

# Accelerated Scholars Handbook

**Note:** The information and guidelines below do not apply to the Physician Assistant BS/MS or Partner Programs with other universities.

Please use the links below for more info regarding these programs.

- **Physician Assistant BS/MS:** click [here](#)
- **Partner Programs:** click [here](#)

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## HOW IT WORKS

### Terms/Definitions:

#### **Combined Accelerated Bachelor's/Master's Programs:**

- Dual-Degree Programs:
  - BS/MS
  - MS/ME
- Accelerated Bachelor's + Master's:
  - +1 MBA
  - 4+2 BFA/M.Arch

#### **Accelerated Scholar:**

- Any student enrolled in a Combined Accelerated Program
- Includes **both** students who have received early acceptance through admissions and students who apply within the department via the enrolled student pathway

### Contacts

#### **Combined Accelerated Program Team:**

**Karen Palmer**

Associate Director

Combined Accelerated Programs

Enrollment Management

[kbpges@rit.edu](mailto:kbpges@rit.edu)

**Lauren Cannon**

Assistant Director

Combined Accelerated Programs

RIT Graduate School

[ltcpgd@rit.edu](mailto:ltcpgd@rit.edu)

## ***Contacts in your Academic Department***

### ***Academic Advisor***

Every undergraduate student at RIT is assigned an academic advisor who is a great resource for questions about your undergraduate plan of study, student support resources, RIT policies, co-curricular opportunities, undergraduate research, study abroad, and more.

### ***Graduate Program Director***

Most master's degree programs have a graduate program director who is a great resource for questions regarding the masters' degree portion of your accelerated degree program, capstone options, graduate degree requirements, and more. Click [here](#) for a list of graduate program contacts.

## **What makes these programs accelerated?**

### ***Dual-Degree Programs (BS/MS, BS/ME)***

A dual degree program is one in which the student works towards satisfying the academic requirements for both a bachelor's and a master's degrees in an integrated fashion ([D01.3 Undergraduate Dual Degree Policy | University Policies | RIT](#))

- Students are able to **double-count 6 to 12 credit hours** in both the bachelor's and master's degrees. Specific degree requirements for each program can be found at [Degree Programs | RIT](#)
- Students are enrolled in both undergraduate and graduate course work at the same time (typically beginning in their 4<sup>th</sup> year)
- Students **receive two diplomas, one for each degree earned**
- The undergraduate degree may be conferred once the requirements are completed, but in many programs, students complete both degrees at the same time

### ***Accelerated Degree Programs (+1 MBA, 4+2 BFA/M.Arch)***

Allows students to earn both a bachelor's and master's degree in less time than it would normally take to complete each degree separately.

- A limited number of graduate courses can be waived by taking a combination of undergraduate course work that covers content in the graduate program.
- +1 MBA
  - Students work with an MBA advisor to plan for at least 4, and up to 6 course [waivers](#)
  - Up to 18 (six classes) of 48 credits can be waived toward the MBA
  - The +1 MBA is an option for students from ALL majors provided they are able to build at least 4 course waivers into their undergraduate plan of study
    - Students with less than 4 course waivers may apply for admission to the MBA, and will be considered for the waivers, but are not considered Accelerated Scholars
  - For more information visit [Accelerated 4+1 MBA | Saunders College of Business | RIT](#)
  - MBA Contact: Matt Cornwell, Associate Director of Student Services, [mcornwell@saunders.rit.edu](mailto:mcornwell@saunders.rit.edu)
- 4+2 BFA/M.Arch
  - Pathways from industrial design BFA and interior design BFA
  - Students work with their academic advisor from the College of Art and Design to plan for at least 30 credits waived from the M.Arch (of the 105 required). Click [here](#) for additional information.

## Conditional Early Acceptance

Beginning in fall 2021, outstanding applicants for first-year admission were offered conditional early acceptance as incoming first-year students.

### *Programs with Early Acceptance*

Click [here](#) for complete list of Combined Accelerated Bachelor's/Master's degree pathways. Not all programs offer early acceptance. Look for the 'early accept icon' to see which pathways have an early accept option.

### *Conditions for Continuance*

Accelerated Scholars are considered conditionally accepted to their Combined Accelerated Bachelor's/Master's pathway during their first two to three years of study (depending on their program/pathway). That conditional status may continue until the point of department review and decision regarding continuation in the program.

### **General conditions are as follows:**

- Successfully complete at least two years of undergraduate study (timing of department review varies by program)
- Attain a minimum GPA as specified by the degree program at the point of department review
- Make adequate progress toward graduation, as evidenced by successfully completing all course work and cooperative education scheduled to be completed by the time of department review
- Other ***factors that may impact student eligibility for continuance include: incidents of academic misconduct, unresolved grades of D, I or F, or excessive course withdrawals.***
- To view or download the requirements for continuance in an a Combined Accelerated Bachelor's/Master's Degree, click the links below based on enrollment term:
  - [RIT Enrollment Prior to Fall 2023](#)
  - [RIT Enrollment in Fall 2023 or later](#)

### *Department Review – How it works*

There is no additional application. The Combined Accelerated Programs Team will reach out to you via email.

Students who are approved by their department for continuance:

- Will be asked to confirm their intent to continue or to opt-out if they are no longer interested

Students who do not meet the eligibility requirement to continue at the point of department review:

- May simply continue on and focus on their undergraduate degree
- May have the opportunity to apply to a Combined Accelerated Bachelor's/Master's program in a future semester by working directly with the department

### *Opt-out of the Accelerated Pathway at any time*

Students may choose to opt out of the accelerated degree program and simply focus on the bachelor's degree if future plans change.

Click [here](#) to access an Opt-out form.

**Note:** Any previously applied BS/MS or MS/ME co-op waivers will be removed for students who choose to opt out. All co-op requirements of your program will need to be completed.

### *Change of Major*

An early accept Accelerated Scholar who wishes to change programs during their first year at RIT may bring their Accelerated Scholar status with them (*still conditional*). The change of program acceptance criteria is at the discretion of the NEW program department:

- The NEW program has an early accept Combined Accelerated Bachelor's/Master's Degree option...[Combined Accelerated Bachelor's/Master's Degrees | RIT](#)
- This should be discussed with an academic advisor and new department as part of the Change of Program process
- Accelerated Scholars, in any major, may also opt to move to the +1 MBA early accept program provided they are able to build at least four course [waivers](#) into their undergraduate plan of study. Contact [Matt Cornwell](#), Associate Director of Student Services in Saunders College of Business for more information about this option.

### **Can I still become an Accelerated Scholar if I'm not offered early acceptance?**

Yes. RIT students can apply to a Combined Accelerated Bachelor's/Master's program via the Enrolled Student Pathway after their second or third year of study. This is also the pathway for any Combined Accelerated Program that does not have an early accept option. The application process is managed by the academic department and the timing of this process and the application requirements vary from program to program. For more information about the application process, check with your academic advisor or the [graduate program contact](#).

### **Transition to Graduate Status:**

#### ***Dual Degree Programs (BS/MS, MS/ME)***

- When a student enters the program as an undergraduate they are set up as an undergraduate student in the Student Information System (SIS)
- Upon completion of the number of credits required for the undergraduate degree, a review of the student's progress in their pathway will be conducted. The transition to graduate status will occur in the following semester for students who:
  - have been approved by their department for continuance AND
  - have completed the number of credits toward their degree program (current enrollment plus total earned credit) that meet or exceed the credit count required for the undergraduate degree (120-129 credits—varies by degree program)
- Once the transition to graduate status occurs, students will be considered graduate students for tuition and financial aid purposes (see Financial Aid info below).

#### ***Accelerated Degree Programs (+1 MBA, 4+2 BFA/M.Arch)***

- Students in these accelerated degree programs transition to graduate status once their undergraduate degree is completed.

## Financial Aid Information:

Your financial aid will change over the course of a Combined Accelerated Bachelor's/Master's Degree program:

- When a student enrolls as an undergraduate student (undergraduate status), they will be billed undergraduate tuition and fees rates, and receive undergraduate financial aid.
- The [Office of the Registrar](#) notifies the [Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships](#) when a student has advanced to graduate student status (see above).
- Once a student advances to graduate status, their undergraduate tuition, fees, and financial aid no longer applies and tuition is adjusted to the graduate tuition rate.
- The Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships will award the Combined Pathways Scholarship toward the graduate tuition rate based on the student's entry term to RIT.
- The student's new tuition and fees and scholarship award are then assessed by [Student Financial Services](#).

Details about the change in financial aid for a specific program can be found on the [Combined Accelerated Bachelor's/Master's Financial Aid website](#).

Any financial-aid related questions should be directed to [ritaidd@rit.edu](mailto:ritaidd@rit.edu) or a [Financial Aid Counselor](#).

## RIT Policies of Particular Interest to Accelerated Scholars

Some RIT policies differ for undergraduate and graduate degree programs. It is important for Accelerated Scholars to be aware of these differences:

- Undergraduate policies will apply to all undergraduate degree requirements
- Graduate Policies will apply to graduate degree requirements

### ***GPA Requirements are different for graduate students***

[D12.0 Graduation Requirements](#) | [University Policies](#) | [RIT](#)

### ***Repeating Courses to Raise Low Grades***

[D05.0 Grades](#) | [University Policies](#) | [RIT](#)

## General Timeline for Early Accept Combined Accelerated Degree Programs

### ***Years 1 and 2***

- Focus on undergraduate courses (within your major and in your general education requirements)
- Get to know advisors and your professors and take advantage of faculty office hours.
- Attend Accelerated Scholar events and information sessions. Ask questions.
- Get involved by joining a club, team, or student organization.
- Learn about co-op, research, study abroad, and experiential learning opportunities (timing varies by program)
- +1 MBA and 4+2 BFA/M.Arch students may start taking courses that count toward graduate waivers

### ***During Year 2 or 3***

- Department Review of eligibility to continue toward the graduate portion of your studies will be conducted (timing varies by program).
- To view or download the requirements for continuance in an a Combined Accelerated Bachelor's/Master's Degree, click the links below based on enrollment term:
  - [RIT Enrollment Prior to Fall 2023](#)
  - [RIT Enrollment in Fall 2023 or later](#)

### ***Year 3***

- Continue to focus on undergraduate courses. Do well and seek support as needed.
- Complete co-op requirements and experiential learning (timing varies by program).
- Attend Accelerated Scholar events and information sessions.
- Stay connected to an academic advisor.
- Explore career options. Discuss elective and graduate course options with advisors or a faculty member.
- Look into research opportunities
- Stay involved by participating in clubs and student organizations or attend lectures and seminars.

### ***Year 4, 5, and beyond (program length varies by degree pathway)***

- Start taking graduate degree courses
- Work closely with faculty and academic advisors to
  - refine career interests
  - choose upper level electives and graduate courses of interest
  - make sure degree requirements are met
- Connect with financial aid with questions about tuition changes related to graduate study
- Complete co-op requirements and gain experiential learning experience (timing varies by program)
- Talk with faculty advisors about graduate degree completion (research or a capstone project)
- Stay involved
- Be a mentor or a program ambassador to help support other Accelerated Scholars

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **How does the Combined Accelerated Program impact co-op?**

You can still do co-op. The timing of your co-op(s) will depend on your undergraduate program. Most students in a major with a required co-op will take a co-op prep course in their second year.

Some BS/MS or BS/ME programs may waive one co-op block so that you can be on campus an extra semester to complete graduate course work. This varies by program. Talk with your academic advisor about the specific co-op requirements for your program.



### **Can Accelerated Scholars also participate in the Honors Program?**

Yes. Many Accelerated Scholars are also part of the Honors Program.

### **Will I still be able to participate in study abroad, internships, etc.?**

Combined Accelerated Bachelor's/Master's degrees include opportunities for you to engage in a full educational experience. You will work with your academic advisor to create a plan of study to accommodate degree requirements and opportunities for you to complete co-ops and internships, research, study abroad, volunteering, and more.

### **What if I'm struggling in a class?**

There are many resources at RIT, including the [Academic Success Center](#), to assist you. It is not uncommon for new students to struggle at first. It can take time to adjust to college. There is help. Talk to your academic advisor about resources and strategies to get back on track.

### **What if I don't meet the GPA requirement to stay in the program?**

Early Accept Accelerated Scholars are conditionally accepted to their combined accelerated degree program until the time of department review, which will occur after two or three years of study (varies by program).

To view or download the requirements for continuance in an a Combined Accelerated Bachelor's/Master's Degree, click the links below based on enrollment term:

- [RIT Enrollment Prior to Fall 2023](#)
- [RIT Enrollment in Fall 2023 or later](#)

The GPA requirement listed is a cumulative GPA, so if you get off to a rough start, talk with your academic advisor about ways to raise your GPA. For example, they might recommend repeating a course. For undergraduate courses, the new grade in a repeated course replaces the old grade in the cumulative GPA, so this is a great way to quickly improve your GPA.

If you don't meet the eligibility requirements at the point of department review, simply continue and focus on your undergraduate degree. A bachelor's degree from RIT is an amazing credential.

### **How will I know which courses will double count for my BS/MS degree?**

Double counted courses are typically upper-level program electives taken in your fourth or fifth year (graduate courses are 600-level or above). Some departments run combined 500/600 level courses. In these cases you will enroll in the 600-level course. Check with your advisor or your graduate program director for details.

### **Where can I find a list of course waivers for the +1 MBA program?**

The [+1 MBA](#) website provides information on the +1 MBA program, course waivers, and other important information, including a list of [waiver agreements](#) by RIT department.

### **RIT Non Discrimination Statement**

RIT does not discriminate. The RIT Nondiscrimination Notice can be found here: [rit.edu/nondiscrimination](http://rit.edu/nondiscrimination).