

Schulich Graduate Admissions

Application Tips: REFERENCES

The Schulich School of Business requests references as part of the application process. Who should you choose as yours?

Do you have work experience?

If you have been working for several years, you should be providing professional references.

- Your direct managers, past or present, make the best referees as they are most familiar with your work and potential.
- If you have worked on a project for several months, the project lead could also make a strong referee, especially if you worked with that individual extensively.
- It is acceptable for both references to come from the same company, and you do not have to include a current supervisor if this is too difficult.

Are you self-employed?

If you are self-employed or work for a family business, you may need to get creative regarding who you choose as a reference.

- We do not accept relatives as referees.
- A client, vendor, or professional services provider that you work with could be an acceptable referee, as long as you have an established working relationship with them.



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Have you volunteered or worked on-campus?

- Choosing a referee from your extra-curricular life is also acceptable if you have committed yourself to a volunteer or on-campus role over a length of time.

REFEREE TIPS

Break the ice

Consider taking your prospective referees for coffee and explain why you are applying to the program. Feel free to remind them of your greatest accomplishments!

Formally ask for a recommendation

Ask if they are willing to give you a positive recommendation. You may think you know how they feel but should ensure the references will be on your side. References are submitted online and remain confidential.

Give your referee enough time

We suggest approaching your referees early in the application cycle, to give them sufficient time to complete the reference form. References should be submitted within 1 month of submitting your online application.

Provide professional contact information

Make sure to provide your referee's official work email, and not their personal email.

Do you have a strong relationship with a professor?

If you are currently studying or have graduated within the last two years, you should be able to provide an academic reference.

- Only go this route if you have an established relationship with the professor, and you made a positive impression beyond the typical student-professor relationship.
- We suggest that at least one of your references come from a work environment, even if it's from a part-time or summer position.
- For admission to the MBA program, academic references are not required. We require two professional recommendations.