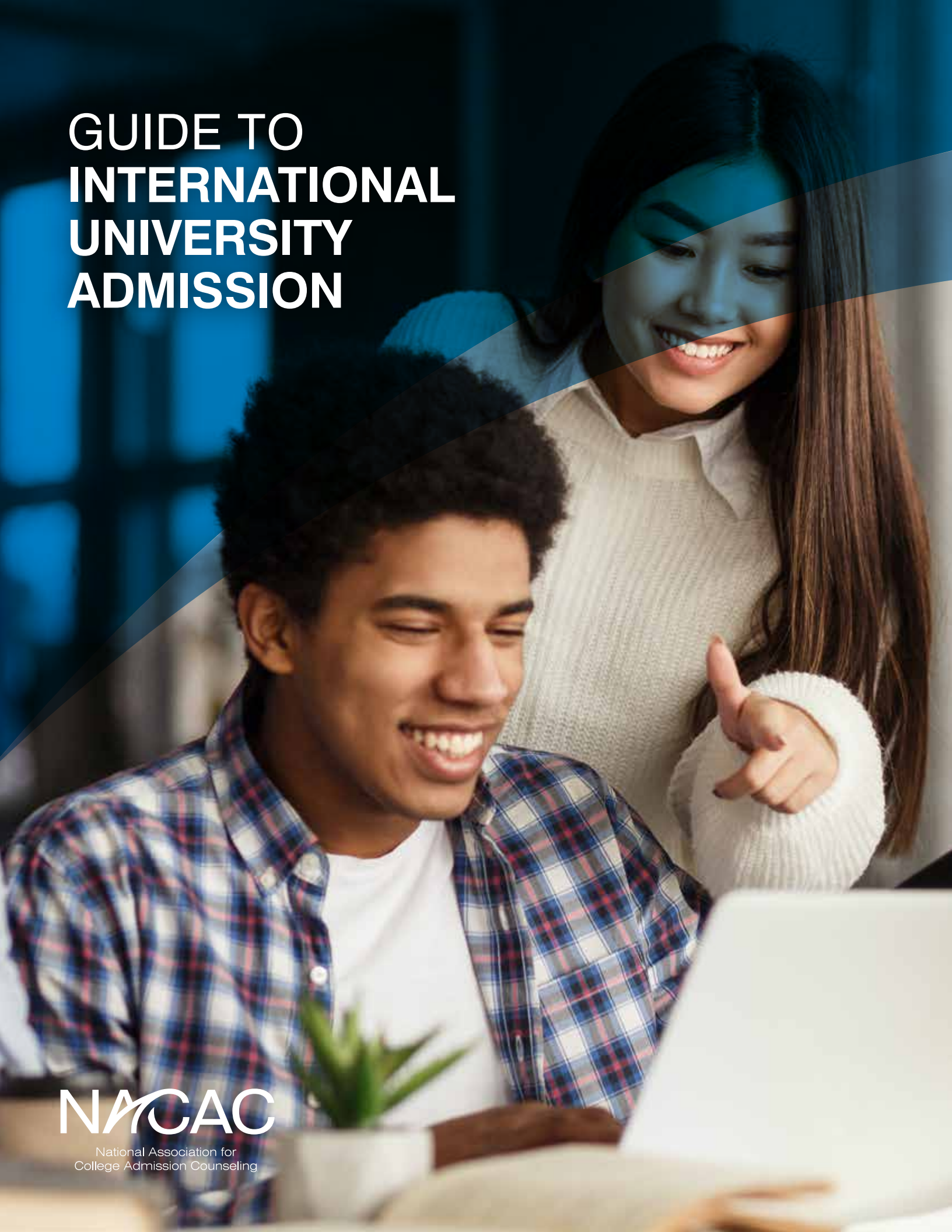


# GUIDE TO INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY ADMISSION

**NACAC**

National Association for  
College Admission Counseling





## About NACAC

The National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC), founded in 1937, is an organization of 14,000 professionals from around the world dedicated to serving students as they make choices about pursuing postsecondary education. NACAC is committed to maintaining high standards that foster ethical and social responsibility among those involved in the transition process, as outlined in the NACAC's *Guide to Ethical Practice in College Admission*.

For more information and resources, visit [nacacnet.org](http://nacacnet.org).

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### COVID-19 IMPACTS ON APPLYING ABROAD

NACAC is pleased to offer this resource for the fifth year. NACAC's *Guide to International University Admission* promotes study options outside students' home countries for those who seek an international experience. Though the impact the current global health crisis will have on future classes remains unclear, we anticipate that there will still be a desire among students—perhaps enhanced as a result of COVID-19, to connect with people from other cultures and parts of the world, and to pursue an undergraduate degree abroad.

The 2019–2020 coronavirus outbreak and resulting quarantine measures have disrupted many facets of higher education around the world, including university admission. The *2020 Guide to International University Admission* was updated prior to knowing how upcoming admission cycles will be affected. In light of COVID-19 disruptions, it's especially important to check institutional and official in-country websites to see how processes, requirements, and deadlines may have changed.





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# FOREWORD

*By Beth Gilfillan, PhD, Assistant Professor of Counseling, Bowling Green State University (OH)*

One of a college counselor's most important jobs is to educate students on their college options as we guide them through the search and application process. A few years ago, a [report from the Institute of International Education](#) confirmed what a group of Chicago-area high school counselors had begun to notice: a growing interest among students who aspired to earn their college degree outside the United States. Meanwhile, representatives from universities in a number of countries were beginning to knock on our doors.

In fall 2013, the group of counselors organized a program called [International College Options \(ICO\)](#). The program includes college fairs and counselor luncheons aimed at helping students, and those advising them, explore the expanding landscape of university admission. The ICO program has become an annual event and has expanded to Boston, Detroit, Denver, and New York. The most recent events in 2019, drew 46 institutions from 15 countries.

The majority of counseling participants who participated in research about the ICO program reported seeing an increase in students' and families' interest in international college options. And, as a result of participating in the program, reported feeling more prepared to counsel these students and families. It is promising to see programs, such as ICO, having a positive effect on counseling students and families.

With more US students looking to earn a full bachelor's degree outside the United States, NACAC provides this guide to assist and support counselors, families, and students as they navigate the sometimes confusing search and application process.

Why do students choose to pursue a degree abroad? The reasons vary. Some students want to take advantage of

dual citizenship, or have family abroad, while others long for an adventure. Lower tuition may attract their interest—helped along, in some cases, by a full degree program that can be completed in three years.

The type of student who has the potential to thrive overseas is independent and open-minded, loves to travel, enjoys experiential learning, appreciates diversity, and is interested in other cultures. Not every student fits that description, of course, but if a student you are working with demonstrates some of these characteristics, you might mention the idea of a full degree program abroad. I also find that students who express a desire to study abroad in college are well-suited to this option.

It is also important for counselors to understand the application process, deadlines, and chances of admission for a US student. While institutions that welcome US students are eager to provide helpful information, it can be difficult to gather and compare information from schools' websites in different countries. Language barriers, differing time zones, and unfamiliar application processes are just three challenges students will face.

Just as when we research US schools, it is important to look at fit—that is the alignment of academic offerings, social aspects, campus culture, cost, employment rates, and other critical factors, with a student's goals and expectations for their undergraduate experience. Few families have the resources to visit multiple colleges overseas. The high school counselors involved in ICO events consider them to be a useful alternative. Through these activities, students, parents, and counselors can talk individually with international college representatives about courses, the application process, visa requirements, and any other questions they might have. This guide is another valuable resource for counselors. We encourage you to use it as a starting point.

# INTRODUCTION

This guide responds to the growing desire among high school counselors to broaden undergraduate college options for students, specifically students who have expressed an interest in studying internationally. It is designed to be a starting point for counselors building their competence and confidence in advising these students. The guide seeks to take you from where you might be when the first student comes into your office and says, “I heard college is free in Germany,” to where you likely want to be as a counselor of students exploring broader options—supportive, informed, and able to assess specifics as the need arises.

## Understanding the Big Picture

Students’ initial questions about international study options often focus on admission, but as a counselor, your perspective needs to also include the bigger picture of matriculation, persistence, graduation, and beyond.

Whether students are moving across town or around the globe, adjustment challenges are expected. For those studying internationally, these can be exacerbated by cultural and language differences, educational system variances, and the distance involved. For Americans, the student experience is often fundamentally different outside the US than it is inside it. As an example, many international universities do not have American-style campuses and on-site housing. And even if students are proficient in the language of the country where they’d like to study, living on their own in a different culture can be challenging. Teaching styles and evaluation methodologies may differ from US high schools or US postsecondary institutions. At a practical level, when a student overseas experiences a slump, it is less likely that

he or she can be shored up by a quick visit home or a visit from a parent or friend. On the other hand, students completing degrees internationally can become true global citizens, and grow and thrive in ways that are hard to fully explain or measure.

Looking ahead to beyond graduation, counselors need to consider a student’s potential eligibility to remain in their host country for work or further education. Immigration and visa policies can be complex, and what’s more they frequently change. Students who wish to stay abroad following graduation need to research their eligibility for short- or long-term work visas, and the associated requirements.

Students looking to pursue undergraduate degrees in another country should also be aware of the applicability of their intended degree in their home countries. While globally educated students are often very attractive to employers and graduate programs, students considering professional degrees abroad, such as medicine, law, architecture, and engineering, need to carefully research whether their prospective credential will be recognized back home. Additionally, fewer nationally-based employers recruit students at overseas campuses for employment back that country. Alumni networks, however, can be an important resource for graduates of international universities.

Counselors new to helping students apply to universities abroad may want to acquaint themselves with international and national rankings. While NACAC advises caution when using rankings, they can be useful in helping counselors, students, and families build an understanding of various international universities,

their sizes, strengths, and how they compare to familiar domestic universities. International rankings such as *Times Higher Education World University Rankings*, *U.S. News & World Report Global Rankings*, *QS World University Rankings*, and Shanghai Jiao Tong University's *Academic Ranking of World Universities* are useful for building awareness of some of the more prestigious institutions across the globe. There are also new efforts to help students choose where to apply, such as the [UK's Teaching Excellence Framework](#) (TEF). While performance indicators used in traditional rankings are not always indicative of the student experience, the TEF aims to measure things students care about: teaching, learning, and what students go on to do afterwards.

In some countries, national rankings are done at the course/major level. The much scrutinized league tables in the UK are one such example. The tables illustrate how an individual university's rank can differ considerably by course of study.

With that background, some of the significant differences in postsecondary education internationally, vis-à-vis the US, include:

**Duration and Focus** – In many of the countries covered in this guide, the standard duration of an undergraduate program is three years, though there are variations for honors programs and degrees in certain disciplines. Additionally, the student often selects a major (or course of study) before application, is admitted into that major, and has limited flexibility to change once accepted.

Consequently, the applicant's academic record and other required application materials need to be targeted to the student's specific course of study. This also has implications for the student's experience once at university; the ability to take courses outside one's major would likely be limited when compared to American institutions.

**Timing** – Academic calendars and the timetable for admission decisions vary by country, and do not necessarily coincide with those in the US or the student's home country. Students who apply to universities in more than one country can find themselves facing different decision notification and acceptance/deposit dates. Additionally, US students bound for New Zealand and Australia, for instance, may have an eight-month gap between high school graduation and matriculation.

**Admission Requirements and Processes** – Generally, admission decision-making tends to be less holistic at universities abroad and requirements are clearer cut.

In part because admission is generally granted into a specific major, universities are often more specific in the courses and grades required at the high school level. Additionally, some overseas universities do not consider a US high school degree comparable to a secondary school degree from their country. They may accept

students with a high number of Advanced Placement (AP) tests or the International Baccalaureate (IB) diploma, but may require students with a different academic background to complete another year of schooling (often called a *foundation year*) prior to beginning the three-year degree program. During the application process, counselors may need to provide detailed course descriptions to help the student justify the rigor of his or her high school curriculum.

**Conditional Offers** – In certain countries, conditional offers of admission are common. These may specify attainment of specific scores on final testing, including AP exams and IB tests. This can mean a student will not know whether they may enroll at the university that made the conditional offer until those results are available in the summer before planned matriculation.

**Costs** – Some countries regulate university costs. In most cases costs are stated on university websites in the local currency. Students and families should be aware of possible fluctuations in currency exchange rates, and the associated risk of costs rising. While many international universities are recruiting international students, financial aid opportunities may be limited. And there are additional costs, such as required insurance and travel to and from the home country.

**Agents** – In some of the countries profiled it is common for universities to recruit international students in partnership with commercial recruitment agencies, and remunerate their partners via per capita commission payments. However, domestic and international universities alike that participate in US federal financial aid programs are prohibited from paying incentive compensation to agencies for the recruitment of financial aid-eligible students (US citizens and permanent residents). Generally speaking, students should exercise caution in considering third-party advisory services. The NACAC publication [Trusted Sources: Seeking Advice on Applying to Universities in Another Country](#) can help students make informed decisions about these services.

## How to Use this Guide

This guide was developed with cooperation from representatives of countries that have proven popular or emerging postsecondary study destinations among international students. Though many countries are featured, NACAC hopes other countries representing more world regions and languages will participate in future editions.

The first section profiles 15 countries based on information provided by the aforementioned representatives, and reviewed by NACAC members with experience counseling students seeking international study. At the time of publication, this guide offered the most up-to-date information available, but counselors and students should always reach out to specific universities, organizations, and embassies, or consulates to confirm important details. Following the country-specific



information, the guide briefly addresses other options for international educational experiences.

The country profiles are organized into sections:

**Brief Background** – Provides an overview of the postsecondary educational landscape, including numbers and types of universities/colleges, subgroupings of educational institutions, and statistics on the number of international students studying in the country.

**Good to Know** – Describes the length of a typical undergraduate degree program, country-specific terminology, special strengths of the educational system, and legal protections for international students.

**Academic Calendar** – Lists the start and end dates of the school year, exam periods, and school holidays.

**Search** – Provides links to specific websites to learn more about university options and courses of study.

**Apply** – Addresses whether students must apply directly to a major/course of study, whether applications are processed by a central organization or by each individual university, and whether there are restrictions on the number or type of applications a student may submit.

**Deadlines** – Lists application timelines by semester of matriculation.

**Application Fees** – Provides costs to apply to one or more universities.

**Admission Requirements** – Describes admission factors, such as language proficiency, coursework, and SAT, SAT Subject, ACT, and IB and AP testing. Also describes advanced credit provided for AP or IB coursework, if applicable.

**Upon Acceptance** – Reviews the documentation provided at acceptance, whether conditional acceptances are common, if there is rolling admission and timing for student responses and deposits.

**Tuition and Fees** – Provides general cost ranges, information on tuition regulation at the state or national level, and financial aid options, including how to use US federal student loans.

**Housing** – Explains typical housing arrangements for international students, including the availability and costs of university-provided housing, methods for securing off-campus housing, and general timelines and caveats.

**Visa and Other Permits** – Provides tips and resources for obtaining student visas and other permits, including demonstration of proof of sufficient funding and required health insurance. Work eligibility is also discussed.

**Advice from the Field** – Offers insights and recommendations by NACAC members with ample experience counseling American students about international postsecondary study. Tips include additional website resources, who to contact for more information, and how to identify universities to consider.

### Myth or Fact: What You Need to Know about Applying to Foreign Universities

If your students are interested in expanding their college search beyond the US borders, make sure they have the facts.

#### Myth or fact? Students must be fluent in another language to apply to an overseas university.

Myth! Australia, Canada, Ireland, the United Kingdom, and other English-speaking countries are popular destinations for US students. English-taught programs are also offered through universities in countries, such as France, Japan, Germany, the Netherlands, Finland, and Spain.

#### Myth or fact? All countries follow the same academic calendars and college admission timeline.

Myth! Academic calendars and the timetable for admission decisions vary by country, and do not necessarily coincide with those in the United States. US students bound for New Zealand and Australia, for instance, may have an eight-month gap between high school graduation and matriculation.

#### Myth or fact? US degrees are more valuable.

Myth! Quality higher education options exist across the globe. Students whose prospective careers require certification (such as doctors or architects) may have to complete additional exams or meet other requirements in order to practice outside the country where they studied. In most cases, globally educated students are very attractive to employers.

#### Myth or fact? Earning a degree abroad will break the bank.

Myth! Affordable options are available. For instance, tuition is generally free at all German public universities (though fees are assessed). Some foreign universities participate in the US federal student loan program. Check with individual institutions to learn more about costs and financial aid options.





# AUSTRALIA

**Brief Background:** The Australian government's National Strategy for International Education 2025 sets out a 10-year plan to grow and sustain Australia as a global leader in education, training, and research.

In 2019 there were 758,154 international students in Australia, with about 64 percent enrolled in Australia's 39 public and four private universities—or unis, as known in local parlance. In 2019 there were 12,431 US students enrolled in Australian education institutions. Over half of all American students participated in short-term study abroad programs (6,800). Of the 3,000 American enrollments in higher education, 950 were undergraduates and 2,050 postgraduates..

Many unis have multiple campuses, often in different states and cities, to improve access and choice for students. Some universities also have formed groups of like-minded institutions. [Universities Australia](#) represents 39 comprehensive universities in Australia and maintains a relationship with its counterpart organizations overseas, including the American Council on Education and Universities Canada.

Australia's [Group of Eight \(Go8\)](#) comprises Australia's eight leading research intensive universities: University of Melbourne, Australian National University, University of Sydney, University of Queensland, University of Western Australia, University of Adelaide, Monash University, and University of New South Wales. With 99 percent of Go8 research considered world class or above, this group of universities leads postgraduate education in Australia.

The [Australian Technology Network of Universities \(ATN\)](#) is made up of four of the country's most innovative and

enterprising universities: the University of Technology Sydney, RMIT University, the University of South Australia, and Curtin University. Members are a new generation of universities focused on industry collaboration and research with real-world impact. ATN universities typically have deep expertise in the application and interpretation of the latest technologies and big data. Their objective is to produce employable graduates with the skills for tomorrow.

[Innovative Research Universities \(IRU\)](#) is a policy network of seven comprehensive universities: Charles Darwin University, James Cook University, Griffith University, La Trobe University, Flinders University, Murdoch University, and Western Sydney University. IRU members seek to lead the way in collaborative teaching, language, research, and policy initiatives. Eighty-nine percent of research at IRU universities is ranked at world standard or above, according to Excellence in Research for Australia 2018.

The [Regional Universities Network \(RUN\)](#) is a group of seven universities with headquarters in regional Australia and playing major roles in their regions. RUN universities are Central Queensland University, Southern Cross University, Federation University Australia, University of New England, Charles Sturt University, University of Southern Queensland, and University of the Sunshine Coast.

RUN universities deliver educational programs to over 110,000 students each year, including over 45,000 students studying externally through distance education. In 2019, the Australian Government created the Destination Australia grants program to attract more international students to study outside of capital cities.

**Good to Know:** Students can typically earn an undergraduate degree in Australia in three years. However, there are exceptions that may require an additional year or two of study: professional fields (for example, veterinary science), honors programs, double bachelor's degree programs, or an area of study that requires research.

The term *course* generally refers to a program of study. Only rarely can students enroll at an Australian university with an undecided program of study, though options are available for students who want to change their course after enrolling. International students who want to change majors are urged to check with immigration officials to ensure they follow the correct procedure.

In Australia, higher education institutions generally set their own admission requirements for domestic and international students. They will take into consideration whether the student has the academic ability to complete the course of study as well as English language proficiency. For a range of professional courses, additional admission requirements may be set, such as an interview with the university or an independent aptitude test, but this will depend on the university students are applying to.

Universities develop their professional courses in collaboration with the relevant professional accreditation body or association in that field (for example, the Australian Medical Council or Engineers Australia) to ensure students will meet Australian accreditation standards once they graduate and will be eligible for entry into their chosen profession. These professional courses tend to include an internship or placement component, and universities will offer various levels of support and services to assist students with completing the requirements. Students should contact the university at which they would like to study, to discuss internship availability.

Australia's Educational Services for Overseas Student (ESOS) Act is designed to protect and promote the rights of international students on student visas. For example, institutions are required by law to provide access to orientation and support services, and accurate and timely information about fees and study options. Many free services are available to all students on all campuses, including academic guidance, skills and career advice, employment search support, and assistance to students with disabilities.

The Overseas Students Ombudsman is a specialist role of the Commonwealth Ombudsman which investigates complaints about problems that prospective, current or former overseas students have with private education providers in Australia.

The Fair Work Ombudsman is an independent government agency created by the Fair Work Act in 2009. It provides free education and information about people's basic rights and protections in the workplace, including



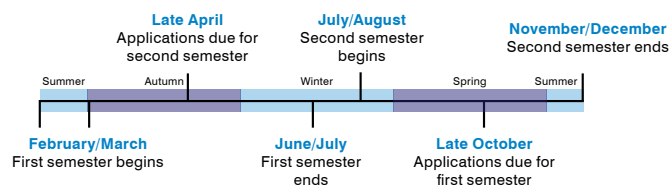
Photo courtesy of Ian

**“Since the flexibility that largely exists in your first year or two at an American university is less evident in the Australian system, you need to have a fairly solid idea of what you want to major in at the beginning of your degree. There is still some flexibility early on, but I could definitely see people getting caught off guard by the different timing if they want to switch their focus.”**

—Ian Rintala, Pennsylvania,  
University of Melbourne

minimum pay and conditions. It also helps to resolve workplace issues, conduct investigations, and enforce relevant Commonwealth workplace laws.

**Academic Calendar:** Most universities have two semesters: February/March to June/July, and July/August to November/December, with breaks in between. Many courses allow students to begin their studies in either semester. International students from the northern hemisphere often start in Australia's second semester, late July or early August. The student visa system caters to different enrollment terms.



However, many Australian universities are moving toward more flexible arrangements, (e.g., some have three semesters, some four) with the intent of making things more convenient for northern hemisphere international students.

Most Australian unis run orientation week—known as O-week—at the start of each semester.

**Search :** The Australian government's [Study in Australia](#) website offers general advice and information for prospective international students. All institutions offering courses to international students in Australia must be registered through the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (known as CRICOS). Its [website](#), enables users to search by institution or by course of study. [Universities Australia](#) offers additional institutional profiles and key contacts.

State and territory governments also host websites focused on services they provide for international students:

<a href="#">Australian Capital Territory</a>	<a href="#">South Australia</a>
<a href="#">New South Wales</a>	<a href="#">Tasmania</a>
<a href="#">Northern Territory</a>	<a href="#">Victoria</a>
<a href="#">Queensland</a>	<a href="#">Western Australia</a>

**Apply:** There is no national application system for international students. However, Tertiary Admission Centres (TACs) process applications for institutions within a particular state. International students should check if the course they are interested in encourages direct application to the institution or application through a TAC.

Students apply to a course of study within a university. Many universities allow students to apply a year ahead of time. Admission is typically offered on a rolling basis, and students are encouraged to submit their application as soon as they can.

**Deadlines:** Applications are due in late October or late April, depending on whether a student intends to start in the first or second semester.

**Application Fee:** Varies by university. Can be up to 100 Australian dollars.

**Admission Requirements:** For a majority of programs, admission is based on completion of a high school diploma, AP exam scores, and scores on either the SAT or ACT exam. Full IB diplomas are also accepted. Some programs require a minimum high school GPA.

If a student is applying through a TAC, eligibility for a selected program is determined by converting a student's final results (GPA + SAT; IB) into an Australia Tertiary Admissions Ranking (ATAR) equivalent. This ATAR score is the result of the final year of high school for Australian students and is the primary metric used for entry into undergraduate programs.

If an international student is applying directly to a university, eligibility will be determined by assessing the

final high school results (GPA + SAT; IB) against the cut-off entry requirements published by each university.

Some courses may require additional components in an application, such as a statement of purpose, interview, or portfolio, but this is relatively rare at the bachelor's level. Essays and recommendation letters are generally not required or considered.



**Upon Acceptance:** Accepted students receive a *letter of offer*, which serves as a contract between the student and the institution. It sets out the course the student will be enrolled in, enrollment conditions, fees, and refund policies. The letter of offer is required to obtain a student visa.

Applicants are either offered a conditional place subject to final results (if they apply before final exam scores are released) or an unconditional offer if completed results are provided. Copies of final result statements and certificates must be notarized. Details on this step in the process will be provided to successful candidates.

If a student's qualifications are not sufficient to gain admission to an Australian university, he or she can enroll in a *foundation* year lasting six to twelve months. Successful completion of a foundation year results in admission to the university where the program was completed.

**Tuition and Fees:** Tuition and fees are regulated at the national level and tend not to fluctuate. Annual undergraduate bachelor's degree charges range from AU\$20,000 to AU\$45,000 (this range does not include professional courses such as veterinary or medical), depending upon the program of study.

US undergraduates may be eligible for some scholarships, grants, and other forms of financial support offered by the Australian government, individual education institutions, and a number of other public and private organizations. Several Australian universities also accept US federal student loans.

More information on financial aid for international students can be found through [Study in Australia's website](#).



**Housing:** Australian university students traditionally live at home or off-campus, but more universities are building accommodations to attract international and local students. Most universities have comfortable and furnished apartment-style living on campus or close by, sometimes with cleaning and meals included. Some universities offer residential colleges that provide dining services; opportunities for social, sporting, and cultural events; and extracurricular academic programs for residents. Individual institutions should be contacted directly in order to ascertain the accommodations available and how the costs compare with securing housing on one's own.

Minimum cost of living, estimated by Australia's Department of Home Affairs, is AU\$21,041 a year. A shared rental can be anywhere between AU\$95 and AU\$215 per week, and on-campus housing, AU\$110 and AU\$280 per week. Groceries and dining out range from AU\$140 to AU\$280 weekly. Students will also need to consider the cost of utilities, public transportation, and a phone plan when they arrive in Australia. More information can be found through [Study in Australia's website](#).

**Visa and Other Permits:** Students planning to pursue an undergraduate degree in Australia will be eligible for a student visa (subclass 500). Visa information is available on the Australian government's [Department of Home Affairs website](#). Australia also runs a Visa and Citizenship Information Service office, located in Ottawa, Canada, which can be reached by phone at (613) 238-1040. In addition to a visa, students will also need to meet the Genuine Temporary Entrant (GTE) requirement stating they intend to stay in Australia temporarily for the purpose of study.

The visa application will require evidence of academic and language skills, evidence that the student has funds to support their study, and evidence of Overseas Student Health Coverage (OSHC). The cost of OSHC varies and all costs will be in Australian dollars. For more information on health coverage, visit the [Australian government's Department of Health website](#).

Visa fees vary depending on an applicant's circumstances. For more information see the Australian government's [Department of Home Affairs website](#).

The student visa status allows students to work part-time (up to 40 hours over a two-week period) when school is in session, and unlimited hours outside term time. Following graduation, students are eligible to remain in Australia on their student visa for approximately two months, provided the course of study they completed was longer than 10 months. Students who wish to work in Australia—either temporarily or for a longer term— must apply for a new work stream visa, which is granted for durations of 18 months, two years, three years, or four years, depending on the level and type of degree achieved.

**Advice from the Field:** Students can apply to Australian universities through education agents, however this is not necessary. Note that under Australian law, an Australian



Photo courtesy of Ian

**“My best decision when coming to Australia was applying to and accepting a spot at one of Melbourne’s residential colleges. These colleges have their own unique atmosphere and community, providing housing, academic support, dining, sporting activities, social events, and more, to residents.”**

—Ian Rintala, Pennsylvania,  
University of Melbourne

university that works with agents must list all of its contracted agents on the institution's website. For more information on agents in Australia, visit [Study in Australia](#).

The Australian government has developed a strategy to reach out to the global alumni community, inviting alumni to connect and engage with Australia and the region. The [Australia Global Alumni website](#) provides a virtual global network to connect, build and invigorate the international community of scholars who have studied in Australia, and Australians who have studied overseas. The website is also home to the practitioner hub, an exclusive virtual community for practitioners in alumni engagement – such as Australian education institutions, alumni associations, state and federal government agencies, and professional bodies. Each Australian university also has its own alumni programs.



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OF WORLD UNIVERSITIES**  
QS World University Rankings, 2021



**RANKED #1 IN  
AUSTRALIA FOR GRADUATE  
EMPLOYMENT RATE**  
QS Graduate Employability Survey, 2020



**TOP 5 SAFEST CITIES  
IN THE WORLD**  
The Economist Intelligence Unit  
Safe Cities Index, 2019



# CANADA

**Brief Background:** Canada has recently committed to renewing its international education strategy to continue to attract top-tier international students to Canadian universities and colleges. The previous strategy, which aimed to increase the number of international students in Canada to 450,000 by 2022, was achieved 5 years early. In 2017, Canada hosted 369,000 international students and in 2019, the number was up to 499,000. Attracting international students, creating bilateral research agreements, and enriching learning opportunities in the classroom remain the cornerstone of Canada's international education goals.

Canada's public and private nonprofit universities offer more than 15,000 undergraduate and post-graduate programs, as well as professional designations, certificate and diploma courses, and short career-focused programs. Canadian institutions, known for their cutting-edge technology and research labs, provide opportunities for cooperative education, known as co-ops, and internships. Many of the well-known universities in Canada are located in large metropolitan areas, but there are many excellent universities that do not have urban campuses and are similar to US liberal arts colleges.

Four Canadian universities—University of Toronto, McGill University, University of British Columbia, and University of Alberta—rank among the top 100 in the 2018 QS World University Rankings, with many other universities ranking high on QS program-specific rankings.

Canada's higher education options also include more than 150 public colleges, similar to US community colleges, and polytechnic institutes of technology. Colleges and polytechnics provide a variety of credentials including certificates, diplomas, and academic and

applied degrees. Together, they offer more than 8,000 programs. Some colleges have transfer agreements with universities and can provide an alternate pathway to a top-ranking Canadian university.

Education is under the legislative jurisdiction of provinces and territories but the basic structures are similar across the country.

**Good to Know:** A degree from a Canadian university can typically be completed in four years and is considered equivalent to an American qualification. A Canadian degree can lead to work opportunities in Canada, the US, and around the world.

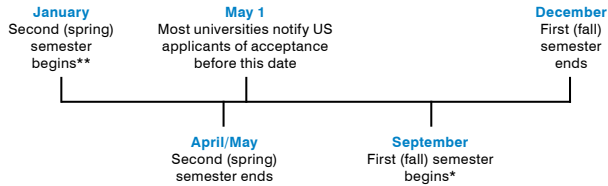
Co-op experiences are a hallmark of many Canadian degree programs. Co-ops involve alternating periods of academic study with periods of work. Almost all postsecondary schools offer co-op options in fields as diverse as business, political science, natural resources, and social services. In many arrangements, students are paid for their work, and upon completion, a student can expect to have gained a year or more of work experience in their field of study. It is important to note, however, that co-op programs can increase the length of a degree/diploma program.

Many Canadian universities and colleges have career and co-op offices dedicated to finding and preparing students for co-op placements. Relevant internships may also be available and can be completed for pay or academic credit.

A large number of Canadian universities are located within 100 miles of the US border, offering a convenient option for US students who want an international degree that is not too far away.



**Academic Calendar:** Most universities and colleges run from early September until the end of April or early May, but there is no national standard. The academic year is typically split into two terms running from September to December and January to April. Some universities utilize a trimester system, providing full courses in the summer.



\*Students planning to enroll in the first (fall) semester are encouraged to apply in the fall or winter of the previous year.  
 \*\*Students planning to enroll in the second (spring) semester are encouraged to apply several months in advance.

**Search:** The official [study in Canada portal](#), includes a program finder, cost calculator, information about visas, and links to institutional websites. [Universities Canada](#) also offers up-to-date information on universities and academic programs to help with planning. The [Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials](#) provides an online directory of universities, colleges, and schools that are recognized and authorized by Canada's provinces and territories. It also includes information on foreign credential evaluations and qualification recognition. Another resource is the [website of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada](#). It offers information on study permits, visas, and work permits.

**Apply:** Students interested in applying to a Canadian institution are advised to visit the admission website at their institution(s) of choice to find detailed information about program options, the application process, and application forms.

Some provinces have established a centralized, electronic application process for admission to their institutions:

**Alberta**—[ApplyAlberta](#): Alberta Post-Secondary Application System

**British Columbia**—[ApplyBC](#): BC Post-Secondary Application Service

**Ontario**—[Ontario Universities' Application Centre](#) and [Ontario Colleges Application Services](#)

**Nova Scotia**—[MyNSFuture](#)

And, general information about [studying in Quebec](#)

Depending on the university, students may apply either directly to their intended program or to the larger faculty (i.e., school) with the expectation that they will declare their major in their second or third year. Most Canadian universities allow students to apply to two programs or faculties and students can be accepted by more than one program or faculty.

After a student has applied to a university or college, he or she will receive an email acknowledging receipt of the



**“From my experience, the admission process to Canadian universities is very grade-oriented. When I applied no supplemental essays were required, for example, so do your best to maintain competitive marks in high school because they will be representing you the most.”**

—Sadie Sherman, California, University of Alberta

application and requesting any additional documents. The email will also usually contain a personal student number that should be affixed to all documents submitted to the institution thereafter.

**Deadlines:** Application deadlines vary by institution. Students planning to enroll in the fall semester are encouraged to apply in the fall or winter of the previous year. Students planning to enroll in the semester that begins in January are encouraged to apply several months in advance.

**Application Fees:** Fees range from 100 to 250 Canadian dollars.

**Admission Requirements:** For many schools and programs, admission is based almost entirely on academic grades earned in high school, generally grade 12. Some institutions, however, consider grade 10 and 11 marks as well. If course prerequisites have not been fulfilled, a student may not be accepted. Applicants should keep in mind that high school curricula in Canada and the United States are similar but not identical, which can potentially create confusion about whether a student has satisfied certain requirements. An example of this is how core science classes are taught.

## QUEBEC SYSTEM

Quebec follows a different educational system than the other provinces. Secondary students in Quebec finish their education at grade 11, not 12. As such, students have the option to pursue a two-year CEGEP program that prepares them for university admission. That is also why Quebec university programs for local students are three years instead of four, relative to other provinces in Canada.

High performing international students with AP or IB credits may be eligible to enter the university system in Quebec in sophomore standing, whereas students from outside Quebec who haven't completed such coursework may have to enroll in a full four-year program. Each university has its own policies governing international admission and recognition of credits.

Some Canadian universities require SAT or ACT test scores in addition to a US high school diploma. Some may require SAT Subject tests, depending on the program. Scores can be sent directly to the Canadian institution.

IB students can apply with their transcript and IB predicted scores without having to take the SAT or the ACT.

Many Canadian universities accept AP and IB exam scores for academic credit or placement. Information about specific policies should be obtained from the institution's admission office.

An increasing number of institutions recommend the completion of a personal profile while others, often highly selective programs, require it. Personal profiles give the student a chance to reflect on their background, share non-academic leadership experience and other qualities, and demonstrate interest and understanding of the program they hope to enter. This information may play an important role in admission decisions. In some cases, students might be asked to upload a video response to a randomly generated question as part of the application process.

Ethnicity/race, legacy, and advancement potential are not permitted as factors in admission decisions.

**Upon Acceptance:** Institutions typically operate on a rolling admission basis. Once the university or college receives a student's application form and all supporting documents, they will evaluate the application and may issue an offer of admission or an early conditional offer of admission, which is often contingent on forthcoming grades or exam results. There is no specific date by which applicants will be notified of their admission decision, though most institutions work to notify US applicants before May 1.



Photo courtesy of Sadie

**“One of the most challenging aspects of being a student in Canada has been managing the logistics around financing my education. I would recommend that new students from America open a Canadian bank account upon arriving for school.”**

—Sadie Sherman, California, University of Alberta

**Tuition and Fees:** The average tuition fee for international undergraduate students at Canadian universities was CA\$29,714 in 2019–2020, ranging from CA\$9,340 for some humanities programs to CA\$60,570 for some business, management, and public administration programs. Tuition at Canadian colleges range, on average, from CA\$6,600 to CA\$22,000 per year. The [EduCanada website](#) enables students to determine a rough estimate of tuition, food, and housing based on the program and institution, where they are coming from, and whether any dependents will be staying with them.

Currently, 85 higher education institutions in Canada accept US federal student loans, according to the US Department of Education.

The [Canadian government website](#) has scholarship information for international students. [Fulbright Canada](#) also manages a scholarship program for university exchange students. Scholarship and award options for international undergraduates vary greatly by institution. Some relatively small athletic scholarships are also available. Generally student-athletes must meet certain academic expectations, in addition to possessing athletic talent, to qualify for these scholarships.

**Housing:** Most colleges and universities offer housing near or on campus. Dormitories vary but generally feature a shared kitchen, bathroom, and laundry facilities. Most university housing also provides required or optional meal plans. Many international students in Canada choose to stay on campus during their first and second year before moving to private accommodations. Some university student service offices maintain lists of recommended



house or apartment rentals nearby; however, rental agreements are transacted solely between the student and the property owner.

Students should consult their university of choice for an estimate of rent costs. Some institutions have rent cost calculators available on their websites, and these can be the most accurate as each university promotes and updates their information based on their location.

**Visas and Other Permits:** American citizens traveling with US passports are eligible to apply for a study permit at a port of entry to Canada. Ports of entry are located at major airports and border crossings. Alternatively, students can apply for a study permit while still outside Canada, either online or in person, at a [visa application center](#).

Note that students enrolling in Quebec institutions for programs of six months or more must obtain the [Certificate of Acceptance from Quebec \(CAQ\)](#).

The application fee for a study permit is CA\$150. There may be an additional cost of CA\$83 if biometrics are required. Three key documents are required: an acceptance letter from the Canadian institution, proof of identity (such as a passport), and proof of financial support.

A valid study permit also allows international students to work on- or off-campus up to 20 hours per week while classes are in session and full-time during regularly scheduled academic breaks, such as spring break and winter and summer holidays.

The Post-Graduation Work Permit Program allows students who have graduated from a participating Canadian institution to work in Canada for up to three years. Skilled Canadian work experience gained through this program helps graduates who wish to stay in Canada longer qualify for permanent residence through the Canadian Experience Class (CEC).

More information on study permits and immigration procedures can be found on the [Canadian government website](#).

**Advice from the Field:** General inquiries on study opportunities in Canada should be directed to contacts available at [EduCanada](#).

Rankings such as those compiled by [Maclean's](#) and [The Globe and Mail's Canadian University Report](#) can be helpful as students begin the process of choosing where to apply. Keep in mind that not all Canadian universities participate in such ventures. As is true of US universities, rankings only tell part of the story.

High school grades are often used to determine admissibility to particular programs of study. Many institutions set a minimum standard of academic achievement or publish the cut-off from the prior admission cycle. This gives students more clarity on their chances of admission and can be very helpful in alleviating student anxiety.





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# FINLAND

**Brief Background:** Finland is consistently rated highly as a study destination by international students who value the many perks that Finnish institutions offer including quality education, academic freedom, and student-centered support services. Finland attracted nearly 32,000 international students in 2018, with the majority enrolled in degree programs, according to the Finnish National Agency for Education.

A national education policy focused on quality, efficiency, equity, and internationalization; excellent basic education; and competitive student admission underpin the high standards of Finnish higher education. The country boasts a world-class knowledge community, and is frequently rated as one of the most innovative countries with first-class higher education and training programs, according to the World Economic Forum's *Global Competitiveness Report*.

Finland has 22 universities of applied sciences (UAS), and 13 universities. At UAS institutions, research and development form the basis for teaching, and the curriculum addresses the needs and expectations of both industry and commerce. A UAS bachelor's degree typically takes between 3.5 and 4.5 years, and consists of core and professional studies, optional studies (similar to electives in the US), practical training, and a thesis. At universities, a bachelor's degree consists of basic and intermediate courses, language studies, and a thesis. It is typically completed in three years.

**Good to Know:** English is considered Finland's third, unofficial language, and most Finns speak it fluently. Finnish higher education institutions provide over 400 full-degree programs taught in English. Most of the bachelor-level degree programs taught in English are offered at universities of applied sciences, but universities offer some as well.

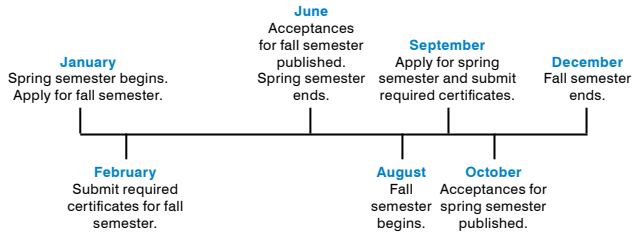
If students are fluent in Finnish or Swedish, they can pursue a degree in one of these national languages tuition-free. Advice, provided in Finnish or Swedish, on how to apply to these programs can be found on the [Studyinfo website](#).

Students who complete their bachelor's at a university are automatically admitted to a master's degree program at the same university upon completion of the undergraduate degree, without needing to apply again. With a UAS bachelor's degree, students must separately apply for admission to a master's degree after at least two years of relevant work experience.

The Finnish attitude toward education follows an approach that benefits the individual: Students are challenged and encouraged to think for themselves. Courses offered at Finnish universities are research-based and align with the institution's specialization. These high-quality study programs combine in-depth research with the needs of a student's future working life.

**Academic Calendar:** Finnish universities and universities of applied sciences usually follow a two-semester calendar. The first semester typically begins at the end of August, and the second semester in January. Summer break occurs between June and August, when some institutions offer courses, with a two-week winter break taking place in December and January.





**Search:** The [Studyinfo website](#) is the official source for information on Finland's degree programs.

The [Study in Finland website](#) also links to the admission webpages for the 13 universities, as well as all 22 UAS.

**Apply:** Applying to Finnish higher education programs takes place either through a joint application or a separate application. Applications for bachelor's degree programs are primarily completed through a joint application, but there may be some exceptions. Students should always check with the degree program to which they are planning to apply.

With a [joint application](#), students use one application to apply to up to six study programs. The six options may include degree programs from one or several different institutions.

Some programs may require students to apply through a [separate application](#), though this is not common at the bachelor's degree level, and there is no limit on the number of programs a student can apply to. Separate applications are typically submitted either through Studyinfo or an institution's own website.

**Deadlines:** For fall admission, most English-taught bachelor's programs have their application period in January. For spring admission, applications usually open in September. Some exceptions may exist so always check the exact application period and supplementary documentation deadlines with the university or UAS to which you are planning to apply.

**Application Fees:** Universities and universities of applied sciences do not require application fees. Applying through the national Studyinfo portal is free of charge.

**Admission Requirements:** Student selection is usually based either on grades, an entrance exam, or a combination of the two. Students can learn about entry requirements and eligibility criteria by reading program descriptions on the [Studyinfo website](#). Students can also find this information on the institutions' admission websites.

In most cases, students are eligible to apply for bachelor's degree programs in Finland if they have a high school completion certificate (e.g., a US high school diploma), which would allow them to apply to a college or university within that country. Programs also recognize the International Baccalaureate (IB) diploma.

The universities will instruct students about the type of document needed to verify their upcoming graduation. For example, institutions often accept an official academic transcript as an official statement of upcoming graduation.

Generally, applicants must have already completed high school for a copy of their diploma to reach the relevant university by the application deadline. Note that universities and universities of applied sciences provisionally admit students who apply and have not yet graduated. Once available and prior to enrollment, these students are asked to submit a copy of their diploma.

**Entrance Examinations:** The entrance examination process is primarily a domestic system and used as part of student admission when applying to bachelor's degree programs, though some universities and UAS institutions are moving away from this process. International students should check with the individual programs to see if entrance examinations are being used. In some cases, institutions may require SAT subject tests in lieu of an entrance examination.

Many universities of applied sciences cooperate in the design and administration of entrance examinations, that in some cases a student will take one examination and the results will be shared with multiple institutions. Exam types vary by field of study. If institutions require separate entrance examinations, a student must sit for all the necessary exams to be considered for admission.

Some entrance exams are offered only in Finland, while others may be offered abroad through the [Finnish Network for International Programmes \(FINNIPS\)](#). Students will be able to access a list of countries where entrance examinations will be held at the time of applying. Some entrance examinations include multiple phases, with only some applicants continuing after each phase of the process.

**Upon Acceptance:** After the application and any required entrance exams have been completed, the university will process the student's application and make a final admission decision. Results are usually announced by the end of June.

If accepted, students will receive an official letter of admission from the university or UAS. They must follow the steps provided by the institution to confirm their placement.

As soon as a student has received the official letter of admission, they should start making arrangements to study and live in Finland.

**Tuition and Fees:** Non-European Union (EU)/European Economic Area (EEA) students applying to an English-taught bachelor's degree program are subject to tuition



fees. These range from approximately 4,000 to 13,000 euros, depending on the program. Tuition exemptions do exist. For example, fees may be waived if a student has an EU/EEA citizenship. Visit the [Studyinfo website](#) for more information on exemption rules.

Finnish higher education institutions also offer scholarship options for gifted non-EU/EEA students who are admitted to fee-charging degree programs. Often based on academic performance, these scholarships may include full or partial fee waivers or performance-based refunds. Typically, students apply for a scholarship at the same time they apply for admission.

Students should confirm the details about tuition or scholarships with the university to which they are applying.

Each university and UAS has its own student union. At universities, students are required to pay an annual student union fee. Currently the fees range from 100 to 140 euros approximately. Student union membership is optional at universities of applied sciences. Students who join the local student union receive a student card they can use to access several benefits. Student unions often organize services like student housing or tutoring, and routinely plan sports events or cultural excursions.

**Housing:** Students are encouraged to inquire about housing options directly from the institution where they will be studying. Student housing organizations work closely with the institutions to provide on-campus housing, which is offered widely, but many students live in local flats. These apartments, which have been designed for students, are often located near campus and are generally easily accessible via public transportation.

The [Finnish Association of Student Housing Organisations](#) (SOA) maintains a list of SOA members that provide student apartments.

Choosing student housing through the local student housing foundation is often the most cost-effective option. The average monthly rent for a single room in a shared student flat ranges from approximately 700 to 900 euros per month, and typically includes internet, electricity, and water. Single apartments or family flats are also available, but the rent is higher. Monthly living expenses are around 700 to 900 euros, depending on where a student is studying. Costs are typically higher in the Helsinki metropolitan area and other large cities.

There may be long waiting lists for student flats, especially in the autumn term when many new students start their studies. Students should apply for housing well in advance of their arrival to Finland.

**Visas and Other Permits:** US citizens do not need to obtain a visa for visits or studies lasting less than 90 days, but their passport must be valid for a minimum of three months after the trip. Therefore, a US citizen would not need a visa to travel to Finland to take an entrance examination.



**“Keep in mind that if at first you feel isolated or homesick, Finns really are extremely considerate people. Don’t be discouraged by the lack of small talk, or the occasional silence. Finns are good at knowing when it’s necessary to speak and when not to, which is something I took some time getting used to.”**

—Oksana Mitchell, Maryland, Aalto University,  
School of Business, Mikkeli Campus

When staying in Finland for a longer period of time, for example to pursue a degree program, non-EU/EEA citizens need a student residence permit. A student residence permit is a long-term temporary permit issued by the Finnish Immigration Service that is typically granted for two years at a time. In order to apply for the residence permit, students will need a valid passport and an official admission letter.

In order to apply for the residence permit, students will need a valid passport and an official admission letter. Additionally, students have to show that they have enough funding to cover the cost of their studies and living expenses. Valid health insurance is also required. Detailed information on the health insurance requirement and residence permits for non-EU/EEA nationals can be found on the [Finnish Immigration Service website](#).

Part-time employment during the academic year is allowed on a student residence permit if the work is practical training required by the degree, or does not exceed 25 hours a week. Outside the academic terms, such as during summer and winter break, students may work unlimited hours. However, students who don’t speak Finnish or Swedish may have difficulty finding a job.

Non-EU/EEA students who have resided in Finland on a student residence permit can apply for an extended residence permit for up to a year after graduation to search for employment. Students must apply for this extended residence permit before their valid student residence permit expires. If a graduate finds a job, they can then apply for a new residence permit based on their employment.

**Advice from the Field:** [Check the list of Five Steps to Studying in Finland.](#)



# FRANCE

**Brief Background:** Campus France, an agency of the French government, was created with the purpose of promoting French higher education abroad. The Campus France USA branch serves as the primary contact for US students and international students residing in the US seeking guidance about admission to French institutions and pre-visa applications.

Significant nationwide efforts in recent years have focused on attracting and supporting international students. These efforts include a simplification of the visa and immigration process, new support for student housing options, and continued development of programs taught in English—of which there are currently over 1,500—within French institutions. Additionally, through the *Bienvenue en France* initiative, significant public funding has been made available to French institutions seeking to improve international student services.

Each year, about 17,000 US students choose to study in France, and 50 percent pursue programs that last longer than 90 days. In all, French institutions enroll more than 358,000 international students, who make up about 12 percent of the country's total student population. At the doctoral level in France, international students make up 40 percent of the total student population.

Undergraduate degrees from France are offered at 74 public universities and 250 *grandes écoles*. *Grandes écoles* are uniquely French institutions and typically offer five-year programs that are equivalent to a master's degree, although some offer three-year bachelor's degrees. A list of *grandes écoles* can be found on the website of the *Conférence des Grandes Écoles* while a complete list of French universities is available through

Campus France, or through the Conference of University Presidents' website.

Technical and professional programs—in fields such as music, gastronomy, visual arts, design, fashion, and nursing—are offered at approximately 500 specialized schools (*écoles spécialisées*). The credential awarded is specific to each institution.

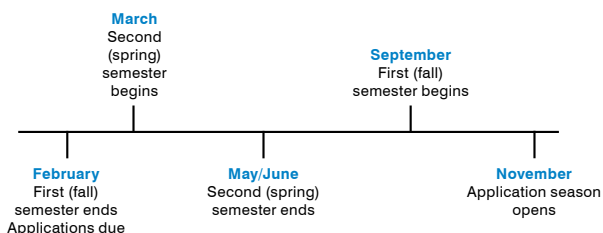
**Good to Know:** An undergraduate degree is known as a *licence*, and can be completed in three years. Exceptions exist, as some professional degrees follow a different curriculum and may be longer programs. Students can also choose to pursue short programs or summer programs in France to prepare themselves for a degree program.

While programs are mainly taught in French and require French proficiency, more than 1,500 undergraduate and graduate programs are offered in English, across a variety of fields. Students can search programs with English as the language of instruction using Campus France's Taught in English platform.

International students who obtain French degrees in certain specific fields—for example medicine, law, architecture, accounting, and engineering—may have to complete additional courses/exams and meet other requirements in order to be able to practice outside of France.

**Academic Calendar:** The university academic year typically begins in September and ends in May or June, and is always divided into two semesters of between 12 and 14 weeks each. The academic calendar, including dates of vacations, varies widely among institutions.

Students should check with the institutions to which they hope to apply to learn about their specific calendars.



**Search:** Program-specific information can be found on individual institutions' websites, and through [Campus France USA's searchable database](#), which includes a directory of *licence* degree programs. The Campus France website also allows students to [search for programs taught in English](#).

### BIENVENUE EN FRANCE CERTIFICATION

As of Spring 2020, 74 higher education institutions in France have been awarded the Label Bienvenue en France. This is a certification of high quality international student services and the capacity of the institution to welcome, retain, and support international students. Students can search for this Label when researching programs on the Campus France catalogs.

**Apply:** International students who wish to enroll as a first-year undergraduate in France apply via Campus France, with several exceptions, such as students seeking admission to a *grande école*, engineering school, preparatory classes, or other selective programs. Campus France charges an application fee of 205 US dollars. Campus France not only streamlines the process of applying to multiple institutions but also offers applicants advice about degree programs and tips on how students can improve their chance of acceptance at their top choice institutions. Students are assigned a representative who they can contact by email or by phone.

Students can apply to up to three programs, offered by the same university or by different universities. Admission examinations will simultaneously start in March by all three selected choices at the same time. All institutions will have to respond—either accepted or refused—to candidates by April 30. All candidates will have to accept one admission offer by early May. If denied admission to all three of their choices, a student can apply again the following year.

**Deadlines:** The applications season typically starts in November and ends in early January. The exact dates are usually released in November.

Photo courtesy of Zoey



France

**“Traveling is one of my favorite things to do, and not only can I say that I have studied in France (in French) but once you’re in Europe, you can travel to other countries very easily and inexpensively.”**

—Zoey Ginsberg, Texas, Université Nice Sophia Antipolis

**Application Fees:** Public universities do not charge application fees.

The Campus France application fee of US\$205 covers the application process for international students entering the first year of an undergraduate degree program.

**Admission Requirements:** Students must meet the equivalent requirements of the French Baccalaureate. A high school diploma, the IB diploma, or an equivalent (such as a GED) is required, as are official high school transcripts. It is recommended, though not mandatory, that students submit scores from AP exams, the SAT, or other tests. While these additional performance indicators are not officially recognized by French institutions, they add value to admission applications.

There is no standardized official equivalency recognition of AP, IB, or other non-European Union qualifications. Each institution has full discretion to admit applicants and determine the level at which they will be admitted.

Diplomas and transcripts must be translated into French by a certified translation service (such as one



recommended by the American Translators Association) and uploaded as part of the Campus France application.

A curriculum vitae and goals statement in French are required. In general, universities are looking for information not addressed in the other required application documents, such as motivation to study in France, interests and strengths, and academic and career goals. Recommendation letters and internship documents can improve the chances of being admitted. Although submitting at least one letter of recommendation is strongly advised, it is not mandatory.

International students who wish to apply to a French-language undergraduate program must take the TCF-DAP (*Test de Connaissance du Français – Demande d'Admission Préalable*) to demonstrate language proficiency. The required level is B2 of the European Framework for Languages. Students that have completed a French Baccalaureate are exempt from this test, and in some cases other French proficiency tests.

**Upon Acceptance:** A student's application is either accepted or rejected; French institutions do not utilize wait lists. Once accepted, students will be asked to confirm their intent to enroll. Students then receive a pre-inscription acceptance letter from Campus France that will allow them to apply for a student visa.

Upon arrival in France, students must finalize course registration with the institution's registration office.

**Tuition and Fees:** The cost of studying in France is among the lowest in the world. For both French and foreign students, the government subsidizes two-thirds of the tuition fees in higher public institutions.

For 2020–2021, the tuition fees for international students at French public universities will be 2,770 euros per year for a *licence*. Annual tuition rates at private institutions—including *grandes écoles* and professional schools, such as schools of business and management—are generally higher, with annual tuition ranging from 3,000 to 20,000 euros.

Most universities, however, offer tuition exemptions for international students. Candidates should check with their prospective institutions in which they intend to apply to verify their effective tuition fees for the upcoming school year.

Many scholarship options are available for US students. Some

institutions accept FAFSA, but students are advised to check directly with their prospective institutions for loan options.

**Housing:** Students are encouraged to secure housing upon being accepted to a university and well before they arrive in France. Contact the institution's office for incoming international students or student association. Both should be able to provide a list of housing options along with tips on how to get started.

Campus France also has housing resources.

Many students choose to live in student dormitories. Dormitories for students enrolled in public universities are managed by regional student-service agencies known as CROUS (*Centre régional des œuvres universitaires et scolaires*). As CROUS dorms are the most affordable form of student housing, they are highly sought after. Rent varies from 120 euros to 350 euros per month.

There are also a number of privately-run dormitories that house students. These residences are also highly sought after and typically more expensive, their rent ranging between 300 and 700 euros per month depending on location.

International students are eligible for government assistance for housing expenses. Short-term accommodations, including homestays with host families, are another option.

**Visas and Other Permits:** International students who plan to study for more than 90 days in France must apply for a student visa. Students should first log on to France-Visas, the official website for visa applications.





The “visa wizard” will assist students in preparing their applications and includes a list of required documents. Students will then apply in person through their [local VFS visa center](#). Students are advised to take into account possible processing delays when scheduling their visa appointments. It may take up to three weeks after the visa appointment to receive the student visa. The appointment must take place within a 90 period before the start date of the program.

International undergraduates pursuing their first year of study are eligible for a [long-stay visa with residency permit](#) (VLS-TS – *Visa Long Séjour Valant Titre de Séjour*), which must be validated once they arrive in the country by the [Directorate General of Foreigners in France](#).

For information about visa fees, students and counselors should consult the [France-Visas website](#).

Registration to social security is free and mandatory for all students in France. Students will need to [register online](#) in order to cover most of their health care expenses throughout their time in higher education. Students may choose to increase the amount of healthcare expenses that are reimbursed by taking out complementary health insurance, or *mutuelle*. Practical information about social security, health, and insurance is provided on the [Campus France website](#). International students have the right to work while studying in France as long as they are enrolled in an institution that participates in the national student health care plan. US students must also hold a valid residency permit. The law allows students to work 964 hours in a given year, which corresponds to 60 percent of full-time employment for the year.

**Advice from the Field:** Campus France is available to respond to follow-up questions from counselors regarding student applications. US counselors may contact Campus France at [Washington@campusfrance.org](mailto:Washington@campusfrance.org). Include “NACAC counselors” in the subject line of the email.

[Campus France USA's Facebook page](#) is another good source of information. [France Alumni](#), a digital bilingual platform, was created to unite, inform, and guide professionals who have completed part of all of their studies in the French education system, and may also be a useful resource for prospective students looking to begin their studies.

In recent years, French universities have developed dedicated resources for international students, and made international student recruitment, retention, and support one of their top priorities. Many French universities have dedicated departments to help international students find housing, adjust to life in France, and succeed academically.

Study of economics, social and political history, and the hard sciences, is popular at French institutions. Furthermore, graduates of French universities in fields strongly associated with France and French culture—such as gastronomy, hospitality, and fashion—may have a competitive advantage in related job markets.

In France, there are a number of support structures to help students with disabilities succeed academically and professionally. Campus France has a [website](#) dedicated to being a student with a disability in France.



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Learn more at [nacacfairs.org](http://nacacfairs.org).





# GERMANY

**Brief Background:** In 2013, the [German Academic Exchange Service \(DAAD\)](#) launched its Strategy 2020 campaign, which includes a goal of hosting at least 350,000 international students in Germany by 2020. Toward that end, Germany's public universities offer more than 2,000 degree programs taught in English, though most are at the graduate level. In 2017, Germany reached the goal set in Strategy 2020; it hosted 358,900 foreign students, 5,839 of whom were US students.

DAAD's commitment to the internationalization of its higher education landscape was further discussed in the organizations recently released [2025 strategy](#). The strategy aims to improve the academic success of international students so that they may be as successful as their German peers. With this, DAAD is committed to shaping foreign science policy, and expand international university relations in the 2020s, according to the strategy. The strategy builds on the strength of the German university and science system: partnership, freedom of science, and a commitment to the joint solution to pressing global issues.

Germany is home to more than 427 state-accredited universities in 180 towns and cities countrywide, of which 120 are private institutions. There are three types of higher education institutions in Germany: universities, universities of applied sciences, and colleges of art, film, and music. Universities offer strong theoretical and academically-oriented degree programs in a broad range of disciplines. Instruction at universities of applied sciences is very practice-oriented, and internships are an integral part of the degree program. Colleges of art, film, and music are for students who want to develop their

artistic talents, and instruction at most of these institutions is in German only.

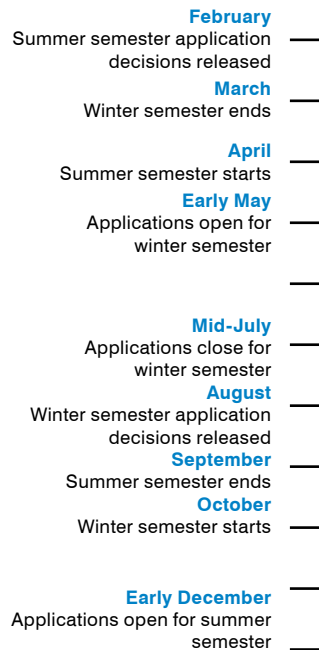
Subjects popular among international students include economics and business administration, Germanic studies, electrical engineering, computer science, and music. In 2016, approximately one-third of all international students studied at the undergraduate level, though this increases to more than 60 percent at universities of applied sciences.

**Good to Know:** More than 90 percent of all university students in Germany, domestic and international, are enrolled in public universities, where they must choose and specialize in a specific course of study when they first apply. Students pursuing a bachelor's degree can complete their studies in six to eight semesters. Undergraduate programs in Germany are very structured in terms of course selection, when compared with programs at many American liberal arts colleges. Students are encouraged to study the German language even if they enroll in English-taught programs.

Private universities in Germany offer undergraduate and graduate programs. These institutions typically offer more of a US-style campus experience.

**Academic Calendar:** At German universities the academic year is divided into two terms: the winter semester (October to March) and summer semester (April to September).

Sometimes students sit for exams during breaks between semesters. They also use breaks to travel, work, or do internships.



**Search:** Several websites are designed to help international students find best-fit opportunities, including the DAAD-sponsored [Study in Germany website](#) where students can plan their studies by searching and viewing programs according to the language in which the course is offered.

**Apply:** Upon identifying their desired program of study, US students should check to see if the university offering it is a member of [Uni-Assist](#). Uni-Assist is an application service that evaluates international documents and credentials for roughly 180 member universities. If the university is part of the Uni-Assist network, international students must apply using the Uni-Assist application service. If the university is not a member of Uni-Assist, international students can apply directly to the institution. Applications from international students whose credentials are determined by Uni-Assist to meet the standards for admission to German university study programs are forwarded to the individual university. The university itself makes the final admission decision.

In most cases, students can apply to as many programs as they would like. For high demand subjects, including medicine, veterinary science, pharmacy, and dentistry, the number of spaces available is restricted. These programs are designated *numerus clausus*, referencing the “closed number” of spaces. Students interested in these areas of study are advised to directly contact their universities of choice for details.

**Deadlines:** Applications for the winter semester can be submitted from late May through mid-July, though some universities have deadlines as early as the end of May. Applicants who will not receive their high



Photo courtesy of Riley

**“Germany is a beautiful country with a rich history and easy access to other major European cities. The biggest challenge has been the language barrier, especially when dealing with bureaucratic matters, but trust yourself to find your own path in a completely new country.”**

—Riley Newman-Gatton, Washington, Jacobs University

school diploma until after the application deadline are advised to contact the specific university and program for guidance. Decision notifications generally begin in August. Summer semester submission season runs from early December to mid-January, with notification beginning in February.

**Application Fees:** Uni-Assist charges 75 euros for the first application, and 30 euros for each additional application submitted for the same semester. Other fees for translation services, notarized copies, and exams (see “Admission Requirements”) may also apply.

**Admission Requirements:** Many German universities require the equivalent of a German state-accredited Abitur qualification, a document issued to German secondary school students who have passed their final exams.

International students can either qualify for direct admission to a course of study or general admission to a preparatory program, depending on their

preparation in high school. To find out if you meet the criteria, use this [Uni-Assist tool](#). Early academic planning will help ensure admission requirements are able to be met. Applicants should go to [Uni-Assist](#) for the most up to date information on requirements and consult with the [International Office](#) at the chosen higher education institution.

Direct entry is typically possible with a US high school diploma—as long as the student has completed prerequisite courses—and one of the following: two years at a college, an associate degree, or four advanced placement exams for direct subject-restricted admission. An IB diploma that fulfills [Germany's IB requirements](#) also qualifies students for direct admission.

Applicants who do not fulfill direct admission requirements but have a US high school diploma may qualify for general admission to a preparatory program, undertaken at a Studienkolleg, which offers foundational courses to prepare international students for university. In some cases, students may sit for the university qualification exam, known as *Feststellungsprüfung*. An IB diploma that does not include six mandated examination subjects would also qualify students for a preparatory program. See the [Studienkolleg website](#) for more information.

For *numerus clausus* courses, admission is based on a calculated average grade, which takes into account applicants' high school grades and standardized test scores. Because admission is competitive, successful applicants usually have strong grades and test scores.

GEDs issued by individual states are not accepted by German universities. Moreover, students who were homeschooled for the entirety or part of their studies in grades 9-12 would not be considered eligible for admission to German universities.

With some exceptions, students who plan to enroll in programs taught in German must submit scores from either the German Language University Entrance Examination for Foreign Applicants (DSH) or the Test of German as a Foreign Language (TestDaF). Completion of certain Studienkolleg preparatory courses may also satisfy German *language* requirements. More information on language requirements can be found through [Study in Germany](#).

Students applying to English-taught programs generally do not have to demonstrate German proficiency.

Letters of recommendation are usually not necessary, though some programs may require them.

**Upon Acceptance:** Universities typically accept or deny students; conditional offers are uncommon. If accepted, the university will advise students on what paperwork they need to complete.

**Tuition and Fees:** Tuition, even for international students, is generally free at all German public

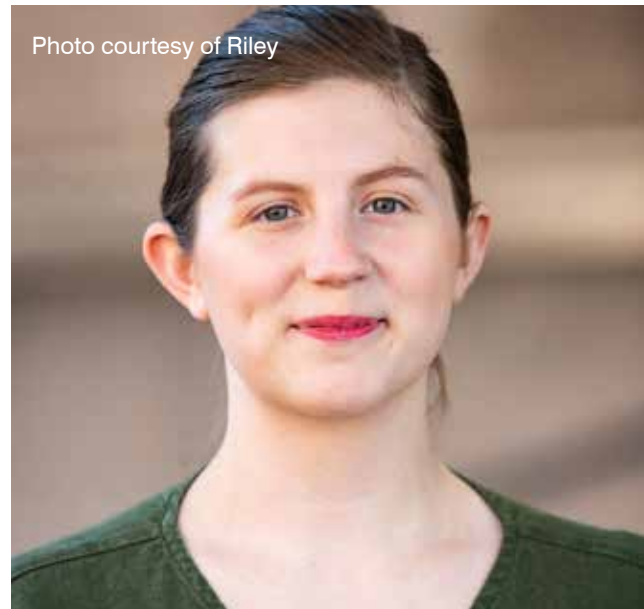


Photo courtesy of Riley

Germany

**“Choosing a residential international university made all the difference for me. Living among students from all over the world has been the most enlightening part of my undergraduate experience.”**

—Riley Newman-Gatton, Washington, Jacobs University

universities, though students are required to pay fees each semester for public transportation, meals in the dining halls, use of athletic facilities, and cultural programming. The fees average about 250 euros per semester, but vary by university. Universities in the state of Baden-Württemberg, however, charge 1,500 euros for students from outside the European Union, with some exceptions for exchange students and researchers.

Private German universities charge tuition, some up to 20,000 euros per year. Some schools offer flexible financing options, such as allowing students to defer fee payment until after graduation when they have secured employment.

The [DAAD website](#) includes a database of merit-based scholarship opportunities for international students.

**Housing:** Students typically live in either a student residence hall or private accommodation. The [DAAD website](#) offers an online search tool based on a student's destination; see “Plan Your Stay.” This search feature allows students to view options, locations and prices, the related application process, and deadlines for securing a spot.

Campus life at German institutions is typical of European universities. Many students live off campus in shared or single apartments. Dormitories with cafeterias and meal programs are not usually available at the larger public universities. Most offer only shared kitchen spaces.



**Visa and Other Permits:** Although US citizens are eligible to enter Germany without a visa, students can apply for a student visa from a German embassy or consulate prior to departing for Germany. This will facilitate their application for a residence permit, which is required. Students must apply for a valid residence permit within their first three months in Germany.

To apply for this permit, students must first find accommodations and obtain a confirmation of registration (*Meldebestätigung*) document from the local Residents' Registration Office. Students will also need the following when applying for a residence permit: passport, letter of university acceptance, evidence they can cover the expected cost of their education and living expenses (approximately 853 euros per month or 10,236 euros per year), and proof of health insurance. Additional documents may also be required.

The residence permit is valid for two years and must be renewed before it expires. An extension of the residence permit will usually be granted provided the student shows proof from their university that their studies are proceeding properly. For more information on German visa regulations, visit the [German Federal Foreign Office website](#).

Fees for residence permits vary according to location but cost up to 75 euros. Additional guidance

about specific locations can be obtained through the [German Consulates General](#). Non-European Union (EU) students can work 120 full days or 240 half-days per year—or more if a work permit is obtained—excluding research assistant work. Germany has recently eased its post-study work eligibility requirements for students. After graduation, international students can extend their residence permits by 18 months in order to find a job, beginning from the date their final exam results are issued. If they obtain a job in Germany, after two years of work they can apply for permanent residency status.

**Advice from the Field:** General queries can be directed to The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) via email at [daadny@daad.org](mailto:daadny@daad.org). DAAD also provides numerous resources about studying in Germany:

- [A pocket guide for international students](#)
- [A practical guide for international students](#).

Academic standards across German universities are high and generally consistent among institutions.

While some programs in Germany may be taught in English, the majority are not. To take full advantage of their experience, students are encouraged to learn some German either before or during their studies.



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# IRELAND

**Brief Background:** Ireland has a long history of welcoming international students, going back more than a thousand years to when it was known as the Land of Saints and Scholars. In 2017-18, more than 12,000 international students from the United States studied in Ireland's public higher education institutions. International students globally made up around 16 percent of all higher education enrollments in Ireland. The United States, China, and France are the top places of origin among full-time international students in Ireland, according to IIE's Project Atlas.

Recognizing the value that international students contribute to the education system, and to society in general, Ireland launched Irish Educated, Globally Connected—an international education strategy for 2016 through 2020. This strategy aims to support the development of global citizens through Ireland's high-quality education system by attracting talent from around the world to its educational institutions, and equipping students with the skills and experience they need to compete internationally.

## IRISH UNIVERSITIES

Dublin City University  
Maynooth University  
National University of Ireland, Galway  
Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland  
Technological University Dublin  
Trinity College Dublin  
University College Cork  
University College Dublin  
University of Limerick

Ireland's higher education offerings include nine universities, five public colleges, 11 institutes of technology, and eight private colleges. Irish qualifications are internationally recognized and the full academic range of studies is available, including the arts and humanities, social sciences, medicine, business, and engineering. In the past 30 years, successive Irish governments have put enormous resources into education and research. As a result, the reputation of its higher education system has grown considerably, and its research is now making an international impact. In the 2019 QS World University Rankings, several individual institutions rank in the global top 50 for a diverse range of key subjects including English, politics, and veterinary science; and in the top 100 for history, pharmacy, and biology.

Ireland is also where some of the world's biggest and best companies have located key, strategic research facilities. These include nine of the world's top 10 information and communication technology (ICT) companies; nine of the world's top 10 pharmaceutical and life science companies; and half of the world's major financial services companies. Companies include Boston Scientific, Pfizer, Apple, Facebook, and Google. CEOs of these cutting edge global companies repeatedly point to the strengths of Irish-educated graduates as crucial to their decision to establish facilities in Ireland.

Irish higher education emphasizes the experiential aspects of degree programs, allowing students to gain practical, hands-on experience throughout their academic journey. The proximity to so many innovative companies and organizations grants students unique opportunity to engage with their career fields throughout their education, ensuring that they graduate with the critical skills and experiences they will need in today's economy.

[Education in Ireland's website](#) addresses many questions about studying in Ireland, lists internationally recognized and approved programs, and provides links to the websites of Irish universities.

**Good to Know:** Most undergraduate degrees take four years to complete, though there are some programs that can be completed in three. Courses offered by the institutes of technology range in duration from two to four years. Course typically refers to an academic program of study. Undergraduates can directly enter professional programs in medicine, veterinary medicine, dentistry, and law.

Most Irish degree programs do not include general education requirements. However, several universities offer bachelors' degrees in liberal arts.

When applying, students are advised to consider choosing a general area of interest and refrain from being too specific. Business students, for instance, can begin to specialize in accounting or finance once at university. Students who want to change their major will likely need to start their coursework over.

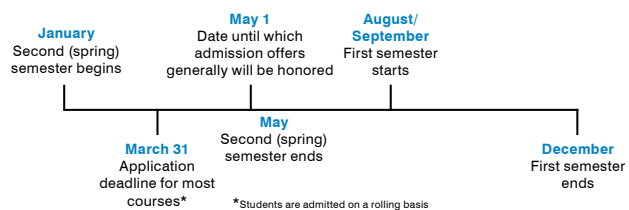
**Search:** Students can search by city, course, and university through the [Education in Ireland website](#). Each institution will have information about its courses on its website along with testimonials, interviews and, in some cases, videos.

**Apply:** Programs and application processes vary across Irish universities, but overall the application process is straightforward. Applications are made directly to each institution, and students apply directly to their intended course of study. Students can apply to more than one course at a particular university. Special subjects such as law, medicine, dentistry and veterinary can all be done at an undergraduate level in Ireland and applicants may apply directly to the institution.

**Atlantic Bridge** is an application system, similar to the Common App, which allows international students to apply for medicine, dentistry, physiotherapy, and pharmacy programs at six different Irish universities.

**Application Fees:** Application fees vary among different institutions, and average 50 euros.

**Academic Calendar:** Academic schedules in Ireland begin in late August or early September and end the following May. Specific dates will vary slightly, but generally universities operate on a semester schedule, with mid-term breaks in the fall and spring semesters, and winter and summer vacations.



**“The best part of attending university in Ireland is the curriculum, the diversity on campus, the clubs/ societies, and events, as well as the opportunity to travel throughout Europe.”**

—Alyssa Rogers, New Jersey, University College Dublin

**Deadlines:** The initial deadline for applications varies by course and institution. Some are as early as Feb. 1, but most deadlines are around March 31. Students are admitted on a rolling basis beginning in October, and offers will generally be honored until May 1. The late application deadline stretches until July 1. In some cases, applications may be considered beyond this date.

**Admission Requirements:** Requirements vary by institution, but three types of credentials are generally accepted: IB Diploma, French Baccalaureate, or a combination of high school grades and standardized test scores. Some schools require additional written materials—personal essays, writing samples, and in some cases both. Depending on the institution, students may be required to submit up to two recommendation letters for each course to which they apply.

**Upon Acceptance:** Students interested in scholarship opportunities should research scholarship deadlines and begin submitting applications once they have received an offer of admission. More information on scholarships can be found on the [Education in Ireland website](#).

**Tuition and Fees:** Tuition for full-time undergraduate programs ranges from 10,000 to 22,000 euros per year, though tuition for medical and related fields is usually much higher.

All Irish universities are approved by the US Department of Education to accept federal financial aid loans and private student loans.

**Housing:** On-campus housing is provided for all first-year international students at every university; the average cost is 9,000 euros per year. Following their first year, students are responsible for securing housing. Estimated expenses beyond tuition range between 9,000 and 12,000 euros per year based on accommodations and personal lifestyle.

**Visa and Other Permits:** US citizens do not need a visa to study in Ireland. However, all students from outside the European Union must register with the Garda National Immigration Bureau (GNIB) within seven days of arriving in Ireland. To register, students must present a letter of acceptance from an Irish institution confirming their place in a recognized program, furnish evidence of having private health insurance, and show proof of sufficient funds (at least 3,000 euros) to cover accommodation and living expenses.

International students studying full-time in Ireland can work up to 20 hours a week or up to 40 hours during holiday breaks. International students who have graduated from an Irish institution can also work in Ireland for one year after graduation.

International students are required to have private health insurance. Students who purchase insurance from their home country must ensure that the insurance will be valid in Ireland and in any other country where the student might travel during their studies. If a student is part of a group insurance program operated by the university he or she will attend, a letter of enrollment mentioning this will be adequate proof for the GNIB authorities.

**Advice from the Field:** University specific inquiries can be sent to [educationinireland@enterprise-ireland.com](mailto:educationinireland@enterprise-ireland.com). Questions will then be directed to an international recruitment specialist at the university of interest.

Each university in Ireland has its own alumni networks. These have global representatives focused on supporting and organizing events for alumni around the world.



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\*THES Impact Rankings 2020



# ISRAEL

**Brief Background:** With 4,000 years of history, students are drawn to Israeli culture and its excellent academics. Higher education institutions are known worldwide for their award-winning faculty members, cutting-edge research and innovative programs, with several universities ranked among the highest in the world.

Internationalization is a central priority for the Israeli government, which has committed to significantly increasing the number of international students in the country. The Council for Higher Education of Israel, the statutory government agency responsible for all matters related to higher education, has defined internationalization in higher education as a main priority in its multi-year strategy (2017-2022). As part of this strategy, the Council for Higher Education seeks to attract top-tier international students to Israel (degree-seeking students, short-term programs, and post-doctoral researchers), to develop Israeli students' international competence, further international research collaborations, and advance strategic partnerships with leading universities worldwide.

In 2018-2019, there were approximately 12,000 international students in Israel, including students participating in study abroad, short-term programs, and post-doctoral research. Israel aims to increase this number to 24,000 by 2023. In order to achieve this goal, significant resources have been invested in developing English courses and programs and creating the institutional capacity to recruit and support international students.

Students have the opportunity to study at one of the following types of institutions:

## **Universities**

All universities in Israel are publicly funded institutions. There are eight universities in Israel: Technion – Israel Institute of Technology, Tel Aviv University, Bar Ilan University, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Ben-Gurion University, Ariel University, Weizmann Institute of Science, and the University of Haifa. These institutions engage in teaching and advanced research for undergraduate degrees, master's degrees, and doctoral degrees in a wide range of fields. A notable exception is the Weizmann Institute of Science, which offers only graduate and post-graduate degrees.

## **Public Academic Colleges**

Public academic colleges offer undergraduate and often master's degree programs in a variety of fields, some of which are more professionally oriented. Some of the academic faculty in these institutions conduct their own research. Institutions in this category include general colleges, arts institutes such as Bezalel & Shenkar, the Jerusalem Academy for Music & Dance, and several engineering colleges.

## **Private Academic Colleges**

Private academic colleges offer undergraduate and often master's level education in various fields, particularly in the social sciences. These institutions are not financed by the state. Tuition is higher than at subsidized public institutions. In these institutions, some of the faculty are involved in research. There are 11 private academic colleges in Israel. The Interdisciplinary Center Herzliya is one private academic college that has numerous bachelor and master degree programs in English and a large international student body.

### Academic Teacher Training Colleges

Academic teacher training colleges are publicly funded and offer undergraduate and master's degrees in education. There are 21 teacher training colleges.

### The Open University

This institution offers undergraduate and master's degree studies. However, the teaching methods employed are typical of open universities around the world, namely, online teaching and distance learning. The Open University is publicly funded.

**Good to Know:** Undergraduate degrees in Israel are generally completed in three years, with engineering degrees spanning four years. Due to mandatory military service in Israel, students usually begin academic studies around the age of 22-24. The average age at graduation from bachelor's degrees is over 27.

Israel prides itself on its excellent higher education system and is home to several leading universities and top professors. Due to the informal culture of Israeli society, and its flat hierarchy, students can engage intimately in this academic environment. Students take an active role in their studies, debate and collaborate with their professors, and develop entrepreneurial skills that will jump-start their careers.

Israel is a world leader in science and engineering. Israeli scientists have won four Nobel Prizes in chemistry, three Turing Awards (the highest distinction in computer science), and one Fields Medal and one Abel Prize (awarded for excellence in mathematics). Israel ranks seventh globally in the number of citations per scientific publication and is particularly strong in computer science, engineering, chemistry, and life sciences. Studying these fields in Israel will give students the chance to work with leading researchers and in cutting-edge facilities.

Israelis are known as out-of-the-box thinkers, making Israel the "Start-Up Nation" and the reason leading companies from around the world have opened research and development centers in Israel. This sense of innovation is rooted in Israel's higher education institutions, with many academic programs targeted for students who want to succeed in business and entrepreneurship. Some programs include opportunities to conduct internships in leading companies from around the world, giving students the opportunity to receive career skills and build their résumés.

Many of Israel's higher education institutions are engaged in teaching and research related to agriculture and sustainability, which are of critical importance to the world's environment. Since the first kibbutz farmers struck their hoes in Israeli soil, a great deal of progress has been made in the country's agriculture sector. Israel's challenging environment and lack of natural resources has led it to become an agricultural "incubator" of ideas, developing new kinds of plants as well as revolutionary agricultural innovations. Drip irrigation technologies are one famous example of Israel's success in this field.



Photo courtesy of the Embassy of Israel

Israel

**“I was excited to study in Israel because its educational culture is very different from what I experienced in the US. The professional opportunities also drew my attention along with the cost difference when compared to the schools I applied to in the US.”**

—Yishai Markovitz, Minnesota, Tel Aviv University

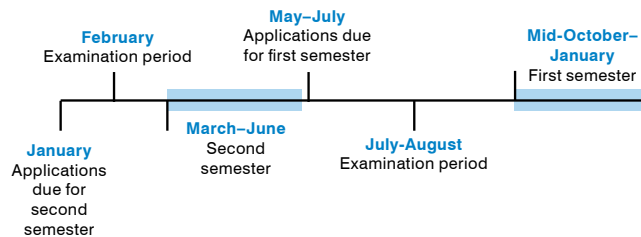
Israel also offers students an unparalleled opportunity to acquire an in-depth understanding of the political, social, and economic dimensions of the Middle East and the international diplomatic arena. The birthplace of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, Israel is the perfect place to study religion—especially Jewish studies, with some of the world's top scholars based there. Archaeology programs are also very strong, with students having the ability to study ruins dating thousands of years old.

International students are welcomed in Israeli universities and colleges. As a result of the national policy, Israeli universities and colleges have invested significant resources into developing their international affairs and international student support services. All universities and colleges that offer programs in English have dedicated staff who ensure that international students receive all support necessary, from academics to student life, housing, and wellbeing.

**Academic Calendar:** The academic calendar in Israel begins in mid- to late-October, following the Jewish high holiday season, with the first semester generally ending in mid- to late-January. Following a month-long break, which includes the examination period, the second semester begins in March and continues until the end of June. The examination period takes place in July and August. Students in Israel are given the opportunity to re-take tests for most courses, which extends this period. Some higher education institutions hold summer semester courses from July to September.

Universities and colleges are closed for a two-week Passover vacation in April.

Some higher education institutions hold orientation and preparatory courses from August to September for first-year students in undergraduate degree programs.



**Search:** The Council for Higher Education manages the [Study in Israel](#) website, which provides information to international students about the country's higher education system. The website includes a list of all Israeli universities and colleges as well as a search engine of all courses of study taught in English.

**Apply:** Students must apply directly to a course of study at the relevant university or college. International student applications are generally processed by the institution's international center/school/office. There is no restriction on the number of applications a student may submit to the country's various higher education institutions.

**Deadlines:** Applications for fall semester must generally be submitted from May to late July. In order to start in the spring semester, students generally must apply by January.

**Application Fees:** Each university or college determines its application fees. Fees are generally US\$100 to US\$150 per application.

**Admission Requirements:** Applicants must submit an application form, high school diploma and transcripts, and two recommendation letters. Most programs require at least one recommendation to be from someone qualified to comment on the student's academic abilities. Standardized test scores are also required. Depending on the country of origin, this may be SAT, ACT, or Aptitude Scholastic Test (AST). Additionally, students who are non-native English speakers must also submit English proficiency test scores from TOEFL or IELTS.

Some institutions require personal essays and résumés, as well. In addition, depending on the program, there might be additional math or science requirements. For example, engineering programs require a background in physics and/or SAT subject tests in math and physics.

As admission requirements vary between institutions and programs, it is important to verify requirements with the institution.

**Upon Acceptance:** Most universities review student applications upon submission and rolling admission is utilized. Admitted students are required to pay a deposit to secure their spot. Students will receive a letter of admission, which must be presented to acquire a student visa.

**Tuition and Fees:** Israeli higher education tuition fees are competitive compared to average costs of college in the United States. Tuition varies depending on the institution and program, with undergraduate tuition ranging from US\$4,000 to US\$15,000.

Financial aid is offered by all colleges and universities and scholarships are offered based on merit and need. Many organizations and nonprofits also provide scholarships for international students in Israel. American students are eligible to apply for US Federal Student Aid for undergraduate programs at most Israeli higher education institutions that offer full degree programs in English.

Photo courtesy of the Embassy of Israel





**Housing:** International students are eligible to live in on-campus housing, pending availability. Students sign up for dormitories when registering for the academic year. Dorms are furnished and maintained by the university. Information about on-campus housing is provided upon admission.

The international schools and centers have dedicated student life coordinators, all fluent in English, who are available 24/7 for their students. The institutions organize social events and trips for international students around Israel. Many universities and colleges also provide “buddy systems” which give international students the opportunity to meet and build real friendships with Israeli students, as well as integrate into and experience Israeli society and culture.

**Visa and Other Permits:** In order to study in Israel, international students will need an A/2 student visa. Applications should be submitted to the Israeli embassy or consulate in their home country. Once granted, the visa is valid for up to one year and allows for multiple entrances and exits from the country.

In order to be granted a visa, the following items are needed:

- Completed and signed application for a visa to enter Israel
- Two passport-sized pictures

- A formal letter of acceptance for studies from a recognized higher education institution in Israel
- Proof that the student has the financial means to cover their studies and living costs for the duration of their stay in Israel
- A travel document (e.g., passport) that is valid for the entire period of study and another six months beyond that. If the country has a diplomatic mission in Israel, the passport only needs to be valid for at least a year.
- Fee payment
- International undergraduate students are not permitted to work in Israel.

**Advice from the Field:** Most of the universities have active alumni chapters and conduct activities for alumni in different parts of the world, with a strong focus on the United States.

It is important to note that most degree programs in Israel, which are open to international students, are designed for English speakers and are taught in English. There are opportunities for students to take a Hebrew “Ulpan”—an intensive Hebrew study program that is centered around everyday conversations—which will help students navigate the country when traveling.

Academic programs offer a diverse selection of internship programs for students to gain experience in their field of interest during their studies.

Israel



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# ITALY

**Brief Background:** Art and culture play a very important role in a country where beauty, design, good taste, and fashion are an everyday imperative. Italy's charms—a diverse landscape, an immense cultural and historical legacy, iconic and historic sites, incomparable cuisine, an impressive history of inventions and discoveries—are attractive to tourists and international students. It boasts the greatest number of UNESCO world heritage sites of any country and is also home of the oldest European university—the University of Bologna, which was established in 1088. This, coupled with high quality university education, makes Italy an ideal place for living and studying.

The Italian education system is composed of 127 universities, 14 national research centers, and 145 higher education institutions in arts, dance, and music (referred to as *alta formazione artistica e musicale* or AFAM). The 2019 *Times Higher Education World University Rankings* ranked 27 Italian universities among the top 500 universities in the world. According to the Italian Ministry of Education, University and Research, approximately 100,000 international students were pursuing degree programs in 2017-2018. Italy is the second leading destination country in the world for US students studying abroad, only after the UK, according to IIE's 2019 Open Doors Report. In 2017-18, 37,000 US students studied in Italy for academic credit.

Italian universities use the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), which is designed to facilitate international mobility within different educational systems. It is a central tool in the Bologna Process, which aims to make academic credits more easily transferable between different national education systems. Italy is also part of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), the result of collaborative efforts of 48 countries to reform higher education on the basis of common key values.

For participating countries, the main goal is to increase staff and students' mobility and to facilitate employability. International students enrolled in Italian universities benefit from these policies.

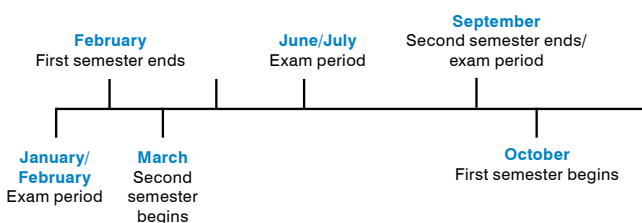
**Good to Know:** Bachelor's degrees are known as *laurea*, or first cycle degrees, and last three years. A high school diploma is the common requirement for admission to a first cycle degree. Students who are interested in continuing their studies can pursue a master's degree or *laurea magistrale*, which may be required for work in certain fields. These programs typically last two years.

For some subjects (i.e., law, medicine and surgery, veterinary science, dentistry and dental prostheses, pharmacy, chemistry and pharmaceutical technology, architecture, building engineering, and primary education sciences) there is a common study path without division between bachelor's and master's degrees. Called a single cycle master's degree (*laurea magistrale a ciclo unico*), such programs can last from five to six years depending on the subject. To be admitted, students need to have a high school diploma and meet other subject-specific criteria. For example, applicants for medicine, veterinary science, and dentistry (which are *numerus clausus* programs—a process used to manage enrollment size), must pass a national exam that can be in Italian or English, and which takes place on the same day and time at all Italian universities. The results are valid at the national level.

Students interested in arts, music, dance, and theater can apply to AFAM institutions to acquire knowledge of artistic methods and techniques. As at universities, AFAM students spend three years to get a first level academic diploma and two years for a second level academic diploma.

Most courses are taught in Italian, but many courses are also offered in English. An international student can choose to apply to a course fully taught in English or fully taught in Italian. Applicants to English courses may be required to submit an English proficiency certificate. For courses taught in Italian, international students have to pass an Italian language exam to be admitted. Visit the [Lingua Italiana website](#) for additional information on language certification.

**Academic Calendar:** Depending on the institution and program, the academic year is generally divided into two semesters: the first one starts in October and ends in February (with a break for Christmas and New Year's), and the second one starts in March and ends in September (with a break in August for summer holidays). Each semester, a certain number of weeks are devoted to lessons and the other weeks are dedicated to exams. Students are required to take an exam at the end of each course, which may be written and/or oral. The length of exam sessions may vary among universities, but they are usually held in the months of January-February, June-July, and September.



**Search:** For more information about the availability of university courses taught fully in English, enrollment requirements, and visa information, please visit the following websites:

- [University](#) run by the Italian Ministry of Education, Universities and Research
- [Study in Italy](#) run by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation
- [Uni-Italia](#), an association that promotes academic study in Italy

**Apply:** Applications are made directly to each institution. Deadlines, required documents, language certificates, etc., can vary across Italian institutions. Some may require students to participate in an interview using Skype or another online communication tools.

Medicine, veterinary science, architecture, health care professions, and primary education sciences are courses of study with restricted admission because the number of applicants is greater than the number of spots available in the course of study. Each year, the Italian Ministry of Education establishes a quota for the number of international students who can be admitted.

**Deadlines:** Each institution/program sets its own deadlines, so students should check each university's website.



**Application Fees:** It is common for higher education institutions to charge an application fee—typically several dozen euros. The amount varies by institution.

**Admission Requirements:** To be admitted to an Italian university, international students have to demonstrate academic eligibility for university study in their country of origin. Examples include a US high school diploma or an IB diploma. Students can apply before completing high school, but will need to submit the official, original documents once they are received.

Demonstration of Italian language skills is mandatory for enrolling in courses taught in Italian. If a course is entirely taught in English, students will be required to prove their command of the English language. Always check with Italian institutions as to whether a student's English studies are sufficient to meet this requirement. In these cases, an Italian language test is not required. [Lingua Italiana](#) provides additional information.

**Upon Acceptance:** Each higher education institution will provide admitted students with useful information about next steps, such as documents to translate or to have authenticated through Italian diplomatic representatives at their local consulate or embassy. Once students arrive in Italy, they need to bring all the documents released and sealed by the Italian representatives to their university to finalize enrollment.

Before enrolling in an Italian university, international students pursuing a bachelor's or master's degree must complete a pre-enrollment process through the Italian diplomatic representatives in the student's home country. This is different from having a letter of acceptance and enrolling at the university. This process must be completed before applying for a student visa. Usually this procedure starts in March and finishes in July. For more detailed information, US students can use the [embassy's website](#) to find out which Italian consulate serves their area.

**Tuition and Fees:** Regular tuition fees for EU and non-EU students depend on the student's family income and on the program. On average, public institutions charge 900 to 4,000 euros per year; private institutions charge 6,000 to 20,000 euros per year, not including living expenses and books. In some cases, students need to pay the first installment in advance. The tuition fees may be covered by institutional merit-based scholarships offered annually to talented international students.

**Housing:** Students are encouraged to rent a place to live before leaving for Italy. Many higher education institutions have an office that can help international students find housing.

Renting a private room in an apartment with shared facilities (bathroom, kitchen, etc.) is a popular option for students because the price is more affordable compared to renting an individual apartment. The price for a private room in a shared apartment is around 300 to 600 euros;



Photo courtesy of Carly

**“There are three reasons I always give when people ask me [why I decided to pursue an undergraduate degree outside the United States]: it’s more affordable, it’s only three years, and it’s Italy! Though my university is one of the more expensive in Italy, my entire three-year degree will cost less than one year of tuition at some of the US universities I was considering.”**

—Carly Cornell, Pennsylvania, Bocconi University

the price for an entire apartment could be more than 800 euros. Prices will vary depending on size, location, and city, as well as other factors, such as the apartment's proximity to public transportation and universities.

Depending on a student's financial status and academic merit, students may be eligible for university housing.

**Visa and Other Permits:** US citizens are eligible to enter Italy without a visa for study reasons and for a period of time shorter than 90 days. If students are applying for a study course that is more than 90 days, they need to apply for a student visa through the Italian embassy or consulate in the US prior to departing for Italy. The student visa, called National Visa Type D, is needed to apply for a student residence permit.



To get a student visa, several documents have to be submitted to the Italian diplomatic or consular representatives, which include evidence of the ability to cover living expenses in Italy (approximately 6,000 euros per year) plus the amount of money needed to rent a room/apartment.

Students must apply for a residence permit (which costs about 120 euros) within eight working days of their arrival in Italy. Before applying for a residence permit, which is valid for one year, students need to get a fiscal code (*codice fiscale*) at Italy's Revenue Agency (*Agenzia delle Entrate*) and obtain health insurance.

International students who apply for a residence permit may take out private health insurance, which is very limited and only covers urgent medical assistance. If students prefer to have wider coverage, they can sign up with the national health service (*servizio sanitario nazionale*). This guarantees full health care and ensures students receive the same treatment as Italian citizens. Registration lasts for a year (from Jan. 1 to Dec. 31), is not divisible, and costs about 150 euros. US students who already have private health insurance should check with the Italian diplomatic representatives at their local embassy or consulate as to whether it provides coverage in Italy.

Non-EU students who have a residence permit for study purposes can work part-time for a total of 20 hours a week. Work does not have to be related to students' academic program, but should students work in a related field, they are eligible to gain credits through the ECTS system.

**Advice from the Field:** Students can send questions to Uni-Italia, a nonprofit organization that supports internationalization of Italian higher education institutions, with offices located at the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation. The Uni-Italia association—founded jointly by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation; the Ministry of Education, University and Research; and the Ministry of Interior—has the aim of promoting Italian higher to foreign students and researchers and encouraging academic cooperation between Italy and other foreign countries. Uni-Italia works closely with Italian diplomatic offices across the globe and cooperates with the Italian cultural institutes and the Italian consulates abroad.

Uni-Italia also assists students for the length of their stay. Their aim is to facilitate integration into the new social, academic, and cultural environment. Counselors can reach out to Uni-Italia using the following methods:

1. Email: [student@uni-italia.it](mailto:student@uni-italia.it)
2. Phone: (+39) 06 3691 2651
3. Facebook: Search for Uni-Italia Rome
4. Twitter: @Uni\_Italia
5. Website: [uni-italia.net](http://uni-italia.net)
6. Instagram: [uni\\_italia\\_official](https://www.instagram.com/uni_italia_official)



Photo courtesy of Carly

**“Classes here are very theoretical. They may take some getting used to at first, but in the end, it is interesting to be exposed to a new approach to university education. Academics can be difficult at any of the world’s top universities, but if you attend university in Italy, at least you’ll be living the dolce vita in the process!”**

—Carly Cornell, Pennsylvania, Bocconi University

Though English is spoken widely at universities, Italian is the common language outside the campuses. To enjoy the Italian lifestyle, students are encouraged to learn some Italian before and during their studies.

Graduates of Italian higher education institutions in fields strongly associated with Italy and Italian culture—such as engineering, music, arts, medicine, design, architecture, fashion, economy, and gastronomy—may have an edge over other competitors in the job market.

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# JAPAN

**Brief Background:** In 2008, the Japanese government announced plans to bring 300,000 international students to Japan by 2020. The Japan Student Services Organization (JASSO) reports that international students in Japan numbered over 298,980 in 2018, with significant growth in postsecondary and vocational enrollments. According to JASSO's annual survey of international students, there were 2,932 American students enrolled in Japanese higher education institutions in 2018.

There are hundreds of local and national universities in Japan, varying in size, reputation, and institutional control. The University of Tokyo (known as Todai) and the Kyoto University (known as Kyodai) are considered Japan's top two universities. They are among the country's so-called Ivy League institutions, referred to as the National Seven Universities or the former Imperial Universities.

Though English-taught programs have existed at Japanese universities for decades, the Japanese government has selected 13 universities as members of its Global 30 initiative, which aims to increase the number of programs taught in English as a way to attract more international students to Japan's most prestigious institutions. No Japanese proficiency is required at the time of admission to these programs. Note that most of these universities offer only a small number of places in just a few academic areas.

In 2014, the Japanese government announced special funding for 37 universities through its Top Global Universities Project, part of an effort to boost the presence of Japanese universities in global rankings. Most but not all of these universities offer courses

taught in English; students should carefully check the departments at each university to determine whether English-taught programs are offered.

In addition to English-taught programs, some universities such as Kyoto University and Osaka University are introducing a new bilingual program where students can study in English for a couple of years and then shift a medium of instruction to Japanese (Kyoto University International Undergraduate Program (iUP) and Osaka University International Undergraduate Program in Science (IUPS)). They study Japanese and enhance it to the academic level while studying in English. This would be a good option for those who would like to pursue a specific field of study as well as enhance Japanese to the academic level.

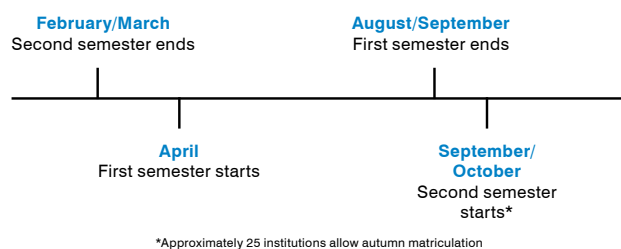
**Good to Know:** To earn a bachelor's degree, a student must study at a university for at least four years. There are no programs in medicine, dentistry, or veterinary science offered in English.

Despite the growth in English-taught programs, many students wishing to study in Japan enroll in a year-long Japanese language course before beginning their academic program. Some universities offer private language programs. Students also have the option of enrolling in separate language institutes. These programs typically educate students about Japanese language, society, and culture.

By law, Japanese universities cannot accept students who will be under age 18 on the first day of their freshman year. If the applicant will be under 18, it may be possible to apply to some universities as a non-traditional student.



**Academic Calendar:** Most educational institutions in Japan start their academic year in April. The long holiday seasons are usually in the summer (end of July to early September), winter (end of December to early January) and spring (February to March). There are approximately 25 universities in Japan at which students may matriculate in the autumn. Some institutions are moving to a quarter system to facilitate entry at various points throughout the year.



Students beginning programs in the fall who wish to work in Japan after graduation should be aware that companies typically hire new workers to begin in April. Considering this challenge, some programs offer a fast-track graduation plan, which means that students are able to start the academic year in September, graduate in March, 3½ years later, and then begin work in April.

**Search:** Students can search for a degree program taught in English, with autumn matriculation, and with admission procedures and assessment standards similar to those in North America, through the [JASSO](#) or [Univ. In Japan](#).

Each faculty or department within a university typically has a profile or policy that details the requirements and demands of its program. These profiles may be useful in helping students evaluate their options.

**Apply:** Students must apply directly to a Japanese university and to the specific college or program within the university where they hope to enroll. Traditionally, the faculty of each program review and select applicants. However, some universities are beginning to adopt elements of a more holistic admission review process at the behest of Japan's Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT). Additionally,

### NATIONAL SEVEN UNIVERSITIES

- University of Tokyo
- Kyoto University
- Tohoku University
- Kyushu University
- Hokkaido University
- Osaka University
- Nagoya University



Photo courtesy of Namie

**“Many Japanese public and private universities had programs where students from around the world could study in English with a more Western style curriculum. This was the perfect program for me, as I could meet and study with people from around the world in English, while working on my Japanese outside of classes.”**

—Namie Wilson, Oregon, Osaka University

applications to English-taught degree programs may be reviewed by an admission office dedicated specifically to international applicants, with input from faculty.

Many Global 30 schools require an interview component as part of the admission process, but this can be conducted virtually. Some universities also require additional tests; students should check with individual institutions for more details. The SAT or the ACT is accepted (and in many cases required) at almost all universities with English-taught programs.

Students within the Japanese secondary school system are selected based on their results on a competitive nationwide exam, but international students are exempt from this requirement. However, note that the English translations of admission procedures that appear on many university websites use the term examination to refer to all admission methods, which can be confusing.

International students can apply for admission to undergraduate professional degree programs, such as law or medicine, at Japanese universities. These programs are highly competitive and require a high level of Japanese proficiency prior to applying. These

programs are not available at all institutions, students should contact universities directly for more information.

Students should be aware that application requirements vary depending upon the university and program. The requirements can be quite rigid, with the applicant having to follow a set format for completion of the forms or production of application essays. Failure to adhere to the published guidelines can result in an applicant being denied.

**Deadlines:** Deadlines vary greatly, and many universities have two or even three admission deadlines within the same academic year. If applying to multiple Japanese universities, students are advised to choose one application window and submit their materials to all institutions during that timeframe. Check with each institution to confirm its deadlines.

**Application Fees:** Application fees vary by institution, but the average fee is between 5,000 and 35,000 yen and is non-refundable. Additionally, if accepted, a student must pay an entrance/admission fee of between 200,000 and 300,000 yen, on average. The entrance/admission fee should be understood as a contribution to the university; it is not considered part of tuition fees.

**Admission Requirements:** By law, Japanese higher education institutions can only enroll students who have a high school diploma following 12 years of schooling. Many universities are familiar with the IB Diploma, but they will not accept exam scores for college credit. The same applies to AP exams. However, advanced classes and extracurricular involvement related to the desired program of study will strengthen a student's application.

Students applying to programs taught in Japanese will be required to pass an Examination for Japanese University Admission for International Students (EJU). Administered by JASSO, it evaluates both Japanese language skills and other basic academic abilities.

**Upon Acceptance:** Students should follow the directions for accepting an admission offer provided by the university. Once accepted, there is a narrow range of dates within which a student must commit to entry, which includes paying a deposit equivalent to the entire tuition for the first semester. Once a student has committed, the university—most likely the international student office—will supply a Certificate of Eligibility to be used as part of the visa application process.

**Tuition and Fees:** Annual tuition at national and local public institutions typically ranges between 535,000 and

931,000 yen. Private university undergraduate tuition varies based on the course of study pursued, ranging anywhere between 1,108,000 and 4,189,000 yen. Tuition costs for studies in medicine and other professional science fields are at the higher end of this scale. International students pay the same tuition and fees as domestic students.

International students can apply for scholarships from universities, private foundations, local governments, JASSO, and MEXT. It is important to note that students cannot receive a MEXT scholarship and a JASSO scholarship simultaneously. According to a 2019 JASSO Survey, 39.3 percent of international students receive scholarship funding to study in Japan.

In addition to scholarships, some universities also offer application fee waivers. Inquiries about these opportunities can be directed to individual universities.

**Housing:** While most international students choose to live in private apartments or homes, privately-run off-campus student dormitories tend to be a cheaper option—in part because most apartments are not furnished and in some cases appliances must also be purchased. A university's international student services office or admission representative can typically recommend housing options or connect students with area landlords or real estate agents. Some universities have on-campus dorms, however, only a limited number of students are able to live there.



According to the 2017 JASSO Survey, the average monthly rent paid by students is 34,000 yen, with the Tokyo metropolitan area being the most expensive with rent upward of 39,000 yen. The average monthly cost of living for an international student in Japan, including rent, is approximately 146,000 yen.

Students staying in Japan for more than a year must register for national health insurance and pay yearly premiums of approximately 20,000 yen. Insurance covers 70 percent of medical bills with the remaining 30 percent the responsibility of the individual.

**Visa and Other Permits:** Students must apply for a visa before traveling to Japan and will need the Certificate of Eligibility issued by their institution to do so. Students planning to live and pursue university study in Japan for more than three months must obtain a residence card. They must carry their College Student Residence Status card with them at all times.

US citizens are exempt from paying all Japanese visa fees, including fees for student visas.

Students who want to work part-time while studying in Japan must submit an application to a regional immigration office. They may not begin part-time work until that application has been approved. Students may not work more than 28 hours a week (there is no maximum number of hours per day), but may work up to 40 hours a week (eight hours a day) during summer break or other vacation periods.

Following graduation, international students can work in Japan as long as they have a job related to their major and receive a salary equivalent to a Japanese national employee. Without satisfying both of these requirements, the student cannot change their status of residency (i.e., acquire a work visa). Students who do not secure a job immediately can remain in Japan for job-seeking activities for a maximum of one year following graduation.

Japanese universities pride themselves on their ability to help their graduates secure jobs in Japan, and much of a student's final undergraduate year is spent job-hunting, with comprehensive support provided by the university.

**Advice from the Field:** Since there are well-established and reputable universities offering September entry to English-taught programs, the start date should be an important criterion for students and counselors when selecting academic programs.

Japan is a relatively safe country with a low crime rate. However, prospective international students should be aware that drug laws are strict and equally applied to foreigners and Japanese citizens. Use or possession of even small amounts of a prohibited drug can result in a prison sentence of one to 10 years, as well as a fine. Individuals arrested in Japan may be held without bail for two to three months during a police investigation and legal proceedings.



Photo courtesy of Namie

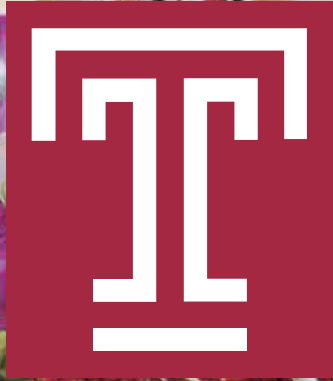
**“Most English programs at Japanese universities are small, with about 10 to 20 people per grade. Class sizes are no bigger than 30 students maximum, which allows for students to easily get help from other classmates or professors.”**

—Namie Wilson, Oregon, Osaka University

Japanese universities are looking to diversify, and American students are well sought after. Be aware, however, that English is not widely spoken in Japan, so basic knowledge of Japanese or a desire to learn the language is highly beneficial. The terms international or global appear frequently in some university course descriptions and publicity, but that is no guarantee that all students or professors are fluent in English. It is worth investigating how many professors have studied overseas or the percentage of students from outside Japan within a given university or program. Universities that include these statistics prominently on their websites have likely made a sincere effort to internationalize the education they provide.

Following graduation, international students can stay connected to their institution and fellow graduates by joining an alumni-initiated group in Japan, should they stay to continue their education or work in Japan, or an alumni-initiated group back in their home country or new country of residence. Some universities have designated offices operating in different countries. Students can contact these offices or the universities directly for more detailed information about available networks.





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[www.tuj.ac.jp/undergrad](http://www.tuj.ac.jp/undergrad)



# THE NETHERLANDS

**Brief Background:** The Netherlands hosts more than 122,000 international students annually, and 1 in 5 new bachelor's students were international in 2017-2018. The Netherlands was the first country on the European continent to widely offer programs taught in English. A high level of English proficiency nationwide and hundreds of English-taught bachelor programs make the country an attractive destination for students. The Netherlands is also near some of Europe's most popular travel destinations and has a reputation as one of the safest countries in the world.

The Dutch are historically explorers, inventors, and entrepreneurs, and this legacy continues to be a driving force in Dutch academia. The Netherlands boasts strong science, architecture, economics, and engineering programs, as well as a thriving creative sector of designers, journalists, artists, and film producers.

Although small in size, the Netherlands is a strong academic force. Thirteen Dutch research universities rank among the top 250 universities in the world, according to the 2019 *Times Higher Education World University Rankings*.

**Good to Know:** Higher education in the Netherlands is a binary system featuring research-oriented and profession-oriented institutions.

Research-oriented programs—*wetenschappelijk onderwijs* or WO—are available at 13 public research universities. Among these research universities, some are general comprehensive institutions and others are universities of technology, specializing in technology, engineering or agriculture. Academic programs focus on theoretical aspects of the field of study and prepare students to undertake independent research. Many programs offer internships and study abroad opportunities; minors are also possible. Bachelor's programs are typically three years in length. The vast majority of students continue on to complete a master's degree, a process which typically lasts an additional one to two years.

## RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES

Research universities are a good fit for students who like asking “why” questions, students who enjoy abstract thinking, building analytical skills, and the theoretical. The emphasis is on learning to look analytically and critically at the way a certain field can be approached. Students learn to present convincing oral and written arguments and to draw conclusions from them. Students are expected to study of their own initiative, have self-discipline and independence.

Over the past 20 years, most of the Dutch universities have created university colleges, or selective honors colleges, that follow a liberal arts and sciences curriculum. These international programs are relatively small—between 300 to 900 students—and are often residential to foster a tight-knit community of students within the larger research university.

Profession-oriented education, or professional higher education—referred to as *hoger beroepsonderwijs* or HBO—is offered by 36 universities of applied sciences, called *hogescholen*. Universities of applied sciences offer programs specializing in a specific field of study. These programs prepare students for particular professions, tend to be practically oriented, and include internships and minors in the last two years of study. The programs lead to four-year bachelor’s degrees. Though less common than at research universities, students can continue on to master’s programs at universities of applied sciences. Graduates of these universities can also apply to research universities to complete a graduate-level qualification, however this will likely require a bridge year in which research skills and specific preparatory requirements are taught.

### UNIVERSITIES OF APPLIED SCIENCES

Universities of applied sciences are a good fit for students who like to ask “how” questions, as they provide opportunities for concrete, practical learning. Students apply knowledge and work in a solutions-oriented way. The educational experience is directed toward the acquisition of competences. Programs at universities of applied sciences usually involve more contact hours as compared to research-oriented programs. More time is spent on each topic at a relatively relaxed teaching speed.

Dutch professors often encourage student participation and questions. The Dutch teaching style is often interactive, student-centered, and focuses on teamwork. Students learn not only to operate at an academic level, but also to work independently on real-world issues—just as they will later in their careers.

Under a [code of conduct](#) created in 2006, and renewed every five years, participating higher education institutions commit to provide reliable and easily accessible information for international students about their programs of study, accreditation status, admission process and requirements, and similar policies.

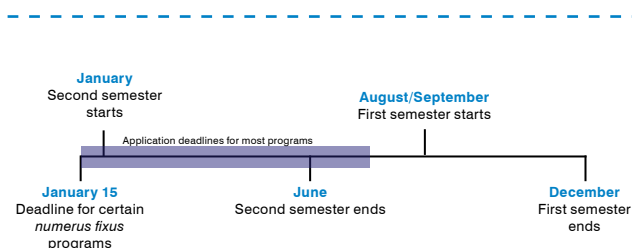
**Academic Calendar:** The academic year generally begins in late August or early September and ends in June or July, with a holiday break in December/January. The academic year is 42 weeks long and is either divided into two semesters or four blocks or periods.



Photo courtesy of Malachi

**“Living internationally and leaving everyone you know behind is definitely challenging. However, it’s incredibly rewarding to meet and study with people from all around the world. Studying in the Netherlands is great because everything is really close and the transportation system makes getting around really easy!”**

—Malachi Shapiro, Pennsylvania, University College Utrecht



**Search:** [Study in Holland](#) includes a course search, scholarship finder, and information about visas, housing, daily expenses, working while studying, learning Dutch, and more. Study in Holland is run by Nuffic, an independent, nonprofit organization based in The Hague that supports internationalization in higher education, research, and professional education. Students can also search study programs taught in English.

[Studielink](#), a Dutch national enrollment system for degree-seeking university students, also provides a complete list of Dutch institutions.

**Apply:** Applying to a bachelor’s program in the Netherlands generally involves applying to the program of choice and registering for free on Studielink.



**Step 1:** Decide on the program(s) and institution(s) of choice.

**Step 2:** Check the admission requirements of the university and entry requirements of the specific program. Requirements and application processes differ not only from institution to institution, but also from program to program within institutions. Also, check if any matching activities are required.

A matching process is used to determine if a program is a good fit for the student. This can take place via online skills testing, questionnaires, tests about the student's interests, an interview or meeting, a letter of motivation (see below), or other requirement. Taking part in the matching process may be mandatory, but the outcome is only advisory, not binding.

**Step 3:** Confirm the deadlines of the specific program.

**Step 4:** Check the program's application instructions. Every application process will include both an application to the specific program as well as registration in [Studielink](#). The program instructions will tell you in what order to complete these two steps. Follow all instructions from both the institution and [Studielink](#).

To submit an application to the program(s) of interest, you will need to do so through an online system. Supporting documents such as transcripts, copy of passport, letter of motivation, and letters of recommendation may be required.

Letters of motivation give students the opportunity to explain their interest in the program of study. University colleges typically use these letters as an official criterion of admission, whereas other institutions may not use them at all.

To register with [Studielink](#), create an account and register your applications. Students may register for up to four programs in [Studielink](#), only two of which can be *numerus fixus* programs, though exceptions exist.

*Numerus fixus* programs are highly-selective programs, including medicine, physiotherapy, psychology, and some types of business, which have a capped number of seats available. (The programs listed are a few examples and do not represent the exhaustive list of programs available.)

**Deadlines:** Deadlines generally range from Dec. 1 through July 1 depending on the nationality of the student (for visa purposes) and the particular program. Some programs offer rolling admission. The deadline for all *numerus fixus* programs is Jan. 15. A single university may have a different deadline for each academic program, so students should check the deadline of the specific program to which they are applying.

**Application Fees:** Some institutions require application fees. Students should confirm whether application fees are required by their prospective program and/or institution.

**Admission Requirements:** The Dutch government equates certain diplomas around the world to its university preparatory diploma, called the Dutch VWO. Typically, a US high school diploma is deemed equivalent to a Dutch VWO when combined with a minimum number of AP courses (usually four) and sufficient performance on AP exam, typically scores of 3 or higher. IB diplomas are also recognized as equivalent.

Depending on the program, institutions in the Netherlands operate using one of three approaches to admission. Regardless of how a student is admitted, enrolled students are expected to meet very high academic standards and to obtain a minimum number of credits.

#### General Admission

Students applying to general admission programs, which comprise the vast majority of programs offered at research universities and universities of applied science, must have a Dutch VWO Diploma or an equivalent certification. General admission programs use few admission criteria so that more students have an opportunity to try the program.

#### Numerus Fixus

*Numerus fixus* programs have a capped number of places available. All *numerus fixus* programs have a minimum of two selection criteria. These criteria will be outlined per program on the program websites and can include grade achievement, standardized tests, international experience, letters of recommendation, and more.

Some programs at certain universities may be designated *numerus fixus* while not having that same status at others, and this can change from year to year.

#### Special Status Programs

Some programs offering an intensive education in a small-scale setting, for instance the university colleges and hotel schools, are selective and use a holistic admission process similar to universities and colleges in the United States. Each program utilizes a process unique to the institution where it is based. University colleges, for instance, tend to look for students who are highly engaged in their studies and who have contributed to the student community. Motivation, as demonstrated in a personal statement, is important, and

so is academic achievement. Some of these programs require interviews as part of the admission process. These are conducted by faculty and explore students' academic motivation, commitment, and curiosity. When required, interviews can be conducted virtually.

Fine arts, performing arts, and hospitality also have special status and may require auditions, interviews, or the submission of a portfolio. These talent-driven programs also consider motivation and prior academic performance.

The ACT and SAT are not typically considered as part of the admission process but may be a factor in scholarship decisions. Additional entrance exams are not common, although a very small number of programs may require them.

There is little standardization of eligibility requirements, application processes, deadlines, or non-European Union (EU)/European Economic Area (EEA) tuition fees in the Netherlands. When in doubt, students should contact an institution directly. The university's admission office ultimately makes all final decisions regarding applications.

**Upon Acceptance:** Each higher education institution will provide instructions on the acceptance of an admission offer and next steps. This will include practical information about how to arrange housing, visas, and residence permits, instructions for joining social/virtual communities of admitted students, welcome/orientation week schedules, and other pre-departure and arrival information.

**Tuition and Fees:** Tuition rates for non-EU/EEA citizens are set by each university and usually range from approximately 6,000 to 15,000 euros per year. Tuition fees for students with a passport from the EU, EEA, Switzerland, or Surinam are approximately 2,143 euros for 2020-2021 academic year. A select few programs, among them the university colleges, charge between 3,000-4,500 euros.

The Dutch government and some institutions offer scholarships or financial aid for students. These opportunities can be found on individual institutions' websites, or through [Study in Holland's scholarship search tool](#). FAFSA loans can be used for a few Dutch universities such as Utrecht University and the University of Amsterdam.

**Housing:** Due to governing laws in the Netherlands, universities do not have a tradition of on-campus accommodation. Finding good, affordable accommodation can be a challenge, as there is a shortage. Students will need to take responsibility and start looking for a room as soon as possible. If the university has a housing liaison office, this will be a good place to start. Otherwise, students can work through private organizations or housing corporations, and network through social media groups.

Students will ordinarily have their own private bedroom; rooms that two or more students share together are uncommon. Universities do not typically have a meal plan, although many provide some on-campus dining options.

University colleges operate differently when it comes to student accommodations. Many university colleges in the Netherlands are residential, and require students to live in the student residences for all or part of their studies. Single dwellings with many amenities are the most common.



The Netherlands

**Visa and Other Permits:** American citizens do not need visas to enter the Netherlands, but students will need to apply for a residence permit, called an MVV. Students cannot apply on their own behalf; the Dutch government has mandated that higher education institutions are responsible for overseeing the visa/residence permit application process for each international student they admit. The institution will inform admitted students about the application procedure and documents needed.

As part of the residence permit application process, all institutions require students to submit documentation confirming that they have sufficient funds to support their living costs; in 2020 this amount was set at 900 euros a month, or approximately 11,000 euros a year. This fee is adjusted bi-annually. The application for a regular provisional residence permit (MVV) costs 174 euros. This fee is adjusted bi-annually.

Residence permits are granted for the full duration of a student's study. They are only terminated when the university reports that the student has completed their studies or did not earn sufficient academic credits to continue.

US students can work a maximum of 16 hours per week while classes are in session and full-time during the summer months of June, July, and August. A student's prospective employer must apply for a work permit on his or her behalf. If a student is employed, they must also purchase Dutch health insurance, which is more expensive than student plans. Students do not need a work permit if they are participating in an internship that is required by their program of study.

Graduating students may opt to stay in the Netherlands for up to one year in order to look for employment. Students interested in this option must apply for an orientation year visa through the Dutch Immigration and Naturalization Service (IND). Students have up to three years after graduating to exercise this option. Therefore, if they wish, they can return to their home country or travel elsewhere before deciding to return to search for work. If the student is subsequently offered a position that meets the requirements to work in the Netherlands, her or she will be authorized to do so. It is possible to apply for the orientation year visa both after a bachelor's program and then once again after a master's. More information can be found at the [Immigration and Naturalization Service's website](#).

**Advice from the Field:** The Dutch government aims to make international students feel welcome in the Netherlands. English is widely spoken and the Dutch welcome international students into their communities. Many universities also offer free Dutch courses, even for students studying in English-taught programs.

English-taught programs at Dutch universities attract students from all over the world. Dutch institutions have ample experience accommodating international students, and tend to offer a diverse array of related student support services, clubs, and activities.

University colleges focus on undergraduate study only, and the degree structure can be almost as flexible as a program of study at a US liberal arts college.

Early planning is important as some courses have strict prerequisites that students may not meet if they do not prepare early enough in high school. Many business and science programs in the Netherlands, for example, require an advanced level of math. Students should check each program to confirm specific entry requirements.

Within the Dutch higher education system, transferring to the same type of program at a different institution may be possible, though there may be limits on how many credits are accepted. Changing one's program of study is difficult, and would most likely require a student to start his or her studies anew.

Each institution will have an alumni office in some form, which offers resources to graduates. In addition, the Netherlands as a whole offers the [Holland Alumni Network](#) through Nuffic. Holland alumni are invited to join the network to: stay in touch with fellow Holland alumni; join existing communities or establish new ones; stay informed about upcoming alumni activities across the globe; find refresher courses as well as news & trends in an area of expertise; share experiences with prospective international students; find information about career opportunities in Holland; and browse internship and job vacancies.

The Netherlands

# Study in the Netherlands at Leiden University

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The Netherlands

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# NEW ZEALAND

**Brief Background:** The New Zealand International Education Strategy 2018-2030, released in August 2018, sets a path for the future of New Zealand's international education sector. The vision is for international education to contribute to a thriving and globally connected New Zealand through world-class education, underpinned by the three pillars of an excellent education and student experience, sustainable growth, and developing global citizens. The strategy builds upon the International Student Wellbeing Strategy, released in June 2017. The International Student Wellbeing Strategy is designed to protect and enhance New Zealand's reputation as a safe and welcoming study destination by ensuring that international students feel welcome, safe and well, enjoy a high quality education and are valued for their contribution to New Zealand.

Over 31,000 international students pursued studies at New Zealand universities in 2018. US student enrollment totaled 2,687 that year, with most American students participating in one-semester study abroad programs at the undergraduate level.

All eight of New Zealand's universities were ranked among the top 500 institutions in the *QS World University Rankings 2020*, placing them among the top 2.5 percent of universities worldwide. New Zealand university programs

also ranked among the world's top 50 in several subjects, including law, psychology, civil and structural engineering, dentistry, veterinary sciences, and education.

In addition to its universities, New Zealand is home to 16 polytechnics and institutes of technology, which provide applied learning and qualifications ranging from undergraduate certificates to doctoral degrees. The country is also home to about 600 private training institutions that award undergraduate and post-graduate qualifications.

Many students are drawn to New Zealand because of its emphasis on student safety. The country ranked second out of 163 countries in the 2019 Global Peace Index. Students and other visitors are also attracted to New Zealand for its magnificent outdoor recreation, mountains, coastlines, glaciers, and hiking trails.

**Good to Know:** Though English is the predominant language in New Zealand, the two official languages of the country are Te Reo Māori (the indigenous language) and New Zealand Sign Language. Higher education is known as tertiary education and majors or programs of study are typically referred to as courses.

New Zealand's primary and secondary education system is based on the 13-year British model. As such, undergraduate degrees are typically three years in length. A fourth year is an option if students want to pursue an *honours* degree.

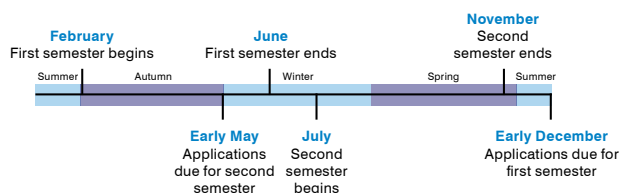
When applying, students choose to study a broad area of interest known as a *programme* (i.e., Bachelor of Science, Bachelor of Arts). Once at university, students can more narrowly focus on a specific major. Double degrees and double majors are possible.

New Zealand has established a [Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students](#) to ensure the fair treatment of international students in New Zealand. All New Zealand educational institutions hosting international students must comply with the code.

## NEW ZEALAND UNIVERSITIES

Auckland University of Technology  
Lincoln University  
Massey University  
University of Auckland  
University of Canterbury  
University of Otago  
University of Waikato  
Victoria University of Wellington

**Academic Calendar:** For most tertiary institutions the academic year starts in February (the end of New Zealand's summer) and finishes in November (late spring). Although the year is usually divided into two semesters with the second semester starting in July, a third term—known as a summer semester—is becoming more common. A summer semester will run from November to February.



## ENROLLMENT TIMING

The difference in academic calendars between the US and New Zealand has implications for the timing of a US student's transition to a New Zealand university. US students who want to begin in February for semester one, which is when most students enroll, might consider a gap experience after completing high school in May or June. Others may opt for a quick transition after graduation and begin during semester two, with orientation programs typically offered in mid-July.

**Search:** Students can explore specific programs and courses, including professional degrees, at the [Study in New Zealand website](#), the official government site for advice on studying abroad in New Zealand.

**Apply:** Students apply directly to universities. Application forms are available online but some documents, including certified copies of academic transcripts and a résumé, may need to be delivered by mail or international courier service. It is best to confirm individual requirements with preferred institutions.

Students who wish to begin in the second semester in July may be admitted conditionally, pending the submission of their high school diploma.

**Deadlines:** Deadlines vary considerably, so students should carefully check institutional websites for details. As a general rule of thumb for most programs, students should submit their applications approximately three months before the start of their intended first semester. Thus, students should apply by early December to enroll for *semester one* (late February start) and by early May to begin studies in *semester two* (July start).

**Application Fees:** Students are not usually charged an application fee to apply to a New Zealand institution.

**Admission Requirements:** All institutions require a high school diploma from a regionally-accredited high school confirming above-average grades. Test scores are also required, generally 1160 or higher on the SAT (out of 1600) and 24 or higher on the ACT. In some cases, alternative entry criteria are accepted. Students with a GED and sufficient SAT or ACT scores may be considered for admission, as may students who have successfully studied at the undergraduate level at a recognized institution. Other admission criteria may be required for certain programs. All institutions list their admission criteria and application process on their websites; students are advised to check with their preferred institutions for more details.

**Upon Acceptance:** Accepted students will receive an *offer of place* that confirms course and program details as well as start dates. An invoice for tuition fees covering tuition for the full academic year will also be included. Before receiving a visa to enter New Zealand, students must provide evidence that they have paid their tuition fees in full for their first year of study. Payments are made directly to the institution.

**Tuition and Fees:** Tuition and fees vary across universities and programs. Information is available on respective university websites and the [Universities New Zealand website](#). Generally, the cost of undergraduate tuition and fees for an international student is 23,000 to 33,000 New Zealand dollars per year.

US students are eligible to use direct loans from the US Federal Student Aid program at some postsecondary institutions in New Zealand.

**Housing:** *Residential colleges* are halls of residence provided by the university where students can lease a single-occupancy room for their academic year of study, somewhat similar to US dormitories. Residential colleges offer meal plans and other support services, such as academic tutorials for key first-year classes. Most international students live in a campus residential college during their first year but later on move to private or independent accommodations with other students (known in New Zealand as *flattening*). Some students choose to live in a residential college for two or even three years. Students may need to submit an essay and additional personal information to obtain a place in a residential college. Further information about accommodation options can be acquired from university websites.

Based on various university websites, estimates for housing costs (both flattening and halls of residence) range from NZ\$11,000 to NZ\$20,000 annually.

**Visa and Other Permits:** Students will need to apply for a visa to study full-time in New Zealand. Students need to pay the full cost of their courses and enroll with an approved education provider. US citizens do not have to pay a fee for their visa application but may be required to pay an International Visitor Conversation and

Tourism Levy (IVL) of \$35 NZD as part of the application process. The levy is to help pay for conservation and tourism infrastructure. Visit the [Immigration New Zealand website](#) for further information on requirements and the application process.

With this visa students can:

- Study full-time at the course stated on their visa.
- Work part-time up to 20 hours a week while studying or full-time during the holidays, depending on the visa conditions.
- Live alone, if they meet minimum age requirements.

Things to note:

Students must have enough money to pay tuition fees and living expenses while in New Zealand. The student visa is normally for the same length of time as the program of study the student has paid for. For example, if a student pays for a year of study and demonstrates sufficient funds to cover living costs for a year, they will receive a visa for that year.

Health care for visitors on a student visa is charged on a pay-as-you-go basis; most accidents are covered by New Zealand's Accident Compensation Corporation, which helps to provide emergency treatment and services to anyone injured in New Zealand. International students must be able to show they have comprehensive international travel and health insurance. This is a legal requirement (per the *Code of Practice*), and the university's international admission office will confirm that students have current and appropriate coverage.

Per a new policy in 2018, students engaged in degree studies at the undergraduate level or higher will receive a three-year open work visa. Visit the [Immigration New Zealand website](#) for more information on post-study work visas.

**Advice from the Field:** Counselors can contact New Zealand institutions directly to ask about entrance requirements, visa requirements, and more. Counselors are invited to direct general questions about studying in New Zealand to [northamerica@enz.govt.nz](mailto:northamerica@enz.govt.nz).

US students applying to New Zealand universities typically need to do thorough independent research about particular institutions and programs. Prospective students and applicants may not experience the same level of engagement and communication from a New Zealand institution as they would from a US college.

New Zealand is generally an easy and safe place to live—an attractive feature for many, as is its stunning natural beauty. New Zealand is also a diverse country. Auckland is the largest Polynesian city in the world, for example, and you will have people from all over the world in your classes.



**“I wanted freedom within the confines of my degree to pursue projects I’m passionate about. The people I’ve met and the organizations I’ve worked with here have supported that pursuit wholeheartedly. I’ve been able to get involved with research, to begin a journalism career, and to explore some of the most astonishing mountain ranges on the planet.”**

—Fox Meyer, Washington, D.C., University of Otago

Classes at New Zealand universities are often lecture-style and relatively large. This might be an important consideration if a student is looking for a more intimate academic experience.

There are a number of alumni networking opportunities available for New Zealand alumni. In addition to various “Study In New Zealand” social media alumni groups, each university has its own alumni association and regularly host events in the US. Additionally, Kiwi Expats Abroad (KEA) is an international organization which aims to connect Kiwi expats and alumni with one another to find global opportunities. Alumni are also encouraged to get in touch with a [local honorary consul, consulate-general, or embassy](#), to stay in the loop for New Zealand events.

Students and counselors are also encouraged to explore [NauMai NZ](#), the official government site for international students studying or about to study in New Zealand. Nau mai in Te Reo is an invitation and a welcome, and this platform is designed to welcome each individual student to prepare them for their time in New Zealand. NauMai NZ is underpinned by the values of manaakitanga—to welcome, host, and care for visitors with respect and generosity.

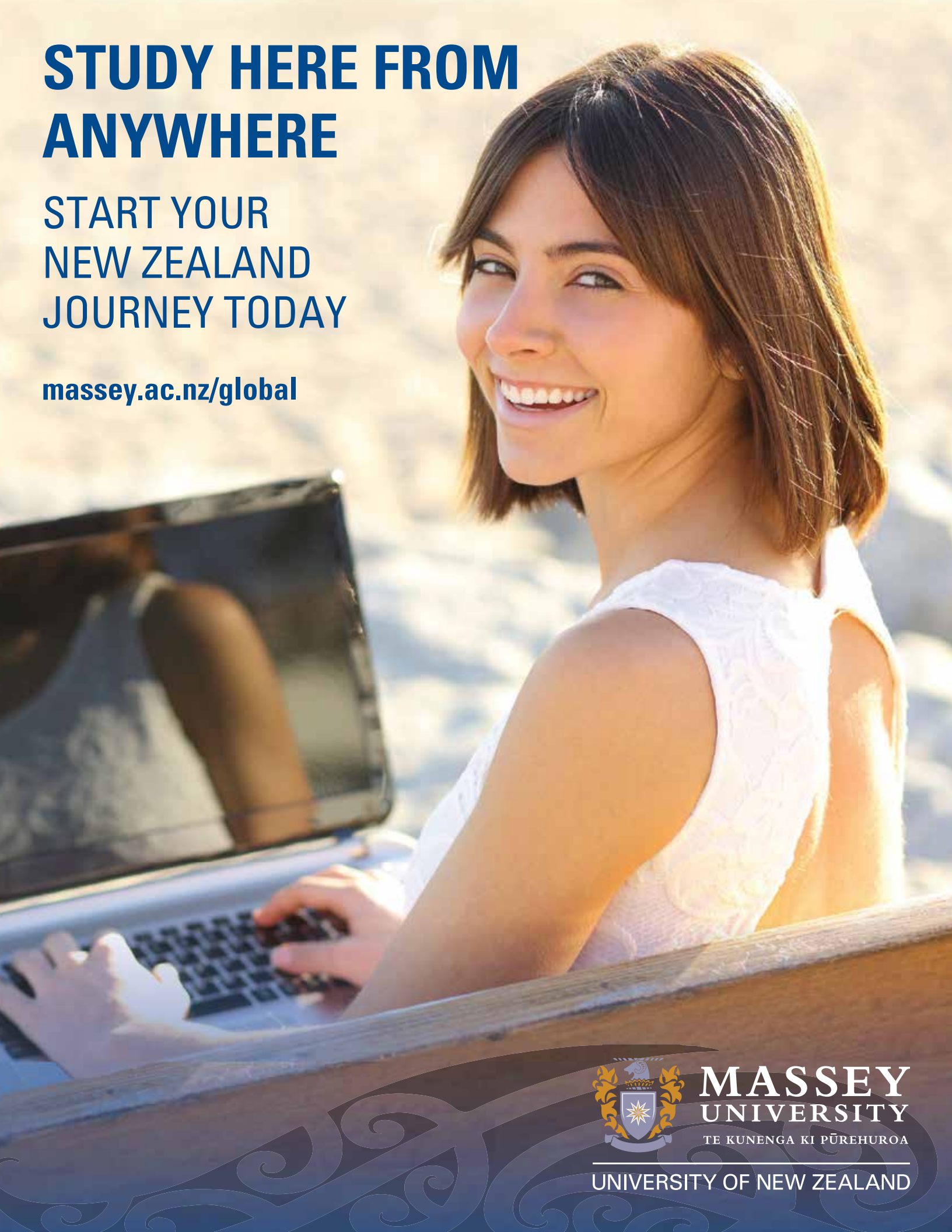
The platform addresses international students' needs for accurate, relevant and easily available information on topics including visa conditions, work rights, how to ‘live like a local’, suggestions to improve wellbeing and help with understanding Kiwi slang and Te Reo. The content was designed with input from students on the information they most wanted and needed.



# STUDY HERE FROM ANYWHERE

START YOUR  
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**MASSEY  
UNIVERSITY**

TE KUNENGA KI PŪREHUOA

UNIVERSITY OF NEW ZEALAND



# SOUTH KOREA

**Brief Background:** South Korea, officially known as the Republic of Korea, has seen a rapid increase in international students in recent years. In 2019 there were nearly 160,165 international students enrolled in Korean institutions, a 12.6 percent increase from 2018. The Korean government is actively working to internationalize universities and develop international student support systems with the aim of increasing that number to 200,000 by 2023. In 2019, there were 2,915 American students in South Korea, making the US the sixth leading country of origin within Korea's international student population.

Higher education institutions in Korea are largely divided into junior colleges (two- to three-year programs), universities (four-year programs), and graduate schools. The majority of institutions are private, with only 50 public institutions out of 416 nationwide. The International Education Quality Assurance System (IEQAS)—a national structure—ensures Korean universities offer global competitiveness and desirable conditions for international students. Under the system, a joint delegation from the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Justice monitor and assess universities' educational responsibilities to international students, with IEQAS certification awarded to those meeting the required standards. In 2019, the number of IEQAS-certified institutions in South Korea was 116, comprising 88 universities, 17 junior colleges, and 11 graduate schools.

**Good to Know:** South Korean university degrees generally take at least four years to complete, with some variation depending on the field of study. Most universities offer English-taught programs, the number of which is steadily increasing.

International students may pursue associate, bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degrees in diverse academic fields by enrolling at a Korean university or college as a full-time student. Classes are often conducted in Korean, but reading materials are generally in English and coursework can usually be written and submitted in English. There is also an increasing number of programs that are offered entirely in English.

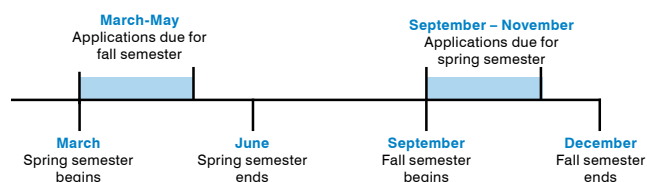
Many South Korean universities have an affiliated Korean language center that provides intensive training to prospective international students and others interested in learning the language. Programs last from 10 to 12 weeks, but some universities also offer short-term programs of two to six weeks.

Universities generally require students to have achieved at least a level 3 on the Test of Proficiency in Korean (TOPIK) before enrolling in a degree-seeking program. Students who achieve level 2 must take more than 300 hours of Korean language study for a year after entering university. Universities offer Korean language training courses to help enrolling students bring their language proficiency to the required standard, however this requirement can be waived for students applying to programs delivered entirely in English, or for certain programs with separate entry requirements for native English speakers.

Nonetheless, a basic command of the Korean language is recommended to get the most out of student life in South Korea. For more information visit the [TOPIK website](#).



**Academic Calendar:** An academic year in South Korea is split over two semesters. The first semester of the academic year is in spring (March through June) followed by one in fall (September through December).



The long vacations offer an ideal opportunity to make the most of the seasonal leisure. Ski trips in winter and beach holidays in summer are common activities for students studying in South Korea, which boasts an abundance of both mountains and coastline.

**Search:** More information on studying in South Korea can be found on the [Study in Korea website](#), run by the National Institute for International Education (NIIED), a division of the Ministry of Education.

The site contains detailed information about South Korean universities, international student admission, a list of IEQAS-certified universities, and a calendar of local Overseas Study in Korea Fairs, virtual fairs, as well as a guide to the Global Korea Scholarship (GKS). Students can look up institutions based on criteria such

as university classification, courses, region of the country, and whether scholarship support, English lectures, and dormitories are offered.

**Apply:** Applications can be made directly through university websites. Alternatively, some universities also accept online applications through the [Study in Korea portal](#).

The academic year starts with the spring semester. It's more common for students to apply for admission in the spring semester, however many universities also allow students to first enroll in the fall.

Because the application requirements and selection process (including interviews and document submission) are different for each university, it is vital to confirm them prior to application, either via the university's website or by contacting its international admission department. In particular, the visa issuance requirements for international students are subject to the guidance and procedures of the university sponsoring the visa.

A professional degree can be obtained as part of an undergraduate program, but the number of universities offering them is limited. In the case of specialist programs (e.g., medicine), support for international students is not universal. Before applying, check with each university and program as to whether it can accommodate international students.





**Deadlines:** Applications to begin studying in the spring semester are accepted from September to November; fall semester applications are open from March to May.

As the deadline for admission is different for the spring and fall semesters, and there are differences in the admission schedules of each university, check the application deadlines with each university.

**Application Fees:** Though it varies from one university to another, application fees generally range from 80,000 to 200,000 won. Other minor administrative fees, such as those assessed when obtaining and submitting the required documents, may also apply.

**Admission Requirements:** Applications are open to international candidates who have graduated (or are expected to graduate) high school in their home country and whose parents are not Korean nationals. An applicant's TOPIK score must be level 3 or above (level 2 for science and engineering programs) to be eligible. However, requirements can vary by institution, so it is important to check before applying. In some cases, applicants without the required TOPIK score can take a Korean language course to bring them up to the required level before beginning their academic program. In the case of universities that have separate entry criteria for native English speakers and for programs delivered entirely in English, the Korean proficiency requirement can be waived.

As admission criteria may differ, check the specific requirements and other information provided on the website of each university to which you plan to apply.

**Upon Acceptance:** Once a student's acceptance is confirmed, the university will provide specific details and instructions for admission and visa applications. The institution will guide students in applying for a D-2 visa. Students will receive a Certificate of Admission that they will need to take, along with other relevant documents, to the Korean consulate in order to be issued the D-2 visa.

**Tuition and Fees:** Generally, the fees for private universities are 3 to 5 million won per semester, while those of national universities are 2 to 3 million won. Some private universities also charge a one-time admission fee of 800,000 won.

There is some variation depending on university and program, so it is important to check the university website or contact the institution's admission office before applying.

There is a range of excellent scholarship opportunities available for international students, including GKS scholarships, which pay all tuition fees and provide a living allowance for the duration of study, including a year of fully-funded Korean language tuition. Visit [Study in Korea](#) for more details.



Photo courtesy of Joyanne

South Korea

**“Before deciding to move to South Korea, I visited the country to see if this was a suitable choice for me. Each campus I toured allowed me to see if I had the courage to integrate into the culture.”**

—Joyanne Purkiss, Texas, Kyung Hee University

**Housing:** According to a 2017 survey by NIIED, 58 percent of international students make use of the dormitory facilities available on university campuses.

Most universities have on-campus dormitories available for international students. The fees vary, but are generally between 150,000 and 600,000 won per month. Both dormitory fees and non-university housing prices vary from area to area, with downtown Seoul being notably more expensive for non-university housing.

Check directly with universities for information about dormitory fees and availability. Detailed information about the cost of living, and other aspects of life in South Korea, can be found through [Study in Korea](#).

Photo courtesy of Joyanne



**“One of the main challenges I face is the language barrier. Unfortunately, some things can be lost in translation, but this is not a reason to be discouraged. I am currently studying Korean and can’t wait till I’m able to communicate fluently.”**

—Joyanne Purkiss, Texas, Kyung Hee University

**Visa and Other Permits:** International students must obtain the relevant visa—D-2 for academic programs; D-4 for language training programs—before entering the country. Any non-Korean staying in the country for more than 90 days is issued an Alien Registration Card (ARC), which they must keep with them at all times.

International students are able to take part-time jobs working up to 20-25 hours per week (dependent on their course of study), provided they obtain prior approval from their university and make a formal application at the Immigration Office.

Due to the strictness of immigration law, it is advisable to check the proper procedures with the international student advisory department of the university in all visa-related matters, including part-time employment.

A range of programs offering career advice and support are available to international students after graduation.

**Advice from the Field:** South Korea is a very comfortable and convenient place to live, boasting very low crime rates; world-leading information and communications technology and internet speed; highly efficient and

affordable public transportation; and a host of public conveniences and facilities, not to mention internationally renowned pop culture.

One of the greatest advantages international students in South Korea enjoy is the financial manageability compared with studying in other developed countries. In recent years the government has invested heavily in developing policies to maximize both the safety and meaningfulness of the international student experience. Studying in South Korea offers students the chance to broaden their horizons, discovering simultaneously the mysteries of the East and the world of academia, living in a creative and dynamic culture blending 5,000 years of history with cutting-edge modern technology.

A guide to South Korean universities and international admission can be found on the [Study in Korea website](#). Refer to the [Guidebook for International Students](#) for detailed information about each university’s admission policies and procedures.

Korean universities have developed alumni networks locally and abroad. NIIED also runs GKS Alumni associations in various countries.



# SPAIN

**Brief Background:** Higher education is an honored tradition in Spanish society. The first university, Universidad de Salamanca, was established in the 13th century. As such, many of Spain's institutions have developed strong programs that have earned them a solid international reputation. In fact, several universities are ranked in the top 500 in the world in various international university rankings including *Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU)*, the *QS World University Rankings*, and *Times Higher Education World University Rankings*. There are currently 84 universities in Spain, of which 50 are public and 32 are private.

From 2009 to 2010, Spain immersed itself in a transformation of its higher education system. Its goal was to harmonize its academic qualification framework to fit into the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) to increase student mobility in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). For the 2017-2018 academic year, 126,670 international students enrolled in Spanish higher education institutions, of which 64,124 students pursued undergraduate degrees.

**Good to Know:** In Spain, an undergraduate degree is referred to as *grado*, and can fall into one of two categories: official, those that are government-regulated and recognized by the EHEA; and unofficial (*propio*), which are independently established by an institution and generally not recognized by other institutions or

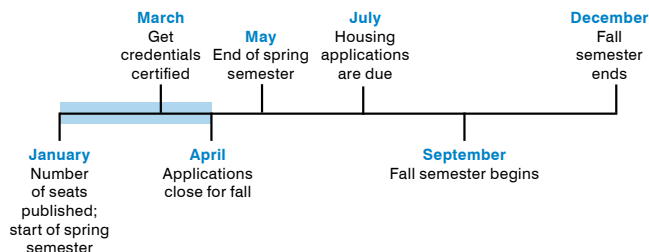
education systems. A student pursues an official degree (*grado oficial*) as they would an undergraduate degree in the US. An unofficial degree (*grado propio*) is typically meant for students that have already completed an official degree and are looking to improve their technical knowledge in a specific field or subject. Length of study for an undergraduate degree varies by subject. While the majority can be completed in three to four years, more technical degrees, like engineering, medicine, and architecture, can take five to six years.

The [Study in Spain](#) website is a government-sponsored resource for English-language speakers. It features information on the cultural and academic value of studying in Spain and has a university search engine that filters by province and university type. It also provides information about administrative procedures; however, the entries often include links to the official resource in Spanish.

Most undergraduate degrees are taught in Spanish or in one of Spain's recognized regional languages, such as Basque or Catalan. However, there has been an increase in the number of programs taught completely in English or in a bilingual immersion format. In bilingual immersion programs, students begin their undergraduate careers in English-taught classes and are slowly transitioned into a full Spanish learning environment.



**Academic Calendar:** The school year in Spain generally starts in the fall and ends in late spring. The majority of Spanish universities operate on a two-semester system: the first from September/October to late December, and the second from January/February to May. Semester exams are usually scheduled right after the semester ends in December/January or May/June.



**Search:** The official source of information for international students is the [Spanish Service for the Internationalization of Education](#) (*Servicio Español para la Internacionalización de la Educación* or SEPIE), a government-run initiative that aims to internationalize the Spanish education system. Among its resources it features the [Study in Spain website](#) providing general information about Spanish culture and education system, and a [list of tools](#) students can use to identify what and where to study, English taught or bilingual programs, as well as available grants and scholarships.

To search universities by program, region, or employability of graduates, use the [What to Study and Where too!](#) (*Qué Estudiar y Dónde en la Universidad* or QEDU) on the website of the Spanish Ministry of Education, Culture, and Sports.

**Apply:** Spain does not have a centralized application system for university admission. Each university sets its own requirements and deadlines for applications and in some instances these can even vary by program within the university. Some universities or programs may require applicants to attend an interview, submit additional materials, or even take a subject or general knowledge exam. It is important that students familiarize themselves with the requirements for each university and program of interest. Students can follow the [six steps](#) for applying set forth by UNEDasiss, a service from the distance learning institution UNED.

Each year, universities assess the number of seats in each program that will be open for new applicants. For public universities, this number is determined by the regional governments and is based on projected labor market needs. Of this number, a specific percentage—determined by the universities—is reserved for international students. The number of seats open for general and international admission are typically published in January or February. Students are advised to apply soon after these numbers are published, as space is limited. Private institutions set their own enrollment goals are not limited in the number of international students they can enroll.

When applying, students can begin the process of having their credentials certified for equivalency by the Ministry of Education, Culture, and Sports. This process is known as *homologación*. Since this can't officially be completed until a student finishes high school, students can apply for a permit for conditional admission (*volante de inscripción condicional*) through the Spanish embassy or consulate that would show they have initiated the credential equivalency certificate process, allowing them to be considered for admission to the university of their choice. While this is a responsibility of the student, some universities do provide assistance. Students should contact the admission office of their prospective school or program to verify which resources are available to them. The Spanish Education Advising Office in the United States recommends that students begin this process as early as possible—since it can take three to six months—to assure they'll have all their documentation in time for enrollment. For the most accurate and updated information about the credential equivalency certificate process and its requirements, students can contact the Spanish Education Advising Office by visiting their [website](#).

**Deadlines:** Students typically begin their academic studies in the fall semester. Deadlines vary by university, but applications are generally due in April.

**Application Fees:** Application fees vary by universities. The fee usually remains less than US\$50. Contact the university for the most accurate cost.

**Admission Requirements:** International students are not required to take Spanish exams, unless they apply for general admission at public universities. In this scenario, universities may require international students to take one or more subject proficiency tests (*Pruebas de Competencias Específicas* or PCE). These tests are managed by [UNEDasiss](#) and are administered in Spain and several other locations across the globe. It is important that students reach out to the university of their choice to determine which tests they will need to take, if any.

Admission is generally based on students' prior academic performance and high school GPA. International students may also be required to take a language proficiency exam for Spanish or English depending on the program they are applying to and their country of origin. There are several testing platforms for language proficiency. The most widely recognized evaluations for Spanish are those given by the [Servicio Internacional de Evaluación de la Lengua Española](#) (SIELE) and the [American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages](#) (ACTFL). For English, the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) and the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) are accepted. It is important for students to research whether their institution or program of choice requires them to take a language proficiency exam, which tests are accepted, and the minimum scores required for admission.

**Upon Acceptance:** The university will send a letter of acceptance, which is needed to apply for a student visa before coming to Spain. Students will also need to complete *homologación* once they have their final high school transcript and diploma.



**Tuition and Fees:** The cost of tuition at Spanish universities varies by the type of degree a student enrolls in (official or unofficial) and by the nature of the university (public or private). The cost of public universities is regulated by the General Assembly for University Policy (*Conferencia General de Política Universitaria*) and the regional governments where they reside. While the universities are not allowed to raise tuition for Spanish and EU students, legislation does allow them to increase the fees for international students. It is important to research each institution individually to assess the true cost of tuition for an international student. However, public university tuition for international students can still be considerably cheaper than the cost of attending a private university. The cost of tuition at Spanish universities varies greatly. For public universities, tuition for an academic year typically ranges between 680 and 2,100 euros, and at private universities it ranges between 5,500 and 18,000 euros.

The Study in Spain website provides [guidance on how to obtain a grant or scholarship](#) to study in Spain. Including resources from the Spanish Ministry of Education, Culture, and Sport.

**Housing:** The average cost of living for students in Spain is estimated between 850 and 1,000 euros per month, depending on the city or town of residence and the individual needs of each student. There are various housing options for students enrolled in Spanish universities:

- **Colegio Mayor:** Similar to American residence halls, these dormitories may be privately-funded or affiliated with a particular university or student organization. However, space is often limited and students must submit a separate application, typically due by mid-July.

- **Apartment rentals or shared apartments:** Some universities provide a service for students and community members to promote alternative housing options.
- **Host families:** Students living with host families can immerse themselves in the Spanish language and culture. Students should contact their universities to confirm the availability of this option.
- **Intergenerational living:** Some universities have adopted programs that pair a student with an older person in their community who offers accommodation at a low rate in exchange for some help at home.

**Visa and Other Permits:** Students from countries outside of the European Union pursuing studies for longer than 90 days must apply for a student visa (*Autorización de Estancia por Estudios*) through the Spanish embassy or consulate in their country of origin or residence. Students should apply within three months of their planned arrival in Spain. This visa expires on a yearly basis, and must be renewed within the 60-day period prior to its expiration date. For the most reliable and up-to-date information, students should contact their local embassy or consulate or visit the [Ministry of Employment and Social Security's website](#).

Citizens of countries outside of the European Union, the European Economic Area, or citizens from countries that do not currently have a reciprocity agreement for social services with Spain must independently enroll in a private health insurance plan. This is a prerequisite for the student visa application. The selected health insurance plan must cover the cost of repatriation of remains and stay valid for the entirety of the student's time in Spain.

Upon arrival in Spain, students will have one month to register for the Foreigner Identity Card (*Tarjeta de Identidad de Extranjero* or TIE) at the local Foreigners Office or police station. This permit serves as an identification for the student. More information can be found through the [Ministry of Interior's website](#).

**Advice from the Field:** The internationalization of Spanish universities is still developing. While there is a growing number of undergraduate degrees offered in English, it is difficult to find English-language resources outlining admission procedures. Moreover, the higher education system and relevant authorities are currently in the process of adopting changes to make the admission process more amenable for international students. During this transition period, counselors are advised to reach out directly to universities, embassies, or consulates via e-mail or telephone for the most accurate and reliable information regarding the application process and requirements.

When deciding where in Spain to apply, students should keep in mind the remarkable differences in temperature and precipitation found in different regions of the country. Cities in the central region undergo major changes throughout the year, while coastal regions can be less stark.



# UNITED KINGDOM

**Brief Background:** The United Kingdom, which encompasses England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland, is home to 164 higher education institutions offering postsecondary degree programs.

2018-2019, the UK enrolled 485,645 international (non-EU) students. Of the more than 18,000 US students pursuing full degrees in the UK, about 7,000 were undergraduates. The most popular courses of study for American students include social studies, historical and philosophical studies, biological sciences, business and administrative studies, and creative arts and design.

*Times Higher Education's World University Rankings* 2019 listed four British institutions among the top 20 universities in the world: The University of Oxford, University of Cambridge, Imperial College London, and University College London. These institutions are members of the [Russell Group](#), an organization representing 24 leading UK universities committed to outstanding research and teaching.

The UK has six ancient universities which are extant medieval universities and early modern universities founded before 1600. Four of the ancient universities are in Scotland and two are in England. The ancient universities in the UK are among the oldest extant universities in the world.

**Good to Know:** A bachelor's degree in England, Northern Ireland, and Wales can be completed in three years and degree programs tend to be very focused from the outset. Whereas, in Scotland, four years is usually standard, with breadth and flexibility offered in the first two years of study. The term course refers to what US institutions typically call a major or program of study, and are declared during the application process. Most programs are honors courses, which require students to produce a dissertation or capstone project based on independent research in their final year.

Some UK universities have courses that allow students more flexibility in their studies. Combined honors give students the opportunity to study up to three subjects, similar to having multiple majors or minors in the US. There are also broad-based courses such as a bachelor's in liberal arts. Students who are unsure of what they want to study might want to focus on Scottish universities, as these allow students to explore additional subjects during their first year.

Professional degrees—such as law, medicine, veterinary science, and dentistry—are available at the undergraduate level. It is important to note that entry requirements for these programs tend to be more demanding than those for other majors, and the duration of the course may be longer. There might also be additional steps involved to practice with these degrees in the US.



## Law

In the UK, students can study law straight after high school and the degree takes three or four years to complete. If a student decides at the end of their course that they want to become a legal professional, there are opportunities to pursue a Graduate Diploma in Law. After successful completion of this one-year course, students receive Qualifying Law Degree status, which is needed to practice law in the UK.

Students thinking of practicing law in the United States with a foreign law degree should keep in mind that each state has different requirements. The requirements for each are listed on the state-specific bar exam website and are summarized by the National Conference of Bar Examiners' Bar Admission Guide.

Law is also offered as an academic subject that can be combined with another discipline for students who are interested in law, but may not want to practice. For example, there are dual honors options such as BA (Hons) Business and Law, BSc (Hons) Law and Psychology, and BA (Hons) Law and International Relations.

**Special Entrance Requirements:** The National Admissions Test for Law (LNAT) is a two-part test that is used to help admission tutors assess aptitude for studying law. LNAT is required for most law courses at the universities of Bristol, Durham, Glasgow, Kings College London, London School of Economics, Nottingham, University of Oxford, SOAS University of London, and University College London. Students should take the test prior to submitting their application via UCAS.

**Application Deadline:** The majority of institutions expect international students applying to law to apply by the Jan. 15 deadline.

## Medicine

There are 33 medical schools in the UK that offer an undergraduate medicine program. These programs provide students the opportunity to pursue medicine without a prior degree, and typically take five to six years. Due to the number of places for international students on medicine courses being capped, the application process for international students will remain extremely competitive due to capacity, the volume of applications, and high academic qualifications required for entry.

Applications must be made through UCAS. Applicants are able to apply to up to four medical courses and their fifth application choice must be to a non-medical course. The fifth choice cannot be dentistry or veterinary science, and is recommended to be an allied health program or life science.

Entrance requirements typically include:

- The equivalent of 13 years of secondary school (although, in some cases, exceptional grades in 12-year schooling systems are accepted)
- Excellent grades in chemistry and/or biology
- Academic excellence in another science or math course (e.g., chemistry, biology, physics)
- Significant experience in a health care environment gained prior to the application submission. Experiences can be voluntary, paid work, or informal.
- Additional tests, such as the The University Clinical Aptitude Test (UCAT) and Biomedical Admissions Test (BMAT) are commonly used to assess aptitude. Applicants must find out whether additional tests are required and, if so, which tests are required by their university choice.

Interviews for medical courses normally take place in the UK between November and March. When a university receives a high volume of quality applications from a particular geographic region, interviews may be arranged at an alternative location.

The [American Medical Association](#) includes an informational page for graduates of foreign medical school programs if they wish to practice in the US. The [British Medical Association](#) also provides a resource for practicing in the US.

**Application Deadline:** Oct. 15 in the year before the student wants to enroll.

## Veterinary Science

In the UK, students can pursue a Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine and Surgery (BVMBVS), or Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine (BVetMed). These degrees can be completed within four to six years.

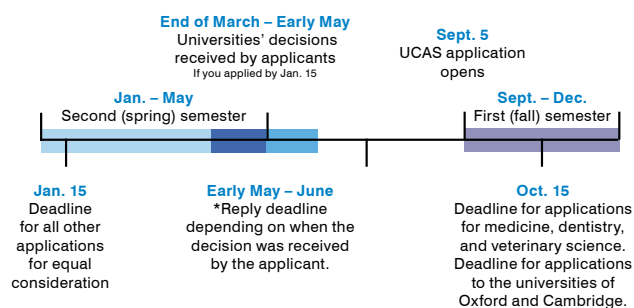
Some veterinary medicine courses in the UK are accredited by American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons and/or the European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education (EAEVE), giving students the ability to practice throughout UK, Europe, North America, and Australasia.

**Special Entrance Requirements:** International academic entry requirements vary by institution for veterinary medicine courses, and in some cases, may be more rigorous than for BA or BSc courses. Applicants are typically expected to have relevant practical experience with handling animals. UCAT, BMAT, or an institution's own test may be required. This will be stated on the entry requirements page of the institution's website. Interviews are required for most veterinary medicine courses.

**Application Deadline:** Oct. 15 in the year before the student wants to enroll.

As part of their degree programs, many UK universities offer work placements, sometimes referred to as a sandwich year. Sandwich years are typically undertaken between the second and final year of the degree, and allow a student the opportunity to put their knowledge into practice, network with companies in their field, and earn money. This experience does not usually require an additional visa, as it is closely tied to a student's academic course. The sandwich year might also be used to study abroad.

**Academic Calendar:** UK academic years run from September to May, with breaks in mid-December to early January and in March to mid- to late-April. Major exam periods are usually in January and May.



\*Students are recommended to apply as early as possible at [wwwucas.com/apply](http://wwwucas.com/apply).

**Search:** The [British Council's website](#) gives students information about selecting a course and institution. Students can search for courses and institutions through the [Universities and Colleges Admissions Service \(UCAS\)](#). The nonprofit organization offers a UK-specific online application system comparable to The Common Application. UCAS also provides tips and other guidance to potential students and families. Another useful website

is [Unistats](#), which allows students to compare three courses alongside one another.

UK media outlets publish university and subject league tables, which are similar to rankings. Because the UK university system is geared toward a student's course of study, subject league tables may provide useful perspective or serve as a starting point for students looking to study a particular major. However, methodologies vary; students are urged to read the fine print, such as the number of people surveyed and the year the information was gathered.

Examples include:

- [The Guardian's University Guide](#)
- [The Complete University Guide](#)
- [Times Higher Education World University Rankings](#)

**Apply:** Most students, domestic and international, apply to British universities through UCAS. Over 20 British universities also participate in the Common Application. Some universities also accept applications made directly to their institution.

Students can apply to a maximum of five courses in the UK, regardless of application method. The British Council recommends students apply to three target and two safety courses. Target courses are those for which a student is likely to meet the entry requirements, and safety courses are those that may require grades slightly below the student's expected results. A student can apply to more than one course at the same institution. Admission officials at the universities where a student has applied cannot see where else the student has submitted an application.

Students considering Oxford or Cambridge can apply to only one of the two institutions. For more on the Oxbridge application process, see page 73.

Students will be expected to enter their complete academic course history in the UCAS section as part of their UCAS application form, students will submit one personal statement and a letter of recommendation from an advisor, teacher, or similar academic professional. Final grades and an academically oriented personal statement are important parts of the application.

Personal statements should show “a student’s passion and motivation for applying and why they are suitable for the course,” according to UCAS. Applicants have 4,000 characters to write one statement, which is sent to all the universities where they have applied. The statement should straightforwardly reflect why the student wants to study their chosen course. Topics such as extracurricular interests or hardships overcome should be linked to how they have impacted the student’s desire and preparedness for studying their course of choice.

If a university requires additional application documents, the student will be asked to upload the documents in a Supplementary Application Questionnaire that is sent to them electronically after they have submitted their UCAS application. Counselors are sometimes required to submit supplementary documents upon request by the university.

**References:** Letters of reference should focus on the applicant’s suitability for studying the intended course. Application readers—admission officers or professors who teach the course—want to know whether the student is knowledgeable about the subject and has demonstrated an interest in various ways, to gauge whether they can successfully study it in depth. The letter of reference should also include a link to the school profile—particularly the curriculum—and cite any extenuating circumstances.

### APPLICATION ADVICE

Advise students to apply to courses which are very similar. A personal statement that tries to weave together too many different courses will not be read favorably. For example, a student should not apply for engineering at one university and business at another.

The teacher or counselor who serves as the applicant’s academic referee will also be asked to predict final year grades or exam results. Such predictions are based on professional judgment, the student’s past performance, current progress, and the school’s historical performance. Referees are encouraged to work with department heads and the student’s teachers to provide predictions, however UCAS is aware that this is an imperfect science. Although some universities require predicted grades for the application to be considered complete, others

Photo courtesy of Eleanor



**“Undergraduate degrees in the UK are much more focused on a single area of study than in the US. Because I had a firm idea of what I wanted to study, the opportunity to develop a strong, in-depth understanding of my subject area was a significant factor in my decision to attend university here. However, American students should be aware that it’s incredibly difficult to change your course of study (or major) once you’ve started your degree, so it’s important to know what you want to study before enrolling in a UK university.”**

—Eleanor Good, California, Queen’s University Belfast

will accept applications without them. Check with the university’s International Office to find out how critical the predicted grades are to the application. Because most offers of admission are conditional on achieving the predicted grades or scores, counselors and teachers should do their best to make fair and accurate predictions. Inflating a student’s predicted grades may result in a student missing out on a conditional offer. See the Upon Acceptance section below for more details.

**Deadlines:** The application season opens in early September. The deadline for applying to Oxford and Cambridge is Oct. 15, as well as medicine, dentistry, and veterinary science courses. Jan. 15 is the equal consideration deadline for all other UK universities, which students are encouraged to meet. Some institutions, however, may accept applications after the equal consideration deadline, and up to as late as six weeks before the course starts.



Some art and design courses have March deadlines so that applicants have adequate time to prepare a portfolio.

**Application Fees:** UCAS charges applicants 18 pounds for one course, or a total of 24 pounds for multiple courses, up to five.

**Admission Requirements:** Entry requirements for UK institutions are generally transparent and straightforward, and can be found on university websites or by contacting individual admission offices. A counselor can easily confirm the minimum GPA, test scores, and other requirements for admission.

Requirements typically include a combination of advanced coursework such as AP courses and test results; IB or college credits; SAT, ACT and SAT Subject test scores; in addition to a high school diploma.

Typically, students apply through UCAS without submitting a high school transcript. The high school transcript, one of the most important elements of the application process in the US, is not usually considered for US applicants to the UK, though some universities may ask for it. Rather, on the qualifications section of the UCAS application form students will indicate qualifications they have already received. In this section students will also include results on any exams such as AP tests, SAT or ACT, or SAT subject tests. Qualifications that are pending, such as AP and IB exams, that will be taken in May of their senior year will be reported here as well.

**Upon Acceptance:** UK universities are usually able to offer admission electronically within two months of an application's submission. Students may be admitted unconditionally or conditionally.

An unconditional offer means that the student has no conditions to meet and has a place at the institution if they choose to accept it.

A conditional offer is the most common offer made to both UK and international students. If a student has a conditional offer this means there are certain requirements outlined by the institution that the student must meet to secure their spot, such as obtaining a

certain final exam score (AP exams; IB scores; ACT, SAT or SAT Subject tests scores) or certain GPA. These offers are legally binding on the part of the university and cannot be rescinded.

Students who applied to five universities and received no offers of admission may have the option of adding an extra choice. UCAS Extra is a free service that allows these students to apply to one course at a time from late February up until early July. A final option, called clearing, is the period during which universities are allowed to fill any places they still have available. Clearing runs from July to September each year.

Once a student is notified of decisions, UCAS enables a student to hold two offers from institutions in the UK. The first is a firm choice, or the student's first choice, and the second is an insurance choice, which provides the student with a safety net should they not obtain the results required by their firm choice.

**Tuition and Fees:** Each university sets its own fees. Annual tuition fees for international students range from about 10,000 to 21,000 pounds per year, with the exception of medical courses which can be up to 38,000 pounds per year.

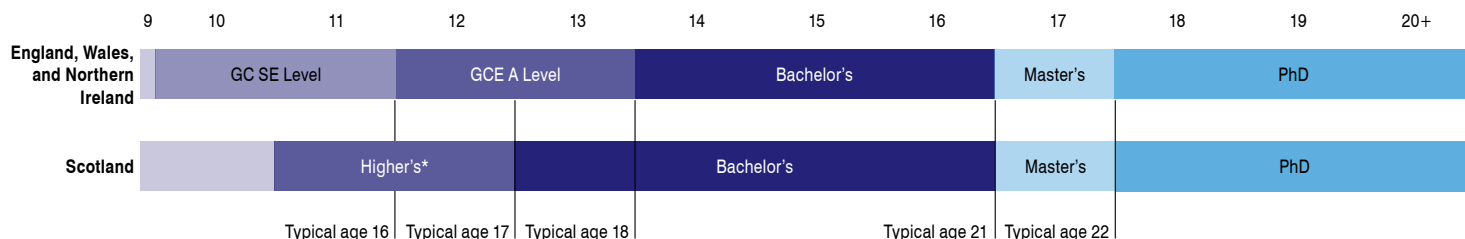
US students are eligible to use direct loans from the US Federal Student Aid program at most UK universities. Some scholarships are available for international students. The [British Council website](#) can provide more details.

**Housing:** Many universities guarantee on-campus housing—typically single-occupancy—for first-year international students. International students are usually integrated into first-year housing with domestic students. Many student residences are self-catered, meaning students prepare and cook their own meals. In cities, for-profit, privately run residence halls are common. Many students elect to live in these private dorms or other private rental accommodations after their first year.

Minimum monthly costs for housing and other living expenses are estimated at 1,015 pounds outside London and 1,265 pounds in London by UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI).

### Years in Formal Education: Comparing England, Wales, and Northern Ireland to Scotland

Chart courtesy of the British Council



\*Some universities require advanced highers, which is an additional 1-year course. If advanced highers have been taken, a student would not complete their bachelor's degree until the age of 22.

**Visa and Other Permits:** Universities typically advise admitted students on how to apply for a student visa. Visas are issued by [UK Visas and Immigration \(UKVI\)](#).

Students are advised to apply for a visa as soon as their offer of admission becomes unconditional. Students must receive a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) from the institution they plan to attend to complete the visa application. Most US students meet the requirements for what is called the Tier 4 student visa, which is valid for the duration of an undergraduate degree program, for up to five years. To obtain a visa, students must demonstrate they have sufficient funds for living costs. However, US citizens applying from within the USA do not need to show evidence of funds.

The visa application cost is 348 pounds. See the UKVI website for more information.

Though US students do not need to prove they have private health insurance, they will be asked to pay an annual health care surcharge upfront as part of the visa application process. Students must pay the per year fee (300 pounds in 2020) for the duration of the visa.

International students are allowed to work up to 20 hours per week while courses are in session, and full-time during university breaks.

A new immigration route has been announced where by international students in the UK who have studied any subject will be eligible to stay in the UK for up to two years to find work. It is expected that this will apply to students entering the UK in the 2020-21 academic year and beyond. This will require a separate visa and application process.

**Advice from the Field:** The British Council provides numerous resources for counselors advising students on higher education in the UK, including a [College and University Guidance Counsellor Handbook](#).

Additionally, [UCAS has a guide for counselors](#) that explains the application process and how advisers can monitor a student's progress. Counselors can fill out a practice UCAS application, allowing them to see what students will encounter when formally applying.

Counselors who have specific questions pertinent to an individual university are advised to contact the institution's international admission officer.

Counselors should be aware that applicants have the right to request access to their recommendations under UK law. This law applies to all UK schools and their applicants, regardless of whether students have waived their FERPA rights on The Common Application.

Many UK universities, particularly those in London, are known as city universities. Students should be advised that these may not have campuses in the traditional American sense. This can be daunting to students who are adapting to both college life and overseas living.



Photo courtesy of Eleanor

**“Although I love my hometown of Oakland, California, I wanted to take advantage of my university years to travel and develop an understanding of a different way of life than that of the US. Although most US universities offer study abroad programs, enrolling as a full-time student in an overseas university has given me the opportunity to experience a different culture on a much deeper level than one can achieve in a single semester.”**

—Eleanor Good, California, Queen's University Belfast

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Some American students prefer the familiar nature of campus universities, which look and feel more like many American institutions.

The [UK Council for International Student Affairs \(UKCISA\)](#) provides student visa advice as well as a wealth of information about other aspects of living and studying in the UK.

Many US cities are home to local chapters of UK university alumni associations which regularly host social, professional development, and volunteer events. Alumni can also stay connected with their university through newsletters and online networks. Similar to US universities, UK universities' career services will continue to offer their alumni support to help them progress and develop their career. Some alumni may also choose to become involved in connecting with prospective students and sharing their experience at student recruitment events.

The British Council Alumni Awards celebrate the outstanding achievements of alumni and showcase the impact and value of a UK higher education. Award winners and finalists are leaders in their fields who have used their experience of studying at a UK university to make a positive contribution to their communities, professions, and countries. You can find out more about past winners and how to apply or nominate someone through the [British Council website](#).

## OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE APPLICATION PROCESS

The University of Oxford and the University of Cambridge—often referred to together as Oxbridge—are two of the most prestigious destinations for postsecondary study in the United Kingdom. Both universities are rated at the top of international rankings for quality of teaching and research. Students entering either Cambridge or Oxford can expect a challenging curriculum. Admission decisions at each university are based solely on academic indicators of a student's ability and potential, according to stated selection criteria for each course, and, importantly, the application process for Cambridge and Oxford has some additional steps compared with other British universities.

Only a small number of courses are available for study (48 at Oxford and 30 at Cambridge), and programs of study are traditional and rigorous. The hallmark of an Oxbridge education is the focus on small-group instruction led by academic experts. At Oxford, these sessions are called tutorials; at Cambridge they are supervisions. Both systems allow students to debate and argue ideas with some of the best minds in the world.

An important caveat: Students can only apply to either Cambridge or Oxford, but not to both. Both schools have the same UCAS application deadline: Oct. 15 at 6 p.m. local time.

Students who want to attend either university should familiarize themselves with entrance requirements early in their high school years, since both universities require specific qualifications and have early deadlines.

### The College System

Oxford and Cambridge are collegiate universities, meaning that a successful applicant gains a place at the university and will be a member of a college for the entirety of their undergraduate course. A college is miniature campus and is the center of undergraduate life, including sporting, musical and dramatic pursuits, and socializing.

Each college at Oxford and Cambridge differs in a number of ways, including size, location, atmosphere, and facilities, although they also have a lot of similarities. Students can research colleges of interest prior to application, but this is not compulsory.

Individual colleges are responsible for admitting their own students, although they do this on behalf of the university as a whole. Students either apply to a specific college or make an open application, meaning they will be assigned to a college based on space availability. Both universities also operate a pooling system—reallocating applicants from over-subscribed colleges to level out the application field.

### Oxford or Cambridge?

Bright and motivated students who have an academic passion for a particular subject may find it difficult to decide between Oxford and Cambridge. Students must choose their course when applying, rather than declaring a major while at university. When deciding between Oxford and Cambridge, students should look first at the degrees offered by each institution, as these vary considerably. Oxford offers more joint-honors courses (e.g. philosophy, politics, and economics; or computer science and philosophy), whereas Cambridge tends to offer more single-subject honors courses, though it has recently introduced joint programs in history and politics, as well as history and modern languages.

For subjects such as history or law that are offered by both universities, students are advised to research the content of the degree course before making a final decision. Note the compulsory and optional modules, opportunities for studying abroad, and teaching and assessment methods.

**Apply:** International student application requirements are online.

- [University of Oxford](#)
- [University of Cambridge](#)



## University of Oxford

### Qualifications:

**IB Diploma:** Depending on the program of study, students are expected to have a total of 38, 39, or 40 points, including the core points. Specific minimum scores in certain courses may be required; students should check online for course-specific requirements. See the [course listing](#) and [international qualifications](#) webpage for details.

**SAT:** Oxford will accept the SAT. Students taking the SAT will need to achieve a total score of at least 1,470 out of 1,600. Oxford does not require the optional essay. For details of the University's policy on superscoring, visit their [international qualifications webpage](#).

**ACT:** A minimum score of 32 out of 36 is required. Oxford does not require the optional essay.

**AP/SAT Subject Tests:** SAT or ACT scores should be supplemented by at least three or more AP tests in appropriate subjects with scores of 5, or three SAT Subject Tests in appropriate subjects with scores of 700 or better.

**Other Tests:** Most programs also require students to take additional, subject-specific tests. Students seeking a bachelor's in law must take the National Admissions Test for Law (LNAT), for example, and math applicants must take the Mathematics Admissions Test (MAT). Results help to determine which candidates will be invited to interview. Some tests need to be completed before the application deadline, while others are completed after application, but before the interview. Students must check course websites to learn what tests are required and should schedule them early in the process. Most tests are administered in early November or late October. Students should check the details of which test(s) they need to take no later than early September to allow time to find and register at the nearest test center. Students are not expected to come to Oxford for their test(s), but their nearest test center may not be local. Schools and colleges may be able to register as a test center, if they haven't already. Further details can be found through [Oxford's website](#).



**Writing Sample:** Some courses require a [writing sample](#) that demonstrates the student's analytical, reasoning, and writing skills.

Students must submit their work by the deadline. The college that is considering their application may have particular format requirements (e.g., in PDF form), so it is important that students ensure their submissions meet these requirements.

**Interviews:** Course faculty, known as tutors, typically create a short list of candidates by late November or early December and then invite selected students for an interview. Applicants may receive very short notice of an interview date. Note that any travel costs incurred are at the student's expense. The college considering the application may choose to interview the student via phone or on Microsoft Teams, but this is not guaranteed. Interviews for specific subjects take place within a designated time frame, and applicants must make sure that they are available on the dates required for their subject, although remote interviews may need to be scheduled outside of this time period, subject to the availability of the professors.

Interviewees should be well-read and knowledgeable about the subject matter of the course to which they are applying. They should also thoroughly review the selection criteria for their course, be fully familiar with what they wrote in their personal statement, be cognizant of relevant arguments, and be prepared to discuss their own views.

**Offers:** Students can expect a decision by the end of January of the year in which they plan to matriculate. An offer may come directly from the college to which a student applied, or it may come from another college within the university. For students who have not yet completed high school, the offer will likely be conditional on final results.

### Resources:

- [US and Canada-specific information](#)
- [Interview Arrangements for International Students](#)

## University of Cambridge

Qualifications:

**IB Diploma:** Typical offers require scores between 40 and 42 points out of 45, with 7/7/6 in IB Higher Level subjects. Applicants may be required to achieve a 7 in a particular subject, depending on individual circumstances.

**SAT:** Applicants will need to achieve 750 in each component to give a combined score of 1500 for most science courses and economics; and 730 in evidence-based reading and writing and 730 in mathematics, to give a combined score of at least 1460 for all other courses.

**ACT:** An ACT composite score of at least 32 (for arts and humanities) or 33 (for sciences) out of 36 is accepted as equivalent to the SAT Reasoning Test scores.

**AP/SAT Subject Tests:** Applicants must submit a minimum of five College Board Advanced Placement (AP) tests (with scores of 5) in appropriate subjects. Note that SAT Subject Tests are not normally viewed as being equivalent to AP Tests.

**COPA:** The Cambridge Online Preliminary Application (COPA) is required of all applicants outside the European Union. It is a questionnaire that allows the university to collect useful information that isn't part of the UCAS application, and to make arrangements for overseas interviews. A student's application will be considered invalid unless the COPA is received by the relevant deadline.

**Transcripts:** You'll be required to submit a high school transcript as part of your application to Cambridge. For most students, the transcript will be an official document or certificate from your school or college which lists the subjects you've studied and the grades/qualifications that you've achieved in the last or most recent two years of schooling. More information about transcript submission deadlines can be found on the University of Cambridge's website.

**SAQ:** After students have submitted their UCAS application, they will be asked via email to complete a Supplementary Application Questionnaire—an online form that collects some additional information. There is also an opportunity to write a Cambridge specific personal statement here. Students are advised to pay close attention to the deadline for the SAQ. Also, be aware a student must include their COPA code, received after submitting the COPA, in the SAQ.

**Admission Assessments/Other Tests:** Most applicants are required to take a subject-specific admission assessment, either pre-interview or at interview. Other tests may be required, depending on the course of study. For example, applicants to mathematics and related courses must complete the Sixth Term Examination Paper (STEP). Students are urged to check the specific course website for details about any required tests.

**Interviews:** Applicants with a realistic chance of being offered a place are invited to attend an interview, and all those who are made an offer will have been interviewed. Candidates based in a location where there is an overseas interview option would ordinarily be expected to apply for an interview in that location, according to eligibility criteria. Cambridge interviews vary depending on subject and college, but the main focus of interviews is to explore the candidates' academic potential, motivation, and suitability for the chosen course of study. Interviews are similar in many ways to supervisions and help selectors gauge how candidates would respond to the teaching methods used at Cambridge.

**Offers:** Students can expect a decision by the end of January of the year they plan to enroll. An offer may come directly from the college to which the student applied or it may come from another college, through the pooling system. For students who have not yet completed high school, the offer will usually be conditional on final results.

### Resources:

- [US-Specific Information](#)
- [COPA Cambridge](#)
- [SAQ Cambridge](#)





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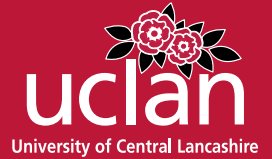
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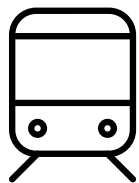
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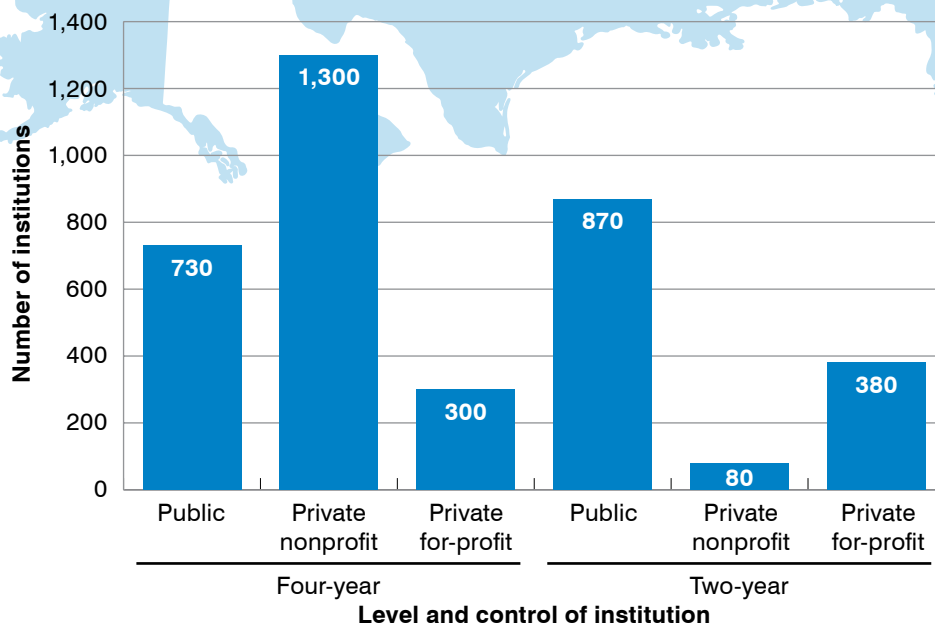
# UNITED STATES

**Brief Background:** The higher education system features a large number of institutions that vary in the types of degrees awarded, the number of students attending, the degree of funding and control from the public sector, and their status as nonprofit or for-profit entities. International students are typically attracted to the US because of the quality of instruction, the robust offerings, and the flexibility of the educational approach.

There are about 4,500 degree-granting postsecondary institutions in the US. Of these, just over 2,300 confer

bachelor's degrees, following a four-year study model (referred to in the chart below as four-year colleges). Many of these institutions also offer graduate degrees, such as master's or doctorate degrees. There are also just over 1,300 institutions that offer associate degrees, and these are sometimes referred to as two-year colleges, community colleges, or junior colleges. Students attend two-year colleges either to gain skills for employment, or as a pathway to continue their studies at a four-year college and earn a bachelor's degree.

**Number of degree-granting institutions with first-year undergraduates, by level and control of institution, 2018–19**



In the 2018-2019 school year, nearly 1.1 million international students enrolled in US colleges and universities, representing 5.5 percent of the students in higher education. The largest number of students come from China, followed by students from India, South Korea, and Saudi Arabia. International students typically pursue a bachelor's or graduate degree, in about equal numbers, though some are pursuing non-degree educational paths.

US colleges and universities (the terms are often used interchangeably) hold 16 of the top 25 spots in the *Times Higher Education University World Rankings*, with 40 institutions in the top 100. While international attention has historically focused on eight private institutions that make up the Ivy League athletic conference, quality runs deep throughout US higher education, at both private and public institutions.

US higher education, unlike that of many other countries, lacks national oversight. Instead, the 50 individual states are responsible for educating students at the primary and secondary level, and higher education institutions are accredited through regional or national entities. Students can check an institution's status through the US Department of Education's [Database of Accredited Postsecondary Institutions and Programs](#).

Compared to private institutions, public universities tend to have larger enrollments and admit students with a wider range of academic profiles. Because of the state funding they receive, these institutions may also restrict the percentage of out-of-state students they enroll.

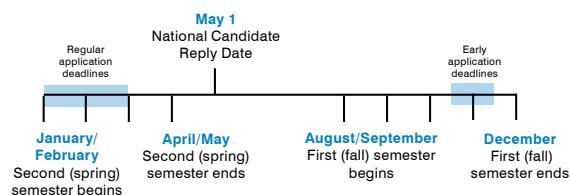
**Good to Know:** Students attending secondary school study a broad range of topics and are not tracked by aptitude or interest. Higher education follows a similar model, with a liberal arts and sciences emphasis. Students explore their strengths, interests, and aspirations before determining a major, or course of study. There are exceptions, such as engineering or nursing, where students apply for a specific major or program. Generally, however, changes between majors are common and most students do not need to declare their major until their second year of college. Professional studies, such as medicine, architecture, and law are not typically direct-entry undergraduate subjects.

Many four-year colleges or universities offer on-campus living options, based on the idea that living away from home fosters independence. On many campuses, residential academic communities are designed to provide significant learning opportunities outside the classroom. Traditionally, athletic competitions have been a central aspect of social life on US campuses, and many also feature Greek life (fraternities for men and sororities for women), a form of social organization that may include a residential component as well.

International students may be surprised by the residential nature and strength of the university community found at many US institutions. Students are often highly engaged in their college or university, regardless of whether they

live on campus. There are hundreds or even thousands of student-run clubs and organizations, including some particularly targeted to the needs and interests of international students. Intramural, club, and varsity sports teams provide athletic and social opportunities, and formalized volunteer and leadership activities are common.

**Academic Calendar:** Most universities run from mid-August until the end of April or early May, but there is no national calendar. The academic year is typically split into two semesters: August to December and January to May, but some universities run on a quarter or trimester system with shorter terms, while still others use a 4-1-4 calendar, with a month-long concentrated session sandwiched between two more traditional four-month terms. A few offer a block plan of studies in which one subject is studied for three to four weeks. Many offer optional summer terms.



**Search:** With so many colleges and universities to choose from, students should consider their educational objectives before beginning their search. There are numerous tools available to use, and data is regularly published on admission rates, retention rates (showing the percentage of students who return for a second year of study at an institution), and graduation rates.

[Education USA's website](#), run by the US Department of State, provides an overview for international students considering studying in the US. The organization also has 425 advising centers for international students in more than 125 countries.

The US Department of Education's [College Navigator](#) is a search tool students can use to find colleges by location, course of study, degree type, institution type, admission selectivity, and other factors.

Students with a particular region in mind may want to review the US Department of Commerce's listing of [educational state consortia](#).

The [Big Future website](#), sponsored by the non-profit College Board (owners of the SAT and Advanced Placement tests), provides another search tool.

**Apply:** Students are not limited in the number of colleges and universities to which they can apply. The majority of first-time freshmen apply to at least three colleges, with a significant percentage (approximately 35 percent) applying to seven or more colleges.

Though there is not a single, universal application platform in the US, in the most recent application cycle, more than 1 million students submitted applications

to almost 900 colleges and universities through the [Common Application](#). Students can also apply to about 150 colleges through the [Coalition for College](#) application. Additionally, many universities have their own applications, or participate in a state application platform, such as in [California](#) or [Texas](#).

Most institutions have no preference for applications submitted through one application platform over another.

The applications specify which information is to be included for each institution; what documents are to be uploaded (either by the student, a counselor, or a teacher/recommender); which are to be self-reported (sometimes test scores and/or grades); and which are to be sent separately (often ACT or SAT scores). The requirements may differ by institution, and it is important to double-check the individual institutions' websites for further direction.

**Admission Deadlines:** Deadlines vary by institution, by application type, and occasionally by major, but generally the early deadlines are mid-October to mid-November for students applying for the following fall. These early deadlines are for binding early decision applications or non-binding early action applications, and for both, students are informed whether they are admitted between mid-December and mid-January. Under regular decision deadlines, which generally fall sometime between Jan. 1 and March 1, students submit their application by a specific deadline and then are notified within a specified period of time (which can be as late as April 1 for fall entry).

## ADMISSION PLANS

- **Regular Decision:** Students submit an application by a specified date and receive a decision in a clearly stated period of time.
- **Rolling Admission:** Institutions review applications as they are submitted and render decisions throughout the admission cycle.
- **Early Action (EA):** Students apply early and receive a decision well in advance of the institution's regular response date.
- **Early Decision (ED):** Students make a commitment to a first-choice institution where, if admitted, they definitely will enroll. The application deadline and decision deadline occur early.
- **Restrictive Early Action (REA):** Students apply to an institution of preference and receive a decision early. They may be restricted from applying ED, EA or REA to other institutions. If offered enrollment, they have until May 1 to confirm.



**“I decided to study in the US because of the academic diversity and opportunities the school afforded, especially for the humanities/social sciences, which is what I wanted to pursue. There was also flexibility in what I could study—it was easy to pursue minors and additional majors across the different undergraduate colleges.”**

—Teresa Xu, Vanderbilt University, Canada

Some institutions practice rolling admission, which means that students can apply as soon as the application opens, with admission decisions released on a rolling basis as the applications are reviewed, rather than on a single date. Still other institutions utilize open admission policies—as long as students meet the college's entry requirements, they will be admitted. Rolling and open admission schools may continue to accept applications up until the term begins, on a space-available basis.

Application deadlines for financial aid (either merit or need-based) are specified by institution. Certain scholarships are only available to students who apply by a stipulated early deadline. The availability of aid varies considerably for domestic or international students, by institution, and even by state, for US citizens. Students seeking need-based aid are asked to provide significant documentation of their family's financial situation as part of the application.

**Application Fees:** Application fees vary by university, ranging from US\$0 to US\$100 and averaging US\$50. Fee waivers may be available, typically with support from a school counselor. Institutions also sometimes have application events where they waive the application fee for a particular date or range of dates. [NACAC](#), the [Common Application](#), and other organizations have further information for counselors about fee waivers on their websites.

**Admission Requirements:** Many colleges and universities utilize what is referred to as “holistic admission” processes, looking at academic performance,



background, personal qualities, activities, and other factors when considering which students to admit. On average about two-thirds of applications receive favorable decisions, but admission rates vary widely by institution (and in some cases, major) from 4 percent of students admitted at the most selective institutions to nearly 100 percent at schools with open admission policies.

Each university or college sets its own admission requirements, process, and decision-making criteria. For some institutions, admission is based strictly on high school grades (generally grades 9 – 11, and depending on the time of application, the first half of grade 12) and/or standardized test scores. Generally, the institutions with lower admission rates (more selective institutions) require more information from students. Policies change frequently and vary widely between institutions, making it imperative that students check each institution's individual policies throughout the application process.

Students must submit their grade reports or transcript upon application, and then supply a final transcript and/or proof of diploma/completion before matriculation.

Historically, most four-year colleges have required ACT or SAT test scores, though more recently, many have

adopted test optional policies, where scores can be submitted if desired but are not required. These policies change frequently. In addition, an institution's testing requirements may differ for domestic and international students and may differ for admission and scholarship purposes. Refer to [The National Center for Fair and Open Testing](#) for an overview and visit individual university websites for the most up-to-date testing information.

International students, particularly those coming from countries where English is not the native language, may be required to submit proof of English proficiency, such as [TOEFL](#), [IELTS](#), or [Duolingo](#) test scores.

Some of the most selective institutions may require or recommend further testing in two or more subject areas to help differentiate between candidates, although this requirement is becoming less common. This requirement is typically met through [SAT Subject Tests](#).

Many colleges or universities may require students to submit one or more personal essays as part of their application process. Some may also require or recommend admission or alumni interviews, and certain programs, such as those in performing or visual arts, may require submission of a portfolio or an audition.

**Percentage of Colleges Attributing Different Levels of Importance to Factors in Admission Decisions: International Students (First-Time Freshmen), Fall 2017**

Factor	N	Considerable Importance	Moderate Importance	Limited Importance	No Importance
English proficiency exam scores	162	80.2	14.8	1.9	3.1
Grades in All Courses	166	75.9	13.9	7.2	3.0
Grades in College Prep Courses	165	67.3	18.2	9.7	4.8
Strength of Curriculum	164	48.2	28.7	13.4	9.8
Admission Test Scores (SAT, ACT)	165	39.4	31.5	21.8	7.3
National school-leaving certificate (non US)	151	35.1	27.8	14.6	22.5
Essay or Writing Sample	162	20.4	39.5	17.3	22.8
Counselor Recommendation	161	12.4	41.0	28.0	18.6
Student's Demonstrated Interest	161	16.8	23.0	31.7	28.6
Teacher Recommendation	162	10.5	43.8	25.3	20.4
Class Rank	165	9.7	17.6	32.1	40.6
Extracurricular Activities	163	1.8	31.3	42.3	24.5
Subject Test Scores (AP, IB)	159	7.5	22.6	28.9	40.9
Portfolio	161	5.0	6.8	31.1	57.1
Interview	161	2.5	18.0	31.1	48.4
Work	162	1.2	13.6	38.3	46.9
SAT II Scores	160	6.3	2.5	20.6	70.6
State Graduation Exam Scores	159	4.4	6.9	12.6	76.1

SOURCE: NACAC Admission Trends Survey, 2017-18.

United States

Many universities also accept Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and other advanced course exam scores for academic credit or placement. They may also grant credit for a college course that a student takes either at their high school (dual enrollment) or on a college campus.

**Upon Acceptance:** Students receive one of four responses to each application: admitted, not admitted, deferred to regular decision (for early action or early decision applications), or waitlisted. Acceptance is typically contingent upon a student continuing to perform at a level consistent with previous academic performance.

Students who are *admitted* may attend assuming that their final transcript (or proof of completion through exams) is in line with their previous grades, they submit any required deposits (usually due May 1, a well-established National Candidate Reply Date), and obtain a student visa.

Students who are *deferred* may be asked to provide additional information such as updated grades or test scores, a letter of continued interest, or an update on non-academic achievements. Deferred students generally receive more information on their application status by April 1.

Students can also be *waitlisted*. This means the institution might accept the student at a later date, depending on whether spaces open up in the incoming class. Waitlisted students will typically be notified sometime between May and August if they are being offered a place for fall entry.

Students typically receive all their admission decisions by April 1 and will need to choose among their options and submit a deposit by a date specified by their selected university, typically May 1 for enrollment the following fall.

**Tuition and Fees:** Each college sets its own tuition, housing, meals, and other fees. Generally, published costs are lower at public universities, however, private universities may provide more generous financial aid, though policies on aid to international students vary widely.

Public universities charge tuition based on whether a student resides in the state. For out-of-state students, including international students, the average undergraduate tuition at a four-year public school is approximately US\$16,000 per year. Private universities do not differentiate tuition based on residency, and the average cost is approximately US\$37,000 per year. At both public and private universities, international students may be charged additional fees.

Cost of attendance is a term used to describe an estimate of the full costs of attending a specific college for one year. Universities include this information on their websites, both for domestic and international students. Total cost of attendance (factoring in tuition, housing, required insurance, mandatory fees, books, and miscellaneous expenses), can approach US\$80,000 at some institutions, though it can be much lower at others.



**“The application process was much more complex than applying to a school in my home country. However, the admission process is also a lot more holistic, emphasizing more than just grades.”**

—Agneetta Moiso, Vanderbilt University, Finland

United States

EducationUSA provides [information about paying for college in the US](#).

NAFSA: Association of International Education provides [detailed information on financial aid for international undergraduate students](#) studying in the US.

The Institute of International Education provides [selected information about scholarships programs for international students](#) in the US. Scholarship and award programs for international undergraduates vary greatly by institution.

**Housing:** Many four-year colleges and universities, and some two-year institutions, have their own housing, and may require students to live on campus and purchase a university meal plan, at least for the first year. First-year students have historically been housed in residence halls, with multiple students sharing a bedroom/study area. Styles vary, but generally feature shared bathrooms, laundry facilities, and other common areas. Some universities have suites or apartment-style living, though this is often reserved for upperclassmen. Application for on-campus housing generally occurs after a student has chosen their institution and paid an enrollment and/or housing deposit.

Many students move off campus to private accommodations after their first or second year, if the university allows it. Some institutions provide a list of off-campus housing, but the rental agreements are transacted solely between the student and the property owner.

The fees for housing and meals are referred to as room and board and should be accounted for when planning for study in the US. Students should refer to individual university websites for cost estimates for on- and off-campus living, as the rates vary by institution and location.

**Visa and Other Permits:** Nonimmigrant international students usually enter the United States using one of three visa types: F-1, J-1, or M-1. The F-1 status is for international students who wish to individually enroll in a more traditional academic program, such as a two- or four-year college or university. International students with M-1 status usually are enrolled in a shorter-term program at a vocational school that teaches a technical skill like culinary, cosmetology, or aviation. J-1 exchange visitors come to the United States to participate in a program specifically geared toward cultural exchange, including academic exchanges. J-1 exchange visitors must be sponsored by an organization designated by the US Department of State. Students can learn more about the Exchange Visitors Program on the [Department of State website](#).

The [US Department of Homeland Security website](#) has useful information for students on visa types, applications, and requirements. Federal regulations require that all F-1 and M-1 international students attend a school or program certified by the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP). Students can search the [SEVP website](#) to confirm their school's status.

Subject to approval from their university's international student office, international students on F-1 or M-1 visas

may be able to work on campus up to 20 hours a week their first year and can apply to work off campus in subsequent years.

**Advice from the Field:** In part because of the number and variety of higher education institutions, there is emphasis on "fit" as students select a college or university. The definition of fit varies and is personal, but includes factors such as academic approach and areas of study, social and extracurricular life, affordability, size, location, and more. And through the holistic admission policies practiced at many colleges, the concept of fit goes both ways: admission officers reviewing student applications are assessing what the student would bring to the residential and social community in addition to evaluating their academic credentials and ability to succeed in the classroom. Accordingly, university admission can appear arbitrary, and admission decisions are often difficult to predict. It is very important for students to apply to a balanced list of schools, with a range of admission selectivity.

University rankings can be controversial in the US, as it would be incredibly difficult to create a systematic way to measure educational quality delivered by institutions that vary on so many dimensions. The most well-known ranking is produced annually by *U.S. News & World Report*. Other media outlets have created college rankings, including *Forbes*, *Money Magazine*, and *Princeton Review*. *Colleges that Change Lives*, both an organization and book of the same name, provides in-depth information on some innovative small liberal arts and sciences colleges.

US colleges and universities often have strong alumni networks throughout the states and the world. Alumni can often provide career advice, connections, and other opportunities to graduates.





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# DIVERSE AND UNDERREPRESENTED STUDENTS ABROAD

An international educational experience offers students many long-term benefits, including self-confidence, a broadened world view, and expanded career path. Yet traditionally underserved populations remain underrepresented in education abroad. Given the benefits gained, non-participants may be at a competitive disadvantage. Building awareness of the barriers these populations face in pursuing international opportunities—and how to better support them—plays a critical role in addressing this disparity.

In 2018 the [National Center for Education Statistics](#) reported that 46 percent of all undergraduate students identified as people of color, a 29 percent increase since 1980. Yet while diversity in higher education continues to increase, representation in other areas of the undergraduate collegiate experience have not followed suit. This is particularly true of international experiences. In 2018, 70 percent of US study abroad students were white; 11 percent were Hispanic or Latino; 8 percent were Asian, Native Hawaiian, or other Pacific Islander; 6 percent were Black or African American; 4 percent were multiracial; and less than 1 percent identified as American Indian or Alaskan Native, according to [IIE's \*Open Doors\* data](#). These numbers are an improvement over previous years, but there is still room for further growth.

It is also important to think of representation in terms beyond race and ethnicity, including all groups that have not traditionally participated in global programs. In addition to racial and ethnic minorities, [Diversity Abroad](#)—an international organization that connects diverse students with meaningful international experiences—identifies the following groups: economically disadvantaged students,

students with disabilities, LGBTQI+ students, and first-generation students.

Gender is another important consideration. Though women make up the majority of American study abroad participants, they are included in diversity discussions as a result of sensitivities around gender inequality in host countries. Men, on the other hand, have in fact been underrepresented in international programs. IIE's data for the past decade show the female-to-male participation rate for students studying abroad has consistently been two-to-one.

The factors influencing participation from these groups are varied and complex. However, by identifying the issues deterring international study and recognizing factors that encourage participation, counselors can better serve their students. Table 1 offers a breakdown of these obstacles as well as practices proven to mitigate these challenges.

Making the decision to pursue an international educational experience takes time and energy, but above all it requires students to be aware it's even a possibility. There are several organizations currently working to provide services and information for underrepresented populations in international education. Some of these organizations cater specifically to certain groups, and most of them focus on short-term educational opportunities. However, their content can also be applicable as students consider the viability of pursuing other international experiences, such as three-year full degrees abroad and community college-to-international university pathways. A list of organizations and resources can be found in Table 2.

Table 1: Challenges and Strategies for Diverse and Underrepresented Student Representation in International Education

Population	Challenges/Concerns	Strategies
Racial and Ethnic Minorities	Financial barriers, lack of information, social capital, fear of discrimination, lack of support, institutional and academic barriers	Inclusive messaging, broader understanding of why it is important, presenting the cost of lost opportunities, early planning and budgeting, institutional and external scholarships, cost savings of pursuing full degree abroad, peer support
Economically Disadvantaged Students	Financial barriers, loss of income (job) while abroad, family obligations, heavily structured majors	Exposure to program options, presenting the cost of lost opportunities, early planning and budgeting, institutional and external scholarships, cost savings of pursuing full degree abroad, peer support
Students with Disabilities	Insufficient knowledge of available programs, lack of assistive devices and services, financial barriers, challenges to requesting accommodation, concerns about perception abroad, family support	Awareness of available opportunities, support from peers and study abroad alumnae, equal access to advising
Women	Social norms in the destination country, as well as the US, home obligations (e.g., single mothers)	Research on safety abroad, social norms of the host country, adaptability, advice from peers, support from program organizers, scholarships for women that consider special circumstances
Men	Peer influence, perceived incompatibility with course requirements (particularly STEM majors), perceived as a female-dominated activity, home obligations	Link reasons for going directly to major or career, provide support from professionals in the field or major faculty
LGBTQI+ Students	Privacy, fear of discrimination by host culture and program organizers	Inclusive messaging, research on safety abroad, social norms of the host country, adaptability, advice from peers, support from program organizers
First-Generation Students	Financial barriers, loss of income (job) while abroad, family obligations, heavily structured majors	Exposure to program options, presenting the cost of lost opportunities, early planning and budgeting, institutional and external scholarships, peer support
Undocumented Students	Legal status, academic success, reduced social and cultural capital, financial barriers	Advance parole, legal counsel from a board-certified attorney with access to US Citizenship and Immigration Services or representative from a Board of Immigration Appeals, participation in local global programs

Table 2: Resources by Student Demographic

Population	Strategies
Racial and Ethnic Minorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Diversity Abroad</a></li> </ul>
Students with Disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Diversity Abroad</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Mobility International USA</a></li> </ul>
Women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Diversity Abroad</a></li> </ul>
LGBTQI+ Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Diversity Abroad</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, and Intersex Association</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">NAFSA Rainbow SIG</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">NAFSA LGBTQI+ Student Advising Guide for Education Abroad Professionals</a></li> </ul>
First-Generation Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Diversity Abroad</a></li> </ul>
Undocumented Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">NAFSA</a></li> </ul>



# AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES ABROAD

**Brief Background:** American Universities Abroad (AUA) is a group of private American universities located outside of the US that offer English-taught degree programs modeled on American curricula and quality oversight practices. AUA universities meet the following criteria:

- Have US regional accreditation
- Are nonprofit
- Operate on the US academic credit system
- Participate in US federal financial aid

AUA universities are located in different regions of the world, and encourage international perspectives and cross-cultural education within the context of their degree programs. Each AUA university enrolls a significant number of international applicants, leading to a diverse and multinational population of students on campus. American students make up the largest percentage of students at most AUA universities, but there is typically less than 50 percent of any one nationality.

**Good to Know:** Many AUA institutions specialize in the humanities. AUA universities offer a liberal arts style of education, including general education as well as

major requirements, and grant US degrees. Some AUA universities also offer a nationally recognized degree from the local host country.

For institutions that have a US-based campus and a campus abroad—such as Webster University (MO) or Saint Louis University (MO)—degrees can be completed in their entirety at the campus abroad, or students can spend time completing academic requirements in both countries. Some AUA universities, such as John Cabot University, have direct exchange partnerships with US universities, allowing students to complete part of their undergraduate experience in the United States.

Fundamental to the student experience in AUA programs is engagement with global issues, experiential learning, travel and cross-cultural exchange, and an emphasis on global citizenship. AUA universities instill a cosmopolitan outlook and teach students how to adapt to change. Students have the opportunity to experience not only a US-style education, but are also uniquely situated to immerse themselves in the culture of the university's host country as well.

**Academic Calendar:** AUA universities follow a traditional American academic calendar, generally beginning in August or September and continuing until May, with summer course options.

**Search:** Many AUA universities are members of The Common Application and can be found using the Common App search function. Many AUA university admission representatives are also active in events and fairs in the United States throughout the fall and spring, and some AUA institutions have admission representatives based in the United States.

**Apply:** AUA universities follow a traditional US timeline, with applications accepted beginning in the late summer or fall. Institutions that are members of The Common Application require students to use the portal to apply, sometimes asking applicants to complete a supplementary essay. As in the US, other requirements vary, and sometimes include an interview, meeting, or phone conversation in addition to the application. Those schools not on The Common Application use a similar approach to admission, but requirements differ among institutions.

**Deadlines:** AUA admission decisions are often rolling, though there are deadlines for confirmation of acceptance. For US students the May 1 deadline is generally observed.

**Application Fee:** Fees vary by institution, even those that accept The Common Application.

**Academic Requirements:** Most AUA institutions opt to review applications holistically. Counselors and students should check with each school for the required minimum GPA, as they vary by institution. The universities award academic credit demonstrated by AP test scores, IB diplomas, and A-level exams. While test scores are not always required, the institutions will accept and may assess them as a part of the application review when submitted.

**Upon Acceptance:** US students should confirm enrollment by May 1.

There are associated deposit fees for confirmation and in some cases for housing. AUA universities generally have an extensive pre-arrival process. Admission counselors and student life officials help students with each step they need to complete to arrive promptly and safely—including visa acquisition, as well as travel, housing, and banking arrangements. Some AUA universities direct students to websites that offer discounted student airfare.

**Tuition and Fees:** Tuition varies among institutions. Counselors and students should check each school for estimates regarding tuition and living costs.

### How do I know if a university abroad has US regional accreditation?

US regional accreditation is one way to assess institutional quality. In the US there are seven regional accrediting bodies that oversee postsecondary education at public and private institutions. While national accreditation seems like it would be more important, regional accreditation is older and generally more prestigious. American accrediting agencies are increasingly evaluating foreign institutions as they believe they have a role to play in promoting the mobility of students and faculty.

The following agencies keep an updated directory of accredited institutions, including non-US institutions:

- [Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges](#)
- [Middle States Commission on Higher Education](#)
- [Higher Learning Commission](#)
- [Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities](#)
- [Western Association of Schools and Colleges](#)
- [New England Commission of Higher Education](#)
- [Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges](#)

Some AUA universities bill tuition in the currency of the country where they are located. Some schools list the dates when the exchange rate will be set—typically early July for the fall semester, and early November for the spring semester—so students and families can better understand what they will pay in US dollars, and budget accordingly.

Financial aid, both institutional and federal, is available at all AUA institutions. Institutional financial aid is determined by each university. US citizens can also access federal student loan opportunities by filing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Note that current US government legislation prohibits US citizens enrolled in colleges or universities outside the United States from receiving Pell Grants, SEOG, Perkins Loans, or Federal Work Study funds, even though they may be eligible for such assistance. Additionally, all AUA universities offer merit-based scholarships. Some award need-based scholarships and have programs similar to American work study.



**Housing:** Each university strives to provide affordable housing options for their students. Accommodations vary among institutions and can include on-campus housing (some with residential advisors) and off-campus accommodations, such as apartment-style living, host families, or residence halls managed by local universities. Meal plan options also exist at many AUA universities. Most AUA institutions have a housing department and/or housing partner that will help students secure housing for their first year and beyond. Some AUA universities require that students use university-approved housing—on-campus or provided by a partner—during their first year of studies.

**Visas and Other Permits:** In most cases students will need a student visa to study in their AUA host country. The visa acquisition process varies in length, but students begin it once they have confirmed their attendance. Fees to obtain the student visa vary depending on the destination country. AUA institutions offer admitted students help with the required paperwork and process. However, students must follow the host country's policies for visa application.

Students may be able to work part-time with their student visa while studying at an AUA institution, however, availability varies by country. For the most part, students are not guaranteed any type of visa or permit to remain in-country after they complete their education, unless sponsored by another organization or employer.

**Advice from the Field:** Communications and the assistance provided by an AUA university are similar to that of US-based institutions. One possible difference is that many of the AUA universities are smaller in size compared to many universities in the US, so the support that students and counselors receive tends to be very personalized. Students can expect one-on-one attention starting with the admission process and extending on to academic advising and on through graduation.

Because student visas are required in most cases, it is important that counselors encourage students to be in constant contact with their admission representative for help with each step of the process.



# US BRANCH CAMPUSES

A branch campus is one that operates in one country, but is owned and operated (at least in part) by a university that is based in a different country, according to the SUNY Albany-based Cross-Border Education Research Team (C-Bert). C-Bert [maintains a list of institutions](#) that meet its definition of an international branch campus (along with links to branch campus websites). Note that this website is not specifically focused on admission procedures. Some college guidebooks, including Fiske Guides, also identify several branch campuses that draw a diverse student body, including US students.

More than 100 US colleges and universities operate one or more branch campuses in another country, offering additional opportunities for students to earn a US college degree outside of the United States. Additionally, six international universities operate branches within the United States. Most US branch campuses operate very similarly to their main campuses in the United States, with courses typically taught in English. However, a branch campus is usually smaller in size than its home campus and boasts an extremely diverse student body.

There are various models associated with the branch campus concept. Many branch campuses are organized as part of a hub, in which several branch campuses—for example from the United States or other countries—are operating alongside one another. Major hubs can be found in Qatar, Singapore, the United Arab Emirates, Malaysia, and China. Education City in Qatar, for example, includes six American universities, one British university, and one French university, each offering a degree program in a field for which the institution is well-known. Alternatively, Yale-NUS College in Singapore is sometimes viewed as a branch campus by virtue of its affiliation with Yale, however it does not award a Yale degree. Rather, it awards a Yale-NUS degree. New York University offers another model, where its campuses in Abu Dhabi and Shanghai form a global network with its main campus in New York and 11 international academic centers.

Enrollment at branch campuses is open to local nationals who meet admission criteria and other students coming from around the world. Many US universities that operate branch campuses welcome US students to these locations for short-term educational experiences,

and some actively recruit US students for full degree programs. The following represent examples of US student enrollment at branch campuses:

- At New York University (NYU) Shanghai, a degree-granting campus in NYU's global network, 51 percent of each entering class is made up of Chinese nationals, while the remaining 49 percent come from around the rest of the world, including the United States.
- Many students at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia study abroad at Mason Korea, just outside of Seoul. The branch campus also enrolls several US citizens in full undergraduate degree programs.
- The Saint Louis University–Madrid Campus enrolls 1,000 students with around 850 coming from St. Louis for semester programs.

The number of majors available at any one university's branch campus tends to be fewer than what the home campus offers. Marist Italy, a branch campus of Marist College in Poughkeepsie, New York, offers four-year degrees at its Florence campus in majors such as studio art, art history, conservation studies, digital media, fashion design, interior design, and Italian language.

It is important to note that some governments place restrictions on teaching and research, potentially influencing the types of programs offered. This also raises concerns about academic freedom.

Many branch campuses follow an academic calendar that is similar to that of the home campus. In some cases, the application process, fees, and other admission-related policies and procedures are similar for US students at both the home and branch campus. However, because admission representatives at branch campuses review applications from a very diverse applicant pool, standard US admission requirements—for example the SAT or ACT—may or may not be factored into admission or scholarship decisions. Exceptions tend to be context-specific. For admission to NYU Shanghai, for example, Chinese nationals must take the gaokao as part of the university's agreement with the Ministry of Education in China.

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# INTERNATIONAL PROGRESSION PATHWAYS

Community colleges are an integral facet of the US higher education sector. More than 1,460 community colleges across the United States serve an estimated 10 million students each year, offering a wide variety of vocational courses as well as academically oriented associate degree programs. For many students, community colleges provide a cost-effective path toward attaining a bachelor's degree via established transfer agreements with four-year colleges and universities.

Historically, community colleges have developed these “2+2” progression programs with local and regional institutions. Increasingly, however, there is a growing interest among community colleges to also partner with international institutions. These international partnerships not only strengthen a college's global outlook, but also provide students with more options for completing their undergraduate degrees. These partnerships are attractive to international universities as a way to increase the diversity of the institution by enrolling more American students.

A number of community colleges across the country have already established progression agreements with universities from Australia, France, Ireland, New Zealand, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom, among other countries.

**Benefits of International Transfer:** Research has shown that community college students are the least likely to consider studying abroad. However, transferring to an international university may be a particularly attractive option for these students because of the cost-saving benefits. Since foreign institutions tend to charge substantially lower tuition than their American counterparts, enrolling in an international university may be cheaper than attending a local public or private college.

In addition, because of how the progression agreements are structured, students may only need to study for one year abroad to attain their bachelor's degree. In contrast, a four-year American institution typically requires transfer students to complete two additional years of coursework. The “2+1” programs offered by some international universities can therefore save students a year's worth of tuition and living expenses.

**Transfer Agreement Structure:** International collaborations tend to take a few forms. Some institutions establish guaranteed admission agreements that ensure students' entrance to a partner institution when certain academic requirements are met. Others create articulation agreements that define the way specific courses and programs of study will transfer between partner institutions. Guaranteed admission and articulation agreements are not mutually exclusive.



Note that sometimes these agreements encompass only certain degree programs. For example, Brookdale Community College (NJ) has an articulation agreement with Aberystwyth University (UK) applicable only for students with associate degrees in business administration, English, creative writing, media studies, and studio arts.

**Application Process:** The process of applying to a partner institution abroad varies. Whereas some universities require students to complete an online application and furnish a copy of their transcript, others have a more involved application process. For instance, Green River College (WA) has specific conditions for admission to its University Transfer Pathway Program with University College Roosevelt in the Netherlands. In addition to completing 60 college-level credits and earning at least a 3.5 GPA, interested students must submit a letter of recommendation and sit for an admission interview with university faculty and staff.

**Sample of US Community Colleges and International Universities with Progression Agreements**

US Community Colleges	
Brookdale Community College	NJ
Edmonds Community College	WA
Green River College	WA
Maricopa Community College	AZ
Northern Essex Community College	MA
South Puget Sound Community College	WA

International Universities	
Aberystwyth University	UK
The American Business School of Paris	France
Bath Spa University	UK
College Roosevelt	The Netherlands
Cork Institute of Technology	Ireland
Deakin University	Australia
Goldsmiths, University of London	UK
IMI International Management Institute	Switzerland
Les Roches International School of Hotel Management	Switzerland
Middlesex University London	UK
Otago Polytechnic	NZ
Rennes School of Business	France
Robert Gordon University	UK
Thompson Rivers University, British Columbia	Canada
University of Glasgow	UK
University of Otago	NZ
University of West London	UK



# INTERNATIONAL DUAL AND JOINT PROGRAMS

International dual and joint degrees are programs in which two or more institutions from different countries form partnerships to design and deliver an academic program. In many of these programs, institutions in non-English speaking countries are paired with US institutions. According to [research conducted by the American Council on Education \(ACE\)](#), the top five partner countries for international joint and dual degree programs are China, France, Turkey, Germany, and South Korea.

ACE defines two types of programs:

In dual degree programs, a student receives a qualification from each of the partner institutions. These programs are also known as double degrees.

In joint degree programs, a student receives a single qualification endorsed by both institutions.

Dual degree programs tend to be more complex and variable. In some programs, students might receive a degree from each university in the same program of study, while at others they may receive a degree from each institution for distinctly different majors. Some offer two degrees, but at different levels, such as awarding a bachelor's from one institution and a master's degree

from another. Students are advised to make sure they understand program policies before enrolling.

Many joint and dual degree programs require students to study at the partner institution overseas for one to two years or during the summer. One such example, the program between the College of William & Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia and the University of St. Andrews in Scotland, offers undergraduate students the option to pursue a joint degree in economics, English, history, or international relations. Depending on where they enroll their first year, students will then spend their second year at the other university, and consult with their advisors on how to split their third and fourth years between the two locations.

International joint and dual degree programs also help US institutions diversify their campuses. ACE's data show that 63 percent of joint or dual degree programs enroll non-US students only; 34 percent enroll a mix of US and non-US students; and only 4 percent enroll just American students. US universities express eagerness to expand the numbers of US students engaged in such programs, but thus far they have proven more popular among international students hoping to study in the United States.

# GAP YEAR OPTIONS

**Brief Background:** A gap year, sometimes called a bridge year, is an option for students who want to spend a semester or year away from a traditional academic environment and immerse themselves in an experiential learning environment, typically before starting their first year of college or at some point during their early undergraduate years.

The Gap Year Association (GYA), a nonprofit membership association, estimates that prior to 2020, about 80 percent of gap year participants traveled internationally for some portion of their gap year time, and 71 percent report studying abroad later in college. The GYA focuses its work on four key pillars 1) gap year research, 2) program accreditation and federally recognized standards, 3) resources for students, families, and educators, and 4) equity and access.

A gap year is distinguished from study abroad in its timing and focus, and in the ways students experience, explore, and experiment with different possible future pathways. Most students on a gap year will touch on practical, professional, and personal learning outcomes, whereas a study abroad is more focused on one particular area of study, and accompanied by a credit-bearing academic component.

Some examples of a transformative gap year include being an assistant teacher for lower-income communities in AmeriCorps' CityYear program domestically in the USA, working for two months with baboons in South Africa,

interning with a mobile cinema in rural Argentina, studying solar panels in an international community in Northern India, learning from a local artist in Mexico.

**Good to Know:** GYA defines a successful gap year as one that: primarily employs experiential learning methods, and lasts a minimum of two months. Gap year students are sometimes called gappers, and should approach their gap year as an experience in its own right; not as a strategy to get into a better school or get more financial aid.

**General Structure:** Think about a gap year as multiple, independent activities superimposed onto an academic calendar—trimesters or semesters. The best gap years include at least two of the following distinct classes of experience: service-learning to promote empathy and global citizenship, an internship or career experimentation to inform college and career paths, paid work to help fund a solid gap year and to encourage personal investment in the experience, and a free time to leave room for the unknown.

The majority of students who participate in a gap year spend most of their year unaffiliated with a formal program, stitching together a mix of experiences and travel. However, GYA recommends launching the gap year with a structured introductory experience, leaving the remaining time to be more independent and lower-cost. This ensures gappers have ample opportunity to get trained on cultural issues, safety, global political situations, responsible volunteering, etc.



### Benefits:

- 90 percent of gap year graduates enter a four-year college within a year of their gap year experience. (Haigler, K & Nelson, R., *Gap Year American Style*, 2019).
- Gappers over-perform in college, often achieving GPAs 0.15 to 0.45 points higher than would have been predicted— benefits that are sustained throughout their college career, per a [2012 Middlebury College study](#).
- The median time for gappers to graduate with a bachelor's degree is 3.75 years, according to a [2015 survey](#).
- The [same survey](#) found 86 percent of gap year students report being satisfied or very satisfied with their careers post-degree.

**Search:** The GYA's accreditation process is focused largely on pedagogy and safety. A searchable list of programs can be found on the [GYA website](#).

The GYA has a Gap Year Student Membership level with toolkits, discounts, and access to experts; as well as membership levels for High School and Independent Counselors. New online resources are available to help create an independent gap year, modeled off the heralded Duke of Edinburgh Award from the UK.

For the last 12 years, USA Gap Year Fairs has collaborated with more than 40 high schools across the country to host annual informational events. These fairs connect a wide variety of gap year programs with interested families, educators, and gap year alumni.

Other resources, like Go Overseas and TeenLife, offer more general listings of gap year programs. While these programs are not formally vetted they are peer-reviewed and can provide a greater variety for students to consider. There are also a number of professional gap year consultants who work with families to maximize the gap year. The GYA also manages a process for accrediting Professional Gap Year Consultants.

**Apply:** Programs that depart in the fall months are usually filled by June/July of the same year. The vast majority of students who participate in a gap year program will begin researching options a year or more in advance. However, some students might not begin considering a gap year until the spring of their senior year once they have received decisions from the colleges they applied to and the concrete reality of “four more years” settles in.

**Typical Cost:** There is no typical cost associated with gap years—they range from paid (e.g., AmeriCorps) to expenses on par with college. Gap year consultants, who charge a nominal fee, can help families find low-cost or paid options, or, leverage familial and friend networks to keep costs down. Many students will spend US\$15,000 for a full program. At this price point,



students are typically able to find a program that meets safety and education expectations. GYA-accredited programs gave away almost US\$5 million in need-based financial aid in 2017.

An increasing number of programs can be financed by US federal loans and grants, which students access by filing the FAFSA. Contact the program directly to determine if this is a possibility. Additionally, several US Department of State scholarship opportunities are available that could fund the entire year or defray a portion of the expenses. Note that in order to be eligible for US federal loans and scholarships, students have to be earning college credit (see below). The GYA website can provide more information.

### Can a student get college credit from participating in a gap year?

Some gap year programs offer college credit. In these cases, it is typically applied as general education credit or on par with AP credit. Lowering the overall cost of college, by coming in with a semester of credit for instance, is how some students and families justify participation in a gap year.

Students are strongly encouraged to check with individual institutions about the potential financial aid implications of entering college as a first-year student with some credit already earned. In some cases, they may be treated as a transfer student even if they have deferred admission.

The method for assigning credit for a gap year experience varies depending on the partnership between the gap year program and partner university. Typically, organizations work to ensure the experiential learning pedagogies of the gap year program are not sacrificed, instead requiring papers, journals, and/or presentations after completion of the program. Innovative models for fusing the gap year and freshman year experience are

emerging, like those offered by [Verto Education](#)—a first semester abroad program that guarantees acceptance into one of Verto’s partner colleges and universities to streamline the college admission process.

**Gap Year Colleges:** Some institutions run their own gap year programs, such as Tufts University (MA), Princeton University (NJ), Duke University (NC), Savannah College of Art and Design (GA), Florida State University, and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Each operates with a particular focus. Tufts, for instance, focuses on service as the central theme. Find out more about universities with favorable deferral policies through GYA’s Official Gap Year Colleges listing.

**Advice from the Field:** A good litmus test to determine whether a gap year would be appropriate for a student is to ask what excites them about college. If they genuinely light up at the academic prospects of an institution of higher learning, then they should strongly consider matriculating. If, however, they show more enthusiasm for experiential learning, or such academic excitement is not present, then a gap year should be actively discussed. Counselors are encouraged to initiate a conversation as most students do not know that a gap year is an option or may have misperceptions about its outcomes. In an informal survey by the [IECA](#), 50 percent of students who were offered a gap year option on their college list chose to become a gapper. In every case, however, make sure the student leads the way and their families don’t take on the lion’s share of the work and exploration.

Gap year program providers offer varying levels of support, though some students may require additional supports or accommodations. For example, if a student requires therapeutic supports, they may be better suited for a wilderness therapy program or a “pre-gap year” program.

In helping students identify gap year options, ask them to spend an hour writing down the various elements—countries, languages, activities, housing situations, physical/emotional/academic challenges, personal goals, other skills—that they think would be most interesting. Keep in mind that as a student’s research broadens and self-awareness grows, options will often change, and a good plan will adjust with new information and experience.

Many students who take a gap year have already applied and gained admission to a university; it is much easier logistically to gather materials and fill out college applications during high school. These students then defer their admission for a year. If a student intends to pursue an undergraduate degree following their gap year, encourage them to share their gap year plans with admission officers at their deferred or prospective institutions. Increasingly, colleges and universities are developing formal policies for students choosing to defer so they can take part in a gap year. Furthermore,

some schools are recruiting gap year graduates with higher merit-aid awards knowing that, on average, they will significantly contribute to the college reputation and campus community.

Roughly 12 percent of gap year students change their college plans as a result of the personal growth they experience during their gap year. Some students apply to other schools during the gap year and some reapply to schools where they were not originally accepted in hopes that the gap year will improve their chances of being accepted. Again, this experience should not be encouraged as a means to an end.



Several gap year programs provide participants with college application resources and supports. Nonetheless, students should work through the high school counselor who originally helped them with college applications, and who has access to their transcripts and other academic records. These should include letters of recommendation requested by the student and written by teachers and the counselor during the student’s final year of high school.

**Conclusion:** A running commentary in the gap year field is: “Most students take a gap year, it’s just called their freshman year.” This implies that stereotypical first-years in college are expensive and focus more on social-learning than academics. Gap year advocates are keen to highlight that participants emerge from their gap years happier and more focused about their path because it is within an experienced context. As career and technical schools grow in popularity and importance, gap years are being talked about as a smart way to help students determine the appropriate next step for their education and chosen career path.

# SHORT-TERM STUDY ABROAD

## US GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES

**Brief Background:** Study abroad is one of the best ways students can acquire the global skills and experiences that colleges are looking for in their applicants and that employers are increasingly looking for in their workers. By studying abroad, students experience new perspectives, learn how to work with diverse peers, and can immerse themselves in learning other languages.

Each year more than a quarter million American students pursue short-term study abroad while enrolled as undergraduates at a US postsecondary institution. The programs they participate in take many forms—including studying, interning, or volunteering abroad—and range from a week to a full academic year. Studying abroad for a shorter term during college or high school can be a good option for students who show an interest in studying internationally, but who are not certain they want to commit to a full undergraduate degree program outside the US.

The US government recognizes the need for more American students to have meaningful study abroad experiences, to better prepare them for 21st century jobs and global challenges. The US Study Abroad Office, a US State Department-supported initiative, was launched in 2015 with a goal of increasing and diversifying student participation in study abroad. The office manages the

Benjamin Gilman and Critical Language Scholarship Programs, helps build institutional supports through the administration of capacity-building grants and workshops, and advocates for study abroad. The [government-supported website](#) provides information on US and foreign government resources in support of study abroad.

**Good to Know:** Study abroad for academic credit has increased by 18 percent over the last five years, according to IIE's [Open Doors data](#). Moreover, the racial and ethnic diversity of students studying abroad has increased over the past decade. The top 10 destinations for US students studying abroad are: United Kingdom, Italy, Spain, France, Germany, Ireland, Australia, Costa Rica, China, and Japan.

**Search:** The Department of State, the Department of Education, and the Department of Defense fund a number of programs that enable K-12 and university students to conduct research, work, or study abroad. A list of these programs can be found through [State Department's US Study Abroad website](#).

**Apply:** Given the great and growing diversity of study abroad programs, application and visa deadlines vary. Students should be familiar with the requirements of the program to which they are applying as some require specific applications, supporting documents, testing, and/or essays.

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**Cost:** Efforts are underway to make study abroad more accessible and affordable for anyone wanting to take advantage of this important educational experience. Many of the US government study abroad programs are fully or partially funded. Students can also use federal financial aid to fund their studies abroad. Find out more about how federal student aid can help students pay for their international study experience.

**Advice from the Field:** Encouraging exchange students at your school to share their culture and their experiences as international students can make the thought of studying abroad less daunting and more appealing for American students.

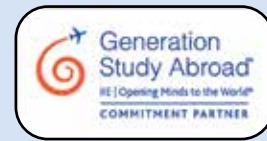
Country and Regional Profiles from the US Study Abroad Office provide an overview of the academic systems in each country and resources available for students interested in studying in those countries.

Encourage students to inquire about undergraduate study abroad options when college and university representatives visit your school. At many institutions, offices are dedicated to helping students pursue study abroad options, including government-supported programs.

Generation Study Abroad is an initiative of the Institute of International Education (IIE), a nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing access to education worldwide. Launched in 2014, the initiative aims to mobilize resources and commitments with the goal of doubling and diversifying the number of US students studying abroad by the end of the decade.

NACAC is one of more than 800 partners that have joined Generation Study Abroad to promote these ambitious goals.

Learn more and join the conversation on the IIE website.



# FEDERAL AID OUTSIDE THE US

Students may be able to use US federal student loans to finance studies outside the United States for a semester or an entire degree. The type of aid a student can obtain and the process for applying depends on the type of program they intend to enter.

**Types of Aid:** Hundreds of universities around the world participate in the [US William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program](#). Students planning to attend one of these schools may be eligible to use either a Direct Subsidized Loan or Direct Unsubsidized Loan to finance their undergraduate education.

## SEEK AID EARLY

State and local financial assistance programs, including private scholarships, may be available to help with study abroad and overseas study. Students should take the time to check carefully, calling or emailing the funding agency and asking specific questions well in advance of committing to a course of study outside the United States.

Parents also might be able to borrow on a student's behalf, via the Direct PLUS Loan program for parents. International universities do not participate in the US Department of Education's grant programs, so US students may not use Pell Grants to finance studies at an international university.

Some institutions accept GI Bill funding. The [US Department of Veterans Affairs provides guidance](#) for military veterans who wish to attend schools outside the United States and a search function to find participating foreign institutions by country.

Students should contact the student financial aid office at any international institution they are interested in attending to confirm its participation in the federal aid program and to learn about application policies and procedures.

**Amount of Aid:** The annual limit for Direct Subsidized Loans plus Direct Unsubsidized Loans for undergraduate students varies from \$5,500 to \$12,500, depending on a variety of factors, such as year in school, and whether a student receives financial support from his or her family. Check annual and aggregate limits for subsidized and unsubsidized loans on the [Federal Student Loan website](#)

**Steps:** The application process to obtain student loan funding for undergraduate studies at an international university is similar to that used for US schools. Generally, the student must take the following steps:

**1. Complete the FAFSA**

Fill out a FAFSA form at [fafsa.gov](https://fafsa.gov). The FAFSA form is available on October 1. Students select the international university they plan to attend in the question about Federal School Codes. The [FAFSA site includes a search tool](#) to help locate the appropriate institution and its code. Select “Foreign Country” in the required “State” field. The international institution will gain access to a student’s FAFSA information electronically once it is submitted.

Note: The award year and the academic year at the international institution can differ depending on the country; questions about timing and process should be directed to the institution’s financial aid office.

**2. Complete Entrance Counseling**

Students borrowing federal funds for the first time must complete entrance counseling to learn about their loan responsibilities. This must be done before funds are released. Depending upon the school, entrance counseling might occur electronically before a student leaves the United States. It could also be administered once the student arrives in the host country electronically or by the host institution’s financial aid office or admission staff. Students should be prepared to advocate for themselves and proactively seek out the information they need once abroad. A good deal of perseverance may be needed to connect with the right person and/or office at an international university.

**3. Submit a Master Promissory Note**

The Master Promissory Note (MPN) is a legal document that obligates students to repay their loan(s), plus the accrued interest and fees, to the US Department of Education. Students complete the [MPN online](#).

Note: One MPN must be completed per loan. Thus, separate MPNs must be submitted for student borrowers whose parents are also taking a PLUS loan.

**4. Contact the University, Complete the Loan Application**

Once steps 1 through 3 have been completed, the student should notify the university to confirm and inquire about next steps. This will typically entail the completion of a loan application form by email or via the institution’s online portal.

**5. Receive Financial Aid Award Letter from University**

The university will calculate the student’s estimated cost of attendance. Students deemed eligible for loan funding will receive an award letter indicating the maximum amount they may borrow.

**6. Accept the Loan**

Following instructions accompanying the award letter, students can opt to formally accept loan funding, specifying the total amount they wish to borrow. The institution will then originate the loan, and in most cases the money will be electronically applied to the student’s university account to pay for tuition and fees. The remainder will be available to the student.

Note: Funds are likely to be rendered in the local currency. And, depending upon timing, funds might not be disbursed before a student departs the United





States. This means travel and initial expenses will need to be self-financed.

With the exception of entrance counseling, this process must be completed each year a student accepts loan funding. Entrance counseling is only required before the first year.

**Advice from the Field:** Assessing the cost and value of pursuing a full degree program at an institution outside of the United States should be part of the financial aid discussion counselors have with students. For students interested in institutions outside of the United States, travel may represent a significant expense. So can renting an apartment, as not all universities offer dormitories or student housing. If not bundled with the tuition, families should also be aware of fees for visas and international health insurance costs.

Students should be mindful of school breaks. Not all students receiving financial aid can afford to come home for long holiday breaks and perhaps not even the summer.

Currency fluctuations are another consideration. The value of most foreign currencies relative to the US dollar is in continual flux. While short-term changes are unlikely to be significant, costs can increase or decrease considerably over a period of years. Students and families should budget with this in mind.



Any school that participates in federal student aid programs is required to provide information on its cost of attendance and to offer a net price calculator on its website, although this requirement is still being phased in at some institutions.

If a student is interested in pursuing a study abroad program for a semester or a year during their undergraduate program, they should contact the financial aid office at the US colleges or universities they are considering. Note that the US institution must participate in the federal student aid program for a student to be eligible to use federal aid for their study abroad program.

## Step by Step: College Awareness and Planning for Families, Counselors and Communities

Download free at [nacacnet.org/steps](http://nacacnet.org/steps)



**NACAC**  
National Association for  
College Admission Counseling

Federal Aid

## NACAC Member Universities — International

To search NACAC member institutions, visit [nacacnet.org/membership/member-directory](http://nacacnet.org/membership/member-directory).

As of June 2020

American University School of Medicine - Aruba	Aruba	<a href="http://ausoma.org">ausoma.org</a>
Deakin University	Australia	<a href="http://deakin.edu.au">deakin.edu.au</a>
Griffith University	Australia	<a href="http://griffith.edu.au">griffith.edu.au</a>
James Cook University	Australia	<a href="http://jcu.edu.au">jcu.edu.au</a>
Macquarie University, Sydney	Australia	<a href="http://mq.edu.au">mq.edu.au</a>
Monash University	Australia	<a href="http://monash.edu.au/north-america-info">monash.edu.au/north-america-info</a>
The University of New South Wales	Australia	<a href="http://unsw.edu.au">unsw.edu.au</a>
The University of Sydney	Australia	<a href="http://sydney.edu.au">sydney.edu.au</a>
University of Melbourne	Australia	<a href="http://unimelb.edu.au">unimelb.edu.au</a>
American University in Bulgaria	Bulgaria	<a href="http://aubg.edu">aubg.edu</a>
Bishop's University	Canada	<a href="http://ubishops.ca">ubishops.ca</a>
Brock University	Canada	<a href="http://discover.brocku.ca">discover.brocku.ca</a>
Capilano University	Canada	<a href="http://capilanou.ca">capilanou.ca</a>
Carleton University	Canada	<a href="http://admissions.carleton.ca">admissions.carleton.ca</a>
Concordia University	Canada	<a href="http://concordia.ca">concordia.ca</a>
Corpus Christi College	Canada	<a href="http://corpuschristi.ca">corpuschristi.ca</a>
Dalhousie University	Canada	<a href="http://dal.ca">dal.ca</a>
Emily Carr University of Art And Design	Canada	<a href="http://ecuad.ca">ecuad.ca</a>
Fairleigh Dickinson University - Vancouver	Canada	<a href="http://fdu.edu/campuses/vancouver-campus">fdu.edu/campuses/vancouver-campus</a>
Ivey Business School, Western University	Canada	<a href="http://ivey.uwo.ca">ivey.uwo.ca</a>
McGill University	Canada	<a href="http://mcgill.ca">mcgill.ca</a>
McMaster University	Canada	<a href="http://mcmaster.ca">mcmaster.ca</a>
OCAD University	Canada	<a href="http://ocadu.ca">ocadu.ca</a>
Queen's University	Canada	<a href="http://queensu.ca">queensu.ca</a>
Quest University Canada	Canada	<a href="http://questu.ca">questu.ca</a>
Ryerson University	Canada	<a href="http://ryerson.ca">ryerson.ca</a>
Simon Fraser University	Canada	<a href="http://sfu.ca/students/admission">sfu.ca/students/admission</a>
St. Thomas University	Canada	<a href="http://stu.ca">stu.ca</a>
The University of British Columbia	Canada	<a href="http://you.ubc.ca">you.ubc.ca</a>
Trinity Western University	Canada	<a href="http://twu.ca">twu.ca</a>
Tyndale University College & Seminary	Canada	<a href="http://tyndale.ca">tyndale.ca</a>
University of Alberta	Canada	<a href="http://ualberta.ca/prospective-students">ualberta.ca/prospective-students</a>
University of Calgary	Canada	<a href="http://ucalgary.ca">ucalgary.ca</a>
University of Guelph	Canada	<a href="http://uoguelph.ca">uoguelph.ca</a>
University of Manitoba	Canada	<a href="http://umanitoba.ca">umanitoba.ca</a>
University of New Brunswick	Canada	<a href="http://unb.ca/international">unb.ca/international</a>
University of Ontario Institute of Technology	Canada	<a href="http://uoit.ca">uoit.ca</a>
University of Saskatchewan	Canada	<a href="http://usask.ca">usask.ca</a>
University of Toronto	Canada	<a href="http://utoronto.ca">utoronto.ca</a>
University of Victoria	Canada	<a href="http://uvic.ca">uvic.ca</a>
University of Waterloo	Canada	<a href="http://uwaterloo.ca/international">uwaterloo.ca/international</a>
University of Winnipeg	Canada	<a href="http://uwinnipeg.ca">uwinnipeg.ca</a>
Vancouver Island University	Canada	<a href="http://viu.ca">viu.ca</a>
Western University	Canada	<a href="http://uwo.ca">uwo.ca</a>
York University	Canada	<a href="http://yorku.ca">yorku.ca</a>
Duke Kunshan University	China	<a href="http://dukekunshan.edu.cn/en">dukekunshan.edu.cn/en</a>
New York University Shanghai	China	<a href="http://shanghai.nyu.edu/cn">shanghai.nyu.edu/cn</a>
Rennes School of Business	France	<a href="http://rennes-sb.com">rennes-sb.com</a>
The American University of Paris	France	<a href="http://aup.edu">aup.edu</a>
The New School-Parsons Paris	France	<a href="http://newschool.edu/parsons-paris">newschool.edu/parsons-paris</a>
Bard College Berlin, A Liberal Arts University	Germany	<a href="http://berlin.bard.edu">berlin.bard.edu</a>
Jacobs University Bremen	Germany	<a href="http://jacobs-university.de">jacobs-university.de</a>
KIT Carl Benz School of Engineering	Germany	<a href="http://carlbenzschool.kit.edu">carlbenzschool.kit.edu</a>

NACAC Member Universities — International (*continued*)

<b>University of Applied Sciences Würzburg-Schweinfurt</b>	Germany	<i>fhws.de/en</i>
<b>American College of Thessaloniki</b>	Greece	<i>act.edu</i>
<b>American College Dublin</b>	Ireland	<i>iamu.edu</i>
<b>Maynooth University</b>	Ireland	<i>maynoothuniversity.ie</i>
<b>Queens University Belfast</b>	Ireland	<i>qub.ac.uk</i>
<b>Trinity College Dublin</b>	Ireland	<i>tcd.ie</i>
<b>University College Dublin</b>	Ireland	<i>ucd.ie</i>
<b>University of Limerick</b>	Ireland	<i>ul.ie/international</i>
<b>Bocconi University</b>	Italy	<i>unibocconi.eu/wps/wcm/connect/SitoPubblico_EN/Navigation+Tree/Home</i>
<b>John Cabot University</b>	Italy	<i>johncabot.edu</i>
<b>International College of Liberal Arts (iCLA), Yamanashi Gakuin University</b>	Japan	<i>icla.ygu.ac.jp/en</i>
<b>Nagoya University</b>	Japan	<i>admissions.g30.nagoya-u.ac.jp</i>
<b>Osaka University</b>	Japan	<i>chadwickinternational.org</i>
<b>Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University</b>	Japan	<i>admissions.apu.ac.jp</i>
<b>Temple University - Japan Campus</b>	Japan	<i>tuj.ac.jp</i>
<b>Waseda University</b>	Japan	<i>waseda.jp/top/en</i>
<b>Leiden University</b>	Netherlands	<i>universiteitleiden.nl/en</i>
<b>University College Roosevelt</b>	Netherlands	<i>ucr.nl</i>
<b>University of Groningen</b>	Netherlands	<i>rug.nl</i>
<b>Massey University</b>	New Zealand	<i>massey.ac.nz</i>
<b>Northwestern University in Qatar</b>	Qatar	<i>qatar.northwestern.edu</i>
<b>Texas A&amp;M University at Qatar</b>	Qatar	<i>qatar.tamu.edu</i>
<b>Singapore Management University</b>	Singapore	<i>admissions.smu.edu.sg</i>
<b>Yale NUS College</b>	Singapore	<i>yale-nus.edu.sg</i>
<b>Saint Louis University-Madrid</b>	Spain	<i>slu.edu/madrid</i>
<b>Universidad de Navarra</b>	Spain	<i>unav.edu</i>
<b>University Carlos III of Madrid</b>	Spain	<i>uc3m.es/ss/Satellite/C3IS/en/PortadaMiniSite/1371220461783/Carlos_III_International_School</i>
<b>Ecole hoteliere de Lausanne</b>	Switzerland	<i>ehl.edu</i>
<b>Franklin University Switzerland</b>	Switzerland	<i>fus.edu</i>
<b>Abertay University</b>	United Kingdom	<i>abertay.ac.uk</i>
<b>Aberystwyth University</b>	United Kingdom	<i>aber.ac.uk</i>
<b>Bangor University</b>	United Kingdom	<i>bangor.ac.uk/index.php/en</i>
<b>Bath Spa University</b>	United Kingdom	<i>bathspa.ac.uk</i>
<b>Brunel University London</b>	United Kingdom	<i>brunel.ac.uk</i>
<b>Cardiff University</b>	United Kingdom	<i>cardiff.ac.uk</i>
<b>City University London</b>	United Kingdom	<i>city.ac.uk</i>
<b>Durham University</b>	United Kingdom	<i>dur.ac.uk</i>
<b>Edge Hill University</b>	United Kingdom	<i>edgehill.ac.uk/international</i>
<b>Edinburgh Napier University</b>	United Kingdom	<i>napier.ac.uk</i>
<b>ESCP Europe Business School</b>	United Kingdom	<i>escpeurope.eu</i>
<b>Goldsmiths, University of London</b>	United Kingdom	<i>gold.ac.uk</i>
<b>Heriot-Watt University</b>	United Kingdom	<i>hw.ac.uk</i>
<b>Imperial College London</b>	United Kingdom	<i>imperial.ac.uk</i>
<b>King's College London</b>	United Kingdom	<i>kcl.ac.uk</i>
<b>Kingston University London</b>	United Kingdom	<i>kingston.ac.uk/northamerica</i>
<b>Leeds Arts University</b>	United Kingdom	<i>leeds-art.ac.uk</i>
<b>Leeds Beckett University</b>	United Kingdom	<i>leedsbeckett.ac.uk/international</i>
<b>Liverpool John Moores University</b>	United Kingdom	<i>ljmu.ac.uk</i>
<b>London Metropolitan University</b>	United Kingdom	<i>londonmet.ac.uk</i>
<b>London Studio Centre</b>	United Kingdom	<i>londonstudiocentre.org</i>
<b>Manchester Metropolitan University</b>	United Kingdom	<i>mmu.ac.uk</i>



NACAC Member Universities — International (*continued*)

<b>Newcastle University</b>	United Kingdom	<i>ncl.ac.uk</i>
<b>Northumbria University</b>	United Kingdom	<i>northumbria.ac.uk</i>
<b>Norwich University of the Arts</b>	United Kingdom	<i>nua.ac.uk</i>
<b>Oxford Brookes University</b>	United Kingdom	<i>brookes.ac.uk</i>
<b>Queen Mary University of London</b>	United Kingdom	<i>qmul.ac.uk</i>
<b>Ravensbourne University London</b>	United Kingdom	<i>ravensbourne.ac.uk</i>
<b>SOAS University of London</b>	United Kingdom	<i>soas.ac.uk</i>
<b>Staffordshire University</b>	United Kingdom	<i>staffs.ac.uk</i>
<b>Swansea University</b>	United Kingdom	<i>swansea.ac.uk/international</i>
<b>The Glasgow School of Art</b>	United Kingdom	<i>gsa.ac.uk</i>
<b>The University of Greenwich, London</b>	United Kingdom	<i>gre.ac.uk/usa</i>
<b>The University of Manchester</b>	United Kingdom	<i>manchester.ac.uk</i>
<b>The University of Sheffield</b>	United Kingdom	<i>sheffield.ac.uk</i>
<b>The University of York</b>	United Kingdom	<i>york.ac.uk</i>
<b>UCL, University College London</b>	United Kingdom	<i>ucl.ac.uk/prospective-students/international</i>
<b>Ulster University</b>	United Kingdom	<i>ulster.ac.uk/global</i>
<b>University of Aberdeen</b>	United Kingdom	<i>abdn.ac.uk</i>
<b>University of Birmingham</b>	United Kingdom	<i>birmingham.ac.uk/index.aspx</i>
<b>University of Bradford</b>	United Kingdom	<i>bradford.ac.uk</i>
<b>University of Bristol</b>	United Kingdom	<i>bristol.ac.uk</i>
<b>University of Central Lancashire</b>	United Kingdom	<i>uclan.ac.uk</i>
<b>University of Chester</b>	United Kingdom	<i>chester.ac.uk</i>
<b>University of East London</b>	United Kingdom	<i>uel.ac.uk</i>
<b>University of Edinburgh</b>	United Kingdom	<i>ed.ac.uk</i>
<b>University of Exeter</b>	United Kingdom	<i>exeter.ac.uk</i>
<b>University of Glasgow</b>	United Kingdom	<i>gla.ac.uk/international</i>
<b>University of Kent</b>	United Kingdom	<i>kent.ac.uk</i>
<b>University of Leeds</b>	United Kingdom	<i>leeds.ac.uk</i>
<b>University of Lincoln</b>	United Kingdom	<i>lincoln.ac.uk</i>
<b>University of Nottingham</b>	United Kingdom	<i>nottingham.ac.uk/studywithus/international-applicants/index.aspx</i>
<b>University of Plymouth</b>	United Kingdom	<i>plymouth.ac.uk</i>
<b>University of Roehampton</b>	United Kingdom	<i>roehampton.ac.uk</i>
<b>University of Salford</b>	United Kingdom	<i>salford.ac.uk</i>
<b>University of Southampton</b>	United Kingdom	<i>southampton.ac.uk/international</i>
<b>University of St. Andrews</b>	United Kingdom	<i>st-andrews.ac.uk</i>
<b>University of Stirling</b>	United Kingdom	<i>stir.ac.uk</i>
<b>University of Strathclyde</b>	United Kingdom	<i>strath.ac.uk</i>
<b>University of the West of England, Bristol</b>	United Kingdom	<i>uwe.ac.uk</i>
<b>University of Warwick</b>	United Kingdom	<i>warwick.ac.uk</i>
<b>University of West London</b>	United Kingdom	<i>uwl.ac.uk</i>
<b>University of Westminster-United Kingdom</b>	United Kingdom	<i>westminster.ac.uk</i>

Key Information: Applying to International Universities (see chapters for more detailed information)

Country	Australia	Canada	Finland	France	Germany	Ireland	Israel
<b>Degree Type</b>	Bachelor's	Bachelor's	Bachelor's	Licence	Bachelor's	Bachelor's	Bachelor's
<b>Typical Duration</b>	3 years	4 years	3.5-4.5 (universities of applied sciences) 3 (universities)	3 years	3-4 years	3-4 years	3 years; 4 years (engineering degrees)
<b>Major</b>	Declared at admission	Declared during study	Declared at admission	Declared at admission	Declared at admission	Declared at admission	Declared at admission
<b>Typical Application Method</b>	Through institution	Through institution or centralized province application	Joint application	CampusFrance	Uni-Assist	Through institution	Declared at admission
<b>Application Fee*</b>	Varies by institution	Varies by institution	No fee	US\$205 for three choices via CampusFrance	75 euros for first application, 30 euros for all additional applications via Uni-Assist	Varies by institution	Varies by institution
<b>Application Deadline</b>	Late Oct. or late April, depending on whether a student intends to start in the first or second semester	Varies by institution. Students planning to enroll in fall semester should generally apply in fall or winter of previous year	Early Jan. for fall admission. Sept. for spring admission	Early January	Applications for the winter semester are due from late May through mid-July. Summer semester deadline is mid-January	Between Feb. 1 and March 31	Late July for fall semester. January for spring semester.
<b>Visa Requirements</b>	Higher Education Visa (Subclass 500) required	American citizens can apply for a study permit at a Canadian port of entry	Student residence permit required	The VLS-TS visa and study permit is required	US citizens do not require a visa, however, a student visa is recommended to obtain a residency permit	No visa required. Must register with Garda National Immigration Bureau (GNIB) upon arrival	A/2 student visa required
<b>Annual Tuition Cost*</b>	AU\$20,000-\$45,000	CA\$9,340-\$60,570; varies by academic program	4,000–11,000 euros	Public: 2,770 euros per year for a licence Private: 3,000-20,000 euros	Tuition is generally free at public unis, students are required to pay fees for housing, transport, and extracurriculars. However, unis in some provinces charge additional fees to international students. Fees range from 250-1,500 euros. Private unis charge up to 20,000 euros	10,000–22,000 euros	US\$4,000 to \$15,000

\* The costs reflected in this chart are current as of publication. However, costs can change annually and students and counselors should verify with institutions.

Key Information: Applying to International Universities (*continued*)

Country	Italy	Japan	The Netherlands	New Zealand	South Korea	Spain	UK	US
<b>Degree Type</b>	Laurea	Bachelor's	Bachelor's	Bachelor's	Bachelor's	Grado	Bachelor's	Bachelor's
<b>Typical Duration</b>	3 years	4 years	3 years	3–4 years	4 years	4 years	3 years (England, Wales, and Northern Ireland); 4 year (Scotland)	4 years
<b>Major</b>	Through institution	Declared at admission	Declared at admission	Declared at admission	Declared at admission	Declared at admission	Declared at admission	Declared during study
<b>Typical Application Method</b>	Varies by institution	Varies by institution	Through institution and Studielink	Through institution	Through institution, but can also apply through Study in Korea	Through institution	UCAS	Through institution, Common Application or other application platforms
<b>Application Fee*</b>	Varies by institution	Varies by institution, average fee between 5,000–35,000 yen	Varies by institution	Varies by institution	Varies by institution, average fee between 80,000 to 200,000 won	Varies by institution	"UCAS 5 Choice Application: 24 pounds CAS 1 Choice Application: 18 pounds	Varies by institution
<b>Application Deadline</b>	Varies by institution	Varies by institution	Jan. 1 to May 1, depending on the program	Varies by institution. Generally apply three months before the start of the intended first semester	November for spring semester, May for fall semester	April	Oct. 15: Oxbridge degree programmes as well as medicine, dentistry, and veterinary science courses. Other course deadlines range from Jan. 15 through mid-September	Varies by institution
<b>Visa Requirements</b>	A student visa is required for programs longer than 90 days.	Visa required for entry. US citizens are exempt from paying all visa fees	Residence permit required	Student visa required	Must obtain relevant visa: D-2 for academic programs; D-4 for language training programs	Student visa is required. Must register for a foreigner identity card within one month of arrival.	Tier-4 student visa required	Student visa required: F-1 for traditional academic programs.
<b>Annual Tuition Cost*</b>	Public: 900–4,000 euros Private: 6,000–20,000 euros	Public universities: 535,000–931,000 yen. Private universities: 1,108,000–4,189,000 yen	6,000–15,000 euros	NZ\$23,000–\$33,000	Public: 2–3 million won per semester Private: 3–5 million won per semester	Public: 680–2,100 euros Private: 5,500–18,000 euros	10,000–38,000 pounds	4-year: US \$16,000–\$80,000

\* The costs reflected in this chart are current as of publication. However, costs can change annually and students and counselors should verify with institutions.



## Key Information: Working While Studying Abroad

Country	Can you work while a student?	Can you work in the country following graduation?
<b>Australia</b>	Yes. Up to 40 hours a week over a two-week period while classes are in session. Unlimited hours outside of term.	Yes. You must apply for a new visa. The length of the visa is dependent on the level and type of degree previously achieved. You can then apply for permanent residency.
<b>Canada</b>	Yes. Up to 20 hours a week during term and up to 40 hours during scheduled academic breaks.	Yes. If you graduated from a Canadian university participating in the Post-Graduation Work Permit Program, you can stay for three years and then apply for permanent residency.
<b>Finland</b>	Yes. Under 25 hours a week, or if the work is practical training required by the degree.	Yes. However, you will need to apply for an extended residence permit before your current permit expires to allow you to search for work for up to a year following graduation. If you find a job, you can then apply for a new residence permit based on your employment.
<b>France</b>	Yes. Up to 964 hours annually with a valid residency permit.	Yes. Non-European students must have a promise of employment or a work contract and be paid at least one and a half times the minimum wage (2,220 euros gross per month in 2017). Alternatively, a foreign, non-European graduate may request a temporary resident permit valid for twelve months and non-renewable.
<b>Germany</b>	Yes. Up to 120 full days or 240 half-days per year, excluding research assistant work. An additional work permit is required if you want to work more than 120 days/240 half-days.	Yes. You can extend your student residence permit by 18 months. As soon as you receive a job offer you can apply for a new residence permit and then for permanent residency.
<b>Ireland</b>	Yes. Up to 20 hours a week during term and up to 40 hours during scheduled academic breaks.	Yes. Graduates from Irish universities can remain in the country for one year under the Third Level Graduate Scheme to seek employment and work. After 12 months, student may be eligible to apply for a green card or work permit.
<b>Israel</b>	International undergraduate students are not permitted to work	Yes. However, you will be required to apply for a B/1 work visa, which is approved for a limited time.
<b>Italy</b>	Yes. Up to 20 hours a week with a residence permit. Work does not have to be related to students' academic program.	Yes. However, you will need to apply for a work permit.
<b>Japan</b>	Yes. Up to 28 hours a week during term and up to 40 hours a week during scheduled academic breaks. Work permit required. There is no limitation on work hours for research assistants.	Yes. After graduating you have one year to find full-time employment. After finding a job you must then change your status of residence.
<b>The Netherlands</b>	Yes. Up to 16 hours a week during term or up to 40 hours a week during scheduled academic breaks. Work permit required.	Graduates who have yet to find employment can apply for a one-year residence permit. Employers must submit an application on behalf of a highly skilled migrant as their recognized sponsor in order for the graduate to obtain a residence permit.
<b>New Zealand</b>	Yes. Up to 20 hours a week during term and up to 40 hours during scheduled academic breaks.	Yes. Per a new policy that came into effect on November 26, 2018, students engaged in degree studies at the undergraduate level or higher will receive a three-year open work visa.
<b>South Korea</b>	Yes. Up to 20–25 hours a week, depending on the course of study. Students must obtain prior approval from their university and make a formal application at the Immigration Office.	Yes. However, students must change their visa status. There are several options, including one for job seekers (D-10). The career section of the Study in Korea website can provide more details.
<b>Spain</b>	Yes. Up to 20 hours a week, so long as the work is related to their field of study or research.	Yes. However, you will have to apply for a resident work permit. This process requires the students to have completed at least 3 years of study in Spain, to not have received any scholarships or grants from their country of origin, and to have been offered a job with at least a one year contract.
<b>UK</b>	Yes. Up to 20 hours a week during term and up to 40 hours during scheduled academic breaks.	Yes. However, you will need to apply for a new visa. Starting 2020-21 academic year, international students who have studied any subjects can stay up to 2 years to find employment.
<b>US</b>	Yes. On-campus employment for up to 20 hours a week during term and full-time during scheduled academic breaks. After the first academic year, students may engage in off-campus employment related to their field of study with approval.	Yes. Students are eligible for up to a year of post-completion practical training with their student visa. STEM graduates are eligible for a 24 month extension. Students may also apply for the H1-B visa if they have earned a bachelor's or higher.

# The Trusted Source in College Admission

Members of the National Association for College Admission Counseling come together for one reason—to better serve students in the transition to higher education. Members are committed to the fair and ethical treatment of all students and represent the association's commitment to the dignity, worth, and potential of every student, to one another, and to our communities.

NACAC membership is open to enrollment management, admission and counseling professionals and others from institutions and organizations who assist students in their educational pursuits beyond high school.

Connect with colleagues, bolster your recruitment efforts, and engage in a professional community dedicated to service and the highest ethical standards.

## Core Values

### Education

We believe in and are committed to educating students, their families, the public, fellow education professionals, and ourselves about the transition to and within postsecondary education.

### Fairness and Equity

We believe our members have a responsibility to treat one another and students in a fundamentally fair and equitable manner. Our institutional and individual members strive to eliminate from the education system bias based on race, ethnicity, creed, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, age, political affiliation, national origin, or disability. We view this as fundamental to our responsibility as educators.

### Professionalism

We believe that ethical behavior is the foundation of the counseling, admission, and enrollment management profession. We are responsible for the integrity of our actions and, insofar as we can affect them, the actions of our member institutions, organizations, and individuals.

### Civility

We believe members should conduct dialogue with respect and openness to differences, listening to various perspectives from a place of support and understanding. Members should strive to disagree without being disrespectful, abusive, or demeaning.

### Collaboration

We believe the effectiveness of our profession—college counseling, admission, and enrollment management—is enhanced when we work together to advocate for students and their best interests.

### Trust

We believe our profession is based upon trust, mutual respect, and honesty with one another and with students.

### Social Responsibility

We believe we have a duty to serve students responsibly by safeguarding their rights and their access to and within postsecondary education.

## Education, Networking, and Programming

- Professional Development
- National College Fairs
- National Conference
- Special Interest Groups

## Resources and Information

- *NACAC Bulletin*
- *The Journal of College Admission*
- *Today in College Admission*
- *Admitted* Blog
- Research and Reports
- Knowledge Center
- Professional and Student Publications

## Ethics and Advocacy

- Fair and Ethical College Admission Practices
- Educational Policy and Legislation Action

Learn more about NACAC. Visit [nacacnet.org](http://nacacnet.org) today.