for portfolio, if they pass an interview in English with a score above 5 points inclusive out of 10 for proficiency in English
- Winners without a place in CSR and other sociological directions – 15 points
- Participation in CSR and other sociological directions without victory – 10 points

NIRS competition

- Winners in sociological directions (1st-3rd place) – 100 points for portfolio, if they pass an interview in English with a score above 5 points inclusive out of 10 for proficiency in English
- Winners in other directions (1st-3rd place) - increasing coefficient x2 for essay, motivational letter and CV
- Laureates in any direction – 15 points
- Participation without victory – 10 points

Early Invitation Competition

- Invitation from CSR – 100 points
- Participation without invitation from CSR – 10 points

Winter School of the Faculty of Social Sciences

- Victory in competitions in CSR direction – 15 points
- Participation in the school – 10 points

Open Doors Days

- Participation in one Open Doors Day of CSR - 5 points

PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT OF PORTFOLIO

If applicants want to receive recommendations for improving their portfolios, they can send their packages of documents to the Programme's Academic Supervisor Ekaterina Mitrofanova via e-mail: emitrofanova@hse.ru.

The topic of the letter should be "Preliminary assessment of portfolio".

After receiving recommendations, candidates should submit their portfolios according to the official procedure. Preliminary portfolios will NOT be automatically added to the system.