

# INTERNATIONAL STUDY

*Coaching you to the right decision*



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Please note that specific advice can change constantly, as universities and other organisations change their requirements. You should always try to obtain the most up to date information and look at your circumstances in detail, which Dr Afra can assist you with.

# International Study:

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# Introduction

The first secret I want to tell you is that my degree, even my PhD from Dublin City University, is now quite useless to me. People call me 'Dr Afra' - but that's about it. You are likely to be in a battle to get good grades in your Inter or A levels - each mark is written on your face today, for all to see and judge you. I was the same. It's hard even for me to believe that I have to think really hard to remember my exam results - because they were just a stepping stone to becoming the person I wanted to be.

Exams, which university you go to - or the choice not to - are incredibly important - but there needs to be a plan that you can stick to, something practical that you can really love - someone I know managed to work her way to LUMS and picked engineering topics that mean that she is now really only employable in Pakistan. Her dream of eventually living abroad is gone because she picked the wrong stepping stones.

I was born in Peshawar, raised in Gujranwala and Lahore, studied at the Lahore College for Women (journalism and literature) because I couldn't get into medical school as my parents wanted me to (I actually didn't want to go). My siblings were motoring along, one becoming a doctor and the other is now a professor of Business Studies in the Netherlands. I was lost.

My father, now that I had no path to doing medicine, propelled me towards one of the other 'honourable' professions - I could not do engineering as I did not have the foundation, had no interest in the law - accountancy was all that was left. My world became so narrow and constricted.

So, I spent years studying from the University of Glamorgan and then transferred to Ireland to do my PhD in Business Administration. My thesis, bound in blue, sits on top of a shelf gathering dust. I do not use that knowledge in my work. But I've managed to travel for work to over 80 countries, lived in about a dozen (it's a cliché, but Istanbul and London were my favourites), and worked for a huge company that spread accountancy education around the world.

But it was all an accident. None of it was by design - I did not lay the proper stepping stones in what I studied or where I went - I took a zigzag path and ended up, by the grace of God, or luck, or whatever you want, to have already lived an incredible life.

I was lucky - and you might not be as lucky - only now do I understand the journey that I should have taken and want to help others do the same.

It is not just about writing applications or getting a visa - it's about understanding who you are and where you want to go in your life. It's about understanding whether you want to live abroad permanently, what sector you want to work in, what are your family's expectations, your budget, language skills - it's about you and your individual path.

That's why I am writing this, to help you understand that while engineering, medicine, law and accountancy are noble professions (and we need more doctors and engineers), that understanding what you want your path to be is the most important thing.

# Who and what do you want to be?

We have to live out our own dreams - sometimes you can make these subservient to the desires of parents and family. We are all restricted by time and budgets and what we are good at - I always wanted to be a novelist but I am accepting (in my late 40s) that I cannot write fiction in such a sustained way.

It does feel that our options are narrow - that we are hemmed in on all sides. But within these parameters, there is more freedom and space than is first apparent.

Making money is important to some - others just want basic security. Prestige, or being interested in what you do might matter. Or it could be to make a difference.

So, how do you start to figure out the answer?

- **Self-assessment:** Start by evaluating your interests, skills, values, and personality traits. What are you passionate about? What activities or subjects do you excel in? What kind of work environment do you thrive in?
- **Set goals:** Define your short-term and long-term goals. Consider what you want to achieve in your career and how it aligns with your personal aspirations.
- **Research:** Explore different industries, professions, and roles. Look into the job market, salary ranges, and job outlook for the careers you're interested in. Consider talking to people in those fields to get insights into their experiences.
- **Education and Training:** Consider the level of education and training required for your desired career. Some careers may require specific degrees or certifications, while others may offer on-the-job training.
- **Experience and Internships:** Gain practical experience through internships, volunteer work, or part-time jobs. This will give you a taste of the actual work involved in a particular field.
- **Networking:** Connect with professionals in your desired field. Attend industry events, seminars, and workshops. Networking can provide valuable insights and potential job opportunities.
- **Balance Personal and Professional Life:** Consider how your chosen career aligns with your personal life. Some careers may require long hours or frequent travel, while others may offer more flexibility.
- **Consider Your Values:** Think about what matters most to you. For example, do you prioritise job security, work-life balance, creativity, helping others, or financial rewards?

- **Adaptability and Growth:** Consider how the industry you're interested in may evolve in the future. Will there be opportunities for advancement and skill development?
- **Trial and Error:** It's okay to try different things before settling on a long-term career. Your interests and priorities may change over time, and that's perfectly normal.
- **Seek Advice:** Talk to mentors, career counsellors, or trusted individuals who can provide guidance and perspective.
- **Trust Your Instincts:** Ultimately, trust your own judgement. You know yourself better than anyone else, so make sure the decision feels right for you.

Remember, it's okay to change career paths or pursue multiple interests over time. Your career journey is a dynamic and evolving process. Keep an open mind, be willing to learn, and be adaptable to new opportunities and experiences.

# Skills for the future and the workplace in 2030 and beyond

## How students are left adrift without advice

Whatever you study today should lead you to a path that you want to take. For some, it may be the pleasure of learning. Perhaps you will follow into the family business, or get married and raise a family. But most people focus on learning and education as a means to an end - a career, money, respect and all that the challenge of doing something interesting brings.

Before deciding what study to undertake, it is important to have an understanding of what jobs will be required in the next few years.

Huge organisations, such as the World Economic Forum (WEF) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) have undertaken detailed research. We need to have a lot more imagination in the Pakistani workforce - or the workforce anywhere in the world - to make sure that we will succeed.

In the old days, one simply studied at university and got a job - because university study itself was so rare and only the preserve of the elite. But education is becoming (albeit slowly, in Pakistan) more democratised.

Even in the UK, in the 1950s there were only a couple of dozen universities. Today there are nearly 250. In Pakistan, in 1947 there were two universities in Pakistan<sup>1</sup>. By the late 90s, that had increased to nearly 40. Today, there are more than 250<sup>2</sup>.

Several universities have careers guidance services - but most of them are stuck in a paradox - they spend so much time trying to recruit students that it becomes difficult to explain that there isn't really a job for them in the end.

Take two examples:

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.pbs.gov.pk/sites/default/files/50\\_years\\_statistics/vol1/12.pdf](https://www.pbs.gov.pk/sites/default/files/50_years_statistics/vol1/12.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.hec.gov.pk/english/universities/pages/recognised.aspx>

A young woman does a BSc then an MSc in Pharmacology - she thinks that she will find a job in an industry developing pharmaceuticals, or be able to run a pharmacy, or work in a respectable medical setting dealing with patients. But the pharma industry looks for outstanding graduates from elite universities for research jobs, usually with PhDs. Working in a pharmacy involves working in a commercial, male dominated environment and a lot of women are culturally inhibited here. Medical institutions are not hiring or hiring based on word of mouth. So, she does a PhD in Pharmacology. She is attending a major university in Lahore.

But her CV, after gaining her PhD, does not enable her to write a CV without dozens of mistakes - she is not sure what she wants to do, because the three or four paths she thought of are closed to her. And there is nothing left to study. She is looking for an administrative job paying Rs 70,000 a month.

Or take the student that gets to a good university in Lahore and studies Computer Science - at the end, what job do they get? Do they have the skills required? Can they write clearly? Do they understand customer service and time management? Do they have any soft skills required to get a good internship and then progress from a junior post to a senior one? They are adrift. Because the careers guidance service did not show them the work that is available, or help them understand the skills that they need.

For example, how many universities in Lahore are teaching Rust (it's a programming language that is up and coming and many jobs require this)? If you want to learn this, you have to discover it and then go to a separate institute as a private student to learn it.

Careers guidance services in universities are not explaining gaps because the counsellors are not specialised enough and the student will immediately ask 'I'm paying this university to teach me, so why is this not on the syllabus?' What answer can the university give?

A boy with a Masters in English from a college affiliated to a major university in Pakistan cannot write a CV in English with a single line that is error-free.

What are we saying? We are saying that there are skills for the future that almost no institution is preparing students for in Pakistan. Even stories from the tiny number of elite universities are that students are left adrift - these places are entirely dependent on your social contacts for getting work. If you don't have any, or if you don't have them in the field that you want to work in, then you are also without a path.

So, let's look at the skills for the future.

According to McKinsey, the World Economic Forum, OECD, International Labour Organization, Pearson, Deloitte, and Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) Asia, the emphasis is not just on AI and Robotics or Blockchain, but on soft skills, such as problem solving, creativity and leadership.

## Hard skills:

Digital Literacy and Technology Proficiency:

- Proficiency in using digital tools and software.
  - Familiarity with cloud computing, collaboration platforms, and productivity software.
  - Ability to adapt to new technologies and software quickly.
- Data Analysis and Interpretation:
  - Analysing and interpreting data to make informed decisions.
  - Data visualisation and reporting using tools like Excel, Tableau, or Python.
  - Programming and Coding:
    - Familiarity with programming languages such as Python, JavaScript, Java, or others depending on the industry.
    - Web development skills for creating websites and applications.
- Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning:
  - Understanding the basics of AI and machine learning algorithms.
  - Ability to work with AI-powered tools and platforms.
  - Cybersecurity and Information Security:
    - Protecting data and systems from cyber threats and breaches.
    - Knowledge of cybersecurity best practices and tools.
- Robotics and Automation:
  - Understanding and working with automated systems and robotics.
  - Programming and maintaining automated processes.
- Digital Marketing and SEO:
  - Knowledge of online marketing strategies, including social media, content marketing, and email marketing.
  - Search Engine Optimization (SEO) skills to improve online visibility.
- User Experience (UX) and User Interface (UI) Design:
  - Designing user-friendly interfaces for websites and applications.



- Conducting usability testing and gathering user feedback.
- Blockchain Technology:
  - Understanding the fundamentals of blockchain and its applications in various industries.
- 3D Printing and Additive Manufacturing:
  - Proficiency in 3D printing technology for prototyping and production.
- Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR):
  - Developing applications and experiences in AR and VR environments.
- Environmental and Sustainable Skills:
  - Knowledge of sustainable practices and environmental regulations.
  - Skills related to green technologies and renewable energy sources.
- Healthcare and Medical Technology Skills:
  - Proficiency in using medical technology and electronic health records.
  - Knowledge of telemedicine and digital healthcare solutions.
- Adaptability and Continuous Learning:
  - The ability to learn and adapt to new technologies and methodologies quickly.

Remember, the specific skills required can vary depending on the industry and job role. It's important to stay updated with industry trends and be willing to continuously upskill or re-skill as the job market evolves. You should also remember that you don't have to do these as jobs in themselves. But these activities will support whatever you do.

Additionally, soft skills like communication, problem-solving, and adaptability will continue to be crucial in the future of work.

## Soft skills

Here are some important soft skills for the future of work:

- Adaptability and Flexibility:
  - The ability to quickly adjust to new situations, technologies, and work environments.
- Problem-Solving and Critical Thinking:
  - Analysing situations, identifying challenges, and developing effective solutions.
- Creativity and Innovation:
  - Generating new ideas, approaches, and solutions to problems.

- **Communication Skills:**
  - Clear and effective communication, both written and verbal, with colleagues, clients, and stakeholders.
- **Collaboration and Teamwork:**
  - Working effectively with diverse teams to achieve common goals.
- **Leadership and Management Skills:**
  - Taking initiative, motivating others, and effectively managing projects or teams.
- **Emotional Intelligence:**
  - Understanding and managing one's own emotions, as well as being sensitive to others' feelings and perspectives.
- **Resilience and Stress Management:**
  - The ability to handle pressure, setbacks, and challenges in a positive and constructive manner.
- **Time Management and Organization:**
  - Effectively prioritising tasks, managing deadlines, and staying organised.
- **Cultural Competency and Diversity Awareness:**
  - Interacting respectfully and effectively with individuals from diverse backgrounds and cultures.
- **Ethical Decision-Making:**
  - Making decisions that align with ethical standards and values.
- **Customer Service Orientation:**
- **Focusing on meeting the needs and expectations of customers or clients.**
  - **Networking and Relationship Building:**
  - Establishing and nurturing professional relationships for collaboration and mutual benefit.
- **Negotiation and Conflict Resolution:**
  - Resolving disagreements and conflicts in a constructive and fair manner.
- **Digital Etiquette and Online Presence:**
  - Maintaining a professional and respectful online presence, and understanding digital communication norms.
- **Continuous Learning and Adaptation:**

- A willingness to learn, grow, and adapt to evolving technologies, methodologies, and industry trends.
- Empathy and Compassion:
  - Understanding and being sensitive to the needs and feelings of others.

Remember, these soft skills are valuable in various industries and are transferable across different roles. Developing and honing these skills will not only make you a more effective professional but will also help you navigate the dynamic and evolving nature of the future of work.

# Do you **HAVE** to go to university?

The short answer is NO.

There are many advantages to going to university - but it will depend on what you want to do with your life.

Certainly since the COVID pandemic, much more life has moved online. The proliferation of platforms such as Fiverr and UpWork means that people are more and more looking for skills in employees. We do not have to look to famous people such as Mark Zuckerberg and Steve Jobs (who both went to university but dropped out, never completing their courses). But it is possible to succeed without a university degree if you have a clear plan.

Whether university education is necessary depends on various factors, including individual goals, career aspirations, and personal circumstances. These are some things to consider:

- **Career Goals:** Some professions require a formal education. For instance, doctors, engineers, lawyers, and scientists typically need a university degree. In these cases, university education is necessary.
- **Skill Acquisition:** Universities offer specialised knowledge and skills in various fields. If your desired field requires specific training or expertise, university education can be crucial.
- **Networking:** Universities provide a platform for networking with professors, peers, and industry professionals. This can lead to valuable connections and opportunities in your chosen field.
- **Personal Growth:** University can be a transformative experience, offering opportunities for personal growth, critical thinking, and exposure to diverse perspectives.
- **Research and Innovation:** If you're interested in research or innovation, university education provides access to resources, labs, and experts in the field.
- **Credential and Reputation:** In some industries, having a degree from a reputable university can enhance your credibility and open doors to job opportunities. However, it's important to note that university education might not be necessary or the best option for everyone

- **Alternative Paths:** Some professions value practical experience and skills over formal education. For example, entrepreneurship, certain areas of the arts, and certain trades may not require a university degree.
- **Financial Considerations:** University education can be expensive. It's important to weigh the potential return on investment against the cost. There are alternative education paths, such as vocational training or online courses, that may be more cost-effective. If you get it right, you may also be in a position to earn much earlier than if you spend years at university.
- **Self-Directed Learning:** With the rise of online resources and courses, it's possible to gain knowledge and skills outside of a traditional university setting. This can be a more flexible and affordable option for some individuals.
- **Changing Landscape:** The job market and educational landscape are evolving. Some industries are placing more emphasis on skills and certifications rather than degrees.

Ultimately, the necessity of university education is highly dependent on your individual circumstances, goals, and chosen career path. It's important to carefully consider your options and choose the path that aligns best with your aspirations.

## **How can I develop skills without going to a university?**

There are alternative paths to gaining knowledge and skills, such as online courses on online platforms and self study mechanisms. These can all be alternative options, depending upon your personal choices. I would just say that one requires discipline and focus to acquire skills through these different options and university may be the best option to have a discipline focussed way of getting education, but if you are a self driven person and do not want to go to a university to have a network your preference is to be with yourself, you need not go to a university but acquire skills on your own through alternative paths.

Developing skills without going to university is entirely possible, thanks to the wide array of resources available today.

- **Online Courses and Tutorials:** Take advantage of platforms like Coursera, edX, Udemy, Khan Academy, and LinkedIn Learning, which offer courses on a wide range of topics.

- **Open Educational Resources (OER):** Many universities and organisations provide free educational materials, including textbooks, lectures, and course materials. Websites like OER Commons and MIT OpenCourseWare are good places to start.
- **Skill-Specific Websites and Forums:** Websites like Stack Overflow, GitHub, and forums related to your area of interest can be great places to learn from others, ask questions, and collaborate on projects.
- **Books and eBooks:** Reading books on your chosen subject can provide in-depth knowledge and perspectives. Libraries, both physical and digital, are excellent resources.
- **YouTube and Video Tutorials:** YouTube hosts a vast amount of educational content on various subjects. Channels like Khan Academy, TED Talks, and many others offer valuable insights. Don't underestimate YouTube - if you look for outstanding academics or experts, they can truly teach you remarkable things. The trick is to be discerning.
- **Podcasts and Audiobooks:** Listening to podcasts and audiobooks is a convenient way to absorb information while on the go. Try Google Podcasts on your phone and start to search for programmes that interest you. BBC Sounds is also a great resource.
- **Join Online Communities:** Participate in online forums, discussion groups, or social media communities related to your field of interest. Engaging with others can lead to valuable insights and networking opportunities. Joining LinkedIn and connecting with people in the professional area that interests you, commenting on articles, sharing good materials is a great way to learn and get noticed.
- **Online Workshops and Webinars:** Many organisations and professionals offer free or low-cost workshops and webinars on specific topics. Check websites like Eventbrite and Meetup for virtual events.
- **Volunteer or Intern:** Consider volunteering or interning in a relevant field. This hands-on experience can be invaluable for building practical skills and networking. Pakistan has a tradition of volunteering and interning through social connections that we already have - if that is right for you, do it - otherwise, step out of your comfort zone and look for the thing that interests you and find relevant organisations that can give you the opportunity.
- **Freelance or Contract Work:** Offer your skills and services on platforms like Upwork, Fiverr, or Freelancer to gain real-world experience and build a portfolio. You will slowly gain positive feedback and this can cascade into more and more work. You might take 20 hours to do the first job, which an expert can do in 2 hours - don't worry - it's all learning. The next time you will do it

in 10 hours, and one day you will do a 2 hour job in 2 hours. It's fine to be slower and learn. It's a curve.

- **Create Personal Projects:** Undertake personal projects related to your chosen field. This could be building a website, writing a blog, creating software, or any other project that allows you to apply and demonstrate your skills. Build a portfolio of these, such as on a social media platform or your own website.
- **Practice, Practice, Practice:** Regularly apply what you've learned through exercises, challenges, and projects. This helps reinforce your knowledge and skills.
- **Attend Workshops and Seminars:** Look for local workshops, seminars, and meetups related to your area of interest. They provide opportunities for learning, networking, and hands-on experience. These don't even have to be local - go and look online.
- **Online Certifications and Badges:** Platforms like Google Digital Garage, HubSpot Academy, and Microsoft Learn offer free certifications and badges in various digital skills.

Remember, self-directed learning requires discipline and determination. Set clear goals, track your progress, and seek out resources that align with your learning objectives. Additionally, seek out opportunities to apply what you've learned in real-world situations to solidify your skills.

## Options for studying in Pakistan

An important factor to consider when deciding to study abroad is the cost benefit analysis. Studying abroad is expensive. Even in some of the third tier universities, you may end up investing USD 80,000-100,000. A salary of 100,000 per month, growing to 500,000 per month a few years later might sound ok - but it will take you 10-15 years to recover your education investment. We can't see education purely in financial terms, but this is a necessary part of the calculation.

If you think you can go abroad and work and automatically earn money to support yourself and your studies, you are taking a huge gamble. Plan for the finances before you decide to study abroad, make your calculations assuming you will not be able to earn anything while studying. I have come across dozens of students who leave Pakistan to study abroad, without planning, only to be frustrated when they get there. I advise students to plan for each and every contingency and only go if they are sure that they would be able to survive financially. Getting adjusted in a new country is enough of a challenge, and to be stressed about finances, further complicates mental stress, which in some cases can be life challenging.

Before deciding to go abroad, also think that you will have no mother to cook food, no one to wash your dishes or clothes and no one to look after you. In Europe and the USA, winter is hard, dark and depressing. You can have friends but friends are often not a replacement for family. One gets tired of eating out. I have come across many students returning, financially very sound, for they could not adjust to life in a foreign country. Culturally there is an adjustment needed, I am not asking you to forget your values, I am just asking you to consider that you will have to have an open mind and be tolerant of diversity of views and opinions.

If you are someone who would find it hard financially, socially, culturally, religiously or someone who cannot become domesticated, you need to think of studying in Pakistan. And if you decide to, there are options of studying in Pakistan, depending upon your grades and preferences.



## Where to study in Pakistan

Don't dismiss this idea - for some people who want to go abroad, there may be a good (and cheaper) option right here at home. It is only when you decide that Pakistan is not the place for you that you should plan to invest in going abroad.

There are a number of options to study in Pakistan. It depends upon what you want to do, your grades and your career preferences. It also depends upon the subjects you have chosen in your school and college. And if you want to get admission into a university like LUMS, it depends upon your extracurricular activities and any internships you have done.

I come across students who want to go to LUMS and they have never done anything but be focussed on grades. They do not have the aptitude to take the SAT. They have not done any internships or been part of societies and clubs. They may have very good grades but they do not get into LUMS and then they are shocked. My advice to each one of you is to prepare yourself to go to LUMS, even if you do not want to. Focus on grades, take a SAT exam, be part of as many clubs and societies, do some social work and get some job experience. Even if you do not want to go LUMS, and if you do not want to go abroad, where all this would matter very much, do it for yourself. In life, you cannot be certain of anything and if at any stage you make a decision to go to LUMS or go abroad, you will be ready for it.

Pakistan has 150+ recognised public and private universities. Depending upon your grades and preferences, you can opt for any of the universities and follow their admission process. Most of the universities have a September intake, and some even have a January intake.

## Public Universities

Pakistan has many public universities that offer undergraduate, graduate, and postgraduate programs. Some well-known ones include the University of the Punjab, Karachi University, University of Peshawar and Quaid-e-Azam University in Islamabad. They offer postgraduate and graduate programmes in a number of fields.

## Private Universities

There are also many private universities, such as LUMS (Lahore University of Management Sciences), IBA (Institute of Business Administration), Karachi School of Business and Leadership (KSBL) and Aga Khan University, which offer quality education in various fields.

## **Medical and Engineering Universities**

Specialised institutions like King Edward Medical College, Aga Khan University, Ghulam Ishaq Khan Institute of Engineering Science and Technology and NUST (National University of Sciences and Technology) offer programs in medicine and engineering.

## **Technical and Vocational Training**

If you are interested in developing skills, technical and vocational training centres are available to provide practical skills and training in various trades and professions. The Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority (TEVTA) is one of the main organisations responsible for such programs.

## **Distance Learning and Online Education**

Several universities and institutions offer distance learning and online education options, making it more convenient for students to study remotely. The most famous is the Virtual University of Pakistan.

## **Foreign Universities and Exchange Programs**

Some international universities have partnerships with Pakistani institutions, allowing students to participate in exchange programs. These programs can provide an opportunity to study abroad while still being affiliated with a local institution.

A number of foreign universities are offering external programmes through private institutions. But check these out. Some are offering university admissions without A levels or degrees without exams. These courses are often not worth anything if you want to go abroad and work or study more.

## **University of London External Programme**

The University of London is a well-known and respected institution based in the United Kingdom. It offers a variety of programs, including undergraduate and postgraduate degrees, to students around the world through its International Programmes. These programs are designed to allow students to study for a University of London degree while living in their home country.

In Pakistan, many students pursue University of London degrees through local institutions that are recognized by the University of London as "Recognised Teaching Centres." These teaching centres offer guidance and support to students studying for University of London degrees. Some of the popular programs that students in Pakistan pursue through the University of London include law, business, economics, and various other subjects.

If you are interested in studying for a University of London degree in Pakistan, you can contact recognised teaching centres in your area for more information on available programs and application procedures. Additionally, you can visit the official University of London website to find out more about their International Programmes and the institutions offering these programs in Pakistan.

## **Specialised Institutions**

Pakistan also has specialised institutions in fields like art, music, and design, such as the National College of Arts (NCA) and Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA). These have produced world-class artists whose work is sold internationally for large sums.

# The things that drive us abroad

Why did I go abroad?

I went abroad because my father wanted me to go abroad. I had no choice. I wanted to study in Pakistan as I had friends, family and home here. He insisted going abroad would give me an exposure I could never have in Pakistan. He was right.

Studying abroad can be a valuable and transformative experience for many reasons. Here are some of the key benefits of studying abroad:

- **Cultural immersion:** Studying in a foreign country provides an opportunity to immerse yourself in a different culture, language, and way of life. This first-hand experience can broaden your horizons and help you develop a deeper understanding of other cultures.
- **Personal growth:** Living and studying in a foreign country can be a challenging and rewarding experience. It can push you out of your comfort zone, forcing you to adapt to new situations and become more independent. This can lead to personal growth and increased self-confidence.
- **Academic opportunities:** Many universities and colleges abroad offer unique academic programs and courses that may not be available in your home country. You can gain access to world-class professors and research facilities, which can enhance your education.
- **Language skills:** Immersion in a foreign country is one of the most effective ways to learn a new language or improve your language skills. Being surrounded by native speakers and using the language in daily life can greatly accelerate your language proficiency.
- **Career prospects:** Studying abroad can make your resume stand out to potential employers. It demonstrates adaptability, cross-cultural communication skills, and a global perspective, which are highly valued in today's globalised job market.

- **Networking opportunities:** While studying abroad, you can build international networks and friendships that can be valuable throughout your life and career. These connections can open doors to global opportunities.
- **Personal relationships:** Studying abroad can lead to lasting personal relationships. You may meet people from all over the world and create friendships that can enrich your life and provide a global perspective.
- **Travel opportunities:** Being in a different country allows you to explore not only the host nation but also neighbouring countries and regions. This can be an excellent way to see the world and experience different cultures.
- **Increased cultural sensitivity:** Living in a foreign culture can make you more open-minded and culturally sensitive. You'll learn to appreciate and respect diverse perspectives and ways of life. It is important to appreciate that you will meet people with different religions (or none), different attitudes towards women, minorities such as homosexuals and people with disabilities - these can all be extremely positive for you if you learn that people are different and equally valued.
- **Life experiences:** Studying abroad is an adventure that can lead to a lifetime of stories, memories, and personal growth. It can be a unique and transformative experience that you'll cherish for years to come.
- **Being taken more seriously:** Whether you ascribe it to colonialism, snobbery or whatever, it is a fact that Pakistanis are not supportive of their own education systems - in some ways, it would be beneficial to Pakistan to ban people from studying abroad - if everyone had to study here, poor standards would not be tolerated. But that is a political discussion for another book. Being educated in a foreign country is taken very seriously here - if you are British and you studied in, say, France, it is appreciated that you have done something broad and interesting. If you are Pakistani and you have studied abroad, it is assumed that it is simply better. Sadly, even a third-rate foreign institution can be better respected than a first rate one at home.

While studying abroad has many advantages, it's important to consider factors like financial costs, visa requirements, and academic goals before making the decision. It's not the right choice for everyone, but for those who embrace the opportunity, it can be a life-changing experience.

# Studying in the USA

Culturally, economically and politically, the USA is the most powerful country in the world. A quarter of the universities in the top 1500 ranked universities in the world are in the USA<sup>3</sup>. Studying in the USA appears to be a ticket to success.

But there are complications - the system can be expensive and there is a huge variation in the quality of the universities. In addition, there are several subjects, such as law and accounting, that are taught under very different systems that do not apply outside of the country.

We will look at the USA in a lot of detail to understand what is on offer and whether it might fit what you want.

One note before we move on - the USA is composed of states (such as California or Texas or Ohio), which have their own local governments (you should compare these to the system of Pakistan having provinces, such as Balochistan or Punjab). In addition, there is a federal government in the USA, which should be thought of as having a similar scope as the Pakistani federal government.

## Types of institutions where you can get a degree

There is a large diversity of institutions in the USA - like everything else there, the menu is extensive.

I should explain that I am loosely dividing everything into tiers - first, second and so forth. But 'second tier' should not be mistaken for 'second class'. The extremely elite universities (such as the Ivy Leagues) are in the first tier. However, the second tier is extremely competitive and offers a fantastic education. As a guide, several second and even some third tier universities are ranked higher than LUMS or IBA in Pakistan.

There is, again, extreme diversity in schools - this is the American word for 'department'. Just as a university in Pakistan may have a department of chemistry and a law department, these departments are often called 'schools'.

It is possible that a second tier university in the USA has a particular school that is ranked higher than some first tier schools.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www QS.com/rankings-released QS-world-university-rankings-2024/>

Below is general guidance - one of the advantages in talking to us is that we will find you the best school for your needs - if you want to become an academic in a particular field, one school will be better for you. If you want to work in Pakistan, even if you can get into an elite school, we will ask you the value of having to study so hard and spending so much money when something cheaper and easier will suffice.

## **Public universities**

A public university in the USA is a higher education institution that is primarily funded by the government, usually at the state level. These universities are established and operated by state governments to provide education to residents of that state, as well as to non-resident students. Public universities receive a significant portion of their funding from state budgets, which helps to subsidise tuition costs for in-state students. They are therefore more expensive for non-residents and foreigners.

Public universities form a core part of the second tier of universities in the USA (after the Ivy Leagues).

Characteristics:

**Funding:** Public universities are funded by state governments, which means they receive financial support from taxpayers. This funding helps to cover operating costs, faculty salaries, and infrastructure development.

**In-State vs. Out-of-State Tuition:** Public universities often have two different tuition rates: one for in-state residents and another, higher rate for out-of-state students. In-state students receive a tuition discount because their families have contributed to the funding through state taxes. Each state has different rules for residency.

**Accessibility:** Public universities aim to provide accessible higher education to a broad range of students within their state. They typically have a larger student body compared to private universities. This sometimes means that they run courses that are targeted at less able students. But this does not mean that they do not have a serious number of very good courses.

**Diverse Programmes:** Public universities often offer a wide range of academic programs, including undergraduate, graduate, and professional degrees in various fields of study.

**Research Opportunities:** Many public universities are involved in significant research activities and contribute to advancements in various fields. They often have robust research facilities and faculty engaged in cutting-edge projects.



**Large Campuses:** Public universities may have larger campuses with extensive facilities, including libraries, laboratories, sports facilities, and dormitories.

**Diverse Student Body:** Public universities often attract students from various backgrounds, including different socioeconomic statuses, ethnicities, and regions within the state. This is a really good chance to meet people who are not like you - most of us have friends that are similar to us - take me as an example - almost all of my friends vote the same way, we have similar beliefs about the world, we are from a similar socio-economic background. But the whole world is not like that. Even if you are the CEO of a huge multinational company, you need to be able to understand the needs of the poorest on the planet, or how your product can be used by someone with a disability to make your product reach everyone. Diversity, speaking to people from different cultures and religions, who look at the world in a different way is one of the most valuable soft skills that one can learn.

**Community Engagement:** Many public universities have a strong focus on community outreach and engagement. They often collaborate with local businesses, government agencies, and non-profit organisations to contribute to the community's well-being.

**Governance:** Public universities are governed by a board or system of trustees appointed by the state government. These trustees are responsible for overseeing the university's operations and policies.

Some well-known examples of public universities in the USA include the University of California system, the University of Texas system, and the State University of New York (SUNY) system, among many others. Keep in mind that each state has its own public university system or individual public universities, each with its own unique characteristics and strengths.

## **Private universities**

A private university in the USA is a higher education institution that is not primarily funded by government sources. Instead, these universities rely on tuition, private donations, endowments (these are donations that are so large that the money is invested and the interest or profit only is used to fund the activity), and other sources of private funding to cover their operating expenses. Private universities are typically established and run by non-governmental entities, which can include religious organisations, non-profit organisations, or for-profit corporations.

**Funding:** Private universities do not receive significant funding from state or federal governments. They rely heavily on tuition fees, private donations, and endowments to cover their expenses.

**Tuition Costs:** Tuition at private universities is often higher than at public universities. However, some private universities have substantial financial aid programs to help offset costs for students.

**Smaller Class Sizes:** Private universities tend to have smaller student-to-faculty ratios, which can lead to more personalised attention and closer interactions with professors.

**Diverse Programs:** Like public universities, private universities offer a wide range of academic programs, including undergraduate, graduate, and professional degrees in various fields of study.

**Research Opportunities:** Many private universities are involved in significant research activities, although they may not always have the same level of research funding as larger public research universities.

**Unique Missions and Values:** Some private universities are affiliated with religious institutions and may integrate their faith-based values into the academic experience. Others may have specific educational philosophies or missions.

**Endowments:** Private universities often have substantial endowment funds, which are investments set aside to provide long-term financial support for the institution. The returns from these investments can be used to fund scholarships, faculty salaries, and other expenses.

**Autonomy:** Private universities have more autonomy in setting their own academic policies, curriculum, and admission standards compared to public universities.

**Community Engagement:** While private universities also engage with their communities, their activities may be more focused on specific areas or initiatives that align with their unique missions and values.

**Governance:** Private universities are governed by a board of trustees or directors appointed by the institution's sponsoring organisation. These trustees are responsible for overseeing the university's operations and policies.

Some well-known examples of private universities in the USA include Harvard University, Stanford University, and Yale University, among many others. Each private university may have its own distinct character, values, and academic strengths. Keep in mind that there is a wide range of private universities, from small liberal arts colleges to large research-intensive institutions.

## What is the Ivy League?

The Ivy League is a group of eight prestigious universities in the United States known for their academic excellence, rigorous admissions process, and rich history. They are considered some of the most prestigious and highly sought-after institutions of higher education in the world.

The eight Ivy League universities are:

- Brown University (Providence, Rhode Island)
- Columbia University (New York City, New York)
- Cornell University (Ithaca, New York)
- Dartmouth College (Hanover, New Hampshire)
- Harvard University (Cambridge, Massachusetts)
- University of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania)
- Princeton University (Princeton, New Jersey)
- Yale University (New Haven, Connecticut)

Ivy League universities have some commonalities:

**Academic Excellence:** Ivy League universities are renowned for their high academic standards, world-class faculty, and rigorous programs of study across various disciplines.

**Selective Admissions:** They have highly competitive admissions processes, with low acceptance rates. They attract a pool of exceptionally talented and accomplished applicants.

**Long History and Tradition:** Many Ivy League universities have centuries-old histories, with some being among the oldest institutions of higher education in the United States.

**Diverse Programs:** Ivy League universities offer a wide range of undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs in various fields of study.

**Strong Alumni Networks:** Graduates of Ivy League universities often form influential networks, which can be beneficial for career advancement and professional connections.

**Research Excellence:** These universities are leaders in cutting-edge research and have a significant impact on advancing knowledge across multiple disciplines.

**Ivy League Athletics:** The term "Ivy League" also refers to a collegiate athletic conference composed of the eight universities. While athletics may not be the primary focus, Ivy League schools have competitive sports programs.

**Financial Aid:** Ivy League universities are known for their commitment to providing need-based financial aid to admitted students. This helps make their education more accessible to a diverse range of students.

It's important to note that while the Ivy League universities share these common characteristics, each institution has its own unique culture, strengths, and areas of specialisation. Additionally, while the Ivy League is highly prestigious, there are many other outstanding universities and colleges around the world that offer excellent education and opportunities for students.

### **Are the Ivy League schools always the best?**

Currently, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) is ranked as the number one university in the world. MIT is not an Ivy League university. Stanford; California at Berkeley; Chicago; Pennsylvania California Institute of Technology are all non-Ivy League universities and are ranked in the global top 15. They are higher ranked than several Ivy leagues, such as Brown or Princeton.

The Ivy Leagues do have advantages of prestige but their Ivy League status should not blind anyone to the specific qualities of schools at other universities.

### **Liberal Arts Colleges**

A liberal arts college in the USA is a type of higher education institution that emphasises a broad-based education in the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences. These colleges focus on providing students with a well-rounded education that encourages critical thinking, effective communication, and a deep understanding of various academic disciplines.

Let's look at what a liberal arts education is like:

**Broad Curriculum:** Liberal arts colleges offer a wide range of courses across different academic disciplines, including literature, history, mathematics, natural sciences, social sciences, philosophy, and the arts.

**Small Class Sizes:** These colleges typically have small student-to-faculty ratios, which allow for more personalised attention and close interaction with professors.

**Interdisciplinary Approach:** Liberal arts colleges often encourage students to explore connections between different academic fields and to think critically across disciplines.

**Critical Thinking Emphasis:** The curriculum is designed to foster critical thinking skills, problem-solving abilities, and effective communication, which are valued in a wide range of professions.

**Experiential Learning:** Many liberal arts colleges emphasise hands-on learning experiences, such as research projects, internships, study abroad programs, and community engagement.

**Close-Knit Community:** Due to smaller enrollments, liberal arts colleges often have tight-knit communities where students and faculty have frequent interactions, and students may develop strong relationships with their peers.

**Undergraduate Focus:** While some liberal arts colleges offer graduate programs, their primary focus is on undergraduate education. Faculty members are often dedicated primarily to teaching and mentoring undergraduate students.

**Emphasis on Writing and Communication:** Liberal arts colleges place a strong emphasis on developing writing and communication skills, as these are considered essential for success in a variety of fields.

**Critical Examination of Ideas:** Students are encouraged to question and critically examine various perspectives, ideologies, and theories.

**Preparation for Graduate Studies and Careers:** Liberal arts colleges prepare students for a wide range of careers and graduate studies by providing a strong foundation in critical thinking, communication, and problem-solving skills.

**Alumni Networks:** Liberal arts colleges often have active alumni networks that can provide valuable connections and opportunities for graduates.

Some well-known liberal arts colleges in the USA include Williams College, Amherst College, Swarthmore College, and Wellesley College, among others. Keep in mind that while liberal arts colleges share common characteristics, each institution has its own unique culture, strengths, and areas of specialisation.

## **What is a research university**

A research university in the USA is a higher education institution that places a significant emphasis on conducting original research and advancing knowledge in various academic disciplines. These universities are known for their robust research programs, which often include a wide range of scholarly activities, from scientific investigations to humanities research and beyond.

Research universities have some characteristics:

**Research Focus:** Research universities allocate substantial resources to support faculty and student research endeavours. They often have extensive laboratories, libraries, and other facilities to facilitate research activities.

**Graduate Programs:** Research universities typically offer a wide array of graduate and professional programs in addition to undergraduate programs. They often have master's and doctoral programs that produce a significant number of advanced degree holders.

**Diverse Disciplines:** Research universities cover a broad spectrum of academic disciplines, including natural sciences, social sciences, humanities, engineering, health sciences, and more.

**Faculty Expertise:** Faculty members at research universities are often leading experts in their respective fields. They are actively engaged in research, publishing scholarly articles, and contributing to the advancement of knowledge.

**Academic Freedom:** Research universities place a high value on academic freedom, allowing faculty and students to explore innovative and sometimes controversial ideas without censorship or interference.

**Large Student Body:** Research universities often have larger student populations compared to liberal arts colleges. This can lead to a more diverse student body and a wider range of academic programs.

**Teaching and Research Balance:** While teaching is an important aspect of the mission, research universities expect faculty to be actively involved in scholarly research and creative activities.

**Research Funding:** Research universities typically receive substantial grants and funding from external sources, including government agencies, private foundations, and industry partners, to support their research endeavours.

**Publication and Academic Journals:** Faculty and graduate students at research universities often publish their research findings in academic journals, contributing to the body of knowledge in their respective fields.

**Graduate Student Research:** Graduate students at research universities are often heavily involved in research projects, which can lead to valuable hands-on experience and opportunities for networking.

**Community Engagement:** While research is a primary focus, many research universities also engage with their communities through outreach programs, public lectures, and collaborative initiatives with local organisations.

Some well-known examples of research universities in the USA include Harvard University, Stanford University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), University of California, Berkeley, and University of Chicago, among many others. Keep in mind that while research universities share common characteristics, each institution has its own unique strengths, research specialties, and areas of focus.

## **What is a community college?**

A community college in the USA is a type of higher education institution that offers a range of academic and vocational programs, typically at the associate degree level. These colleges serve as accessible entry points to higher education and often provide opportunities for students to earn a two-year degree or complete courses that can be transferred to a four-year university.

Here are some key characteristics of community colleges:

**Accessibility:** Community colleges are designed to be accessible to a wide range of students, including recent high school graduates, working adults, and individuals seeking to acquire specific skills for the job market.

**Affordability:** Community colleges are generally more affordable than four-year universities. They often provide a cost-effective way to complete the first two years of a bachelor's degree program.

**Open Admission Policies:** Many community colleges have open admission policies, which means they accept all students who have a high school diploma or equivalent, regardless of their academic performance.

**Associate Degrees:** Community colleges award associate degrees, which typically take two years of full-time study to complete. There are two main types of associate degrees: Associate of Arts (AA) and Associate of Science (AS). These degrees are often designed to transfer to a four-year institution.

**Certificate Programs:** Community colleges offer shorter, focused programs that provide specific skills and knowledge for a particular job or industry. These programs can range from a few months to a year or more.

**Vocational and Technical Training:** Community colleges are known for providing hands-on training and education in fields like healthcare, information technology, automotive technology, culinary arts, and more.

**Adult Education and Continuing Education:** Many community colleges offer programs for adult learners, including high school equivalency (GED) preparation, English as a Second Language (ESL), and various lifelong learning courses.

**Transfer Programs:** Community colleges often have agreements with four-year universities that allow students to transfer their credits and continue their education toward a bachelor's degree. This is known as a "transfer pathway" or "articulation agreement."

**Support Services:** Community colleges often provide support services such as tutoring, counselling, career advising, and job placement assistance to help students succeed academically and transition into the workforce.

**Work Opportunities:** Many community colleges allow international students to work part-time during their studies, which can help offset living expenses.

**Community Engagement:** These institutions often have strong ties to the local community, partnering with local businesses and organisations to provide workforce training and contribute to economic development.

Overall, community colleges play a vital role in the American education system by providing accessible and affordable educational opportunities for a diverse range of students. They serve as a valuable pathway to higher education and career advancement.

Community colleges may be a fantastic option for saving money on fees by doing the first two years then transferring to a four year programme in a more prestigious university. They also offer more online



courses and the ability to do a complete Associate Degree in 2 years (we will discuss how an associate degree differs from a bachelors later).

## **Academic entrance requirements for bachelor's degrees**

Entrance requirements for a bachelor's degree program in the USA can vary depending on the institution and the specific program of study. However, there are some common elements that are typically considered during the admissions process. Here are the general requirements:

### High School Diploma or Equivalent:

Most universities in the USA require applicants to have completed a high school diploma or an equivalent qualification, such as a General Education Development (GED) certificate.

### Transcripts:

Applicants need to provide official transcripts from their high school, showing their academic performance. These transcripts should list the courses taken, grades earned, and the cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA).

### Standardised Tests:

Many universities require applicants to submit scores from standardised tests like the SAT (Scholastic Assessment Test) or ACT (American College Testing). These tests assess a student's readiness for college-level work.

### Letters of Recommendation:

Some universities may ask for letters of recommendation from teachers, counsellors, or other individuals who can speak to the applicant's academic abilities and character.

### Personal Statement or Essay:

Many universities require applicants to write a personal statement or essay. This is an opportunity for the applicant to showcase their writing skills and explain their goals, interests, and reasons for pursuing a particular field of study.

### Extracurricular Activities and Achievements:

Universities may also consider a student's involvement in extracurricular activities, leadership roles, community service, and any special achievements or talents.

English Language Proficiency (for International Students):

International students whose first language is not English are often required to demonstrate proficiency in English through standardised tests like the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) or IELTS (International English Language Testing System).

Specific Program Requirements:

Some programs may have additional requirements, such as prerequisite courses, portfolios (for art or design programs), or auditions (for performing arts programs).

Interviews or Auditions:

Certain programs, especially in the arts or performing arts, may require applicants to participate in an interview or audition as part of the application process.

Application Fee:

Most universities charge an application fee, which covers the administrative costs of processing applications. Some institutions offer fee waivers for students who demonstrate financial need.

Deadlines:

It's crucial to adhere to application deadlines set by the universities. These may vary depending on whether you are applying for early decision, regular decision, or rolling admissions.

Keep in mind that these are general requirements and specific details can vary from one institution to another. Additionally, some universities may have more selective admission criteria, while others may have more open admission policies. It's important for prospective students to carefully review the admission requirements of the universities they are interested in applying to.

## **What is the GED?**

The GED, which stands for General Educational Development, is a high school equivalency credential in the United States and Canada. It is an alternative to a traditional high school diploma for individuals who

did not complete their high school education but wish to demonstrate their academic knowledge and skills.

#### Purpose:

The GED is designed to certify that individuals have acquired the knowledge and skills equivalent to a high school graduate. It allows them to pursue further education or employment opportunities.

#### Content Areas:

The GED test covers four main subject areas:

- Reasoning Through Language Arts (RLA): Includes reading comprehension, writing, and critical thinking skills.
- Mathematical Reasoning: Assesses mathematical concepts and problem-solving abilities.
- Science: Evaluates understanding of scientific concepts and the ability to analyse data.
- Social Studies: Focuses on history, government, economics, and geography.

#### Test Format:

The GED is administered through a series of computer-based exams. Each subject area is tested separately, and individuals can take one or more tests at a time.

#### Passing Score:

To earn a GED credential, individuals must achieve a passing score on each of the four subject area tests. The passing score may vary by state or jurisdiction.

#### Eligibility:

GED testing eligibility requirements can vary by state or province, but typically, candidates must be at least 16 years old (in some places, older), not enrolled in high school, and not hold a high school diploma.

#### Preparation:

Many individuals prepare for the GED by enrolling in adult education programs, GED preparation classes, or using self-study materials. There are also online resources and practice tests available.

#### Validity:

Once obtained, the GED credential is considered a valid and recognized high school equivalency certificate. It is accepted by most colleges, universities, and employers as proof of educational attainment.

Benefits:

Earning a GED can open doors to higher education, vocational training, and employment opportunities that may not be accessible without a high school diploma or equivalent.

Continuing Education:

Individuals with a GED can pursue further education, including enrolling in community colleges, technical schools, or universities, depending on the institution's admission requirements.

It's important to note that while the GED is widely recognized, some institutions or employers may have specific requirements or preferences regarding high school equivalency credentials. Therefore, individuals considering the GED should research and confirm its acceptance in their specific educational or employment pursuits.

## What is the SAT?

The SAT, originally known as the Scholastic Aptitude Test, is a standardised test widely used for college admissions in the United States. It assesses a student's readiness for college and is intended to provide colleges with a common data point that can be used to compare all applicants.

Here are some key points about the SAT:

Sections:

The SAT consists of several sections, each designed to measure different aspects of academic readiness:

- Evidence-Based Reading and Writing (EBRW): This section includes Reading and Writing & Language components, assessing reading comprehension, grammar, and writing skills.
- Mathematics: This section evaluates maths skills in areas like algebra, geometry, and data analysis.
- Optional Essay (Essay): While the essay section is optional, some colleges may require it as part of their application process.

**Scoring:**

The SAT is scored on a scale of 400 to 1600, combining test results from the two 200-800 point sections: EBRW and Mathematics. The optional essay receives a score from 6 to 24.

**Test Format:**

The SAT is primarily a paper-and-pencil test, although there is also an option for a digital version in some locations. The test is administered several times a year at designated testing centres.

**Duration:**

The SAT test takes approximately 3 hours without the essay, and about 3 hours and 50 minutes with the essay. Additional time may be allotted for breaks and administrative tasks.

**Test Administration:**

The SAT is administered by the College Board, a nonprofit organisation. It is offered on specific test dates throughout the year, and students must register in advance to take the exam.

**Purpose:**

The SAT is used by colleges and universities in the United States as part of their admissions process. It provides colleges with a standardised measure of a student's readiness for higher education.

**Preparation:**

Many students choose to prepare for the SAT through various means, including self-study with SAT prep books, online resources, and practice tests. Additionally, there are SAT prep courses and tutoring services available.

**Score Reporting:**

SAT scores are typically sent directly to colleges and universities that students choose during the registration process. Students can also request additional score reports to be sent to other institutions.

**Validity:**

SAT scores are generally valid for five years. However, it's important to check with specific colleges or universities for their policies on score validity.

**Optional Essay:**

While the essay section is optional, some colleges and universities require or recommend it as part of the application process. It assesses a student's ability to analyse a provided text and construct a well-organised, evidence-based essay.

It's important for students planning to apply to colleges or universities in the United States to check the specific admissions requirements of the institutions they are interested in, including whether they require or recommend SAT scores. Additionally, some students may choose to take the ACT, another standardised test that is accepted by many U.S. colleges and universities.

## ACT

The ACT, originally known as the American College Testing exam, is a standardised test used for college admissions in the United States. It assesses a student's readiness for college and is designed to provide colleges with a common data point that can be used to compare all applicants.

Here are some key points about the ACT:

Sections:

The ACT consists of four sections, each designed to measure different aspects of academic readiness:

- English: Assesses grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, and rhetorical skills.
- Mathematics: Evaluates maths skills in areas like algebra, geometry, and trigonometry.
- Reading: Tests reading comprehension skills.
- Science: Measures interpretation, analysis, and problem-solving skills related to natural sciences.

Scoring:

Each section of the ACT is scored on a scale of 1 to 36. The scores from each section are averaged to provide a composite score, which also ranges from 1 to 36. The optional writing section is scored separately on a scale of 2 to 12.

Test Format:

The ACT is primarily a paper-and-pencil test, although there is also an option for an online version (the ACT Online) available on specific test dates in some locations.

Duration:

The ACT test takes approximately 2 hours and 55 minutes without the optional writing section. With the writing section included, it takes about 3 hours and 35 minutes.

#### Test Administration:

The ACT is administered by ACT, Inc., a nonprofit organisation. It is offered on specific test dates throughout the year at designated testing centres.

#### Purpose:

The ACT is used by colleges and universities in the United States as part of their admissions process. It provides colleges with a standardised measure of a student's readiness for higher education.

#### Preparation:

Many students choose to prepare for the ACT through various means, including self-study with ACT prep books, online resources, and practice tests. Additionally, there are ACT prep courses and tutoring services available.

#### Score Reporting:

ACT scores are typically sent directly to colleges and universities that students choose during the registration process. Students can also request additional score reports to be sent to other institutions.

#### Optional Writing Section:

While the writing section is optional, some colleges and universities require or recommend it as part of the application process. It assesses a student's ability to analyse a provided perspective and develop an argument.

#### Validity:

ACT scores are generally valid for five years. However, it's important to check with specific colleges or universities for their policies on score validity.

It's important for students planning to apply to colleges or universities in the United States to check the specific admissions requirements of the institutions they are interested in, including whether they require or recommend ACT scores. Additionally, some students may choose to take the SAT, another standardised test that is accepted by many U.S. colleges and universities.

## Letters of recommendation

Letters of recommendation are an important component of a university application in the United States. They provide insights into an applicant's character, abilities, and accomplishments from the perspective of someone who knows them well. Here are some key points about letters of recommendation for admission to U.S. universities:

### Who to Ask:

Choose recommenders who know you well and can speak to your academic abilities, work ethic, character, and potential for success in higher education. This could be a teacher, counsellor, employer, or mentor.

### Academic vs. Non-Academic Recommendations:

Most universities prefer at least one or two recommendations from teachers who have taught you in core academic subjects (e.g., maths, science, English). If possible, choose recommenders from your junior or senior year of high school.

### Diversity of Perspective:

It's a good idea to seek recommendations from different sources to provide a well-rounded view of your abilities and character. For example, you might ask one teacher and one non-academic recommender.

### Requesting Recommendations:

Ask for recommendations well in advance of application deadlines. Provide your recommenders with information about the programs you're applying to, your academic and extracurricular accomplishments, and any specific traits or experiences you'd like them to highlight.

### Waiving Access:

Many applicants choose to waive their right to see the letters of recommendation. This can enhance the credibility of the recommendation, as it assures universities that the recommender is providing an honest assessment.

### Guidance for Recommenders:



Provide your recommenders with any necessary forms or information required by the university. Offer to meet with them to discuss your academic goals and experiences.

#### Content of Recommendations:

Recommendations should be specific, detailed, and provide examples that support the claims made about your abilities and character. They should highlight your strengths and potential for success in higher education.

#### Submission Process:

Most universities provide specific instructions on how recommenders should submit their letters. This may be through an online portal, email, or postal mail. Ensure that your recommenders follow the instructions provided by the university.

#### Follow Up and Express Gratitude:

After your recommenders have submitted their letters, be sure to thank them for their time and effort. This is a professional courtesy that is appreciated.

#### Additional Recommendations (if allowed):

Some universities may allow or require additional recommendations from specific sources, such as supplemental teacher recommendations or recommendations from specific departments.

It's important to carefully read and follow the specific requirements and guidelines provided by each university to which you are applying. Additionally, be sure to give your recommenders ample time to write and submit their letters. This shows respect for their time and ensures they have the opportunity to provide thoughtful and comprehensive recommendations.

## **Personal essays or statements**

A personal statement, also known as a statement of purpose or admissions essay, is a written essay or statement that accompanies a university application in the USA. It provides applicants with an opportunity to showcase their unique qualities, experiences, and aspirations to the admissions committee. A well-crafted personal statement can significantly impact the admission decision.

Here are some key points about a personal statement for university admission in the USA:

**Purpose:**

The primary purpose of a personal statement is to give the admissions committee insight into who you are as a person, what motivates you, and why you are interested in pursuing a particular program or field of study.

**Content:**

A personal statement typically includes information about your background, experiences, academic interests, career goals, and reasons for choosing the specific university or program. It may also highlight any special talents, achievements, or challenges you've overcome.

**Length and Format:**

The length of a personal statement can vary, but it is generally limited to a specific word or page count specified by the university. It is important to adhere to these guidelines. The statement should be well-structured with clear paragraphs and a focused narrative.

**Originality and Authenticity:**

A personal statement should be original and reflect your own voice and experiences. Avoid using generic or clichéd phrases, and instead, share specific details and examples that demonstrate your unique qualities and perspective.

**Relevance to the Program:**

Tailor your personal statement to the specific program or university you are applying to. Explain why you are interested in that particular institution and how their offerings align with your academic and career goals.

**Highlight Achievements and Experiences:**

Showcase any relevant academic achievements, extracurricular activities, internships, research projects, or work experiences that demonstrate your qualifications and passion for the field of study.

**Address Weaknesses (if necessary):**

If there are any gaps in your academic record or other aspects of your application, use the personal statement to provide context or explanations.

**Show Growth and Development:**

Discuss how your experiences, challenges, and achievements have contributed to your personal and intellectual growth. Highlight any lessons learned and skills gained.

**Proofread and Edit:**

Ensure that your personal statement is free from grammatical errors, typos, and inconsistencies. Consider seeking feedback from trusted advisors, teachers, or peers.

**Be Honest and Sincere:**

Admissions committees value authenticity. Be honest about your experiences, interests, and goals. Avoid exaggerations or fabrications.

**Demonstrate Enthusiasm and Commitment:**

Show your passion for your chosen field of study and your commitment to academic and personal growth.

Remember that the personal statement is an opportunity to present yourself as a whole person, beyond just your academic achievements. Take your time to reflect on your experiences and aspirations, and craft a personal statement that effectively communicates who you are and why you would be a valuable addition to the university community.

## **Extracurricular activities**

Extracurricular activities can play a significant role in the university admission process in the USA. They provide a way for applicants to demonstrate their interests, skills, leadership abilities, and commitment to various pursuits outside of the classroom. Here are some types of extracurricular activities that can support university admission:

**Clubs and Organisations:**

Joining or leading clubs or organisations at your school, such as student government, debate club, science club, or cultural clubs, can showcase your interests and involvement in your community.

**Sports and Athletics:**

Participating in sports, either at the varsity or club level, can demonstrate teamwork, discipline, and a commitment to physical fitness. Leadership roles, such as team captain, can also be particularly impressive.

#### Volunteer Work and Community Service:

Engaging in community service projects or volunteering for local organisations shows a commitment to giving back and making a positive impact on your community. We can advise on these.

#### Internships and Work Experience:

Participating in internships, part-time jobs, or summer employment relevant to your field of interest can demonstrate practical skills, work ethic, and a passion for your chosen career path.

#### Academic Competitions and Awards:

Participation in academic competitions, such as science fairs, maths Olympiads, or debate tournaments, and receiving recognition or awards for your achievements can highlight your intellectual abilities.

#### Arts and Creative Endeavours:

Involvement in activities like music, theatre, visual arts, or writing can showcase creativity, dedication, and a passion for self-expression.

#### Leadership Positions:

Holding leadership roles in clubs, organisations, or community projects demonstrates your ability to take initiative, make decisions, and inspire others.

#### Participation in Research or Independent Projects:

Conducting research projects, whether in a lab, in the field, or through independent studies, can demonstrate your curiosity, critical thinking skills, and commitment to academic inquiry.

#### Participation in Specialized Programs or Workshops:

Attending summer programs, workshops, or camps related to your field of interest can demonstrate a proactive approach to learning and a commitment to your chosen area of study.

#### Cultural Exchange or Travel Experiences:

Participating in exchange programs, study abroad, or international travel experiences can demonstrate cultural awareness, adaptability, and a global perspective.

#### Special Skills or Talents:

Showcasing unique talents or skills, such as proficiency in a musical instrument, artistic abilities, or proficiency in a specific language, can set you apart from other applicants.

#### Participation in STEM or Coding Clubs:

Involvement in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) clubs, coding clubs, or robotics teams can demonstrate a strong interest in these fields and showcase problem-solving abilities.

It's important to note that quality often outweighs quantity when it comes to extracurricular activities. Admissions committees value depth of involvement and meaningful contributions over a long list of activities. Additionally, consistency and a clear narrative of your interests and passions can strengthen your application.

Ultimately, choose activities that genuinely interest you and align with your academic and personal goals. Demonstrating genuine passion and commitment is key to making a positive impression on admissions committees.

## Costs?

There are three aspect to costs:

- Getting there (tickets, visas, applications)
- University fees, funding and scholarships
- Living expenses (healthcare, rent, travel, food, clothing, etc)

### Getting there

Tickets will depend on where you are going. The flight time from the East Coast to West is nearly 6 hours. Since the pandemic, flights have become very expensive. But you will need to budget at least \$1000 for your flight and it may be a lot more expensive depending on where you go and at what time of the year.

Basic visas cost less than USD 1,000 but agents will try to charge you a lot more than this.

The truth is that the US system has a set of mandatory requirements (acceptance into a university, language testing, etc) and a set of non-mandatory requirements that make up the rest of your evidence. Agents are pretty good at figuring out what evidence to present and coaching you for an interview. But it's not rocket science. That is why we work with our agents, who are on a commission - when we refer you to them, there is no huge fee - you pay the visa fees and you pay a reasonable amount on top for their expertise and help. But there is no flashy office in DHA whose rent needs to be paid. There is no CEO sitting in the USA, needing to cream massive profits - it's paperwork. We can get it done for you using one of our experts.

## **University fees, funding and scholarships**

University fees vary massively in the USA.

- Tier 1 universities, such as Ivy Leagues or those in the QS Top 100 rankings will cost about \$45,000 to \$65,000
- Tier 2 universities, such as those in large states will cost \$30,000 plus
- Tier 3 universities, such as Ball State, which are low on the rankings, will cost between \$20,000 and \$30,000
- Community colleges will cost around \$10,000 per year but can be less

These figures are per year - so University of Chicago tuition for four years will add up to about \$250,000. A two year associate degree at a community college could be as little as \$15,000.

To obtain a visa, you will need to show that you can afford it. However, you are also allowed on an F1 visa to work up to 20 hours a week (there are strict requirements). Jobs are often menial - working in a coffee shop or cleaning but there can be jobs on campus, such as library work or, for amazing students, research.

There is another option for earning money - the gig economy is massive globally and growing - if you have a skill that you can sell online through platforms such as UpWork or Fiverr, then you have the ability to earn. However, you cannot start doing this once you arrive abroad - building a profile on such platforms, getting the sort of positive feedback you need to get regular work takes time - and you need to have the sort of skill that is transferable onto a remote platform, such as web development or graphic design. It is only when you know that you are getting regular work that you can rely on such an income.

While universities in the US offer a huge amount of financial aid to students, which is based on merit and financial need, these are not open to international students. It is true that the tier 1 universities, if you are admitted, will bend over backwards to assist financially as they are only interested in the quality of the students. But for most students, the assistance can only come in the form of scholarships. The exception is for postgraduate students, who are academically gifted, who may be given assistantships and fellowships (essentially teaching assistant or research assistant posts, to undertake while they are studying).

The scholarships that are available are too numerous to list and the directory we have changes with great regularity. To give you an example, these can range from the American Association of University Women, which offers up to \$30,000 per year or Berea College that offers 100% funding and summer jobs. However, it should be emphasised that these scholarships are incredibly rare and competitive.

## **Living expenses**

This will vary massively. Depending on whether you live in a hostel or shared accommodation, whether you are in a city or a rural setting, the minimum you will need to live will be \$1,000 per month. If you are in a city, you may find that your rent alone is more than \$1,000 per month. The variables in the USA are huge and you will need to understand the cost of living once you have a shortlist of universities.

In addition to living, healthcare in the US is expensive. It is possible to get insured for less than \$400 per year, but there are so many add ons that healthcare should be budgeted for at the rate of \$1,500 per year. Medication, dentists and minor ailments are able to be treated on campus for some universities. Additionally, some universities have their own healthcare plans. It will depend on your shortlist.

## **Settling in the USA after studies**

Most students have F1 visas - unlike most countries, these do not expire on a set date. The visa is valid while you are studying and following all immigration rules. Once you stop your studies, the visa starts to count down and you have 60 days to leave the country.

If you keep studying, you can stay forever (if you never leave the country).

A more practical way is needed to stay - there are several:

- Optional practical training - undertaking a course of training will extend your visa

- H-1B visa - you can get sponsored by an employer, who must show that you are uniquely placed to undertake work in the USA and that no one else can do this. This path is used only where the employer has deep pockets and you are highly skilled.
- Other routes, such as marriage, asylum or military service - these are not recommended routes, although we are aware that they are used.



# Studying in Europe in English

Despite dozens of languages being spoken in Europe and a very proud heritage of diversity, several smaller countries in Europe are teaching some university courses in English, which is recognised as a universal language. In addition, many countries in Europe have some universities that teach in English.

There are separate sections for the UK and Ireland in this book as these are English-speaking countries but here we will survey some examples.

- Many European countries offer university education in English to cater to international students. Some of the countries where you can find English-taught programs include:
- Netherlands: Many universities in the Netherlands offer a wide range of English-taught programs at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels.
- Sweden: Sweden is known for offering a large number of English-taught programs, particularly at the master's level.
- Germany: While the primary language of instruction is German, many universities in Germany offer programs in English, especially at the postgraduate level.
- Denmark: Many universities in Denmark offer a variety of programs in English, particularly at the master's level.
- Finland: Finnish universities, especially those at the higher education level, offer a significant number of programs in English.
- Norway: Universities in Norway also offer a number of English-taught programs, especially at the master's level.
- Belgium: Some universities in Belgium, particularly in Brussels and Flanders, offer programs in English.
- Austria: Austria offers a growing number of English-taught programs, particularly in Vienna and other major cities.
- Portugal: Portuguese universities are increasingly offering programs in English, especially at the postgraduate level.
- Spain: While the majority of programs are in Spanish, there are some universities in Spain that offer English-taught programs.
- Italy: Some universities in Italy offer programs in English, particularly at the postgraduate level.

- France: While the primary language of instruction is French, there are an increasing number of programs taught in English, especially at the postgraduate level.
- Poland: Poland is becoming an increasingly popular destination for English-taught programs, particularly in cities like Warsaw and Krakow.
- Czech Republic: Some universities in the Czech Republic offer programs in English, especially in Prague and other major cities.

Hungary: Universities in Hungary, particularly in Budapest, offer a growing number of English-taught programs.

We will concentrate on the Netherlands as an example - but each country has similar entry and visa requirements.

## **Types of institutions where you can get a degree**

There are many universities in the Netherlands, but the most prominent ones that offer teaching in English language are:

- University of Amsterdam (Universiteit van Amsterdam) - Offers a wide range of English-taught programs across various disciplines.
- Leiden University (Universiteit Leiden) - Offers a diverse selection of English-taught programs, particularly at the master's level.
- Utrecht University (Universiteit Utrecht) - Offers a variety of English-taught programs, both at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels.
- Erasmus University Rotterdam (Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam) - Offers numerous English-taught programs, particularly in business, social sciences, and economics.
- Delft University of Technology (Technische Universiteit Delft) - Offers many engineering and technology-related programs in English.
- University of Groningen (Rijksuniversiteit Groningen) - Offers a wide range of English-taught programs, particularly at the master's level.
- Eindhoven University of Technology (Technische Universiteit Eindhoven) - Offers English-taught programs primarily in engineering and technology fields.

- Maastricht University (Universiteit Maastricht) - Known for its Problem-Based Learning approach, Maastricht University offers many English-taught programs, especially at the master's level.
- Wageningen University & Research - Specialises in agricultural and environmental sciences and offers a variety of programs in English.
- Tilburg University (Universiteit van Tilburg) - Known for its strong business and social sciences programs, Tilburg University offers several English-taught programs.
- Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam - Offers a wide range of English-taught programs, particularly at the master's level.
- Radboud University Nijmegen (Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen) - Offers a variety of English-taught programs, particularly at the master's level.
- University of Twente (Universiteit Twente) - Specialises in engineering and technology and offers programs in English.
- Nyenrode Business Universiteit - Focuses primarily on business-related programs and offers many courses in English.

University education in the Netherlands is divided into different types of institutions:

- Research Universities (Universiteiten):
  - These universities focus on academic and research-oriented education.
  - They offer Bachelor's, Master's, and PhD programs.
  - Examples include the University of Amsterdam, Leiden University, and Utrecht University.
- Universities of Applied Sciences (Hogescholen):
  - These institutions emphasise practical, hands-on education and are often more vocationally-oriented.
  - They offer Bachelor's and Master's programs, but typically do not offer PhD programs.
  - Examples include Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences, Fontys University of Applied Sciences, and Hanze University of Applied Sciences.
- Art and Music Schools (Hogescholen voor de Kunsten):
  - These specialised institutions focus on arts, music, and related fields.

- They offer Bachelor's and Master's programs in creative disciplines.
- Examples include the Royal Conservatoire in The Hague and the Gerrit Rietveld Academie in Amsterdam.
- **Teacher Training Colleges (Pabo):**
  - These colleges specialise in training teachers for primary education.
  - They offer Bachelor's programs in education.
  - Examples include the Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences - Pabo and the Fontys University of Applied Sciences - Pabo.
- **Institutes for International Education:**
  - These institutions are designed for international students and offer programs in English.
  - They can be a part of Research Universities or Universities of Applied Sciences.
  - Examples include University College Utrecht (part of Utrecht University) and University College Maastricht (part of Maastricht University).
- **Open Universiteit (Open Universiteit):**
  - Open Universities offer distance learning and provide a flexible way for students to pursue higher education.
  - They offer Bachelor's and Master's programs primarily through online education.
- **Private Universities:**
  - These are privately-funded institutions that offer a range of programs, often with a specific focus.
  - Examples include Nyenrode Business Universiteit and Wittenborg University of Applied Sciences.

## Academic entrance requirements

### Bachelor's Programs:

Secondary Education Diploma: You will need a diploma equivalent to the Dutch VWO diploma or an international equivalent (e.g., A-levels, International Baccalaureate).

Specific Course Requirements: Some programs may have specific subject requirements. For example, engineering programs may require mathematics and physics.

Language Proficiency: If your native language is not English, you may need to demonstrate proficiency through standardised tests like the TOEFL or IELTS.

### **Master's Programs:**

Bachelor's Degree: You'll need a relevant Bachelor's degree or an equivalent qualification.

Specific Course Requirements: Some Master's programs may have prerequisite courses or specific subject requirements.

Language Proficiency: If your program is taught in English and English is not your native language, you may need to demonstrate proficiency through standardised tests.

### **PhD Programs:**

Master's Degree: Generally, a relevant Master's degree is required for admission to a PhD program.

Research Proposal: You'll often need to submit a research proposal outlining your intended research topic.

Academic References: Letters of recommendation from professors or researchers who can speak to your academic capabilities and potential for research.

Language Proficiency: Proficiency in the language of instruction (usually English) is typically required.

## **Letters of recommendation, personal essays or statements and extracurricular activities**

The system in the Netherlands, and across the whole of Europe is diverse - each university has its own requirements. It may be that some universities will take you on grades alone - but it is generally true that the better the institution, the more demanding the entrance requirements will be - you should start preparing early, especially with extracurricular activities that show the qualities that prove you are worthy of entrance.

## Costs

### Getting there

Airfare: Economy class travel will cost USD 750 to USD 1,200 depending upon when you book and which airlines you book.

Visa Fees: The student visa fees for the Schengen visa can vary depending on the type of visa, the country that you are applying for and your circumstances. The fees may change over time, so it's crucial to check the latest information on the government website or the website of the embassy of the country that you are applying for to get the most up-to-date fee information. The fees range from USD 80 to USD 160. There may be a visa handling fee of USD 10-20 depending upon the country that you are applying to get a visa for.

### University fees, funding and scholarships

University fees, scholarships, and funding in Europe can vary significantly from one country to another. Here are some general points to consider:

Tuition Fees:

Tuition fees in Europe can vary widely. EU/EEA students often receive preferential treatment when it comes to tuition fees, paying the same rates as domestic students in many European countries.

Non-EU/EEA international students generally face higher tuition fees, which can range from a few hundred to several thousand euros per year.

Some general information about fees is as follows:

Netherlands: Non-EU/EEA students in the Netherlands generally pay higher tuition fees for both undergraduate and graduate programs.

Sweden: Sweden charges tuition fees for non-EU/EEA students at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

Denmark: Denmark charges tuition fees for students from outside the EU/EEA for most programs.

Austria: Non-European Union and non-European Economic Area students are subject to tuition fees in Austria.

Belgium: Tuition fees for non-EU/EEA students are common in Belgium, but they can vary between regions and institutions.

Norway: Although education is tuition-free for international students in many Norwegian universities, there are some exceptions, and tuition fees may apply to certain programs and institutions.

France: France generally charges tuition fees for non-EU/EEA students, but there are some exceptions and scholarship opportunities.

Switzerland: Switzerland is not part of the EU, and tuition fees can be significant for international students.

Germany: Germany is known for offering tuition-free education at many public universities for international students, including non-EU/EEA students. However, there might be administrative fees and living expenses to consider.

Finland: Finland provides tuition-free education to international students, including non-EU/EEA students, in its public universities. You may still need to cover your living expenses.

Greece: Greece has several public universities that offer free tuition to all students, including non-EU/EEA students.

Cyprus: The University of Cyprus and some other public institutions offer tuition-free education to international students.

Czech Republic: Some public universities in the Czech Republic offer low or no tuition fees to international students, but there may be fees for certain programs.

Slovenia: Slovenia offers tuition-free education to international students, including non-EU/EEA students, in its public institutions.

#### Scholarships:

Many European countries and universities offer scholarships to both domestic and international students. Scholarships can be based on academic merit, financial need, or specific criteria like sports or arts achievements.

### European Union Scholarships:

The European Union offers various scholarship programs to support international students and researchers. One of the most well-known programs is the Erasmus+ program, which provides opportunities for students and staff to study, train, or teach abroad in EU member states.

The availability and eligibility criteria for scholarships can vary by country and institution. Some scholarships are funded by the government, while others are offered by private organisations or universities themselves.

The European Research Council (ERC) provides funding for research projects, attracting international researchers to work in European institutions.

### Research Funding:

In addition to scholarships, many universities and research institutions in Europe offer funding for research projects and doctoral studies. This funding can come from various sources, including government grants, industry partnerships, and philanthropic organisations.

### Financial Aid and Part-Time Work:

Some European countries allow international students to work part-time during their studies to help cover living expenses. The rules and restrictions on part-time work can vary by country, so it's essential to check the specific regulations in your chosen destination.

### Online Scholarship Databases:

Many organisations and websites compile databases of scholarships available to students studying in Europe. Examples include the European Funding Guide and the ScholarshipPortal.

To get the most accurate and up-to-date information on university fees, scholarships, and funding opportunities in Europe, it's essential to research specific countries and universities you are interested in. Additionally, you should contact the international student offices at your chosen universities or explore scholarship databases and government websites to find the most relevant opportunities for your situation.



## Living expenses

The cost of living for students in Europe can vary significantly depending on the country and city where you are studying. Generally, Western and Northern European countries tend to be more expensive than Eastern and Southern European countries. Below are some approximate average costs you might expect to incur as a student in Europe:

**Accommodation:** Accommodation costs will depend on whether you choose to live in university dormitories, shared apartments, or private rentals. On average, you can expect to spend anywhere from USD 300 to USD 1,000 per month for rent, with higher costs in major cities.

**Food:** Food expenses can vary, but a typical monthly budget for groceries and dining out might be around USD 150 to USD 500. Buying and cooking your own meals is usually more budget-friendly than eating out.

**Transportation:** Public transportation costs can range from USD 20 to USD 80 per month, depending on the city and the frequency of your travels.

**Health Insurance:** Health insurance is often mandatory for students in Europe. The cost varies by country, but it's typically a few hundred euros per year.

**Books and Supplies:** Budget around USD 50 to USD 100 per month for textbooks and other study materials.

**Miscellaneous Expenses:** This category includes personal items, entertainment, and other miscellaneous costs. It can vary widely, but a monthly budget of USD 100 to USD 200 should cover these expenses for most students.

**Mobile Phone and Internet:** Expect to pay around USD 20 to USD 40 per month for a mobile phone plan and internet service.

It's important to research the specific costs in the country and city where you plan to study, as well as any potential scholarships or financial aid that may be available to help offset expenses. Additionally, part-time work opportunities for students may be available in some countries, which can help supplement your income.

Keep in mind that living expenses can fluctuate, so it's crucial to create a budget and be prepared for unexpected costs. European countries offer diverse experiences, and the cost of living can greatly affect your overall student experience.

## Settling after studies

Settling in the European Union after completing your studies can be an attractive option for many international students. However, the process can vary depending on your specific situation and the country in which you studied. Here are some general steps and considerations to keep in mind:

**Visa and Residence Permit:** If you're an international student in an EU country, you likely have a student visa and residence permit. After completing your studies, you may need to apply for a different type of visa or residence permit to stay in the country.

**Job Search:** To settle in the EU, it's often necessary to find employment. Some countries may offer post-graduate work permits that allow you to stay and work for a certain period after graduation. The availability and requirements for these permits can vary, so you should check with the specific country's immigration authorities.

**Networking:** Building a professional network during your studies can be highly beneficial. Attend job fairs, connect with alumni, and make use of any career services offered by your university.

**Language Skills:** Proficiency in the local language can significantly increase your job prospects. Depending on the country, you may need to prove your language skills through language tests or certifications.

**Legal Requirements:** Familiarise yourself with the specific immigration and employment laws of the country you wish to stay in. Each EU member state has its own rules and regulations regarding work permits, residence permits, and other legal requirements.

**Healthcare and Insurance:** Ensure you have the necessary healthcare coverage and insurance to meet the country's requirements. Some countries have public healthcare systems, while others rely more on private healthcare.

**Housing:** Secure accommodation that meets your needs and budget. Depending on the city, finding affordable housing can be competitive, so plan ahead.

**Taxes and Finance:** Understand the tax obligations and financial requirements in your host country. You may need to open a local bank account and comply with tax regulations.

**Legal Advice:** Consider seeking legal advice or assistance from immigration lawyers or consultants who specialise in the country you plan to settle in. They can help navigate the legal complexities of obtaining residency and work permits.

**Cultural Adaptation:** Be prepared for cultural differences and the adaptation process. Living in a new country can be challenging, but it can also be a rewarding experience.

Remember that the specific steps and requirements can vary widely from one EU country to another. Therefore, it's crucial to research and understand the regulations and processes of the specific country you intend to settle in. Additionally, staying informed about any changes in immigration policies is essential as rules and regulations can change over time.

# Studying in Turkey

## Introduction

Studying in Turkey can be an attractive option for Pakistani students for several reasons:

**Cultural Affinity:** Turkey and Pakistan share cultural and historical ties, including common religious and historical connections. This cultural affinity can make Pakistani students feel more at home in Turkey.

**Affordable Education:** Tuition fees in Turkish universities are generally more affordable compared to many Western countries, which can be appealing for Pakistani students and their families.

**Scholarship Opportunities:** Turkish universities and the Turkish government offer scholarships to international students, including those from Pakistan. These scholarships can help alleviate the financial burden of studying abroad.

**Quality Education:** Turkey has made significant investments in its higher education system and is home to several reputable universities. Many Turkish universities offer programs in English, providing Pakistani students with access to quality education in various fields.

**Geographic Location:** Turkey's strategic location at the crossroads of Europe and Asia can offer unique opportunities for Pakistani students to explore diverse cultures, travel to nearby countries, and gain international exposure.

**Diverse Academic Programs:** Turkish universities offer a wide range of academic programs, catering to various interests and fields of study. Pakistani students can find programs that align with their career goals and interests.

**Language Opportunities:** While many programs are offered in English, studying in Turkey also presents the opportunity to learn or enhance Turkish language skills, which can be beneficial for future job opportunities.

**Safety and Hospitality:** Turkey is generally considered a safe and hospitable country, and Turkish people are known for their warmth and friendliness, making it a welcoming place for international students, including those from Pakistan.

**Cultural Experiences:** Turkish culture offers a rich tapestry of history, art, and traditions for Pakistani students to explore, which can enhance their educational and personal experiences.

**International Perspective:** Studying in Turkey can provide Pakistani students with a unique international perspective, helping them broaden their horizons and gain a more global outlook.

When considering studying in Turkey as a Pakistani student, it's important to research specific universities, scholarship opportunities, and admission requirements. Additionally, you should consider the cost of living, legal requirements (such as visas), and the cultural aspects of life in Turkey to ensure that it aligns with your educational and personal goals.

## **Types of institutions where you can get a degree**

Turkey offers a variety of institutions including Private and Public Universities, where you can pursue higher education and obtain a degree. Six Turkish universities are in the Top 1000 The Higher Education Ranking.

### **Public Universities**

Turkey has a large number of public universities offering a wide range of academic programs.

These universities are funded and operated by the government, and they provide education to both domestic and international students. Some of the well-known public universities in Turkey include:

- Bogazici University
- Istanbul Technical University
- Middle East Technical University (METU)
- Ankara University
- Hacettepe University
- Ege University
- Istanbul University
- Bilkent University
- Gazi University
- Sabanci University
- Ataturk University
- Cukurova University
- Kocaeli University
- Erciyes University
- Selcuk University

These universities offer a wide range of undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral programs in various fields of study, including engineering, science, social sciences, arts, and humanities. Admission criteria and application procedures may vary from one university to another, so it's essential to check the specific requirements for the university and program you are interested in.

## **Private Universities**

Turkey has numerous private universities, providing a wide range of academic programs and opportunities for students. Please note that the number of private universities in Turkey may change over time due to new institutions being established and existing ones closing or merging. Some notable private universities in Turkey include:

- Sabancı University
- Koç University
- Bilkent University
- Boğaziçi University (has both public and private sections)

- Istanbul Bilgi University
- İstanbul Şehir University
- Özyeğin University
- Istanbul Technical University (has both public and private sections)
- Yeditepe University
- Kadir Has University
- Sabiha Gökçen Aviation University
- Istanbul Medipol University
- TOBB University of Economics and Technology
- Istanbul Arel University

These universities offer a wide range of academic programs at undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral levels. Keep in mind that the admission criteria, tuition fees, and available programs may vary from one university to another, so it's essential to research each institution individually to find the one that best fits your academic and career goals. Additionally, I recommend checking the latest information on private universities in Turkey from official sources or the universities' respective websites, as the educational landscape may have evolved since my last update.

### **Technical Universities**

These institutions specialise in technical and engineering fields. Examples include Istanbul Technical University and Middle East Technical University.

### **Medical Schools**

These institutions focus on medical and healthcare-related programs, offering degrees in medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, and other health sciences.

### **Vocational Schools**

Vocational schools provide practical and hands-on training in various trades and professions.

### **Open Education Faculty**

The Open Education Faculty at Anadolu University offers distance education programs, making higher education more accessible to a broader range of students.

## **Conservatories**

For those interested in music, theatre, or the fine arts, there are conservatories offering specialised degree programs.

## **State and Private Colleges**

These colleges offer associate degrees in various fields, including business, health, and technology.

## **Institutes of Technology**

Some universities have institutes of technology that focus on science, engineering, and technology-related fields.

## **Health Sciences Institutes**

These institutes are dedicated to healthcare-related fields and offer programs such as nursing, physiotherapy, and medical laboratory technology.

## **Fine Arts Academies**

For those interested in the fine arts, there are academies that offer degrees in fields such as painting, sculpture, and graphic design.

## **Higher Education Schools**

Some universities have specialised higher education schools that offer programs in areas like physical education, sports coaching, and tourism management.

## **Specialized Research Institutes**

Some institutions focus on research in specific fields, offering advanced degrees and research opportunities.

Please note that the availability of specific programs and institutions may vary, so it's important to research individual universities and colleges to find the one that best suits your academic and career goals. Additionally, the language of instruction may vary, with many programs offered in both Turkish and English, especially at the graduate level.

## Academic entrance requirements

### Bachelor's Programs:

The specific requirements for Pakistan students to apply for bachelor's programs in Turkey may vary depending on the university and the program you are interested in. However, I can provide you with some general guidelines and common requirements:

**High School Diploma:** You will need to have completed your secondary education and obtained a high school diploma (e.g., HSSC/A levels/IB) that is equivalent to the Turkish high school diploma.

**Language Proficiency:** Most universities in Turkey offer programs in both Turkish and English. If you plan to study in English, you will typically need to provide proof of English language proficiency through standardised tests like TOEFL or IELTS. Some universities may also offer their own language proficiency exams.

**University Entrance Exam:** In Turkey, students typically need to take the "Yükseköğretim Kurumları Sınavı" (YKS), which is the Higher Education Institutions Examination. You may need to take this exam, and your scores will be a key factor in determining your eligibility for specific programs.

**Application:** You'll need to apply directly to the universities of your choice. Each university may have its own application process and deadlines, so it's important to check the specific requirements of the university and program you're interested in.

**Transcripts and Documents:** You'll need to submit your high school transcripts and other required documents, such as your passport, a copy of your high school diploma, and any language proficiency test scores.

**Visa:** Once you've been accepted into a Turkish university, you will need to apply for a student visa. The specific requirements for a student visa may vary, so check with the Turkish embassy or consulate in Pakistan for the latest information.

**Financial Support:** You may be required to demonstrate your financial ability to support yourself during your studies in Turkey. This may involve providing bank statements or other financial documents.

**SAT:** It is not mandatory but to obtain scholarships at private Turkish universities, a good SAT score may be helpful.



Please note that the exact requirements and application procedures can vary from one university to another. It's important to visit the official website of the university or contact their international admissions office to get the most up-to-date and accurate information on admission requirements, application deadlines, and procedures. Additionally, it's advisable to check for any scholarship opportunities for international students, as some universities in Turkey offer scholarships based on merit and need. **Acceptance and Enrollment:** If you are accepted, you will receive an acceptance letter. Follow the instructions in the letter for enrollment procedures, which may include paying tuition fees and registering for courses.

Remember that it's essential to verify the specific requirements for the program and university you are interested in, as they can vary. Contact the university's admission office for any clarification or additional information. Additionally, you should stay updated on any changes in the application process or requirements, as they may evolve over time.

## **Master's Programs**

To apply for a master's program in Turkey from Pakistan, you will need to meet certain requirements and go through an application process. Here are the general steps and requirements:

**Research and Choose a Program:** First, research the universities and master's programs in Turkey that you are interested in. Make sure to find a program that aligns with your academic and career goals.

**Check Eligibility:** Review the specific admission requirements for the program you're interested in on the university's website. Requirements may vary from one university to another and from one program to another. Typically, you'll need a relevant bachelor's degree.

**Language Proficiency:** You will likely need to demonstrate your English proficiency. Most universities in Turkey accept standardised English language proficiency tests like TOEFL or IELTS. Alternatively, you may need to take a Turkish language proficiency test if your program is taught in Turkish.

**Standardised Tests:** Some programs may require standardised tests like the GRE or GMAT, depending on the field of study. Check the specific requirements of the program you're interested in.

**Application Materials:** Prepare the necessary application materials, which usually include:

Completed application form (online or paper-based).

Academic transcripts and diplomas from your previous studies.

Letters of recommendation (usually two or three).

Statement of Purpose (SOP) or Personal Statement explaining your academic and career goals.

CV or resume.

Passport-sized photos.

Any other documents requested by the specific program or university.

Application Fee: Be prepared to pay an application fee, which varies by university.

Apply Online: Most universities in Turkey have an online application system. You'll need to create an account, fill out the application form, and upload your documents.

Application Deadlines: Pay attention to application deadlines. Deadlines can vary depending on the university and the program. Some universities have multiple application periods.

Visa Requirements: If you are accepted into a master's program in Turkey, you will need to apply for a student visa. Check the Turkish Embassy or Consulate website for the most up-to-date visa requirements and application procedures.

Financial Support: Ensure you have sufficient funds to cover your tuition fees and living expenses in Turkey. Some universities may offer scholarships or financial aid to international students.

Acceptance and Enrollment: If you are accepted, you will receive an acceptance letter. Follow the instructions in the letter for enrollment procedures, which may include paying tuition fees and registering for courses.

Remember that it's essential to verify the specific requirements for the program and university you are interested in, as they can vary. Contact the university's admission office for any clarification or additional information. Additionally, you should stay updated on any changes in the application process or requirements, as they may evolve over time.

## **PhD Programs**

To apply for a Ph.D. program in Turkey from Pakistan, you will need to meet certain requirements and go through an application process. Here are the general steps and requirements:

**Research and Choose a Program:** Start by researching universities and Ph.D. programs in Turkey. Choose a program that aligns with your academic and research interests. Most universities in Turkey offer Ph.D. programs in English, so language may not be a barrier.

**Check Admission Requirements:** Each university and program may have slightly different admission requirements, so it's important to check the specific requirements of the program you're interested in. However, some common requirements include:

- a. A completed application form, typically submitted online through the university's application portal.
- b. A master's degree or equivalent in a related field.
- c. Academic transcripts from previous degrees.
- d. Letters of recommendation from professors or experts in your field.
- e. A research proposal outlining your intended research topic and objectives.
- f. A valid passport.
- g. Proof of English proficiency (e.g., TOEFL or IELTS scores) if the program is in English. Some universities may require an English proficiency test, while others may accept your previous English-medium education as sufficient.
- h. Standardised tests (e.g., GRE or GMAT) may be required by some programs.

**Prepare Your Documents:** Make sure to have your academic transcripts, letters of recommendation, research proposal, and any other required documents ready for submission.

**English Language Proficiency:** If required, take the necessary English proficiency test and achieve the minimum scores as specified by the university.

**Application Submission:** Complete the university's online application form, and submit all the required documents. Pay the application fee, if applicable.

**Application Deadlines:** Be mindful of application deadlines, as they vary by university and program. It's best to apply well in advance to ensure your application is considered.

**Admission Decision:** After the application deadline has passed, the university's admissions committee will review your application. If you meet the criteria and are accepted, you will receive an admission offer.

**Visa and Immigration:** Once accepted, you will need to apply for a student visa at the Turkish embassy or consulate in Pakistan. You'll need to provide documents such as the acceptance letter, passport, visa application form, and proof of financial means.

**Financial Support:** You should also demonstrate that you have the financial means to support your studies and living expenses in Turkey.

**Travel and Arrival:** Make travel arrangements to Turkey and ensure you arrive before the start of your program.

Please note that the specific requirements and procedures may vary depending on the university and program you choose. It's essential to check the university's official website for the most up-to-date information and requirements. Additionally, consider seeking guidance from the Turkish embassy or consulate in Pakistan for visa-related inquiries.

## **Letters of recommendation, personal essays or statements and extracurricular activities**

When applying to colleges or universities in Turkey, letters of recommendation, personal essays or statements, and extracurricular activities can play an important role in your application. Here's some information on each of these components:

### **Letters of Recommendation**

In Turkey, it's common to provide two or more letters of recommendation. These letters should be written by teachers who have taught you in subjects relevant to your intended field of study or by individuals who can speak to your character and abilities.

Be sure to ask your recommenders well in advance, provide them with necessary information about the application process, and give them sufficient time to write strong, detailed letters.

### **Personal Essays or Statements**

When applying for admission to a Turkish university, you may be required to submit a Statement of Purpose (SOP) as part of your application. An SOP is a personal essay in which you explain your academic and career goals, your motivation for studying in Turkey, and why you're a suitable candidate for the program.

The content and format of the SOP can vary by university and program. Make sure to check the specific requirements of the institution to which you are applying.

Generally, an SOP should be well-structured, concise, and showcase your passion for the field of study. Highlight your achievements, experiences, and how they relate to your academic and professional goals.

### Extracurricular Activities

Extracurricular activities can play a significant role in your application, demonstrating your involvement and leadership outside of academics.

Include information about clubs, sports, volunteer work, or other activities that you have participated in. Highlight any leadership roles or notable achievements.

Explain how your extracurricular activities have contributed to your personal growth and prepared you for your chosen field of study.

When applying to Turkish universities, always check the specific requirements and guidelines provided by each institution, as they may have different preferences and expectations for letters of recommendation, personal essays, and extracurricular activities. It's also essential to meet application deadlines and ensure that all components of your application are well-prepared and presented professionally.

## **Costs**

### **Getting there**

#### Airfare

An economy class ticket to Turkey cost USD 800-1,500 depending upon the city, airlines and the time of the booking.

#### Visa fees

Visa fee is approximately USD 70. Please check the Turkish embassy website for updated visa fees information.

## **University fees, funding and scholarships**

The tuition fees for universities in Turkey can vary widely depending on the level of study (undergraduate or graduate), the university's location, and the program of study. Turkey offers both public and private universities, and tuition fees tend to be lower at public institutions compared to private ones. Here are some general estimates for average tuition fees in Turkey:

### **Public Universities (Undergraduate Programs):**

For Turkish nationals: Tuition fees at public universities are relatively low, often ranging from around 500 to 2,000 Turkish Lira (TRY) per year, depending on the program and the university.

For international students: Tuition fees for international students are generally higher but are still quite affordable compared to many other countries. They can range from approximately \$500 to \$5,000 USD per year, depending on the university and program.

### **Private Universities (Undergraduate Programs):**

Tuition fees at private universities in Turkey are usually higher than those at public institutions. Fees for international students can range from \$2,000 to \$20,000 USD per year or more, depending on the university and program.

### **Graduate (Master's and Ph.D.) Programs:**

Tuition fees for graduate programs, both at public and private universities, can vary widely. On average, you can expect to pay between \$1,000 and \$5,000 USD per year for master's programs, and fees for Ph.D. programs can also range in a similar range.

Please note that these are approximate estimates, and tuition fees are subject to change over time. It's essential to check the specific university's website and contact their admissions or international student offices for the most up-to-date information on tuition fees and any available scholarships or financial aid opportunities.

Additionally, some universities in Turkey may offer scholarships or discounts for international students based on academic performance or other criteria, so it's a good idea to explore these options to make your education more affordable.

Scholarships:

Turkey offers various scholarship programs for international students, particularly through the Turkish government and other organisations.

**Türkiye Scholarships:** This is a government-funded scholarship program that provides fully-funded scholarships to international students pursuing undergraduate, graduate, or PhD programs in Turkish universities.

**University Scholarships:** Many Turkish universities offer scholarships to outstanding international students. These scholarships can cover tuition fees, accommodation, and even monthly stipends.

**External Scholarships:** Some international organisations and foundations, as well as the home countries of international students, may offer scholarships for studying in Turkey. It's essential to research and apply for such opportunities. The Higher Education Commission offers a number of scholarships.

It's essential to research the specific universities and programs you are interested in, as each may have its own unique application requirements, scholarship opportunities, and tuition fees. Additionally, make sure to check the official websites of Turkish universities and scholarship programs for the most up-to-date information.

## **Living expenses**

**Accommodation:** Accommodation costs in Turkey, like in many other countries, can vary significantly depending on the city, location within the city, and the type of housing you choose. Turkey offers a range of housing options, from dormitories and shared apartments to private apartments and luxury housing. Here are some approximate average accommodation costs in different types of housing:

**Dormitories:** University dormitories are often the most affordable option for students. Costs can vary depending on the city and the specific university, but you might expect to pay around USD 80 to USD 200 per month for a dormitory room.

**Shared Apartments:** Renting a room in a shared apartment is a common choice for students. Costs can range widely, but on average, you might pay between USD 80 to USD 300 500 per month for a room in a shared apartment. This cost can increase in major cities like Istanbul.

**Private Apartments:** Renting a private apartment will generally be more expensive, especially in major cities. In Istanbul, for example, you can expect to pay between USD 300 to USD 900 or more per month for a one-bedroom apartment. In other cities, the cost might be lower.

**Luxury Accommodation:** If you opt for luxury housing or upscale apartments, the costs can be significantly higher, potentially reaching USD 1,000 or more per month.

It's important to keep in mind that these are approximate figures, and prices can fluctuate based on location, housing quality, and current market conditions. Additionally, utility costs such as electricity, water, and internet may not be included in the rent and will add to your monthly expenses.

To get the most accurate and up-to-date information on accommodation costs, I recommend contacting the international student office or housing office at your university or the institution you plan to attend. They can provide you with specific information related to housing options and costs in your chosen city. You can also check local rental websites and platforms for available housing listings.

Food costs range from USD 60-200 depending upon food consumption and location. Eating out is more expensive than cooking food. Universities offer subsidised food.

Transportation costs in Turkey range from USD 25-USD 200 or more depending upon whether you use public transport or taxis. On public transport students can avail discounts.

Utilities - This would cost ranging from USD 20-80 depending upon location and circumstances.

Textbooks - Annual cost would be in the range of USD 50-150.

**Health Insurance:** You may be required to have health insurance coverage during your studies in Turkey. Some universities offer their health insurance plans for students, while others may require you to purchase health insurance independently. The cost range is USD 30-70.

**Residence Permit:** You'll need to obtain a residence permit to study in Turkey, and there may be associated fees. The cost of a residence permit can vary from USD 50-150, so it's essential to check with the relevant authorities for the most up-to-date information.



**Miscellaneous Expenses:** These can include entertainment, personal items, and unforeseen expenses ranging USD 50-500 per month. It's a good idea to have a buffer in your budget for unexpected costs.

To get a more accurate estimate of the cost of studying in Turkey, you should check with the specific university and city you are interested in and also consider your individual spending habits. Additionally, you may explore scholarship opportunities, financial aid, and part-time work options to help cover your expenses.

Keep in mind that Turkey is known for its rich culture and diverse history, and studying there can be a rewarding experience. It's essential to plan your finances carefully and seek financial assistance when needed to make your education in Turkey more affordable.

## **Settling there after studies**

Settling in Turkey after completing your studies as a Pakistani student can be a rewarding and relatively straightforward process if you follow the right steps. Here are some general guidelines to consider:

**Complete Your Studies:** First and foremost, focus on successfully completing your studies in Turkey. Make sure you meet all the academic requirements for your degree.

**Student Residence Permit:** As a student, you will have a student residence permit. Ensure that your permit is up-to-date and in compliance with the regulations. If you wish to stay in Turkey after graduation, you'll need to transition to another type of residence permit.

**Find Employment:** To stay in Turkey after your studies, you'll typically need to secure employment. Look for job opportunities in your field of study. You can use online job portals, network with your professors and peers, and contact companies directly.

**Work Permit:** Once you have a job offer, you will need to apply for a work permit. Your employer should assist you with this process, as they will need to submit the necessary documentation to the Ministry of Labor and Social Security.

**Residence Permit Conversion:** After obtaining a work permit, you should convert your student residence permit to a work residence permit. This will allow you to legally reside and work in Turkey.

**Legalise Your Stay:** Make sure all your documentation is in order, including your work permit and residence permit, to maintain your legal status in Turkey.

**Learn Turkish:** While English is widely spoken in Turkey, especially in the business and academic world, learning Turkish can greatly improve your job prospects and your daily life in Turkey. Many employers prefer candidates who can communicate in Turkish.

**Cultural Adaptation:** Familiarise yourself with Turkish culture, customs, and social norms to adapt to life in Turkey more easily.

**Respect Legal Requirements:** Always abide by Turkish laws and regulations to avoid any legal issues that could jeopardise your stay in the country.

It's important to note that immigration regulations and requirements may change, so it's advisable to consult with the Turkish Ministry of Interior, the Turkish Embassy or Consulate in Pakistan, or an immigration attorney for the most up-to-date information and personalised guidance on settling in Turkey after your studies.

# Studying in Singapore

## Introduction

Singaporean universities are generally well-regarded and known for their high academic standards and quality of education. They consistently rank among the top universities in global rankings. Here are some reasons why Singaporean universities are considered good:

**High Global Rankings:** Universities in Singapore, particularly the National University of Singapore (NUS) and Nanyang Technological University (NTU), are consistently ranked among the top universities in the world according to various international rankings.

**Strong Emphasis on Research:** Singaporean universities are known for their robust research programs and contributions to various fields of study. They actively engage in cutting-edge research and innovation.

**Multicultural Environment:** Singapore is a diverse and cosmopolitan city, and its universities reflect this diversity. Students from all over the world come to study in Singapore, creating a rich cultural and learning environment.

**Strong Government Support:** The Singaporean government places a high priority on education and invests significantly in its universities. This support helps maintain high standards of education and research.

**World-Class Faculty:** Singaporean universities attract highly qualified and internationally renowned faculty members who contribute to the academic excellence of these institutions.

**State-of-the-Art Facilities:** Singaporean universities are equipped with modern facilities, libraries, laboratories, and technology to support teaching, learning, and research activities.

**Industry Partnerships and Internships:** Many universities in Singapore have strong ties with industries and offer opportunities for internships, co-op programs, and collaborations with businesses, providing students with practical experiences and career opportunities.

**Global Opportunities:** Singaporean universities often have partnerships with institutions around the world, allowing students to participate in exchange programs and gain international exposure.

**Innovation and Entrepreneurship:** Singapore places a strong emphasis on entrepreneurship and innovation. Universities actively promote entrepreneurship initiatives and provide resources for students to develop their own startups and ventures.

**Quality Assurance and Accreditation:** Singapore's universities undergo rigorous quality assurance processes and are accredited by local and international accrediting bodies to ensure that they maintain high educational standards.

**English-Medium Instruction:** English is one of the official languages of Singapore, and it is the primary language of instruction in higher education institutions. This makes it an accessible destination for international students.

## **Types of institutions where you can get a degree**

### **Public Universities:**

**National University of Singapore (NUS):** NUS is Singapore's oldest and most prestigious university. It offers a wide range of undergraduate, graduate, and research programs in various fields.

**Nanyang Technological University (NTU):** NTU is another top-ranked university in Singapore, known for its strengths in engineering, business, and the sciences. It offers a comprehensive array of programs.

**Singapore Management University (SMU):** SMU focuses on business and management education. It offers undergraduate and graduate programs in business, economics, law, and related disciplines.

### **Autonomous Universities:**

In addition to NUS, NTU, and SMU, Singapore has several other autonomous universities like the Singapore University of Technology and Design (SUTD), Singapore Institute of Technology (SIT), and SIM University (now known as Singapore University of Social Sciences, SUSS). These institutions offer specialised programs in fields like technology, design, applied sciences, and social sciences.

### **Private Universities:**

Singapore is also home to several private universities that offer a wide range of undergraduate and postgraduate programs. Examples include James Cook University Singapore, PSB Academy, and Kaplan Singapore.

#### Polytechnics:

Singapore's polytechnics, such as Nanyang Polytechnic, Singapore Polytechnic, and Republic Polytechnic, offer diploma-level programs that emphasise practical skills and hands-on training. Many polytechnic graduates go on to pursue further education at universities.

#### Arts and Design Schools:

Institutions like LASALLE College of the Arts and Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts (NAFA) specialise in arts, design, and related disciplines.

#### Technical and Vocational Institutes:

Singapore's Institute of Technical Education (ITE) offers a variety of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) programs.

#### Overseas Universities with Campuses in Singapore:

Some prestigious foreign universities have established campuses in Singapore, offering programs similar to those available at their home campuses. Examples include INSEAD (business), ESSEC Business School, and University of Chicago Booth School of Business.

#### Joint Degree Programs:

Some universities in Singapore offer joint degree programs in collaboration with foreign universities. This allows students to earn degrees from both institutions.

#### Research Opportunities:

Singapore is known for its thriving research ecosystem. Universities like NUS and NTU are actively involved in cutting-edge research across various disciplines.

#### Continuing Education and Professional Development:

Many institutions in Singapore offer continuing education and professional development programs for individuals looking to enhance their skills or pursue further education while working.

## Academic entrance requirements

### Bachelor's Programs:

The specific entrance requirements for bachelor's degree programs at universities in Singapore can vary depending on the institution and the program of study. However, there are some common criteria and considerations for admission:

#### Educational Qualifications:

Applicants typically need to have completed their secondary education (equivalent to 12 years of schooling) and obtained a recognized qualification, such as a high school diploma or its equivalent.

#### Subject-Specific Requirements:

Certain programs, especially in specialised fields like engineering, medicine, and law, may have specific subject prerequisites. For example, engineering programs may require proficiency in mathematics and physics.

#### Minimum Grade Point Average (GPA):

Many universities in Singapore have a minimum GPA requirement for admission. This can vary depending on the competitiveness of the program and the applicant pool.

#### Standardised Test Scores:

Some universities may require applicants to submit standardised test scores, such as the SAT or ACT. However, this requirement is less common in Singapore compared to some other countries.

### Master's Programs:

#### Educational Qualifications:

Applicants typically need to have completed a relevant bachelor's degree or its equivalent from a recognized institution. The degree should be in a field closely related to the master's program of interest.

#### Minimum Grade Point Average (GPA):

Many universities in Singapore have a minimum GPA requirement for admission to master's programs. The required GPA can vary depending on the program's competitiveness.

Relevant Work Experience:

Some master's programs, especially those in professional fields like business, require applicants to have a certain level of relevant work experience. This requirement is more common for MBA programs and other professional master's degrees.

Standardised Test Scores:

Depending on the program, universities may require applicants to submit standardised test scores. Common tests include the GRE (Graduate Record Examination) for certain programs and the GMAT (Graduate Management Admission Test) for business-related programs.

## **Letters of recommendation, personal essays or statements and extracurricular activities**

Letters of Recommendation:

Some master's programs may request letters of recommendation from academic or professional references who can speak to the applicant's abilities and potential for success in the program.

Portfolio or Writing Samples (for Arts and Humanities):

Applicants to master's programs in the arts, humanities, and related fields may be required to submit a portfolio or writing samples showcasing their creative or scholarly work.

Research Proposal (for Research-Based Programs):

For research-intensive master's programs, applicants may need to submit a research proposal outlining their intended area of study and research objectives.

Interview (if applicable):

Some programs may require applicants to participate in an interview as part of the admission process. This is more common for specialised or competitive programs.

Professional Certifications or Licensing (if applicable):

Certain professional master's programs, such as those in law or education, may require applicants to hold specific professional certifications or licences.

Specific Course Prerequisites (if applicable):

Some master's programs may have specific course prerequisites that applicants must have completed during their undergraduate studies.

## Costs

### Getting there

Airfare: Economy class return ticket will cost USD 1,000-1,600 depending upon the airline, time of the year and how much in advance you book.

Visa fees: Student visa fees, depending upon the circumstances and other fees, vary from USD 60 to USD 180.

### University fees, funding and scholarships

I can provide you with some general information about university fees, funding, and scholarships for Pakistani students in Singapore.

University Fees in Singapore:

Tuition fees in Singapore can vary depending on the university, level of study, and the specific program you choose. Generally, fees for international students are higher than those for Singaporean citizens. Some popular universities in Singapore include the National University of Singapore (NUS), Nanyang Technological University (NTU), and Singapore Management University (SMU). Tuition fees can range from USD 22,000 to over USD 30,000 per year. Medicine and dentistry programs tend to be more expensive.

Scholarships for Pakistani Students in Singapore:

There are various scholarships and financial aid options available for international students in Singapore. Some of these are open to Pakistani students as well. Here are a few potential sources of funding:



- a. **Government Scholarships:** The Singaporean government offers several scholarships for international students, such as the Singapore Scholarship for International Students and the A\*STAR Graduate Scholarship. These scholarships typically cover tuition fees, living expenses, and other allowances.
- b. **University Scholarships:** Many universities in Singapore offer scholarships and financial aid to international students. You should check the scholarship pages on the official websites of the universities you're interested in to see if there are options for Pakistani students.
- c. **External Scholarships:** There are various organisations and foundations in Pakistan that provide scholarships for students studying abroad. You can explore options like the Higher Education Commission (HEC) scholarships, which may offer funding for Pakistani students studying in Singapore.
- d. **Private Scholarships:** Some private organisations and companies in Singapore and Pakistan may offer scholarships to international students. Research and reach out to relevant organisations to inquire about these opportunities.

#### Financial Aid and Work Opportunities:

International students in Singapore are allowed to work part-time during their studies. This can help you cover living expenses. Additionally, there may be on-campus job opportunities. However, you should check the specific work regulations and limitations for international students with the Immigration and Checkpoints Authority (ICA) of Singapore.

Please keep in mind that scholarship availability and eligibility criteria can change, so it's important to visit the official websites of universities, government agencies, and scholarship providers for the most current information.

## **Living expenses**

#### Accommodation:

On-campus housing: approximately USD 220 to USD 880 per month.

Off-campus housing: approximately USD 515 to USD 1,850 per month.

#### Food:

Meals at hawker centres and local food stalls: approximately USD 2 to USD 4.40 per meal.

Dining at restaurants and cafes: USD 7.40 to USD 22 per meal

USD 500 to USD 2,000 per month

Transportation:

Monthly transport pass: USD 59 to USD 88 per month

If taxis used it would increase to USD 200 to USD 600.

Healthcare:

Health insurance: approximately USD 148 to USD 590 per year.

Books and Supplies:

Textbooks and supplies: approximately USD 148 to USD 370 per semester.

Miscellaneous Expenses:

Personal expenses: USD 148 to USD 370 per month.

It's important to note that these are approximate figures. To get the most accurate and up-to-date information on living costs, it's advisable to check with your chosen university or college and consider using budgeting tools provided by educational institutions or the Singapore government.

Keep in mind that there are opportunities to work part-time during your studies in Singapore to help cover some of your living expenses, but the number of hours and regulations may be subject to change, so be sure to check the current rules and restrictions with the appropriate authorities.

# Studying in Malaysia

## Introduction

Malaysia is home to several reputable universities that offer quality education and contribute to research and innovation in various fields. Some of the Malaysian universities are well-regarded both regionally and internationally. Here are a few factors that contribute to the quality of universities in Malaysia:

**Academic Excellence:** Many Malaysian universities are known for their strong academic programs and high standards of education.

**Research Contributions:** Some universities in Malaysia have made significant contributions to research, particularly in areas like engineering, technology, and natural sciences.

**Cultural Diversity:** Malaysia is a multicultural country, and its universities reflect this diversity. Students from various backgrounds and nationalities come to study in Malaysia.

**Affordable Tuition Fees:** Compared to many Western countries, the cost of education in Malaysia is relatively affordable, making it an attractive option for international students.

**English-Medium Instruction:** English is widely used as the medium of instruction in Malaysian universities, making it accessible for international students.

**Global Recognition:** Degrees from Malaysian universities are recognized internationally, and many institutions have accreditation from recognized bodies.

**Partnerships with International Institutions:** Some Malaysian universities have established collaborations and partnerships with universities and institutions around the world, allowing for exchange programs and collaborative research.

**Strong Government Support:** The Malaysian government places importance on education and invests in the development of its higher education sector.

**Research and Development Initiatives:** Malaysia has placed an emphasis on research and development, and universities play a significant role in these initiatives.

**Specialised Programs:** Some Malaysian universities are known for their strengths in specific fields, such as technology, engineering, Islamic studies, and more.

**Student Life and Activities:** Malaysian universities often have vibrant campus life with various clubs, societies, and activities for students to engage in.

## **Types of institutions where you can get a degree**

### **Public Universities:**

Public universities in Malaysia are funded and regulated by the Malaysian government. They offer a wide range of undergraduate, postgraduate, and research programs across various fields of study. Some of the prominent public universities in Malaysia include the University of Malaya (UM), Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), and Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM).

### **Private Universities:**

Private universities in Malaysia are operated by private entities and are subject to the regulations set forth by the Malaysian Ministry of Higher Education. They offer a diverse array of programs, including undergraduate, postgraduate, and professional courses. Notable private universities include Taylor's University, Sunway University, and Monash University Malaysia.

### **Foreign Branch Campuses:**

Malaysia is home to several branch campuses of well-known foreign universities from countries like the United Kingdom, Australia, and the United States. These branch campuses offer programs that are similar to those offered at their home campuses. For example, the University of Nottingham Malaysia, Curtin University Malaysia, and Newcastle University Medicine Malaysia are foreign branch campuses.

### **Polytechnics and Community Colleges:**

Polytechnics and community colleges in Malaysia provide technical and vocational education and training (TVET) programs. They offer diploma-level qualifications and emphasise practical skills and hands-on training.

### **Teacher Training Institutes:**

These institutes focus on training future educators for the Malaysian education system. They offer programs related to teaching and education.

#### Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Institutions:

These institutions provide specialised training and education in technical and vocational fields. They prepare students for careers in areas like engineering, information technology, and hospitality.

#### Islamic Universities and Colleges:

Malaysia has institutions that offer programs with a specific focus on Islamic studies and related disciplines. These institutions may include universities, colleges, and institutes.

#### Open Universities:

Open universities in Malaysia offer distance learning and flexible education options, allowing students to pursue higher education while balancing work and other responsibilities.

#### Research Universities:

Certain universities in Malaysia, both public and private, have been designated as research universities due to their strong emphasis on research and innovation.

#### Medical Schools and Healthcare Institutes:

Malaysia is home to several medical schools and institutes that offer programs in medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, and other healthcare-related fields.

#### Language Schools and Institutes:

These institutions offer language courses and programs for international students and professionals looking to improve their language proficiency.

## Academic entrance requirements

### Bachelor's Programs:

To apply for undergraduate (bachelor's degree) programs in Malaysia as an international student from Pakistan, you will typically need to meet the following admission requirements:

#### Educational Qualifications:

Completion of the Higher Secondary School Certificate (HSSC) or its equivalent, such as the Intermediate (F.Sc./FA) or A-levels or IB. The specific entry requirements may vary depending on the program and university you are applying to.

#### English Language Proficiency:

Most universities in Malaysia will require you to demonstrate proficiency in English by providing acceptable scores on standardised tests such as the IELTS (International English Language Testing System) or TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language). The required scores can vary, so you should check with the university for their specific English language requirements.

#### Academic Transcripts:

You will need to provide transcripts and certificates from your previous educational institution to demonstrate your academic qualifications.

#### Application Form and Fees:

Complete the application form for the university or program of your choice and pay any required application fees.

#### Specific Program Requirements:

Depending on the program you are applying to, there may be additional requirements, such as interviews, entrance exams, or submission of a portfolio (for creative or art-related programs).

It's essential to check the specific admission requirements for the university and program you are interested in, as requirements can vary between institutions. Additionally, application deadlines and processes may differ, so be sure to contact the university's admissions office or visit their official website for the most up-to-date and detailed information on admission procedures for Pakistani students.

## Master's Programs:

To pursue a master's degree in Malaysia as an international student from Pakistan, you'll need to meet certain requirements and follow specific procedures. Here are the general steps and requirements:

### Choose a Program and University:

Research and select the master's program and university in Malaysia that you're interested in. Ensure that the program is accredited and suits your academic and career goals.

### Check Admission Requirements:

Each university and program may have slightly different admission requirements. Typically, you'll need a bachelor's degree or equivalent qualification in a relevant field. Some programs may require specific prerequisites or standardised test scores (e.g., GRE, GMAT, IELTS, TOEFL). Check the specific requirements for your chosen program.

### Meet English Language Proficiency Requirements:

If your native language is not English, you will likely need to demonstrate your English proficiency through a standardised test like IELTS or TOEFL. Minimum score requirements can vary, so check with your chosen university.

### Prepare Required Documents:

Prepare the necessary documents, which typically include:

- Application form from the university.
- Transcripts and diplomas from previous educational institutions.
- Curriculum Vitae (CV) or resume.
- Statement of purpose (SOP).
- Letters of recommendation.
- Passport copy.
- Passport-size photographs.
- Proof of English proficiency (if required).
- Standardised test scores for example GRE or GMAT (if required).

- Financial documents to prove you can cover tuition and living expenses.
- Any other documents specified by the university.

#### Application Process:

Complete the online application form provided by the university you're applying to. Ensure that you follow the specific application guidelines and deadlines for that university.

#### Pay Application Fees:

Pay the application fees, which are usually non-refundable. The fees vary from one university to another.

#### Wait for Admission Decision:

After submitting your application, wait for the university's admission committee to review your application. This process may take several weeks.

Please note that requirements and processes can vary by university and program, so it's crucial to check the specific requirements for the master's program you're interested in. Additionally, you may want to contact the university's admissions office or the Malaysian Embassy or Consulate in Pakistan for the most up-to-date information and guidance.

### **PhD Programs:**

To pursue a Ph.D. program in Malaysia as an international student from Pakistan, you will need to meet certain requirements and follow specific procedures. The requirements and application process may vary between universities and programs, so it's essential to check the specific requirements of the university and Ph.D. program you are interested in. However, here are the general steps and common requirements for applying to a Ph.D. program in Malaysia:

#### Choose a Program and University:

Research and select the Ph.D. program and university in Malaysia that align with your research interests and career goals.

#### Check Admission Requirements:



Review the admission requirements for the Ph.D. program. Typically, you will need a relevant master's degree or equivalent qualification. Some programs may also accept candidates with an exceptional bachelor's degree and extensive research experience.

Identify a Supervisor:

Many Ph.D. programs require you to have a potential supervisor who is willing to work with you on your research. It's important to contact faculty members in your chosen field and secure a supervisor's commitment.

Prepare Required Documents:

Prepare the necessary application documents, which usually include:

- Application form from the university.
- Transcripts and diplomas from previous educational institutions.
- Curriculum Vitae (CV) or resume.
- Statement of purpose (SOP) outlining your research interests and goals.
- Letters of recommendation, often from academic or professional references.
- Passport copy.
- Passport-size photographs.
- Proof of English proficiency (e.g., IELTS or TOEFL scores) if your native language is not English.
- Research proposal detailing your intended research project.
- Standardised test scores, if required by the program.
- Any other documents specified by the university or program.

Research Proposal:

Your research proposal is a critical part of your application. It should clearly articulate your research objectives, methodology, and the relevance of your research to your field of study.

Application Process:

Complete the online application form provided by the university. Be sure to follow the specific application guidelines and deadlines for the Ph.D. program.

Pay Application Fees:

Pay the application fees, which can vary from one university to another.

Wait for Admission Decision:

After submitting your application, wait for the university's admission committee to review your application. The review process may take several weeks to months.

It's essential to communicate with your potential supervisor and the university's admissions office for guidance on the specific requirements and procedures for the Ph.D. program you are interested in. Additionally, stay updated on any changes in admission requirements or visa regulations by contacting the Malaysian Embassy or Consulate in Pakistan.

## **Letters of recommendation, personal essays or statements and extracurricular activities**

When applying for a graduate program, including Ph.D. programs in Malaysia, you'll typically be required to provide letters of recommendation, personal essays or statements, and information about your extracurricular activities. Here's what you should know about these application components specific to applying to Malaysian universities:

Letters of Recommendation (LOR):

LORs play a crucial role in your application. Malaysian universities often require two to three letters from individuals who can attest to your academic and research potential. Professors, research advisors, or employers who know you well are suitable recommenders.

LORs should be written on official letterhead and should include the contact information of the recommender. They should address your academic qualifications, research abilities, work ethic, and your potential for success in the Ph.D. program.

Ensure that your recommenders are aware of the application deadlines and provide them with sufficient information about the program you are applying to.

Personal Essays or Statements:

Personal essays or statements are your opportunity to express your academic and research interests and explain why you are pursuing the degree or a Ph.D. in your chosen field.

Follow the guidelines provided by the university regarding length and content for your personal statement.

Discuss your academic background, research experience, and the specific research areas that interest you. Explain why the program you're applying to is a good fit for your goals.

Address any relevant academic achievements, challenges, and how they have shaped your academic journey.

Extracurricular Activities:

Including information about your extracurricular activities can provide a broader perspective of your interests and character.

Highlight activities that are relevant to your academic and research pursuits. This can include research projects, academic clubs, or organisations related to your field of study.

Emphasise leadership roles, accomplishments, and contributions you've made in these extracurricular activities.

Describe how your involvement has helped you develop skills, qualities, or experiences that are relevant to the program.

Some additional tips:

Be authentic in your personal essays and statements. Admissions committees value honesty and a genuine passion for your chosen field.

Customise your application materials to the specific program you are applying to, demonstrating that you've done your research and are a strong fit for their program.

Review your documents for any grammatical or spelling errors, and make sure they are well-organised and engaging to read.

Request letters of recommendation well in advance, providing recommenders with ample time to craft thoughtful and comprehensive letters.

Overall, these application components help Malaysian universities assess your qualifications, potential for success, and how well you align with the program you are applying to. Make sure to carefully follow the application guidelines provided by the university you're interested in.

## Costs

### Getting there

Aire fare: Return Economy Class ticket will cost USD 700-1,500 depending upon how much in advance of the travel you book the ticket and the airlines.

Student visa fees and other associated costs range from USD 20 to USD 50. These fees and the requirements for the visa change and it is advisable that expert advice is taken at the time of visa application.

### University fees, funding and scholarships

I can provide you with some general information about university fees, funding, and scholarships in Malaysia for Pakistani students. Please note that the information changes, so it's essential to verify the most current details from the universities and scholarship providers.

#### **University Fees in Malaysia for Pakistani Students:**

The cost of tuition fees in Malaysian universities varies depending on the level of study, the institution, and the program. International students, including those from Pakistan, typically pay higher tuition fees than local students.

The average tuition fees for international students at Malaysian universities can vary widely depending on the level of study (undergraduate or postgraduate), the specific university, and the program of study. However, I can provide you with a general range to give you an idea of what to expect:

**Undergraduate Programs:** On average, international students can expect to pay anywhere from \$3,000 to \$10,000 or more per year for undergraduate programs at Malaysian universities. Some programs, particularly in fields like medicine or engineering, may have higher tuition fees.

**Postgraduate Programs:** For master's and Ph.D. programs, tuition fees for international students can range from \$4,000 to \$15,000 or more per year. Business and science programs, for example, tend to be on the higher end of this range.

**MBA Programs:** Tuition fees for international students pursuing an MBA in Malaysia can range from \$10,000 to \$25,000 or higher, depending on the university and the program's prestige.

**Private vs. Public Universities:** Private universities in Malaysia often have higher tuition fees compared to public universities. Public universities are generally more affordable for both domestic and international students.

Please note that it's essential to check with the specific universities you're interested in for the most up-to-date information on tuition and any available scholarships.

### **Funding for Pakistani Students:**

Pakistani students looking to study in Malaysia have several options for financial support, including the following:

**Scholarships from Malaysian Universities:** Many Malaysian universities offer scholarships and financial aid to international students, including those from Pakistan. These scholarships may be based on academic merit, leadership qualities, or specific criteria set by the university.

**Pakistan Higher Education Commission (HEC):** The HEC of Pakistan may offer scholarships or financial assistance to Pakistani students pursuing higher education abroad. It's advisable to check with HEC for specific programs and eligibility criteria.

### **Scholarships for Pakistani Students:**

Pakistani students can explore scholarships offered by various sources to help fund their education in Malaysia. These scholarships may include:

**Malaysian International Scholarship (MIS):** The Malaysian government provides the MIS program, which offers scholarships to international students, including those from Pakistan, for pursuing postgraduate studies in Malaysia.

**Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Scholarships:** Pakistani students may be eligible for scholarships offered by the OIC, which is designed to support students from OIC member countries in their higher education endeavours.

Other international and local organisations may also provide scholarships for Pakistani students studying in Malaysia. It's recommended to search for specific scholarship programs and their eligibility criteria.

To get the most up-to-date and detailed information about university fees, scholarships, and funding opportunities in Malaysia for Pakistani students, I suggest visiting the official websites of Malaysian universities and contacting their international student offices. Additionally, you can check with the

Pakistani Higher Education Commission (HEC) or the Malaysian High Commission in Pakistan for information on available scholarships and financial aid programs.

## **Living expenses**

Living expenses for international students in Malaysia can vary depending on the city or region in which you are studying, your lifestyle, and the institution you are attending. However, I can provide you with some general estimates to give you an idea of what to expect. Please keep in mind that these figures are approximate, and you should check with your specific university or college for more accurate information.

### **Accommodation:**

**On-campus housing:** On-campus accommodation options vary by institution but can cost anywhere from USD 100 to USD 400 per month, depending on the type of room and amenities.

**Off-campus housing:** Renting a room or apartment off-campus can range from USD 130 to USD 500 per month, depending on the location and the type of accommodation.

### **Food:**

Monthly food expenses can vary widely depending on your eating habits. On average, you might spend around USD 100 to USD 400 per month on groceries or eating out.

### **Transportation:**

Public transportation is generally affordable in Malaysia. Monthly transportation costs might be around USD 25 to USD 100 depending on your location and how often you use public transport.

### **Health Insurance:**

International students in Malaysia are typically required to have health insurance, which can cost around USD 70- USD 200 per year.

### **Books and Supplies:**

This expense can vary depending on your course of study, but budgeting around USD 50 to USD 250 per month for books and supplies is a reasonable estimate.

### **Miscellaneous:**

You should also budget for other miscellaneous expenses such as phone bills, internet, personal items, and leisure activities. This can amount to approximately USD 50 to USD 200 per month.

It's important to note that these are rough estimates, and your actual expenses may be higher or lower depending on your choices and circumstances. It's advisable to create a detailed budget based on your specific needs and financial resources. Additionally, some universities or colleges may offer cost-of-living estimates on their websites or can provide guidance to help you plan your finances as an international student in Malaysia.

## Studying in the Middle East

### Introduction

Studying in the Middle East can be an attractive option for international students, offering a unique cultural experience and access to a wide range of educational opportunities. Here are some factors to consider when thinking about studying in the Middle East as an international student:

**Diverse Cultures:** The Middle East is a region rich in history, culture, and diversity. Studying there can provide a unique opportunity to immerse oneself in different cultures and traditions.

**High-Quality Education:** Many Middle Eastern countries, such as the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia, have invested heavily in their education systems, and there are numerous universities and institutions that offer high-quality programs in various fields.

**Language Opportunities:** Depending on the country and program, you may have the chance to learn or improve your proficiency in languages like Arabic, which can be a valuable skill in the global job market.

**Scholarships and Financial Support:** Some Middle Eastern universities and governments offer scholarships and financial aid to international students to attract talent to the region.

**Global Hub:** The Middle East is strategically located at the crossroads of Asia, Europe, and Africa, making it a hub for international business, trade, and diplomacy. This can provide unique networking and career opportunities.

**Research Opportunities:** Many Middle Eastern universities are engaged in cutting-edge research in fields like energy, medicine, and technology, which can be attractive for students pursuing advanced degrees.

**Cultural Adjustment:** Adapting to a new cultural environment can be challenging, and it's essential to understand and respect the local customs and traditions.

**Language Barrier:** While many programs are offered in English, local languages may be spoken in everyday life. Language barriers could be a hurdle for some international students.

**Political and Social Stability:** The Middle East can be politically and socially unstable in some areas, so it's important to research and choose a study destination with a stable and safe environment.

**Cost of Living:** The cost of living can vary significantly, and some Middle Eastern cities are known for their high expenses. It's important to budget accordingly.

**Climate:** The Middle East experiences extreme temperatures, which can be a consideration depending on your preferences.

When considering studying in the Middle East, it's crucial to research specific countries and institutions to find the right fit for your academic and personal goals. Reach out to the universities or educational consultants for guidance and explore scholarship opportunities to help finance your education.

Additionally, be prepared for the cultural adjustment and potential challenges associated with living and studying in a new region.

## **Types of institutions where you can get a degree**

In the Middle East, you can find a wide range of institutions where you can pursue a degree.

### **Public Universities**

There are many public universities in the Middle East, and they vary in terms of size, reputation, and areas of specialisation. Here are some public universities in different countries across the Middle East:

**Cairo University - Egypt:** Located in Egypt's capital, Cairo University is one of the oldest and most prestigious universities in the region.

**King Saud University - Saudi Arabia:** King Saud University, located in Riyadh, is one of the largest and most prominent universities in Saudi Arabia.



University of Tehran - Iran: The University of Tehran is Iran's oldest and one of its most prestigious universities.

American University of Beirut - Lebanon: While not a public university in the traditional sense, AUB is a well-known institution that operates as a private university with a strong public service mission.

Jordan University of Science and Technology - Jordan: Located in Irbid, this university is known for its focus on science and technology education.

Qatar University - Qatar: The country's only national university, Qatar University offers a range of undergraduate and graduate programs.

Kuwait University - Kuwait: Kuwait University is the country's first public research institution and offers various academic programs.

University of Bahrain - Bahrain: The University of Bahrain is the primary public higher education institution in the country.

Suez Canal University - Egypt: This university is located in Ismailia and is known for its emphasis on engineering and medical programs.

These are just a few examples, and many more public universities exist throughout the Middle East, each with its own unique strengths and areas of expertise. Please note that the availability of programs and the admission process may vary from one university to another. It's essential to check with each university for specific details about their offerings and admission requirements.

## **Private Universities**

Private universities in the Middle East are diverse and often offer a wide range of academic programs. Here are some private universities from different countries in the Middle East:

American University in Cairo (AUC) - Egypt: AUC is a well-known private university in Egypt with a focus on liberal arts education and offers a variety of undergraduate and graduate programs.

Khalifa University - United Arab Emirates: Located in Abu Dhabi, Khalifa University is a prominent research-focused institution known for engineering and science programs.

Lebanese American University (LAU) - Lebanon: LAU is a private institution that offers a wide range of programs and is known for its strong emphasis on international education.

American University of Sharjah (AUS) - United Arab Emirates: AUS is a private, co-educational institution in Sharjah, UAE, offering American-style education.

Saint Joseph University (USJ) - Lebanon: USJ is one of the oldest and most prestigious private universities in Lebanon, offering a variety of programs.

Qatar University for Science and Technology - Qatar: This is a private university focused on science and technology education in Doha, Qatar.

American University of Beirut (AUB) - Lebanon: While AUB was mentioned earlier, it's worth noting again that it's a private institution with a strong focus on research and a wide range of programs.

Carnegie Mellon University in Qatar - Qatar: This is a branch campus of Carnegie Mellon University in the United States, offering a variety of undergraduate and graduate programs in Qatar.

These are just a few examples of private universities in the Middle East, and there are many more across the region. Private universities often have unique missions, strengths, and areas of specialisation, so it's essential to research each institution to find the one that best fits your academic and career goals.

Admission requirements and tuition fees may vary significantly among these universities.

## **Technical and Vocational Institutes**

These institutes offer technical and vocational training programs and may grant degrees or diplomas in fields such as engineering, IT, and healthcare.

## **Business Schools**

Many Middle Eastern countries have business schools that offer undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in business administration, management, and related fields.

## **Medical Schools**

Medical universities and colleges in the Middle East provide education and training for aspiring doctors and healthcare professionals.

## **Engineering Schools**

These institutions offer engineering degree programs in fields such as civil engineering, mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, and more.

## **Islamic Studies Institutions**

Middle Eastern countries often have institutions specialising in Islamic studies and theology, which offer degrees in Islamic studies and related fields.

## **Art and Design Schools**

Some Middle Eastern countries have institutions that focus on arts and design, providing degrees in fields like fine arts, graphic design, and fashion design.

## **Language Institute**

These institutions specialise in language education and may offer degrees in linguistics, translation, and language-related fields.

## **Hospitality and Tourism Schools**

Some Middle Eastern countries have schools and universities offering degree programs in hospitality management, tourism, and related disciplines.

Please note that the availability and quality of institutions and degree programs may vary from one Middle Eastern country to another. It's essential to research specific institutions and programs to find the one that best suits your educational and career goals.

## **Academic entrance requirements**

### **Bachelor's Programs:**

Admission requirements for bachelor's programs in the Middle East can vary depending on the university and the specific program you are applying to. However, there are some common requirements and considerations that you should keep in mind:

**Academic Transcripts:** Most universities in the Middle East will require your high school transcripts or an equivalent qualification (e.g., secondary school leaving certificate). You may need to have completed a specific curriculum or have a minimum GPA.

**Standardised Tests:** Some universities may require standardised tests like the SAT or ACT. The specific tests and score requirements can vary, so check with the university you're interested in for their requirements.

**Language Proficiency:** If the language of instruction at the university is not your native language, you may need to demonstrate proficiency in that language. Many universities in the Middle East offer programs in English, so you might need to provide TOEFL or IELTS scores to prove your English proficiency.

**Letters of Recommendation:** Some universities may ask for letters of recommendation from teachers or counsellors who can speak to your academic abilities and character.

**Interview:** In some cases, universities may conduct interviews as part of the admission process to assess your motivation and qualifications.

**Application Fee:** Most universities charge an application fee. Make sure to check the fee and payment methods with the university.

**Additional Requirements:** Some programs, particularly those in specialised fields like medicine or engineering, may have additional requirements, such as entrance exams, portfolios, or practical assessments.

## **Master's Programs**

Masters program requirements in the Middle East can vary depending on the country and university you are applying to. However, I can provide you with some general information about common requirements for master's programs in the Middle East:

**Academic Qualifications:**

You typically need a bachelor's degree or its equivalent from a recognized institution. Some programs may have specific undergraduate degree requirements, so be sure to check the program's prerequisites.

**Language Proficiency:**

If the language of instruction is not your native language, you may need to demonstrate proficiency in the language (often English or Arabic) through standardised tests such as IELTS or TOEFL. Some programs may offer language preparatory courses as well.

Entrance Exams:

Depending on the program, you might be required to take standardised entrance exams like the GRE or GMAT. However, not all programs in the Middle East require these exams.

Letters of Recommendation:

Most master's programs require letters of recommendation from professors or professionals who can speak to your academic or professional abilities.

Statement of Purpose (SOP):

You will likely need to submit a statement of purpose outlining your academic and career goals, as well as your reasons for pursuing the specific program.

Resume/CV:

Many programs will require a current resume or curriculum vitae (CV) detailing your educational and professional background.

Transcripts:

You will need to provide official transcripts from your undergraduate institution to demonstrate your academic record.

Application Form:

Complete the university's application form, which is typically available online. Make sure to pay attention to submission deadlines.

Interview:

Some programs may require an interview as part of the admissions process.

Other Requirements:

Depending on the program and university, there may be additional requirements such as a portfolio (for art and design programs), specific prerequisite courses, or an entrance examination specific to your field of study.

## **PhD Programs**

If you're a Pakistani student interested in pursuing a Ph.D. (Doctor of Philosophy) program in the Middle East, you'll generally need to meet specific admission requirements that are common for international students. However, the specific requirements can vary from one university to another and from one country in the Middle East to another. Here's a general overview of the typical requirements:

### Research Programs and Universities:

Identify Middle Eastern universities and Ph.D. programs that align with your research interests. Visit their official websites to obtain detailed information on admission requirements and application deadlines.

### Academic Qualifications:

You will generally need a master's degree or equivalent from a recognized institution. Some Ph.D. programs may accept exceptional candidates with a strong bachelor's degree directly into a combined master's and Ph.D. program.

### Language Proficiency:

Depending on the language of instruction, you might be required to demonstrate proficiency in the relevant language, such as English or Arabic. Common language proficiency tests include IELTS or TOEFL for English-speaking programs.

### Research Proposal:

Most Ph.D. programs require a research proposal outlining your research objectives, methodology, and how your work fits into the broader academic field. This is a crucial part of your application, and it should align with the program's research areas.

### Letters of Recommendation:

You'll typically need to provide letters of recommendation from professors or professionals who can attest to your academic and research abilities.

**Transcripts:**

Submit official transcripts from your previous academic institutions to demonstrate your academic history and achievements.

**Statement of Purpose (SOP):**

Write a well-structured statement of purpose explaining your research interests, academic goals, and why you are interested in the specific Ph.D. program.

**Resume/CV:**

Present a current resume or curriculum vitae (CV) that highlights your academic and research experiences.

**Entrance Exams:**

Some universities may require standardised entrance exams, such as the GRE or a discipline-specific exam, as part of the application process. Check the specific requirements of the program you're interested in.

**Interview:**

Be prepared for an interview, as some Ph.D. programs may include this as part of the admissions process.

**Other Requirements:**

Some programs may have additional requirements, such as writing samples, specific prerequisite courses, or interviews with potential research advisors.

It's essential to carefully review the specific admission requirements of the Ph.D. programs and universities you are interested in, as they can vary. Contact the university's admissions office for any clarification or questions you may have about the application process.

It's essential to research the specific requirements of the program and university you are interested in, as they can vary significantly. Additionally, each country in the Middle East may have its own unique admission policies and visa regulations, so make sure to check with the university and the embassy or consulate of the country you plan to study in for the most up-to-date and accurate information.

## **Letters of recommendation, personal essays or statements and extracurricular activities**

When applying to universities in the Middle East, the importance and specific requirements for letters of recommendations, personal essays or statements, and extracurricular activities may vary from one institution to another. However, I can provide some general guidelines on what to expect:

### Letters of Recommendations:

Middle East universities often require letters of recommendation as part of the application process. These letters are typically written by teachers, professors, or supervisors who can speak to your academic or professional abilities.

Ensure that your recommenders are familiar with the specific program or university to which you are applying and can highlight your qualifications and achievements relevant to your chosen field of study.

Some universities may have specific guidelines regarding the number and format of recommendation letters, so be sure to follow their instructions.

### Personal Essays or Statements:

Personal essays or statements are also commonly required by Middle East universities. They are used to assess your motivations, goals, and suitability for the program.

Be sure to carefully read and follow the essay prompts provided by the universities. Address the specific questions or themes they ask you to cover in your essay.

Emphasise your genuine interest in the program and how it aligns with your academic and career aspirations. Showcase your unique qualities and experiences.

### Extracurricular Activities:

Middle East universities may consider extracurricular activities as part of your application. These activities can demonstrate your well-roundedness, leadership skills, and commitment to community and personal development.



List and describe any relevant extracurricular activities, such as clubs, community service, volunteer work, internships, or leadership roles, that highlight your interests and contributions.

It's essential to research each university's specific application requirements and deadlines, as these can vary. Additionally, consider the cultural and regional aspects of the Middle East when writing your personal essays. Understanding the local culture and values may help you tailor your application to align with the university's expectations.

Lastly, ensure that you proofread and edit your application materials carefully to present a polished and professional image. Seek guidance from mentors, teachers, or advisors if needed, as they can provide valuable insights and assistance in the application process.

## **Costs**

### **Getting there**

Return economy class tickets cost USD 300 to USD 700 depending upon the airlines and when you book the ticket.

Student visa fees cost USD 100 to 300 depending on the country and the circumstances.

### **University fees, funding and scholarships**

University fees, funding, and scholarships in the Middle East can vary significantly depending on the country, the specific university, and the academic program. Here are some general insights on these topics:

#### **University Fees:**

Tuition fees in the Middle East can vary widely. Public universities typically have lower tuition fees for citizens and residents compared to international students. Private universities often have higher tuition fees.

The cost of education may also differ between countries within the Middle East. For example, universities in the Gulf states like Qatar and the United Arab Emirates may have higher fees compared to institutions in countries like Jordan or Egypt.

The specific fees depend on the university's policies, the degree level (e.g., undergraduate or graduate), and the field of study.

Tuition fees for public universities can range from USD 5,000 to over \$10,000 per year for undergraduate programs.

Graduate programs, especially in fields like engineering and business, may have higher tuition fees.

Tuition fees at private universities in these countries may range from USD 10,000 to more than USD 20,000 per year, depending on the program and university.

Funding Opportunities:

Some Middle Eastern universities offer scholarships for international students, particularly at the graduate level. These scholarships may be based on academic merit, research potential, or other criteria.

Keep in mind that tuition fees for international students at private universities can change over time, so it's important to check with the individual universities and their official websites for the most up-to-date information. Many private universities in the Middle East also offer scholarships, financial aid, or other types of support for international students, so it's worth exploring these options to help offset the costs.

## **Living expenses**

The cost of living for international students in the Middle East can vary widely depending on the country, city, and individual lifestyle choices. Here are some approximate monthly living expense for international students in a few Middle Eastern countries, but please keep in mind that these figures are rough estimates and can change over time:

United Arab Emirates (Dubai):

- Accommodation: \$800 to \$2,000 per month for shared housing, and it can be higher for private apartments or on-campus housing.
- Food: \$300 to \$600 per month.
- Transportation: \$50 to \$100 per month.
- Health Insurance: \$50 to \$150 per month.
- Other Expenses: \$300 to \$500 per month.

Saudi Arabia:

- Accommodation: \$300 to \$800 per month for shared housing.
- Food: \$200 to \$400 per month.
- Transportation: \$50 to \$100 per month.
- Health Insurance: \$50 to \$100 per year.
- Other Expenses: \$200 to \$400 per month.

Jordan:

- Accommodation: \$300 to \$600 per month for shared housing.
- Food: \$150 to \$300 per month.
- Transportation: \$20 to \$50 per month.
- Health Insurance: \$100 to \$200 per year.
- Other Expenses: \$100 to \$200 per month.

Qatar:

- Accommodation: \$800 to \$2,000 per month for shared housing.
- Food: \$400 to \$700 per month.
- Transportation: \$50 to \$100 per month.
- Health Insurance: \$100 to \$200 per month.
- Other Expenses: \$300 to \$500 per month.

Please note that these are rough estimates, and the actual costs can vary based on factors such as the specific city you're in, your lifestyle choices, and the exchange rate.

## Studying in Ireland

### Introduction

Studying in Ireland offers a range of benefits, making it an attractive destination for international students. Here are some compelling reasons why you might consider studying in Ireland:

**High-Quality Education:** Irish universities and colleges are known for their academic excellence and high-quality education. Many institutions consistently rank well in global university rankings. Some of these universities include:

- Trinity College Dublin
- University College Dublin
- University of Limerick
- National University of Ireland, Galway
- Dublin City University
- Maynooth University
- Technological University Dublin (formerly Dublin Institute of Technology)

**English Language:** English is the primary language of instruction in Ireland, making it an ideal destination for international students looking to improve their English language skills. This can also be advantageous for future career prospects.

**Cultural Richness:** Ireland has a rich cultural heritage, including a strong literary and artistic tradition. You'll have the opportunity to immerse yourself in Irish culture and history.

**Safety:** Ireland is considered one of the safest countries in the world. Its welcoming and friendly population ensures that international students feel secure and supported.

**Work Opportunities:** Ireland offers post-study work options for international students, making it easier to gain work experience and potentially secure employment after graduation.

**Innovation and Technology:** Ireland is a hub for technology and innovation, with many multinational companies and tech giants having a significant presence in the country. This can provide networking and internship opportunities. There is also a huge job market for tech-graduates with skills - staying in Ireland after study is easier because of the need for highly skilled workers.

**Natural Beauty:** Ireland's stunning landscapes, including lush green countryside, picturesque coastlines, and historic sites, offer a great quality of life for students who enjoy outdoor activities.

**International Community:** Ireland has a diverse and welcoming international community, which can help you feel at home and create lasting friendships.

**Scholarships:** Many Irish universities and institutions offer scholarships and financial aid to international students, helping to ease the financial burden of studying abroad.

**Research Opportunities:** If you are interested in research, Ireland has a strong emphasis on research and development, providing opportunities for students to engage in cutting-edge research projects.

**Easy Access to Europe:** Ireland's location makes it a convenient starting point for exploring Europe, with easy access to other European countries for travel and cultural experiences.

**English-Speaking Environment:** Immersing yourself in an English-speaking environment is an excellent way to improve your language skills, which can be an asset for your future career.

**Healthcare:** Ireland has a well-developed healthcare system, and many international students are required to have health insurance, ensuring access to medical care when needed.

**Global Perspective:** Studying in Ireland can provide you with a global perspective, as you'll be exposed to different cultures and viewpoints, which can be valuable in an increasingly interconnected world.

It's important to research and choose the right program and institution that align with your academic and career goals. Additionally, consider factors like tuition fees, cost of living, and visa requirements when making your decision to study in Ireland.

## **Types of institutions where you can get a degree**

Ireland is home to several universities, both public and private, that offer a wide range of undergraduate, postgraduate, and research programs. Here is a list of some of the well-known universities in Ireland as of my last knowledge update in January 2022:

### **Public Universities**

Public universities in Ireland are funded by the Irish government and offer a wide range of academic programs and research opportunities. Here are some of the public universities in Ireland:

Trinity College Dublin (TCD):

Location: Dublin

One of the oldest and most prestigious universities in Ireland, offering a broad spectrum of programs in various fields.

University College Dublin (UCD):

Location: Dublin

One of the largest universities in Ireland with a strong emphasis on research and a diverse range of academic offerings.

University of Limerick (UL):

Location: Limerick

Known for its research and innovation focus, offering a variety of academic programs.

National University of Ireland, Galway (NUIG):

Location: Galway

Recognized for research activities and comprehensive academic programs.

Dublin City University (DCU):

Location: Dublin

Emphasises a modern approach to education and research, offering a range of programs.

Maynooth University:

Location: Maynooth, County Kildare

Known for research and a diverse range of academic programs.

University College Cork (UCC):

Location: Cork

Known for research excellence and a wide variety of academic programs.

Cork Institute of Technology (CIT):

Location: Cork

Offers a range of programs in engineering, technology, business, and other fields.

National University of Ireland, Maynooth (NUI Maynooth):

Location: Maynooth, County Kildare

Renowned for research and a variety of academic programs.

Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT):

Location: Waterford

Offers programs in engineering, business, science, and more.

These are some of the major public universities and institutes in Ireland. Each institution has its unique strengths, research areas, and academic programs. It's important to visit the websites of these universities to explore specific programs and admission requirements.

## **Private Universities**

Ireland does not have many private universities in the traditional sense, as the majority of higher education institutions are publicly funded. However, there are private higher education institutions and colleges that offer various academic programs, including undergraduate, postgraduate, and professional courses. These institutions may have specialised focuses and offer a range of degree programs and certifications. Here are a few private institutions and colleges in Ireland:

### Dublin Business School (DBS):

- DBS is one of the largest independent colleges in Ireland, offering a wide variety of undergraduate and postgraduate programs in areas such as business, law, arts, media, and communications.

### American College Dublin:

- American College Dublin offers American-style education in Ireland, focusing on liberal arts and business programs. It provides a unique educational experience for international and domestic students.

### Griffith College Dublin:

- Griffith College is a private college with campuses in Dublin, Cork, and Limerick. It offers a range of undergraduate and postgraduate programs, including business, law, arts, and media.

### Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI):

- RCSI is a private medical school and research institution. It is focused on health sciences and medical education, providing undergraduate and postgraduate programs in these fields.

These private institutions are distinct from public universities and may have specific areas of expertise or tailored programs. When considering a private institution, it's important to research the programs they offer, faculty expertise, accreditation, and admission requirements.

## **Institutes of Technology**

Institutes of Technology are known for their practical and vocational approach to education. They offer programs in areas such as engineering, technology, business, and more. These institutions often have strong links to industry and provide valuable hands-on experience.

## **Colleges**

There are various colleges in Ireland that offer specialised education and training in specific fields. These colleges may offer certificate, diploma, and degree programs in areas like art and design, hospitality, and healthcare.

## **Language Schools**

Ireland is a popular destination for English language learners. Language schools offer English language courses for international students, which can be an excellent way to improve your language skills while experiencing Irish culture.

# **Academic entrance requirements**

## **Bachelor's Programs**

Admission requirements for bachelor's programs in Ireland can vary depending on the specific university or college and the program you are applying to. However, there are some common requirements and guidelines that you should be aware of when applying for a bachelor's program in Ireland:

Academic Qualifications:

You will typically need to have completed secondary education (equivalent to high school) in your home country with a recognized qualification, such as the Leaving Certificate in Ireland or an equivalent



qualification from another country. For students in Pakistan, most reputable universities for example UCD require:

Intermediate / Higher Secondary Certificate + 2 Years of a Bachelor's Degree at a recognised university with acceptable grades or International Foundation Year

Cambridge A Level or IB Diploma

English Language Proficiency:

If your primary language is not English, you will often need to provide proof of English language proficiency through standardised tests like the IELTS, TOEFL, or PTE Academic. The required scores can vary by institution and program, but a common minimum IELTS score is 6.0 to 6.5, with no section below 5.5.

Application Process:

You'll need to apply through the Central Applications Office (CAO) for most undergraduate programs in Ireland. Some universities and colleges also accept direct applications, so it's essential to check the specific requirements and deadlines for each institution and program.

Personal Statement or Letter of Motivation:

Many universities and colleges in Ireland require applicants to submit a personal statement or a letter of motivation outlining their interest in the program and reasons for choosing the institution.

Entrance Exams:

Some programs, particularly in areas like medicine and dentistry, may require additional entrance exams, such as the Health Professions Admissions Test (HPAT) for medical programs.

Application Fee:

There is typically an application fee associated with the CAO application process. Be sure to check the current fee and payment options on the CAO website.

#### Portfolio or Audition (for Arts and Creative Programs):

If you are applying for programs in arts, design, music, or other creative fields, you may be required to submit a portfolio or participate in an audition as part of the application process.

#### Visa Requirements:

If you are a non-European Union (EU) or non-European Economic Area (EEA) student for example a student from Pakistan, you will need to apply for a student visa to study in Ireland. Be sure to check the specific visa requirements for your country and the program's duration.

It's crucial to research the specific admission requirements for the university and program you are interested in, as they may have additional or different requirements. Make sure to start the application process well in advance and meet all the deadlines to increase your chances of successful admission. Additionally, consider seeking guidance from the admissions offices of your chosen institutions or educational consultants for personalised assistance.

### **Foundation Pathway to Bachelors Programme**

The foundation pathway program is designed to prepare international students for entry into undergraduate (bachelor's) degree programs in Ireland. These programs are particularly helpful for students who may not meet the standard entry requirements for direct admission to a bachelor's program at an Irish university. Here's how foundation pathways to bachelor's programs in Ireland typically work:

**Eligibility:** Foundation programs are often designed for students who have completed their secondary education but do not meet the academic and/or language requirements for direct entry to a bachelor's program. Students from various educational backgrounds may be eligible, and specific entry requirements can vary by institution.

**Program Duration:** Foundation programs generally last for one academic year. During this time, students will undertake a combination of coursework designed to improve their academic skills and knowledge.

**Curriculum:** The foundation program's curriculum typically includes core subjects relevant to the intended field of study, as well as language courses to improve English language proficiency. The core

subjects can vary based on the chosen field of study, such as science, business, engineering, or humanities.

**Academic Support:** These programs provide academic support and guidance to help students adjust to the Irish education system. You'll receive assistance with study skills, academic writing, research, and other essential skills.

**English Language Proficiency:** Foundation programs often include English language training, such as IELTS or TOEFL preparation, to ensure that students attain the required English language proficiency for their chosen degree programs.

**Assessments:** Students will be assessed throughout the foundation program, usually through exams, assignments, and projects. Successful completion of the program typically requires achieving specified grade or performance standards.

**Progression:** Upon successful completion of the foundation program, students are typically eligible for direct entry into an undergraduate bachelor's program at the host university. The specific degree program and university you can transfer to will depend on the foundation program you've completed and your academic performance.

**University Partnerships:** Many foundation pathway programs are offered by private institutions or language schools in collaboration with Irish universities. These programs are often tailored to meet the specific admission requirements of partner universities.

It's important to note that the availability of foundation pathway programs and their entry requirements can vary between institutions. When considering a foundation program, you should research the programs offered by the universities you're interested in and ensure that the specific program aligns with your academic and career goals.

Keep in mind that successful completion of a foundation pathway program doesn't guarantee admission to a bachelor's program; you will still need to meet the university's entry requirements and any specific program prerequisites. Additionally, the tuition fees for foundation programs can vary from USD 8,000 to 20,000, so it's essential to understand the costs associated with these programs.

## Master's Programs

Admission requirements for master's programs in Ireland can vary depending on the university, specific program, and your previous academic background. However, here are some common admission requirements for Pakistani students interested in pursuing a master's degree in Ireland:

**Bachelor's Degree:** You will typically need to have a bachelor's degree or an equivalent qualification from a recognized institution. Your degree should be relevant to the master's program you are applying for.

**Academic Transcript:** You'll need to provide official transcripts of your academic records, showing your grades and courses completed during your bachelor's degree.

**English Language Proficiency:** If your primary language is not English, you will usually be required to demonstrate your English language proficiency through standardised tests like the IELTS, TOEFL, or PTE Academic. The required scores can vary by institution and program, but a common minimum IELTS score is 6.5 to 7.0, with no section below 6.0.

**Statement of Purpose:** Many universities in Ireland require applicants to submit a statement of purpose or a personal statement explaining their reasons for pursuing the program and their future career goals.

**Letters of Recommendation:** Some programs may ask for letters of recommendation from professors or employers who can vouch for your academic and professional abilities.

**CV/Resume:** You may be required to submit a curriculum vitae (CV) or resume outlining your educational and professional background.

**Application Form:** You will need to complete the university's online application form for your chosen program. Check with the specific university for application details and deadlines.

**Application Fee:** There is often an application fee associated with the application process, which can vary by institution.

**Visa Requirements:** If you are a Pakistani student planning to study in Ireland, you will need to apply for a student visa. Be sure to check the specific visa requirements and application process with the Irish embassy or consulate in Pakistan.

**Additional Program-Specific Requirements:** Some master's programs, especially those in highly specialised fields, may have specific requirements such as interviews, portfolios, or standardised tests relevant to the program.

It's essential to research the admission requirements for your chosen university and program as they may have unique criteria. You should also check the application deadlines, as they can vary among institutions. Additionally, consider reaching out to the admissions offices of the universities you're interested in for personalised guidance on the application process for Pakistani students.

### **PhD Programs:**

Admission requirements for Ph.D. programs in Ireland for Pakistani students are generally similar to those for master's programs. However, Ph.D. programs have additional prerequisites due to their research-intensive nature. Here are the common admission requirements and steps for Pakistani students interested in pursuing a Ph.D. in Ireland:

#### **Educational Qualifications:**

You should hold a master's degree (or an equivalent postgraduate qualification) in a related field to the Ph.D. program you wish to pursue.

#### **Research Proposal:**

You will typically need to submit a well-defined research proposal outlining your intended Ph.D. research project. The research proposal is a critical component of your application, as it demonstrates your research interests and potential contributions to your field of study.

#### **Academic Transcripts:**

Provide official transcripts of your academic records, including your master's degree and any other relevant postgraduate qualifications.

#### **English Language Proficiency:**

If your primary language is not English, you will usually need to demonstrate your English language proficiency through tests like IELTS, TOEFL, or PTE Academic. The required scores can vary by institution, but a common minimum IELTS score for Ph.D. programs is 6.5 to 7.0, with no section below 6.0.

#### **Letters of Recommendation:**

Many Ph.D. programs require letters of recommendation from academic referees who can speak to your research potential and abilities.

Statement of Purpose:

You may need to submit a detailed statement of purpose outlining your research interests, reasons for choosing the program, and long-term career goals.

CV/Resume:

Provide a curriculum vitae (CV) or resume detailing your academic and professional background.

Application Form:

Complete the university's online application form for the Ph.D. program. Check with the specific university for application details and deadlines.

Application Fee:

Be aware that there is often an application fee associated with the application process, which can vary by institution.

Visa Requirements:

As a Pakistani student planning to study in Ireland for a Ph.D., you will need to apply for a student visa. Ensure you comply with the visa requirements and application process outlined by the Irish embassy or consulate in Pakistan.

Interview:

Some Ph.D. programs may require an interview as part of the admission process to assess your suitability for the program and your research proposal.

Research Experience:

Depending on the program and university, having prior research experience, publications, or relevant work experience in your field can strengthen your application.

It's essential to research the specific admission requirements, deadlines, and application procedures for the Ph.D. program and university you are interested in, as they may have unique criteria. Contact the admissions offices of your chosen institutions for guidance and additional information tailored to Pakistani students applying for Ph.D. programs in Ireland.

## Letters of recommendation, personal essays or statements and extracurricular activities

Ireland, like in many other countries, universities often require applicants to provide various documents and information as part of their application process. These may include letters of recommendation, personal essays or statements, and details about your extracurricular activities. Here's an overview of what these documents typically entail when applying to universities in Ireland:

### Letters of Recommendation:

Letters of recommendation, also known as references, are written by individuals who can vouch for your academic abilities, character, and suitability for the program you are applying to.

It's common to provide two or more letters of recommendation. These should ideally be from teachers, professors, or other individuals who have had a direct academic or professional relationship with you.

In Ireland, universities may have specific requirements for recommendation letters, so be sure to check the admission guidelines of the university you are applying to.

### Personal Essays or Statements:

Personal essays or statements are an important part of your application, allowing you to showcase your motivations, aspirations, and qualifications.

The content and format of the essay may vary depending on the university and program. You may be asked to answer specific questions or write a more general personal statement.

Your essay should demonstrate your passion for the subject, your relevant experiences, and your goals. It's an opportunity to stand out and show why you're a strong candidate.

### Extracurricular Activities:

Including information about your extracurricular activities is important to give universities a more holistic view of your interests and capabilities.

List your involvement in clubs, sports, volunteer work, leadership roles, and any other activities that demonstrate your skills and interests.

Highlight any achievements or experiences that are relevant to the program you're applying for. For example, if you're applying to a science program, mention science-related clubs or research projects you've been involved in.

It's essential to review the specific admission requirements and guidelines for each university and program you are interested in. Different institutions may have varying expectations when it comes to letters of recommendation, personal essays, and extracurricular activities. Ensure that you follow their instructions closely and meet all deadlines. Be sure to also proofread and edit your documents carefully to make a strong impression on the admissions committee.

## Costs

### Getting there

**Airfare:** Prices can vary widely, but you can expect to pay more during peak travel seasons. Booking well in advance can sometimes result in lower fares. Travel will cost USD 800 to USD 1,500 depending upon when you book and which airlines you book.

**Visa Fees:**

As a general guideline, following were the typical student visa application fees in 2023:

**Long Stay Study (D) Visa:** This is the standard student visa for degree programs and typically required for programs lasting longer than 3 months.

Visa Fee: €60 for most nationalities.

**Short Stay Study (C) Visa:** This visa is for shorter courses, such as language courses, lasting up to 3 months.

Visa Fee: €60 for most nationalities.

**Pre-Student Long Stay (D) Visa:** This is for students who need to enter Ireland to apply for a course and who will later switch to a long stay student visa.

Visa Fee: €100 for most nationalities.



Please keep in mind that these fees can change, and there may be additional fees for certain services or specific circumstances. It's important to check the INIS website or contact the Irish embassy or consulate in your country to confirm the most up-to-date information and to understand the application process and requirements.

## **University fees, funding and scholarships**

In Ireland, university fees, funding, and scholarships can vary depending on the institution, the level of study, and the student's individual circumstances. Here's some general information about university fees, funding options, and scholarships in Ireland:

University Fees:

EU/EEA Students:

**Undergraduate Programs:** Irish and EU/EEA students typically do not pay tuition fees for undergraduate degree programs at publicly funded universities in Ireland. However, they may be required to pay a student contribution fee, which is a smaller fee to cover services and administrative costs.

**Postgraduate Programs:** EU/EEA students may be required to pay tuition fees for postgraduate (master's and doctoral) programs. The fees can vary depending on the institution and the specific program.

Non-EU/EEA Students:

Non-EU/EEA students are generally required to pay tuition fees for both undergraduate and postgraduate programs in Ireland.

Tuition fees for non-EU/EEA students can vary significantly depending on the university, the specific program, and the level of study. These fees can range from a few thousand euros to over €20,000 per year.

It's important to note that tuition fees are subject to change. Therefore, it is essential to check with the university or institution where you plan to study for the most current fee information. Many universities have detailed information on their websites regarding tuition fees for international students.

Additionally, you should also explore scholarship opportunities, financial aid, and funding options, to help offset the cost of education in Ireland, especially if you are a non-EU/EEA student.

Funding Options:

Students in Ireland, both Irish and international, have access to various funding options to help cover the cost of education, including student loans, grants, and part-time work.

**Student Loans:** The Irish government provides student loans through the Student Universal Support Ireland (SUSI) system. These loans can be used to cover tuition fees and living expenses. Repayment terms and eligibility criteria may vary.

**Grants:** The Irish government offers grants to eligible students to assist with tuition fees and living costs. The most common grant is the Student Grant Scheme, administered by SUSI, which considers factors like family income.

**Part-time Work:** Many students work part-time while studying to help cover their living expenses. The maximum number of hours you can work as an international student is typically limited, so check the regulations.

**Scholarships:**

Scholarships are another way to fund your education in Ireland. Several institutions and organisations offer scholarships to both Irish and international students. These scholarships can be merit-based or need-based.

Here are some scholarship options:

**Government Scholarships:** The Irish government offers scholarships for international students from certain countries through the Irish Aid Fellowship Training Program and other initiatives.

**University Scholarships:** Most universities in Ireland offer scholarships to outstanding international students. These scholarships are typically awarded based on academic performance, leadership skills, or other criteria.

**External Scholarships:** Various organisations, foundations, and agencies offer scholarships to international students studying in Ireland. Examples include the Fulbright Program and the Chevening Scholarships.

It's essential to research and apply for scholarships well in advance of your intended start date, as application deadlines can vary.

I recommend checking with the specific university you plan to attend and visiting the official government websites for the most up-to-date and detailed information on fees, funding, and scholarships in Ireland.

## Accommodation and living expenses

Accommodation and living expenses in Ireland can vary significantly depending on the city or town you choose to live in and your personal lifestyle. Here's a general overview of the costs you might encounter:

Accommodation:

**Rent:** The cost of renting an apartment or house can vary widely. In major cities like Dublin, Cork, and Galway, you can expect higher rents compared to smaller towns. On average, a one-bedroom apartment in a city centre can cost anywhere from €1,200 to €2,000 per month. Rent is usually lower in suburban areas or smaller towns.

**Utilities:** This includes electricity, gas, water, and internet. On average, expect to pay around €100 to €150 per month for these utilities.

Food:

**Groceries:** The cost of groceries can vary based on your dietary choices and shopping habits. On average, a single person might spend around €200 to €300 per month on groceries.

**Dining out:** Eating at restaurants or cafes can be expensive, with a meal at a mid-range restaurant costing around €15 to €30 per person.

Transportation:

**Public transportation:** Cities in Ireland typically have well-developed public transportation systems. Monthly passes for buses or trams can cost around €100 to €150, depending on the city.

**Fuel and car expenses:** If you own a car, you'll need to budget for fuel, insurance, and maintenance, which can add up to several hundred euros per month.

Health Insurance:

If you're not an EU/EEA citizen, you may need to purchase private health insurance. The cost ranges between €150 and €180 per year.

### Miscellaneous Expenses:

Phone and internet: A monthly mobile phone plan with data might cost around €20 to €30.

Entertainment and leisure: The cost of entertainment, such as going to the movies, concerts, or sporting events, will depend on your preferences.

It's important to note that living expenses can vary greatly depending on your lifestyle. Students may have access to more affordable accommodation options, while families may have higher costs due to children's needs. Ireland has a relatively high cost of living compared to many other European countries, so it's essential to budget carefully and plan for your specific situation.

It's a good idea to research the current cost of living in your specific area of interest and make a detailed budget to manage your expenses effectively.

# Studying in Canada

## Introduction

Canada has a well-developed and diverse higher education system that includes a wide range of universities and colleges. There are 31 institutions listed in the top QS rankings.

Canada's higher education system is known for its high academic standards, research contributions, and diverse student population. Each province and territory in Canada has its own regulatory bodies and accreditation processes for universities and colleges. This ensures that institutions meet certain quality standards and provide a high level of education.

The two main languages of Canada are English and French - you should be aware that some institutions may only offer what you want in French.

## Types of institutions where you can get a degree

Universities:

Canadian universities are degree-granting institutions that offer undergraduate (bachelor's), graduate (master's and doctoral), and sometimes professional programs. They conduct research and contribute to the academic and intellectual advancement of various fields.

Colleges and Institutes:

Colleges and institutes in Canada offer a variety of programs, often at the diploma and certificate levels, but some also offer bachelor's degrees. They are known for their focus on applied learning, hands-on training, and preparing students for specific careers.

Polytechnic Institutes:

Polytechnic institutes offer a blend of theoretical knowledge and practical, hands-on training. They often specialise in technical and professional education in areas like engineering, applied sciences, and information technology.

Cégeps (Collèges d'enseignement général et professionnel):

These are unique to the province of Quebec. Cégeps provide a pre-university program (leading to university) and technical or professional programs. They offer a transition between secondary education and university.

#### Community Colleges:

Community colleges are institutions that focus on providing a wide range of vocational and technical programs, often leading to diplomas or certificates. They are known for their accessibility, practical training, and connections to local industries.

#### Technical Institutes:

Technical institutes are specialised institutions that offer programs in technical and vocational fields, preparing students for careers in specific industries or trades.

#### Art and Design Schools:

These specialised institutions focus on programs related to the arts, design, and creative fields. They offer programs in areas like fine arts, graphic design, fashion, and more.

#### Language Schools:

Language schools in Canada offer programs focused on language learning and improvement, including English as a Second Language (ESL) and French as a Second Language (FSL) programs.

#### Distance Education and Online Learning:

Many Canadian universities and colleges offer distance education programs, allowing students to complete their studies remotely. This can be especially helpful for those who cannot attend classes in person.

#### Graduate Schools:

These are specialised institutions or faculties within universities that primarily offer graduate-level programs (master's and doctoral degrees) and focus on research and advanced study.

#### Professional Schools:

Some universities have specialised schools or faculties for professional programs, such as law, medicine, dentistry, engineering, and business.

## **Academic entrance requirements**

Canada is a bilingual country, so universities may require proficiency in either English or French, depending on the language of instruction. You may need to demonstrate your proficiency through standardised tests like the TOEFL, IELTS (for English), or DELF/DALF (for French).

While standardised tests like the SAT or ACT are not universally required for admission to Canadian universities, some institutions may request them for certain programs or for international applicants.

### **Bachelor's Programs:**

For admission to undergraduate programs, you will typically need to have completed your secondary education with a high school diploma or an equivalent qualification. Specific course prerequisites may apply for certain programs.

Some graduate programs may require standardised test scores like the GRE (Graduate Record Examination) or GMAT (Graduate Management Admission Test), depending on the field of study.

### **Master's Programs:**

For admission to graduate programs (master's or doctoral), you will need to have completed a relevant bachelor's degree from a recognized institution. Some programs may require a specific minimum GPA.

### **PhD Programs:**

Generally, you need to have completed at least a Master's degree. Other specific requirements will apply.

## **Letters of recommendation, personal essays or statements and extracurricular activities**

Graduate programs often require letters of recommendation from professors or professionals who can speak to your academic abilities and potential for success in the program.

For graduate programs, you may be required to submit a statement of purpose outlining your academic interests, research goals, and reasons for applying to the program.

Some programs in the arts, design, and related fields may require the submission of a portfolio showcasing your creative work.

Certain programs or institutions may conduct interviews as part of the admission process, especially for competitive or specialised programs.

## **Costs**

### **Getting there**

Travel will cost between USD 1000 and USD 1800, depending on the time of year you travel and the city - Canada is similarly a very large country and the flight time from west to east coast is several hours.

Visas are not very expensive and the current rates are less than USD 500, including biometrics.

Agents typically charge USD 5,000 plus for their services.

### **University fees, funding and scholarships**

In Canada, there are various ways to fund your university education, including scholarships, grants, loans, and other financial aid programs. Here's an overview of university fees funding and scholarships in Canada:

#### University fees

The tuition fees for international students in Canada vary widely depending on the university, the specific program of study, and the province or territory in which the university is located. Here's a general overview of what you can expect, but keep in mind that these figures can change over time, and it's always a good idea to check with the specific university for the most up-to-date information.

**Undergraduate Programs:** Tuition fees for undergraduate programs in Canada typically range from approximately CAD 15,000 to CAD 35,000 per year. Engineering, business, and some science programs may be on the higher end of this range.



**Graduate Programs (Master's and Ph.D.):** Tuition fees for graduate programs, including master's and Ph.D. programs, tend to be higher than undergraduate programs. These fees can range from USD 10,000 to USD 45,000 per year or more, depending on the field of study.

**Professional Programs:** Programs like Medicine, Dentistry, and Law are among the most expensive, with tuition fees often exceeding USD 30,000 per year and, in some cases, exceeding USD 40,000 or USD 50,000 per year.

**MBA Programs:** MBA programs in Canada are known for their quality, but they can be quite expensive. Tuition fees for MBA programs can range from USD 30,000 to USD 100,000 or more for the entire program, depending on the university and program's length.

**Location:** Tuition fees can vary significantly based on the province or territory. Major cities like Toronto, Vancouver, and Montreal tend to have higher living costs and, in some cases, higher tuition fees. Smaller cities and towns generally have lower living costs and may offer lower tuition fees.

It's important to research specific universities and their programs to get accurate and up-to-date information on tuition fees. Additionally, consider other costs such as housing, transportation, textbooks, and living expenses when budgeting for your education in Canada.

**Scholarships and Grants:**

**Merit-Based Scholarships:** Many universities in Canada offer merit-based scholarships to outstanding students based on their academic achievements. These scholarships can cover a portion of tuition fees or even provide full tuition coverage.

**Need-Based Scholarships:** Some scholarships are awarded to students based on financial need. These can help cover tuition and living expenses.

**Provincial and Territorial Scholarships:** Each province and territory in Canada may offer its own scholarships and grants to residents or students attending institutions within their jurisdiction.

**Entrance Scholarships:** Some universities provide scholarships to students when they first enter the institution. These are often based on high school performance.

### External Scholarships:

Numerous organisations, foundations, and corporations offer scholarships to Canadian and international students. These scholarships can be based on various criteria, such as academic achievement, community involvement, or specific fields of study. Websites like Scholarship Canada and Yconic can help you search for external scholarships.

### Work-Study Programs:

Some universities offer work-study programs that allow students to work part-time on campus or in the community, helping them offset their educational expenses.

### Research Assistantships and Teaching Assistantships:

Graduate students, in particular, can often secure funding through research or teaching assistant positions, which provide a stipend and sometimes cover tuition costs.

### Bursaries:

Bursaries are typically need-based and are offered by universities and colleges to assist students who are facing financial difficulties. They do not have to be repaid.

It's essential to research and apply for scholarships and financial aid programs well in advance of starting your studies. Additionally, each province or territory may have its own specific programs and eligibility criteria, so be sure to check with the relevant educational institutions and government agencies for the most up-to-date information and opportunities.

## **Living expenses**

Living expenses for Pakistani students studying in Canada can vary depending on the city or province, lifestyle choices, and the specific institution. Canada is a diverse country with a range of living costs, and some cities are more expensive than others. Here are some general expenses to consider:

**Accommodation:** Housing is one of the significant expenses. You can choose from on-campus residence, off-campus housing, or homestays. On-campus housing may be convenient but can also be expensive. Rent for off-campus apartments or shared housing will vary depending on the location, with major cities like Toronto and Vancouver being more expensive. On average, you can expect to pay anywhere from USD 300 to USD 2,200 per month for accommodation.

**Food:** The cost of groceries and eating out can vary depending on your dietary preferences and location. On average, a student can expect to spend around USD 200 to USD 400 per month on food.

**Transportation:** Public transportation is a common way to get around in Canadian cities. Monthly transit passes can cost around USD 70 to USD 150. If you plan to own a car, you'll need to consider additional expenses like insurance, fuel, and maintenance.

**Health Insurance:** International students in Canada are required to have health insurance. Some provinces provide coverage through provincial health plans, while others require students to purchase private health insurance. Costs for health insurance can range from USD 500 to USD 1,200 per year.

**Books and Supplies:** Depending on your program of study, you may need to budget for textbooks and school supplies, which can cost a few hundred dollars per semester.

**Miscellaneous Expenses:** This category includes personal expenses, entertainment, clothing, and other miscellaneous costs. Budget at least USD 100 to USD 300 per month for these expenses.

It's essential to create a budget based on your specific circumstances and location. Keep in mind that the cost of living can be significantly lower in smaller cities and rural areas compared to major urban centres like Toronto, Vancouver, or Montreal. It's also advisable to explore scholarships, part-time work opportunities, and other financial aid options to help offset your expenses.

# Studying in Australia

## Introduction

University education in Australia is generally considered to be of high quality and is highly regarded worldwide. Here are several factors that contribute to the reputation of Australian universities:

**High Academic Standards:** Australian universities are known for maintaining rigorous academic standards and providing a quality education across various disciplines.

**World-Class Research:** Many Australian universities are leaders in research and innovation, contributing to advancements in various fields. They actively engage in cutting-edge research projects and collaborations.

**Diverse Range of Programs:** Australian universities offer a wide array of undergraduate, postgraduate, and research programs, providing students with a broad spectrum of academic choices.

**Global Recognition and Accreditation:** Degrees obtained from Australian universities are recognized internationally. Australia has a well-regulated higher education system, and its universities are subject to strict quality assurance standards.

**Multicultural Environment:** Australia is a culturally diverse country, and its universities reflect this diversity. Students from all over the world come to study in Australia, creating a rich cultural and learning environment.

**English-Medium Instruction:** English is the primary language of instruction in Australian universities, making it an accessible destination for international students. However, many institutions also offer English language support services for non-native speakers.

**Quality of Life and Safety:** Australia is known for its high quality of life, safety, and excellent healthcare system. These factors contribute to a conducive environment for studying.

**Post-Study Work Opportunities:** Australia offers post-study work opportunities for international students, allowing them to gain valuable work experience after completing their degrees.

**Strong Government Regulations:** The Australian government places a strong emphasis on maintaining high standards in the education sector. Regulatory bodies like the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) ensure that universities meet specific quality benchmarks.

**Global Rankings:** Australian universities consistently rank highly in various international university rankings, further affirming their reputation for academic excellence.

**Innovation and Entrepreneurship:** Australia encourages innovation and entrepreneurship. Many universities have strong ties to industries and offer programs and resources to support startups and entrepreneurial ventures.

## **Types of institutions where you can get a degree**

**Universities:** Australia has a diverse range of universities, both public and private. Public universities are funded by the government and tend to be larger and offer a wide range of programs. Private universities are funded by private sources and may have a more specialised focus.

**Technical and Further Education (TAFE) Institutes:** These institutes offer vocational education and training (VET) programs. They provide practical skills and hands-on training in various industries.

**Colleges:** Some colleges in Australia offer higher education programs, often in partnership with universities. These programs may lead to diplomas, advanced diplomas, or even bachelor's degrees.

## **Academic entrance requirements**

### **Bachelor's Programs:**

The specific requirements for Pakistani students to pursue a bachelor's program in Australia may vary depending on the university and the specific program you're interested in. However, there are some general guidelines and common requirements that you should consider. Here are the typical steps and requirements:

**Choose a University and Program:**

Research Australian universities and programs to find one that suits your academic and career goals.

Ensure that the university and program you choose are recognised and accredited.

### English Language Proficiency:

Most Australian universities require international students to demonstrate their English language proficiency through tests like IELTS, TOEFL, or Pearson PTE Academic.

The required score varies between institutions and programs but is usually around 6.0 to 7.0 for IELTS.

### Academic Qualifications:

You will need to provide your high school transcripts and certificates to demonstrate that you have completed the equivalent of the Australian Year 12 or equivalent qualifications.

Some universities may require specific subject prerequisites for certain programs.

### Application Process:

Apply directly to the university or through an education agent, depending on your preference.

Prepare a Statement of Purpose (SOP) or personal statement explaining why you want to study in Australia and your career goals.

Pay the application fee, which varies from university to university.

Remember that admission requirements may change, so it's essential to check the specific requirements of the university and the Australian government's official website for the most up-to-date information. Additionally, it's a good idea to start the application process well in advance to allow sufficient time for processing and preparation.

## **Master's Programs:**

To pursue a master's program in Australia as a Pakistani student, you will need to meet certain requirements. While the specific requirements may vary depending on the university and program you choose, here are the general steps and common requirements to consider:

### Choose a University and Program:

Research Australian universities and the master's programs they offer to find the one that best aligns with your academic and career goals.

Ensure that the university and program you choose are recognized and accredited.

### English Language Proficiency:

Most Australian universities require international students to demonstrate their English language proficiency through tests such as IELTS, TOEFL, or Pearson PTE Academic.

The required English language score can vary but is typically around 6.5 to 7.0 for IELTS.

#### Academic Qualifications:

Provide evidence of your undergraduate qualifications, including transcripts and degree certificates.

Ensure that your previous degree is equivalent to the Australian bachelor's degree or meet the program-specific prerequisites.

#### Application Process:

Apply directly to the university or through an education agent, depending on your preference.

Prepare a Statement of Purpose (SOP) or personal statement explaining your motivations for studying in Australia and your career goals.

Pay the application fee, which varies among universities.

#### Admission Interviews:

Some programs or universities may require interviews as part of the admission process.

#### Work Experience:

Some master's programs, especially professional or management programs, may require applicants to have relevant work experience. Check the specific program requirements.

It's important to note that admission requirements and visa processes can change, so be sure to check the specific requirements of your chosen university and the Australian government's official website for the most up-to-date information. Start the application process well in advance to allow ample time for processing and preparation.

### **PhD Programs:**

Pursuing a Ph.D. program in Australia as a Pakistani student involves several steps and requirements. Here's a general overview of what you'll need to consider:

#### Research and Choose a University and Supervisor:

Research Australian universities and identify the institutions that offer Ph.D. programs in your field of interest.

Contact potential supervisors who have expertise in your research area.

#### English Language Proficiency:

Most Australian universities require international Ph.D. applicants to demonstrate their English language proficiency through tests like IELTS, TOEFL, or Pearson PTE Academic.

The required score can vary but is typically around 6.5 to 7.0 for IELTS.

#### Academic Qualifications:

Provide evidence of your previous academic qualifications, including transcripts and degree certificates.

You should hold a relevant master's degree or an honours degree with significant research experience.

#### Research Proposal:

Develop a detailed research proposal outlining your research objectives, methodology, and expected outcomes.

#### Contact Supervisors:

Reach out to potential supervisors with your research proposal and seek their guidance and support.

#### Application Process:

Apply directly to the university or through their online application portal.

Pay the application fee, which may vary among universities.

#### Admission Interviews:

Some universities may require interviews as part of the admission process.

It's important to check the specific requirements and deadlines of your chosen university and program, as they may vary. Additionally, be aware that admission to Ph.D. programs in Australia can be highly competitive, so it's essential to prepare a strong application, including a compelling research proposal and letters of recommendation from academic referees.

As with all international study plans, it's advisable to start the application process well in advance to ensure you have enough time for the application and visa procedures.



## Letters of recommendation, personal essays or statements and extracurricular activities

When applying to universities in Australia as a Pakistani student, letters of recommendation, personal essays or statements, and extracurricular activities are important components of your application. These elements can help you stand out and demonstrate your qualifications and potential to the admissions committee. Here's a breakdown of how each of these components is typically considered:

### Letters of Recommendation (LORs):

Typically, you will need two or three letters of recommendation as part of your application. These should be from teachers, professors, or other individuals who are familiar with your academic abilities and character.

Choose recommenders who can provide specific examples of your achievements, character, and potential as a student.

Ensure your recommenders are aware of the programs or courses you are applying to and can tailor their recommendations accordingly.

### Personal Essays or Statements:

Many Australian universities require a personal statement or essay as part of the application process.

The essay is an opportunity to showcase your personal and academic background, motivations, and goals.

Be authentic and concise in your writing, and focus on what makes you a unique and suitable candidate for the program.

Address why you want to study in Australia, what you hope to achieve, and how the program aligns with your aspirations.

### Extracurricular Activities:

Include information about your extracurricular activities and achievements in your application.

Highlight any leadership roles, community service, or significant accomplishments in sports, arts, or other areas.

Emphasise how your extracurricular involvement has contributed to your personal growth and development.

Overall, demonstrating your academic excellence, motivation, and commitment through letters of recommendation, personal essays, and extracurricular activities can enhance your chances of being admitted to Australian universities as a Pakistani student.

## **Getting there**

Airfare: Return economy class ticket will cost USD 1,000 to USD 2,500 depending upon the airlines, route and date of booking the ticket.

Visas and other associated fees are in the range of USD 400-700.

It is advisable to check the visa fees and other requirements from the Australian embassy or government website.

## **University fees, funding and scholarships**

Studying in Australia can be an excellent opportunity for Pakistani students, but it's essential to consider the cost of university fees and explore funding and scholarship options. Here's an overview of university fees, funding, and scholarships for Pakistani students in Australia:

University Fees:

Tuition Fees: The tuition fees for international students in Australia vary depending on the course, university, and location. Courses like medicine and engineering may be more expensive than arts or humanities programs. Tuition fees can range from USD 20,000 to USD 50,000 or more per year.

Funding Options:

Scholarships: Scholarships are an excellent way to offset the cost of studying in Australia. There are various scholarships available for Pakistani students, both from Australian institutions and external organisations. Some scholarships are based on academic merit, while others may consider financial need or specific criteria.

**Part-Time Work:** International students in Australia are allowed to work part-time while studying, typically up to 20 hours per week during the semester and full-time during university holidays. Part-time work can help cover living expenses.

**Financial Aid:** Some universities offer financial aid or bursaries to international students facing financial difficulties. Check with the financial aid office of your chosen university for information on available options.

**Scholarship Opportunities:**

**Australian Government Scholarships:** The Australian government offers scholarships like the Australia Awards for students from eligible countries, including Pakistan. These scholarships cover tuition fees, living expenses, and travel costs.

**University Scholarships:** Many Australian universities offer scholarships to international students, including those from Pakistan. These scholarships can be based on academic excellence, leadership, or other criteria. Research and contact the universities you are interested in for details on available scholarships.

**External Scholarships:** Some organisations, both in Pakistan and internationally, offer scholarships for Pakistani students who wish to study in Australia. These may include government-funded programs, private foundations, or corporate sponsorships.

**Endeavour Scholarships and Fellowships:** The Australian government's Endeavour Scholarships and Fellowships program provides support to international students, researchers, and professionals. These scholarships cover a range of study and research opportunities.

When applying for scholarships, be sure to carefully review the eligibility criteria, application deadlines, and required documentation. Start your scholarship search well in advance to increase your chances of securing financial support for your studies in Australia. Additionally, consider seeking guidance from your chosen university's international student office or the Australian High Commission or Embassy in Pakistan for more information on available funding opportunities.

## **Living expenses**

The cost of living for Pakistani students in Australia can vary depending on the city, lifestyle, and personal choices.

**Accommodation:**

On-campus accommodation: USD 250 - 500 per week

Off-campus accommodation (renting or sharing a flat): USD 150 - 400 per week

Homestay (living with a host family): USD 200 - 3400 per week

**Food:**

Grocery shopping: USD 80 - 150 per week

Eating out (restaurants, cafes, etc.): USD 10 - 50 per meal

**Transportation:**

Public transportation (monthly pass): USD 50 - 200

Owning a bicycle: One-time cost of around USD 100 - 250

Owning a car (including fuel, insurance, and maintenance): Varies significantly

**Utilities:**

Electricity, heating, cooling, water, and gas: USD 50 - 100 per week

**Health Insurance (OSHC):**

Around USD 500 - 800 per year

**Phone and Internet:**

Mobile phone plan: USD 20 - 40 per month

Internet: USD 60 - 80 per month

**Entertainment and Miscellaneous:**

Entertainment, dining out, and other expenses: Varies by personal choice and lifestyle

The total cost of living for a student in Australia can vary greatly depending on the city, with cities like Sydney and Melbourne being more expensive than smaller cities or regional areas. To estimate your annual living expenses, you can use the above figures and multiply them by 52 weeks.

Please keep in mind that these estimates are based on information available, and living costs can change over time. It's advisable to check with the specific university you plan to attend and the Australian Department of Home Affairs for the most up-to-date information on living expenses and any additional costs associated with your specific program or location. Also, consider exchange rates when converting these amounts to USD.

# Studying in China

## Introduction

Studying in China as an international student can be a rewarding experience, but it requires careful planning and consideration. Research and select a program and university that best suits your academic and career goals. Make sure the university is recognised and accredited.

Determine the language of instruction for your chosen program. While some universities offer English-taught courses, many programs are conducted in Chinese. If studying in Chinese, you may need to demonstrate your proficiency in the language by passing the HSK (Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi) exam or other language tests.

Research the cost of living in your chosen city. Major cities like Beijing and Shanghai are more expensive than smaller cities. Create a budget that includes accommodation, food, transportation, and other expenses.

Learn about Chinese customs and etiquette. Be open to new experiences, make friends with local students, and explore the culture and traditions of China.

China is generally considered safe, but it's essential to be aware of your surroundings and follow safety guidelines. Be cautious with personal belongings and travel safely.

Make the most of your time in China by exploring the country, trying local cuisine, and participating in cultural events and activities.

Studying in China as an international student can be a transformative experience, offering a unique opportunity to immerse yourself in a different culture and gain a global perspective. Be sure to stay informed about any changes in regulations or requirements, and consult with the international office at your chosen university for specific guidance.

## Types of institutions where you can get a degree

In China, there are various types of institutions where you can earn a degree at different levels of education. These institutions cater to a wide range of academic fields and specialties. Here are the primary types of institutions where you can pursue a degree in China:

### Public Universities

China is home to numerous public universities that offer a wide range of degree programs at the undergraduate, postgraduate, and doctoral levels. Public universities in China receive government funding and are often known for their quality education and affordable tuition fees. Here are some well-known public universities in China:

Peking University (PKU):

Located in Beijing, Peking University is one of China's most prestigious universities, known for its strong academic programs across various fields, including science, humanities, and social sciences.

Tsinghua University:

Also situated in Beijing, Tsinghua University is another top-tier institution with a focus on science, engineering, and technology. It's often considered a counterpart to Peking University.

Fudan University:

Located in Shanghai, Fudan University is renowned for its comprehensive academic offerings, including business, social sciences, and liberal arts.

Zhejiang University:

Zhejiang University, based in Hangzhou, is known for its strong research programs and a wide variety of academic disciplines, including engineering and natural sciences.

Nanjing University:

Nanjing University, located in Nanjing, offers a wide range of programs and is especially known for its humanities and social sciences departments.

Shanghai Jiao Tong University (SJTU):

SJTU, in Shanghai, is prominent for its engineering, business, and technology programs. It is also known for the Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU), often referred to as the "Shanghai Rankings."

Sun Yat-sen University:

Situated in Guangzhou, Sun Yat-sen University is recognized for its medical and business programs, among other academic disciplines.

Wuhan University:

Wuhan University, located in Wuhan, offers a wide array of academic programs and is particularly known for its research in natural and social sciences.

Xiamen University:

Xiamen University, in Xiamen, is renowned for its business, economics, and environmental science programs.

Sichuan University:

Sichuan University, based in Chengdu, offers a variety of programs and is recognized for its research in science and technology fields.

These are just a few examples of the many public universities in China. Each of these institutions has its unique strengths and may specialise in specific academic disciplines. When considering a public university in China, be sure to research the specific programs, faculty, and facilities to find the one that best aligns with your academic and career goals. Additionally, consider the location of the university, as the cities where these universities are situated offer diverse cultural and lifestyle experiences.

## **Private Universities**

While public universities are more common in China, there are also some private universities that offer a range of degree programs. Private universities in China are relatively newer compared to their public counterparts, and they often focus on specific academic fields or niche areas. Here are a few examples of private universities in China:

Xiamen University Malaysia Campus:

Xiamen University's Malaysia Campus is a branch of the prestigious Xiamen University. It offers a variety of undergraduate and postgraduate programs, primarily in business and economics.

Wenzhou-Kean University (WKU):

Wenzhou-Kean University is a cooperative venture between Wenzhou University and Kean University in the United States. It offers undergraduate programs in various fields, including business, computer science, and the liberal arts.

NYU Shanghai:

New York University Shanghai is a partnership between New York University and East China Normal University. It offers undergraduate programs in various disciplines with a global perspective.

Duke Kunshan University:

Duke Kunshan University is a joint venture between Duke University in the United States and Wuhan University. It offers undergraduate, master's, and doctoral programs in areas such as global health, environmental management, and business.

Beijing Normal University-Hong Kong Baptist University United International College (UIC):

UIC is a partnership between Beijing Normal University and Hong Kong Baptist University. It provides undergraduate programs in a wide range of fields, including business, liberal arts, and social sciences.

Zhejiang University of Media and Communications (ZUMC):

ZUMC is a private institution that focuses on media and communications studies. It offers undergraduate and postgraduate programs in journalism, communication, and related fields.

ShanghaiTech University:

ShanghaiTech University is a research-focused private university offering undergraduate and postgraduate programs in science, technology, and business.

Shenzhen MSU-BIT University (MSU-BIT):

MSU-BIT is a collaboration between Lomonosov Moscow State University (MSU) and the Beijing Institute of Technology (BIT). It provides programs in fields such as mathematics, physics, and computer science.



Please note that the landscape of private universities in China is still developing, and the number of private institutions is relatively small compared to public universities. Private universities in China often collaborate with foreign institutions to provide internationally recognized programs and degrees. When considering a private university in China, ensure that the university and its programs are accredited and meet your academic and career goals. Additionally, you may find that private universities tend to be more expensive than public universities in China.

## **Specialised Universities**

China has specialised universities that focus on specific fields, such as medical universities, engineering universities, and language universities. For example, Tongji University is known for its engineering programs, and Beijing Language and Culture University is renowned for language studies.

## **Vocational Colleges**

Vocational colleges offer practical, hands-on training in various fields, including technical and vocational education. These colleges typically offer shorter degree programs, such as diplomas and certificates, focused on specific career skills.

## **Online and Open Universities**

China has online and open universities that offer distance education and allow students to pursue degrees through online courses. Examples include the Open University of China and various online degree programs offered by traditional universities.

## **Hong Kong and Macau Universities**

While administratively distinct from mainland China, universities in Hong Kong and Macau are highly regarded and offer a wide range of degree programs. Some of the top universities in these regions include the University of Hong Kong and the University of Macau.

## **Foreign Joint-Venture Universities**

China hosts a number of joint-venture universities in partnership with foreign institutions. These universities offer programs taught in English and confer degrees recognised both in China and the partner country.

## **International Programs at Chinese Universities**

Many Chinese universities offer international programs where courses are taught in English to attract foreign students. These programs often lead to degrees recognized globally.

### **Language Institutes**

Language institutes, like the Beijing Language and Culture University, focus on teaching Chinese language and culture. They may also offer degree programs in fields related to language and culture studies.

### **Art and Music Schools**

China has prestigious art and music schools that offer degree programs in fine arts, music, and related creative disciplines. The Central Academy of Fine Arts and the Shanghai Conservatory of Music are notable examples.

### **Business Schools**

Chinese business schools and management institutes provide programs in business administration and related fields. They are known for their MBA and other business-related degrees.

When considering where to pursue a degree in China, it's important to research the specific institutions and programs that align with your academic and career goals. Each type of institution has its unique strengths and areas of expertise, so choose one that best suits your needs and interests. Additionally, ensure that the institution is accredited and recognized by relevant authorities in China.

## **Academic entrance requirements**

### **Bachelor's Programs:**

To apply for a bachelor's program in China as a Pakistani student, you'll need to meet certain academic and application requirements. These requirements can vary slightly depending on the university and program, so it's essential to check with the specific university you are interested in. However, here are the general requirements for Pakistani students applying for bachelor's programs in China:

Eligibility:

You should have completed your high school education and obtained a Higher Secondary School Certificate (HSSC) or an equivalent qualification for example A levels or IB from an accredited educational institution in Pakistan. Some universities may have other requirements.

#### Academic Qualifications:

You will need to provide transcripts and certificates from your high school, demonstrating your academic performance and grades. Some universities may require a minimum GPA or specific subject prerequisites.

#### Language Proficiency:

As most bachelor's programs in China are taught in Chinese, you may need to demonstrate proficiency in the Chinese language. This often involves taking the HSK (Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi) exam, which assesses your Chinese language skills. The specific HSK level required can vary by program and university. Some universities may also offer programs in English, in which case you might need to provide proof of English proficiency through exams like IELTS or TOEFL.

#### Application Form:

Complete the university's application form. This can usually be done online through the university's admissions portal. Some universities may also require a hard copy of the application form.

#### Application Fee:

Pay the application fee, which varies from one university to another. The fee is non-refundable and covers the processing of your application.

#### Interview (if required):

Some universities may require an interview as part of the application process. This may be conducted in person or through video conferencing.

#### Application Deadline:

Be mindful of the application deadlines. Different universities have different deadlines for bachelor's program applications, and it's essential to apply within the specified timeframe.

It's important to contact the university or check their official website for the most up-to-date and specific application requirements and procedures for the bachelor's program you are interested in. Additionally,

you should also consult the Chinese embassy or consulate in Pakistan for information on student visas and the latest regulations regarding studying in China.

## **Master's Programs:**

To pursue a master's program in China as a Pakistani student, you'll generally need to meet certain requirements and follow a specific application process. Keep in mind that requirements may vary depending on the university and the specific program you're interested in, so it's important to research and verify the requirements for the institution and program of your choice. Here are some general steps and requirements:

**Choose a Program and University:**

Research and select the master's program and university that align with your academic and career goals.

**Eligibility Requirements:**

Possess a bachelor's degree or its equivalent from a recognized institution. Make sure your degree is recognized in Pakistan and meets the university's requirements.

Some universities may specify minimum GPA or academic qualifications for admission.

**Language Proficiency:**

Many Chinese universities offer programs in English. If you plan to study in English, you may need to provide proof of English proficiency. Commonly accepted tests include IELTS, TOEFL, or equivalent.

If you plan to study in Chinese, you may need to demonstrate proficiency in the Chinese language, typically through the HSK (Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi) exam.

**Prepare Required Documents:**

Prepare the necessary documents, which may include:

- Transcripts and diplomas from your previous educational institutions.
- Passport copy.
- Curriculum Vitae (CV) or resume.
- Statement of Purpose (SOP).
- Letters of recommendation.

- Standardised test scores (if required).
- Passport-size photographs.
- Proof of financial support.

#### Application:

Complete the online application form provided by the university. Each university may have its own online application portal.

Pay the application fee, which varies depending on the university.

Remember to start the application process well in advance, as deadlines, requirements, and procedures can vary between universities and programs. It's essential to contact the specific university's international admission office for the most up-to-date and detailed information on their application process and requirements.

### **PhD Programs:**

The requirements for Pakistani students to pursue a Ph.D. program in China can vary depending on the university and the specific program you are interested in. However, there are some common requirements and steps you can follow:

#### Eligibility:

You should have a relevant master's degree in a field related to your intended Ph.D. program.

You should have a strong academic record and meet the minimum GPA requirements of the university you are applying to.

#### Proficiency in English or Chinese:

If your program is taught in English, you may need to provide proof of your English language proficiency through tests like IELTS or TOEFL.

If your program is taught in Chinese, you may need to demonstrate your Chinese language proficiency through tests like HSK.

#### Research Proposal:

Most Ph.D. programs in China require you to submit a detailed research proposal outlining your intended research topic and objectives.

#### Application:

Apply to the university and specific Ph.D. program you are interested in. You can usually do this online through the university's admission portal or by contacting the university's international admissions office.

#### Required Documents:

Prepare and submit the following documents:

- Application form (provided by the university).
- Copies of your academic transcripts and certificates, including your master's degree.
- Your research proposal.
- Letters of recommendation from professors or researchers who are familiar with your academic work.
- Proof of English or Chinese language proficiency, if required.
- Passport copy.
- A passport-sized photo.
- Any other documents as specified by the university.

#### Entrance Examination:

Some universities may require you to take an entrance examination, especially for programs in fields like medicine or engineering.

#### Interview:

You may be required to attend an interview with the faculty or admissions committee as part of the selection process.

It's essential to check the specific admission requirements for the university and program you are interested in, as they can vary. You should also pay attention to application deadlines, as they may differ from one university to another.

## Letters of recommendation, personal essays or statements and extracurricular activities

When applying to universities in China, Pakistani students, like students from any other country, typically need to provide a variety of application materials. These may include letters of recommendation, personal essays or statements, and information about your extracurricular activities. Here's a breakdown of what you might need:

### Letters of Recommendation:

These should typically come from teachers or professors who are familiar with your academic work and can speak to your abilities and potential.

Aim to have at least two or three strong letters of recommendation. Check the specific requirements of the universities you're applying to as some may have their own guidelines.

Ensure that your recommenders are aware of the application deadlines and are willing to submit the letters on time.

### Personal Essays or Statements:

Many Chinese universities require a personal statement or essay. This is your opportunity to showcase your personality, interests, and why you want to study in China.

Be sure to address any specific prompts or questions provided by the university. If there are no specific prompts, focus on why you're interested in the program and how it aligns with your academic and career goals.

Highlight any unique experiences, challenges you've overcome, and your future ambitions.

### Extracurricular Activities:

Include a comprehensive list of your extracurricular activities, both in and out of school. This can include participation in sports, clubs, volunteer work, internships, and any leadership roles you've held.

Highlight experiences that demonstrate your leadership, teamwork, and dedication.

Explain how your extracurricular activities have contributed to your personal growth and how they connect to your academic and career goals.

In addition to these application materials, you will also need to complete the standard application form provided by the university or the Chinese university application system. You may need to submit your academic transcripts, standardised test scores (e.g., SAT, ACT, or the Chinese College Entrance Examination), a copy of your passport, and proof of English language proficiency (if the program is taught in English).

Make sure to carefully review the application requirements and deadlines for each university you are interested in, as they may vary. Additionally, consider seeking guidance from educational consultants or reaching out to the admissions offices of the universities you plan to apply to for specific advice tailored to your situation.

## **Costs**

### **Getting there**

Airfare: Return Economy class ticket is in the range of USD 1,000- USD 1,500 depending on the airlines and when you book.

Visas cost ranges from USD 20-50 depending on the type of visa you have applied and associated costs.

It's important to note that visa fees can change over time, and there may be variations depending on the specific Chinese consulate or visa application centre you use in Pakistan. Therefore, I recommend checking the latest visa fees on the official website of the Chinese embassy or consulate in Pakistan or the website of the Chinese Visa Application Service Center (CVASC) serving Pakistan. Additionally, you can contact these offices directly for the most up-to-date information on visa fees and application procedures.

Keep in mind that the application process may also require you to provide various documents, such as your admission letter from a Chinese university, a valid passport, passport-sized photos, and other necessary supporting documents. Make sure to plan ahead and submit your visa application well in advance of your intended departure date to allow for processing time.



## University fees, funding and scholarships

The cost of university fees in China for Pakistani students can vary depending on the university, degree program, and location. China offers a wide range of universities, some of which are highly prestigious and may have higher tuition fees, while others are more affordable. Here are some general considerations for university fees, funding options, and scholarships for Pakistani students in China:

### University Fees:

Tuition fees in China can vary widely. Public universities in China tend to have lower tuition fees compared to private institutions.

The cost of tuition can also depend on the level of education (undergraduate, postgraduate, doctoral) and the specific program of study.

### Tuition fees for public universities:

Tuition fees for public universities in China can vary depending on the university, the specific program, and whether you are an international student or a Chinese national. Here's a general overview of the range of tuition fees you can expect at public universities in China for international students:

### Undergraduate Programs:

Tuition fees for undergraduate programs in public universities can range from approximately \$2,000 to \$10,000 or more per academic year. However, some prestigious universities may have slightly higher fees.

### Master's Programs:

Tuition fees for master's programs typically fall within a similar range, from around \$2,000 to \$10,000 per academic year. Again, fees may be higher at well-known institutions.

### Doctoral Programs:

Doctoral program tuition fees can vary but are generally in a similar range as master's programs, typically from around \$2,000 to \$10,000 per academic year.

### Private Universities:

Private universities in China typically charge higher tuition fees for international students compared to public universities. However, the exact tuition fees can vary significantly from one institution to another and depend on the specific program and level of study. Here's a general overview of the range of tuition fees you can expect at private universities in China for international students:

#### Undergraduate Programs:

Tuition fees for undergraduate programs at private universities in China can range from approximately \$5,000 to \$20,000 or more per academic year. Some highly ranked private universities may charge even higher fees.

#### Master's Programs:

Tuition fees for master's programs typically fall within a similar range, from around \$5,000 to \$20,000 per academic year.

#### Doctoral Programs:

Doctoral program tuition fees at private universities may be in a similar range as master's programs, typically from around \$5,000 to \$20,000 per academic year.

Keep in mind that these are approximate ranges, and the actual tuition fees can vary depending on the university and the specific program you are interested in.

Tuition fees for international students may be higher than those for Chinese students, but they are still generally more affordable than in many Western countries.

#### Scholarships:

**Chinese Government Scholarships:** The Chinese government offers a range of scholarships to international students, including the Chinese Government Scholarship (CSC Scholarship). These scholarships can cover tuition, accommodation, and living expenses. Pakistani students are eligible to apply for these scholarships.

**University Scholarships:** Many Chinese universities offer scholarships and financial aid to international students. These scholarships may be based on academic merit, need, or other criteria.

**Pakistan-China Joint Scholarships:** There are bilateral scholarship programs between Pakistan and China that may provide financial assistance to Pakistani students studying in China. Check with the Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan for information on these opportunities.

**External Scholarships:**

Additionally, there are international scholarships and programs that Pakistani students can explore, such as those offered by organisations like the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission, Fulbright Program, and others. These scholarships may support studies in China.

**Part-Time Work:**

Some Chinese universities may allow international students to work part-time during their studies, although the regulations can vary. Part-time work can help you cover living expenses.

It's crucial to check the official website of the specific private university you are interested in or contact their admissions office to obtain the most up-to-date and accurate information on tuition fees, scholarships, and financial aid opportunities for international students.

When considering studying in China, it's essential to research the specific universities and programs you are interested in, as well as the associated costs. Additionally, reach out to the Chinese embassy or consulate in Pakistan, the Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan, and the admissions offices of your chosen universities for the most current information on scholarships and financial support opportunities.

## **Living expenses**

The cost of living for international students in China can vary depending on the city and lifestyle choices. Major cities like Beijing and Shanghai tend to have higher living costs than smaller cities. I can provide a general overview of the typical living expenses in China:

**Accommodation:**

**On-campus dormitory:** On-campus housing is often more affordable, with prices ranging from \$100 to \$500 per month, depending on the university and the type of room.

Off-campus apartments: Rent for off-campus apartments can vary widely depending on the city and the location. In major cities, you might pay anywhere from \$300 to \$800 or more per month for a one-bedroom apartment.

Food:

Meals can be relatively inexpensive in China, especially if you eat at local restaurants and street food stalls. On average, you might spend around \$150 to \$300 per month on food, but this can vary depending on your eating habits and whether you cook at home or eat out.

Transportation:

Public transportation in China is generally affordable. Monthly transportation costs can range from \$20 to \$50, depending on the city and how often you use buses, subways, and taxis.

Health Insurance:

International students are often required to have health insurance. The cost of health insurance can vary but is typically in the range of \$200 to \$500 per year, depending on the coverage provided.

Books and Supplies:

This cost can vary widely depending on your program of study, but you might budget around \$100 to \$300 per year for books and supplies.

Miscellaneous Expenses:

Miscellaneous expenses can include entertainment, personal items, and other discretionary spending. Budgeting an additional \$100 to \$200 per month for these expenses is a reasonable estimate.

Please note that these are approximate estimates, and the actual cost of living can vary depending on your personal choices and the specific city in which you're studying. It is essential to check with your university and relevant authorities for the most current information on living expenses for international students in China.

# Studying in the UK

## Introduction

The UK is the most desired destination for education by Pakistanis. Around 10% of UK universities are in the top 1500 ranked universities in the world. Studying in the UK has its advantages for example English, family and friends connections, cultural diversity and shorter degree programmes.

But there are complications - cost of education and living is expensive, visa and work requirements are becoming harder and there is limited financial aid.

The UK comprises England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. We will be covering universities across the UK, but the majority of well ranked universities are in England and Scotland.

It's crucial to carefully weigh the advantages and disadvantages when considering studying in the UK. Additionally, research your chosen university, program, and location to determine if they align with your academic and personal goals. Planning and preparation can help you make an informed decision and ensure a positive educational experience in the UK.

## Types of institutions where you can get a degree

### Public Universities

Public universities in the United Kingdom are higher education institutions that receive government funding and are operated by government-appointed boards or councils. They are also commonly referred to as "state-funded" or "government-funded" universities. These institutions are known for their high academic standards, research output, and commitment to providing quality education to students.

Here are some key aspects of public universities in the UK:

**Funding:** Public universities in the UK receive a significant portion of their funding from the government, making them more affordable for domestic students in terms of tuition fees compared to private universities. International students, however, often pay higher tuition fees.

**Governance:** Public universities are typically governed by a combination of university councils and government oversight. These universities are subject to regulations and policies set by the government and are accountable for the use of public funds.

**Quality Assurance:** The quality of education at public universities is monitored and maintained through various mechanisms, including regular inspections and assessments by organisations like the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA). These evaluations ensure that universities meet established standards for teaching and research.

**Research:** Many public universities in the UK are renowned for their research activities and are often involved in cutting-edge research across various fields. Research conducted at these universities contributes to advancements in science, technology, and various other disciplines.

**Academic Excellence:** Public universities in the UK are known for their high academic standards and rigorous academic programs. They offer a wide range of undergraduate, postgraduate, and doctoral programs in diverse fields of study.

**Diversity:** Public universities in the UK are typically diverse in terms of student and staff populations. They welcome students from various backgrounds and nationalities, creating a multicultural and inclusive learning environment.

**Alumni Networks:** Many public universities in the UK have large and influential alumni networks, which can provide opportunities for graduates in terms of career development and networking.

Well known public universities include:

**University of Oxford:** Located in Oxford, England, the University of Oxford is one of the oldest and most prestigious universities in the world.

**University of Cambridge:** Also one of the oldest and most prestigious universities globally, the University of Cambridge is located in Cambridge, England.

**Imperial College London:** Located in London, Imperial College is known for its strong focus on science, engineering, medicine, and business.

University College London (UCL): UCL is one of the largest and most diverse universities in the UK, offering a wide range of programs in various fields.

King's College London: Located in the heart of London, King's College is known for its excellent research and teaching.

University of Edinburgh: Located in Scotland's capital, the University of Edinburgh is one of the UK's leading research universities.

University of Manchester: Situated in Manchester, England, this university is known for its strong emphasis on research and innovation.

University of Birmingham: Located in Birmingham, this university is renowned for its research and strong business connections.

University of Glasgow: Located in Glasgow, Scotland, the university has a strong reputation for research and teaching.

University of Bristol: This university is located in Bristol, England, and is known for its high academic standards and research output.

These are just a few examples, and the UK has numerous other public universities and higher education institutions that offer a wide range of programs and degrees.

## **Private universities**

Private universities in the UK are institutions of higher education that are not funded by the government and operate independently. They often have more flexibility in terms of program offerings, admission criteria, and tuition fees compared to publicly funded universities. Here are some private universities in the UK:

University of Buckingham: The University of Buckingham was the UK's first independent university and offers a range of undergraduate and postgraduate programs.

Regent's University London: Located in the heart of London, Regent's University offers a variety of programs in business, humanities, and the arts.

Richmond, The American International University in London: Richmond offers American-style education in the UK with a focus on liberal arts and business programs.

The University of Law: Specialising in law and business-related courses, this university has multiple campuses across the UK.

Arts University Bournemouth: Focused on creative and arts-related disciplines, AUB offers undergraduate and postgraduate courses.

The University of Chichester (for some programs): While most of its programs are publicly funded, the University of Chichester offers a few programs on a private basis.

BPP University: BPP University is a private institution specialising in law, business, and health programs. It is known for its professional and vocational courses.

Please note that some universities may have a combination of public and private funding for different programs, so it's essential to research specific institutions and their offerings to determine whether they are private or publicly funded for your chosen field of study. Additionally, tuition fees at private universities can be significantly higher than at publicly funded universities, so it's essential to consider your financial situation when applying to these institutions.

## **Russell Group Universities**

The Russell Group is a prestigious association of 24 research-intensive universities in the UK. These universities are known for their high research output and academic excellence. Examples include the University of Oxford, the University of Cambridge, Imperial College London, and the London School of Economics.

Admissions requirements for Russell Group universities can vary depending on the specific university, the program of study, and the competition for places, but there are some common general guidelines:

**Academic Qualifications:** Most Russell Group universities require strong academic qualifications. This typically includes A-levels, the International Baccalaureate (IB), or equivalent qualifications. Entry requirements can vary by university and program, but they often ask for high grades in relevant subjects.

**Entrance Exams:** Some programs or universities may require additional entrance exams or tests, such as the UK Clinical Aptitude Test (UKCAT) for medical programs or the Law National Aptitude Test (LNAT) for law programs.

**Interview:** Some Russell Group universities may require an interview as part of the admission process, particularly for competitive courses.



English Language Proficiency: Recommended is an IELTS score of 7 for an undergraduate programme and 7.5 for a postgraduate programme for admission to a Russell Group university.

Admission is highly competitive for Russell Group universities, so having strong academic qualifications, a well-crafted personal statement, and good references is crucial.

Additionally, keep in mind that entry requirements and processes may change over time, so it's essential to verify the most up-to-date information on the official websites of the universities.

## **Specialist Universities**

Some universities in the UK specialise in specific fields of study. For example, the Royal College of Art is renowned for art and design, while the Royal Veterinary College focuses on veterinary medicine.

## **Open Universities**

The Open University in the UK specialises in distance education and provides a flexible learning experience, allowing students to study at their own pace.

## **Conservatoires**

These institutions are dedicated to the performing arts, music, and drama. Examples include the Royal Academy of Music and the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland.

## **Cathedral Group Universities**

A group of newer universities that have a history as polytechnics and are often located in cathedral cities.

## Scottish Universities

In Scotland, the higher education system is somewhat different from that in the rest of the UK.

Universities like the University of St Andrews, University of Glasgow, and the University of Aberdeen are well-known.

## Academic entrance requirements

### Bachelor's Programs:

The specific requirements for a Pakistani student to pursue a bachelor's degree in the UK may vary depending on the university and the program you are interested in. However, I can provide you with some general guidelines and common requirements that you can expect when applying for a bachelor's program in the UK as a Pakistani student:

#### Academic Qualifications:

You will typically need to have completed your A-levels or the International Baccalaureate, Intermediate or Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) with high scores, suitable Foundation programme, two year Bachelor of Arts (BA), Bachelor of Commerce (BCom) or Bachelor of Science (BSc) degrees.

#### English Language Proficiency:

English language proficiency is crucial for studying in the UK. You will likely be required to provide proof of your English language skills through an English language proficiency test such as IELTS, TOEFL, or PTE Academic. The required score can vary by institution and program, but a typical minimum IELTS score might be around 6.0 to 7.0.

#### University Application:

You will need to apply directly to the universities of your choice through the UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service) system for undergraduate programs. You can choose up to five universities and programs in a single application.

#### Personal Statement:

Most UK universities require a personal statement as part of the application process. This is an opportunity for you to explain why you want to study the chosen program and why you are a suitable candidate.

Letters of Recommendation:

Some universities may ask for letters of recommendation from teachers or other individuals who can vouch for your academic abilities and character.

Application Fee:

Be prepared to pay an application fee when submitting your UCAS application. The fee amount can vary, so check the UCAS website for the most up-to-date information.

Financial Documentation:

You will also need to provide evidence of your ability to cover the cost of tuition fees and living expenses. This may involve submitting bank statements or other financial documents to prove you can support yourself while studying in the UK.

Visa Requirements:

Once you receive an offer of admission, you will need to apply for a Tier 4 (General) student visa to study in the UK. You will need to meet specific financial requirements and provide relevant documents to obtain the visa.

It's important to note that entry requirements and application procedures can vary from one institution to another, so it's essential to check the specific requirements of the universities and programs you are interested in. Additionally, it's a good idea to start the application process well in advance, as there may be deadlines to meet, especially for highly competitive programs and universities.

## **Foundation Pathway to Bachelors Programme**

A foundation pathway or foundation course is an academic program designed to prepare international students, including those from Pakistan, for entry into undergraduate degree programs at universities in the UK. These courses are particularly helpful if your prior education doesn't directly meet the entry requirements for your desired bachelor's program or if you need to improve your English language skills. Here are some key points about foundation pathways in the UK:

**Purpose:** Foundation pathways serve as a bridge between your current qualifications (such as your Intermediate Qualification) and the entry requirements for undergraduate programs at UK universities. They help you develop the necessary academic and English language skills.

**Duration:** Foundation courses in the UK typically last one academic year, although some may be shorter or longer depending on your needs and the university's program.

**Subjects:** Foundation courses are available in a wide range of subjects, including business, engineering, science, arts, and more. You can choose a foundation course that aligns with your intended field of study.

**Entry Requirements:** The specific entry requirements for a foundation course will vary depending on the institution and the course. However, as a general guideline, you may need to have completed your secondary education (e.g., HSSC in Pakistan) and meet English language proficiency requirements, which can often be met through IELTS or other recognized English language tests.

**Content:** Foundation pathways typically consist of academic modules relevant to your chosen field of study, as well as modules that focus on English language and study skills development.

**Progression:** Successfully completing a foundation course will often guarantee you entry into a related undergraduate program at the same university. It's important to check with the university to understand the specific progression agreements and requirements.

**Application:** You can apply for foundation courses through the universities' websites or UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service) if the course is listed there. Be sure to check application deadlines and requirements for the specific foundation program you're interested in.

**Financial Considerations:** Foundation courses have tuition fees, and you will need to show financial evidence to cover the costs, including tuition fees and living expenses, when applying for a student visa.

Foundation pathways can be a valuable option for students who wish to study in the UK but need additional preparation before beginning their undergraduate degree. It's important to research different universities and their foundation programs to find the one that best fits your academic and career goals.

## **Master's Programs:**

When applying for a master's program in the UK from Pakistan, you will need to meet specific entry requirements set by the universities and the UK Home Office. Here are the typical requirements and steps to follow:

#### Academic Qualifications:

You will generally need a bachelor's degree from a recognised institution. Most universities in the UK require a bachelor's degree equivalent to a UK undergraduate degree. The specific GPA or degree classification required may vary depending on the program and university.

#### English Language Proficiency:

If your first language is not English, you will likely need to demonstrate your English language proficiency. Commonly accepted English language tests include IELTS (International English Language Testing System) or TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language). Each university sets its own minimum score requirements, so check the specific requirements of the program to which you are applying.

#### Standardised Tests (if required):

Some master's programs may require standardised test scores like the GRE (Graduate Record Examination) or GMAT (Graduate Management Admission Test). Check the program's admission requirements to see if these tests are necessary.

#### Transcripts:

You will need to provide official transcripts of your academic records, including your bachelor's degree. Transcripts should be translated into English if they are in another language.

#### Letters of Recommendation:

Many master's programs require letters of recommendation from academic or professional references. These letters should speak to your qualifications and potential for success in the program.

#### Statement of Purpose/Personal Statement:

Write a compelling personal statement outlining your academic and career goals, reasons for choosing the specific program, and how it aligns with your aspirations. This is an essential part of your application.

#### Application Form:

Complete the university's online application form. This is where you will submit your personal information, academic history, and other required documents.

#### Visa Requirements:

As a Pakistani student, you will typically need to apply for a Tier 4 (General) student visa. You'll need a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) from your university to apply for the visa. Check the UK government's official website for visa application instructions.

#### Financial Documentation:

You may need to provide evidence of your ability to cover tuition fees and living expenses in the UK. This often includes bank statements, scholarship award letters, or a financial sponsor's letter.

#### Interviews (if required):

Some universities or programs may require an interview as part of the application process.

It's essential to carefully review the admission requirements for the specific master's program and university to which you're applying, as these requirements can vary. Pay close attention to application deadlines and ensure that you have all the necessary documents in order to submit a complete application. Additionally, seek guidance from the university's admissions office or a reputable education consultant in Pakistan to navigate the application process effectively.

### **PhD Programs:**

The entry requirements for a Ph.D. program in the UK for Pakistani students can vary depending on the university and the specific program you are interested in. However, there are some common requirements and steps to consider:

#### Educational Qualifications:

A relevant master's degree: Typically, you will need a master's degree in a related field to the Ph.D. program you wish to pursue. Some universities may accept students with an undergraduate degree and relevant research experience, but a master's degree is often preferred.

#### English Language Proficiency:

Most UK universities require international students, including those from Pakistan, to demonstrate their English language proficiency. The most commonly accepted tests are the IELTS (International English Language Testing System) and TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language).

#### Research Proposal:

You will need to prepare a research proposal outlining the research topic, objectives, methodology, and significance of your proposed research project. The quality of your proposal is often a crucial factor in the admission decision.

#### Academic Transcripts and Certificates:

You will need to submit your academic transcripts and certificates from your previous educational institutions, including your master's degree.

#### References:

Most universities will require you to provide letters of recommendation from academic or professional references who can speak to your qualifications and ability to pursue a Ph.D.

#### Application Form and Fee:

Complete the university's application form and pay the application fee.

#### Interview:

Some Ph.D. programs may require an interview as part of the admissions process.

#### Funding:

Secure funding: You may need to secure funding for your Ph.D. studies, either through scholarships, grants, or personal financing. Many universities offer scholarships and funding opportunities for international students.

#### Visa:

Obtain a student visa: If you are accepted into a Ph.D. program, you will need to apply for a Tier 4 (General) student visa to study in the UK.

It's essential to check the specific admission requirements of the university and Ph.D. program you are interested in, as these requirements may vary from one institution to another. Additionally, be aware of application deadlines, as they can vary depending on the university and program. It's a good idea to contact the university's admissions office or visit their website for the most up-to-date and detailed information regarding their Ph.D. admission process and requirements.

## **Letters of recommendation, personal essays or statements and extracurricular activities**

When applying to UK universities, especially for undergraduate programs, you may be required to submit letters of recommendation, personal essays or statements, and information about your extracurricular activities. These components are important in helping universities assess your qualifications and suitability for their programs. Here's a breakdown of each requirement:

### Letters of Recommendation:

Typically, UK universities require two or sometimes three letters of recommendation. These letters should come from individuals who can speak to your academic abilities, character, and potential for success in your chosen field of study.

Referees can include teachers, professors, counsellors, or employers who are familiar with your work and character.

Letters of recommendation should be submitted directly to the universities by your referees and should be on official letterhead.

### Personal Essays or Statements:

Personal statements are a crucial part of your application to UK universities. They provide you with the opportunity to showcase your academic and personal qualifications.

Personal statements should be well-structured and focused on your academic interests, career goals, and why you are interested in the specific course or program.

Your personal statement should reflect your motivation, aspirations, and any relevant experiences that demonstrate your suitability for the course.

It's essential to follow word or character limits imposed by each university.

### Extracurricular Activities:

Many UK universities value students' involvement in extracurricular activities, as they look for well-rounded individuals.



In your application, you may be asked to list and describe your extracurricular activities, which can include sports, clubs, volunteer work, internships, hobbies, or any other interests that demonstrate your skills, interests, and leadership qualities.

Highlight any positions of responsibility or achievements within these activities.

Here are some general tips for each component of your application:

Letters of Recommendation:

Choose referees who know you well and can provide specific examples of your qualifications.

Provide your referees with information about the programs you are applying to and why you're interested in them.

Personal Essays or Statements:

Be concise and focused on your goals and motivations.

Show how your background and experiences have prepared you for the program.

Edit and proofread your statement to ensure it is well-written and free of errors.

Extracurricular Activities:

Include a diverse range of activities to showcase your interests and skills.

Highlight how these activities have contributed to your personal and intellectual growth.

Each university may have its specific requirements and guidelines for these application components, so it's crucial to carefully read the instructions provided by each institution. Make sure to meet all the application deadlines and submit your materials as per their guidelines.

## **Costs**

### **Getting there**

Airfare: The cost of a plane ticket is one of the most significant expenses. Economy class tickets are typically less expensive than business or first class. Prices can vary widely, but you can expect to pay

more during peak travel seasons. Booking well in advance can sometimes result in lower fares. Travel will cost USD 750 to USD 1,200 depending upon when you book and which airlines you book.

**Visa Fees:** The student visa fees for the UK can vary depending on the type of visa you're applying for and your circumstances. The fees may change over time, so it's crucial to check the latest information on the official UK government website or the website of the UK embassy for the most up-to-date fee information. The fees are typically subject to change.

Here are some general guidelines for the student visa fees in the UK:

**Student Visa (Tier 4 or Student Route) for courses longer than 6 months:** The application fee for a Tier 4 or Student Route visa for courses longer than 6 months can vary based on your location. As of October 2023, the standard application fee was GBP 490.

**Dependents:** If you plan to take family members (dependents) with you to the UK, you will need to pay additional fees for their applications. From January 2024, international students in the UK will no longer be able to bring dependents on their Student visa, unless they are studying a postgraduate research programme.

**Healthcare Surcharge:**

In addition to the application fee, you may be required to pay the Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS) of GBP 776, as of October 2023, as part of your visa application. This surcharge covers access to the National Health Service (NHS) during your stay in the UK.

**Priority and Premium Services:**

If you need your visa application to be processed faster, you can pay extra for priority or premium services, which can significantly increase the overall cost.

It's essential to review the specific fee information on the official UK government website or contact the UK embassy or consulate in Pakistan for the most accurate and current information regarding student visa fees.

## University fees, funding and scholarships

University fees, funding, and scholarships for UK universities can vary depending on the university, course, and the level of study (undergraduate or postgraduate). Here is an overview of the general information regarding university fees, funding options, and scholarships for Pakistani students in the UK:

### University Tuition Fees:

Tuition fees for international students in the UK can be relatively high. The fees vary depending on the course, location, and university, but on average, they can range from £10,000 to £35,000 or more per year for undergraduate courses, and even higher for postgraduate programs, such as master's and PhDs. Medicine and related programs tend to be more expensive.

### Funding and Financial Support:

There are several ways Pakistani students can explore to fund their education in the UK:

**Government Scholarships:** The Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan offers scholarships for students to study abroad, including in the UK. Check their official website for the latest information on scholarship programs.

**British Government Scholarships:** The UK government offers various scholarship schemes for international students, such as the Chevening Scholarships and the Commonwealth Scholarships. These scholarships cover tuition fees, living expenses, and other allowances.

**University Scholarships:** Many UK universities offer scholarships and financial aid to international students, including those from Pakistan. These scholarships are based on academic excellence, specific courses, or other criteria. Check with the university you're interested in for available opportunities.

**External Scholarships:** There are several external organisations and foundations that offer scholarships to Pakistani students to study in the UK. Some examples include the Fulbright Program and the Joint Japan/World Bank Graduate Scholarship Program.

**Part-Time Work:** International students in the UK are allowed to work part-time during their studies. This can help you cover living expenses, but it may not be sufficient to cover tuition fees.

**Educational Loans:** Some Pakistani banks offer education loans for students planning to study abroad. You can inquire with your local bank about such options.

It's essential to research specific universities and courses, their associated costs, and available scholarships and financial support options. Each university may have its own criteria for scholarships and bursaries, so it's advisable to check the university's official website or contact their admissions or international office for detailed information.

## **Getting there**

**Accommodation:** The cost of accommodation will depend on whether you choose to live in university halls, private student accommodation, or rent a private apartment. On average, you can expect to spend around £6,000 to £12,000 per year on accommodation, but this cost can vary widely depending on the city and type of accommodation.

**Living Expenses:** You'll need to budget for living expenses, including food, transportation, textbooks, and personal items. As a rough estimate, you might need around £8,000 to £12,000 per year for these expenses.

**Health Insurance:** In general, Pakistani students who are studying in the UK for six months or longer may be eligible for free NHS healthcare. To qualify, you usually need to pay the Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS) as part of your visa application. The IHS covers your access to NHS services during your stay. The exact cost of the IHS and its requirements can change, so it's important to verify the current details through the UK government's official website.

**Miscellaneous Expenses:** You should also budget GBP 2,000- 6,000 for other costs like travel within the UK, entertainment, and other personal expenses.

It's important to note that living costs can be significantly higher in cities like London compared to other parts of the UK. To get a more accurate estimate of the costs for your specific situation, you should research the universities you're interested in and check their tuition fees, as well as living costs in the city where the university is located.

It's essential to plan your finances carefully and create a budget to ensure you can cover all your expenses while studying in the UK.

## Settling there

Settling in the UK after your studies can be a rewarding experience, but it requires careful planning and consideration of immigration rules and regulations. Here are some steps and options to consider:

Visa Options:

- a. Tier 2 (General) Work Visa: If you have a job offer in the UK, you can apply for a Tier 2 work visa. Your employer must be a licensed sponsor, and you must meet the specific job and salary requirements.
- b. Tier 1 (Entrepreneur) Visa: If you plan to start and run your own business in the UK, you can apply for this visa. However, please note that the Tier 1 (Entrepreneur) Visa has been replaced by the Innovator Visa and the Start-up Visa.
- c. Start-up and Innovator Visas: These are for entrepreneurs with innovative business ideas. You need to be endorsed by an authorised body to apply for these visas.
- d. Global Talent Visa: If you're a recognized leader or emerging talent in your field, you can apply for this visa.

**Graduate Route:** The Graduate Route for international students allows international graduates to stay in the UK for up to 2 years (or 3 years if you have a Ph.D.) after completing their studies to work or look for employment. Check the most recent information regarding this route, as policies can change.

**Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR):** After a certain number of years on certain visas (e.g., Tier 2, Innovator, etc.), you may be eligible to apply for ILR, which is a form of permanent residency. Requirements vary depending on the specific visa you're on.

**Naturalisation:** After residing in the UK for a specified period, you may become eligible to apply for British citizenship through naturalisation. The requirements include a certain number of years of residence, good character, and passing a Life in the UK test.

**Stay Compliant:** Ensure that you follow all visa regulations, renew your visa as required, and maintain a clean immigration record. Any violations can affect your ability to stay in the UK or apply for other visas.

**Settle In:** Once you've secured the right to live and work in the UK, make efforts to integrate into society. Build a network, understand local customs, and consider the various aspects of daily life, such as housing, healthcare, and education (if you have a family).

**Financial Planning:** Living in the UK can be expensive, so it's important to manage your finances wisely. Be aware of the cost of living, taxes, and other financial responsibilities.

**Language Skills:** If English is not your first language, consider improving your language skills. This will help you both in daily life and in your career.

Please note that immigration rules and policies can change, so always check the latest information on the UK government's official website or consult with an immigration lawyer or advisor for the most up-to-date guidance on settling in the UK after your studies.

## English language proficiency and requirements

For international students seeking admission to universities in the English-taught universities, demonstrating proficiency in the English language is typically a crucial requirement. This is to ensure that students can effectively participate in classes, engage with course materials, and succeed in their academic endeavours.

Here are the most common English language proficiency tests accepted by universities:

**Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL):**

The TOEFL is one of the most widely accepted English proficiency tests. It measures the ability to understand and use English at the university level. It is administered by the Educational Testing Service (ETS).

**International English Language Testing System (IELTS):**

IELTS is another widely recognized English proficiency test accepted by many US universities. It assesses the ability to communicate effectively in English in academic and everyday situations.

**Pearson Test of English (PTE):**

PTE Academic is a computer-based English language proficiency test that assesses listening, reading, speaking, and writing skills. It is accepted by numerous US universities.

**Cambridge English Qualifications:**

Some universities accept various Cambridge English exams, such as the Cambridge Certificate of Proficiency in English (CPE) or the Cambridge Certificate in Advanced English (CAE), as evidence of English proficiency.

Duolingo English Test:

The Duolingo English Test is a relatively new online English proficiency test that some universities accept. It measures reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills.

Michigan English Language Assessment Battery (MELAB):

MELAB is an English language proficiency examination developed by the University of Michigan. It is recognized by a limited number of universities.

SAT or ACT (for some universities):

Some universities may waive the English language proficiency requirement if a student achieves a certain score on the English section of the SAT or ACT.

English Language Program Completion:

Completing an intensive English language program (ESL) at an accredited institution in the USA may also serve as proof of English proficiency for some universities.

It's important to note that the specific English language proficiency requirements, as well as the minimum scores needed, can vary from one university to another. Additionally, certain programs within a university may have higher English proficiency standards than the general university admissions.

Prospective international students should carefully review the admission requirements of the universities and programs they are interested in applying to, and ensure they meet the specified English language proficiency standards.

## IELTS

### How does the IELTS work?

The difficulty of the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) can vary depending on the individual's proficiency in English, their level of preparation, and their familiarity with the format of the test. Here are some factors that may influence the perceived difficulty of the IELTS:

#### Language Proficiency:

Individuals with a higher level of English proficiency may find the IELTS less challenging. Those who have been using English extensively in their daily lives, education, or work may find the test more manageable.

#### Test Format:

Familiarity with the structure and format of the IELTS can impact how challenging it feels. Understanding the different sections (Listening, Reading, Writing, and Speaking) and knowing what to expect in each can help alleviate some of the test anxiety.

#### Preparation:

Adequate preparation, including practice tests, study materials, and language improvement, can significantly improve performance on the IELTS. Those who dedicate time to study and practice tend to feel more confident and perform better.

#### Specific Skills:

Different individuals may find certain sections of the IELTS more challenging than others. For example, someone with strong listening skills may find the Listening section easier, while another person might excel in writing or speaking.

#### Time Management:

Effective time management during the test is crucial. Those who are skilled at allocating their time appropriately to each section may find the IELTS less challenging.

#### Nervousness and Test Anxiety:



Nervousness or test anxiety can impact performance on any standardised test, including the IELTS. Learning relaxation techniques and strategies for managing stress can help mitigate this.

#### Personal Learning Style:

Different individuals have different learning styles. Some may find it easier to improve their English language skills through self-study and practice, while others may benefit from structured courses or tutoring.

#### Test-Taking Strategies:

Familiarity with effective test-taking strategies, such as skimming and scanning for reading, note-taking for listening, and organising ideas for writing, can improve performance.

#### Practice and Exposure to English:

Regular exposure to English, through reading, listening, speaking, and writing, can help improve language skills and make the IELTS feel less challenging.

Overall, while the IELTS is designed to assess proficiency in English, it is not an insurmountable task. With proper preparation, practice, and a strategic approach, individuals can increase their chances of achieving their desired scores. Additionally, seeking guidance from experienced English teachers or IELTS preparation resources can be beneficial.

## **How long does IELTS preparation take?**

The amount of time you need to prepare for the IELTS (International English Language Testing System) exam depends on your current level of English proficiency and your target score. However, on average, most test-takers spend 1-3 months preparing for the IELTS exam. Here are some general guidelines:

**Initial Assessment:** Start by taking a practice test or an IELTS sample test to gauge your current English proficiency and identify your strengths and weaknesses. This will help you set realistic goals for your preparation.

**Study Schedule:** Create a study schedule that takes into account your daily or weekly commitments. Aim to allocate at least 1-2 hours of study time per day. But this will depend on your starting point.

**Materials:** Gather appropriate study materials. This may include IELTS preparation books, online resources, practice tests, and sample questions. You can also consider enrolling in an IELTS preparation course, either in-person or online.

**Listening and Speaking:** Focus on developing your listening and speaking skills. You can practise by listening to English podcasts, watching English-language movies or TV shows, and engaging in conversation with native or proficient English speakers.

**Reading and Writing:** Dedicate time to improving your reading and writing skills. Read newspapers, magazines, and books in English, and practice writing essays and reports. Pay attention to vocabulary and grammar.

**Practice Tests:** Regularly take full-length IELTS practice tests to familiarise yourself with the test format and improve your time management. Review your answers and learn from your mistakes.

**Mock Tests:** As your test date approaches, take a few full-length mock tests to simulate the actual exam conditions and evaluate your readiness.

**Speaking Practice:** Consider practising with a speaking partner or recording your responses to IELTS speaking questions. This can help you become more comfortable with the speaking component.

**Review and Feedback:** Regularly review your progress and seek feedback from teachers, tutors, or peers. Constructive feedback can help you identify areas that need improvement.

**Final Review:** In the last few weeks leading up to the exam, focus on your weaknesses, review key grammar and vocabulary concepts, and practice time management.

Remember that the key to success in the IELTS exam is consistent and focused practice. Your preparation time will vary depending on your starting point and your target score. If you're already proficient in English, you may need less time, while those starting from a lower level may require more extensive preparation. It's essential to customise your study plan to meet your specific needs and goals.

## **What does the IELTS exam look like?**

**Format:** IELTS is available in two main formats, depending on your purpose:

**IELTS Academic:** This version is typically required for those seeking to study at universities and other academic institutions in English-speaking countries.

**IELTS General Training:** This version is typically required for immigration purposes or for those seeking to work or train in English-speaking countries.

**Test Sections:** Both the Academic and General Training versions of IELTS consist of four main sections:

**Listening:** You will listen to recordings of conversations and monologues and answer questions based on what you hear.

**Reading:** You will read a variety of texts and answer questions to test your reading comprehension.

**Writing:** You will be required to complete two writing tasks, one shorter and one longer essay.

**Speaking:** A face-to-face interview with an examiner, where you will discuss various topics and perform speaking tasks.

**Test Duration:** The IELTS exam typically takes around 2 hours and 45 minutes to 3 hours to complete, depending on the specific test centre and administration.

**Scoring:** IELTS uses a 9-band scoring system. Each section (Listening, Reading, Writing, and Speaking) is scored individually, and then an overall band score is calculated as an average of the four section scores. The scores range from 1 (non-user) to 9 (expert user).

**Test Dates and Locations:** IELTS is offered at various test centres around the world. Test dates and availability may vary by location, so you should check with your nearest test centre for specific details.

**Preparation:** Many candidates prepare for the IELTS exam by taking preparatory courses, using study materials, and practising sample questions. There are also online resources and practice tests available to help you familiarise yourself with the test format.

**Registration:** To take the IELTS exam, you will need to register and pay a registration fee. You can find information about test dates, locations, and registration procedures on the official IELTS website or through your nearest test centre.

It's important to note that the IELTS test assesses your language skills in a real-life context, and it is widely recognized by universities, employers, and immigration authorities. Your choice of Academic or General Training IELTS should align with your specific goals and requirements. Make sure to prepare adequately for the test, and consider taking practice exams to familiarise yourself with the format and timing.

## Preparing for IELTS

Preparing for the IELTS (International English Language Testing System) exam is essential if you want to achieve a good score. Here are some steps to help you prepare effectively:

**Understand the IELTS Format:**

The IELTS exam consists of four sections: Listening, Reading, Writing, and Speaking. Familiarise yourself with the format of each section.

**Set a Target Score:**

Determine your target score, which depends on your personal goals and the requirements of the institution or organisation you are applying to.

**Gather Study Materials:**

Get official IELTS preparation materials, such as books, practice tests, and online resources. The British Council, IDP, and Cambridge provide official IELTS preparation materials.

**Create a Study Schedule:**

Plan a study schedule that suits your needs and availability. Consistency is key, so allocate sufficient time for each section.

**Improve Your English Skills:**

Work on your overall English language skills, including reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Read English books, watch English films, and engage in conversations with native speakers or other learners.

**Focus on Each Section:**

**Listening:** Practise listening to different accents and take notes while listening to audio recordings. The IELTS Listening test includes various types of questions, so familiarise yourself with these question types.

**Reading:** Practise reading academic texts, newspapers, and magazines. Work on skimming and scanning techniques to find information quickly. Pay attention to paraphrasing and vocabulary.

**Writing:** Practise writing essays and reports. Learn the different types of essays (e.g., argument, discussion, opinion) and how to structure them. Work on your grammar, vocabulary, and coherence.

**Speaking:** Find a speaking partner, if possible, to practise speaking in English. Record yourself and listen to improve your fluency, pronunciation, and coherence. Practice answering common speaking topics and questions.

**Take Practice Tests:**

Regularly take full-length practice tests under timed conditions to simulate the actual exam experience. This will help you identify your strengths and weaknesses.

**Review and Analyze:**

After each practice test, review your answers and analyse your mistakes. Focus on improving your weak areas.

**Seek Professional Help:**

Consider taking an IELTS preparation course, either in-person or online, to receive guidance and feedback from experienced instructors.

**Manage Your Time:**

During the actual exam, time management is crucial. Practice answering questions within the time limits to ensure you can complete each section.

**Stay Calm:**

On the exam day, stay calm and focused. Try to relax and use the strategies you've learned during your preparation.

**Take Care of Your Health:**

Get enough rest the night before the exam, and eat a healthy meal. Being well-rested and alert will help you perform better.

Remember that IELTS preparation takes time and effort, so start well in advance of your exam date. With dedicated practice and a clear study plan, you can improve your English language skills and achieve your desired IELTS score. Good luck!

## What results do I need to achieve?

To gain admission to a good university, your IELTS (International English Language Testing System) results will typically need to meet the university's specific requirements, which can vary depending on the institution and the program you are applying for. Good universities often have higher IELTS score requirements, so it's important to research the specific university and program you're interested in to determine their minimum score requirements.

Here are some general guidelines:

**Overall Band Score:** Most universities require a minimum overall band score, which is usually in the range of 6.0 to 7.5 for undergraduate and postgraduate programs. Highly competitive programs or top-tier universities may require even higher scores.

**Individual Skill Scores:** In addition to the overall band score, universities may have minimum score requirements for each of the four IELTS skills: Reading, Writing, Listening, and Speaking. These requirements can vary, but they typically range from 5.5 to 7.0 or higher.

**English Language Proficiency Levels:** Some universities might have specific English language proficiency requirements for different programs. For example, an engineering program may have different requirements compared to an arts program.

**Preparation:** To achieve a good IELTS score, consider taking an IELTS preparation course or using study materials to improve your English language skills. Practice with sample tests, study grammar and vocabulary, and work on your test-taking strategies.

**Retakes:** If you don't achieve the required score on your first attempt, you can retake the IELTS test. Make sure to allow enough time for retaking the test before your university application deadline.

**IELTS Test Validity:** Keep in mind that IELTS scores are typically valid for two years. Ensure that your test scores will still be valid at the time of your university application.

**Alternative Tests:** Some universities also accept other English proficiency tests like TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) or PTE (Pearson Test of English), so it's worth checking if these tests might be more suitable for you.

It's essential to check the specific requirements of the university and program you are interested in and aim to meet or exceed those requirements to improve your chances of admission. Additionally, having a strong application beyond your IELTS score, including a well-crafted personal statement, letters of recommendation, and a competitive academic record, can also enhance your chances of gaining admission to a good university.

## TOEFL

How does TOEFL work?

The TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) is a standardised test that assesses the English language proficiency of non-native English speakers. It's commonly used for admissions into English-speaking universities and colleges and for professional purposes. Here's an overview of how the TOEFL works:

**Registration:** You start by registering for the TOEFL exam through the official ETS (Educational Testing Service) website. You can choose between the internet-based test (iBT) and the paper-based test (PBT) depending on your location.

**Test Structure:** The TOEFL iBT, which is more commonly used, consists of four sections: Reading, Listening, Speaking, and Writing. The TOEFL PBT, on the other hand, has three sections: Listening, Structure and Written Expression, and Reading Comprehension.

**Test Day:** On the test day, you'll arrive at the designated test centre with the required identification documents. You will be assigned a computer terminal for the iBT or provided with a paper-based test booklet for the PBT.

**Reading Section:** In the Reading section, you'll read academic passages and answer questions related to those passages. The passages can be on various topics.

**Listening Section:** In the Listening section, you'll listen to conversations, lectures, and discussions, and then answer questions based on what you heard.

**Speaking Section:** In the Speaking section of the iBT, you'll use a microphone to respond to tasks that involve expressing an opinion, summarising information, and speaking based on personal experiences. For the PBT, there's no separate Speaking section.

**Writing Section:** In the Writing section, you'll write essays in response to prompts. You'll need to express your thoughts, support your ideas with examples, and write coherently and clearly.

**Scoring:** Your performance in each section is scored on a scale of 0 to 30, with a maximum total score of 120 for the TOEFL iBT. The PBT has a different scoring scale. Your scores are typically available online about 10 days after the test.

**Score Report:** Your TOEFL score report includes your section scores and a total score. You can choose to send your scores to institutions you're applying to during registration or afterward.

**Validity:** TOEFL scores are valid for two years from the test date.

**Test Locations:** The TOEFL is administered at authorised test centres worldwide, and you can choose a test date and location that is convenient for you.

**Preparation:** Preparing for the TOEFL involves studying English language skills and test-taking strategies. Many test takers use TOEFL preparation materials and courses to help improve their scores.

It's important to check the specific requirements of the institutions or organisations you are applying to, as different programs may have different score requirements. Preparing for the TOEFL and familiarising yourself with the test format is essential to achieve your target score.

## **How long does TOEFL preparation take?**

The amount of time required for TOEFL preparation varies from one individual to another and depends on your starting level of English proficiency, your target score, and your study habits. Here are some general guidelines:

**Basic Proficiency (0-10 point improvement):** If you already have a strong command of the English language and are looking to make minor improvements or just familiarise yourself with the test format, you might need as little as 2-4 weeks of part-time preparation.



**Moderate Proficiency (10-20 point improvement):** If you have a moderate level of English proficiency and need to improve your skills to reach your target score, a preparation timeline of 1-3 months of part-time study may be necessary.

**Significant Improvement (20+ point improvement):** If you need a substantial score increase or are starting with limited English skills, you may require 3-6 months or more of consistent, dedicated preparation. Full-time intensive study might be needed for some individuals.

Here are some factors that can influence the duration of your TOEFL preparation:

**Study Hours:** The more hours you can dedicate to TOEFL preparation each day or week, the faster you are likely to progress.

**Starting Level:** If you have a strong foundation in English, your preparation time may be shorter than if you are starting from a lower proficiency level.

**Target Score:** If your target score is significantly higher than your current level, it may take more time to bridge that gap.

**Study Materials:** The quality and effectiveness of your study materials, as well as the guidance you receive from teachers or tutors, can impact the time it takes to prepare.

**Consistency:** Regular and consistent study habits are key. Daily or weekly practice is more effective than sporadic cramming.

**Individual Learning Style:** Some people learn more quickly than others. Understand your learning style and adjust your study plan accordingly.

**Test Date:** Consider the date of your planned TOEFL exam. The more time you have to prepare, the less pressure you'll feel, but ensure you have a clear timeline to stay on track.

It's crucial to set specific, achievable goals and monitor your progress throughout your TOEFL preparation. Start by taking a diagnostic test to assess your initial level, and then create a study plan that outlines what you need to focus on and how much time you can realistically dedicate to your preparation. Adapt your plan as needed and seek guidance if necessary to ensure you're on the right track to reach your target score.

## What is the TOEFL exam like?

The TOEFL exam consists of four main sections:

### Reading Section:

Time: Approximately 54-72 minutes

Number of Questions: 30-40 questions

Format: You'll read 3-4 academic passages, and for each passage, you'll answer questions to assess your comprehension and critical thinking skills. Questions may include identifying main ideas, supporting details, and inferences.

### Listening Section:

Time: Approximately 41-57 minutes

Number of Questions: 28-39 questions

Format: You'll listen to conversations, discussions, lectures, and talks in an academic setting. After each audio clip, you'll answer questions that test your ability to understand spoken English, including main ideas, details, and inferences.

### Speaking Section:

Time: Approximately 17 minutes

Number of Tasks: 4 tasks

Format: You'll be required to speak into a microphone to respond to tasks that include expressing an opinion, summarising information from a reading and a listening passage, and speaking based on your personal experience.

### Writing Section:

Time: Approximately 50 minutes

Number of Tasks: 2 tasks

Format: You'll write essays in response to two prompts. One prompt will ask you to read and respond to a passage, while the other will require you to listen to a lecture and write a response. You'll need to

demonstrate your ability to organise and develop ideas, support your points with examples, and write in a clear and coherent manner.

The entire TOEFL exam can last about 4 hours, including administrative time and breaks. It is administered in a secure testing environment, and the test format may vary slightly based on whether you are taking the paper-based or computer-based version of the exam. However, the core structure of the four sections remains the same.

The TOEFL is a standardised test, and your scores on each section are converted into a total scaled score, which can range from 0 to 120. Different institutions and programs have specific score requirements for admission or employment, so it's important to check the score requirements of the institutions you are applying to.

## **Preparing for the TOEFL**

Preparing for the TOEFL requires a structured approach to develop your English language skills and test-taking strategies. Here's a step-by-step guide to help you prepare effectively:

**Understand the TOEFL Format:**

Familiarise yourself with the TOEFL format, which consists of four sections: Reading, Listening, Speaking, and Writing.

**Set a Target Score:**

Determine your target TOEFL score. This will guide your study plan and help you stay motivated.

**Assess Your Current Proficiency:**

Take a practice TOEFL test or use a diagnostic tool to assess your strengths and weaknesses.

**Create a Study Schedule:**

Develop a study schedule that allows you to cover all sections of the test systematically. Set aside dedicated study time each day or week.

**Study Materials:**

Gather the necessary study materials, including TOEFL preparation books, online courses, and practice tests.

**Improve Your English Skills:**

Focus on improving your reading, listening, speaking, and writing skills. Read English books, watch English-language movies and TV shows, and engage in conversations with native speakers.

**Practice Listening and Reading:**

Practice listening comprehension by listening to podcasts, TED Talks, and news broadcasts. Read a variety of materials, such as newspapers, academic articles, and novels.

**Practise Speaking and Writing:**

Improve your speaking skills by practising with a language partner or using TOEFL-specific speaking prompts. Develop your writing skills by composing essays on a range of topics.

**Review Grammar and Vocabulary:**

Brush up on English grammar rules and expand your vocabulary. Consider using vocabulary flashcards and grammar workbooks.

**Take Full-Length Practice Tests:**

Take full-length practice TOEFL tests under timed conditions to simulate the test environment. This will help you become familiar with the test structure and time constraints.

**Analyse Your Practice Tests:**

After each practice test, review your answers, identify your weaknesses, and work on improving those areas.

**Simulate Test Conditions:**

Practice speaking and writing tasks under timed conditions to get used to the time constraints of the actual TOEFL test.

**Develop Test-Taking Strategies:**

Learn effective test-taking strategies, such as how to skim and scan reading passages, take notes during the listening section, and structure your speaking and writing responses.

**Seek Feedback:**

Get feedback on your speaking and writing from teachers, tutors, or online communities. Constructive feedback can help you identify areas for improvement.

**Stay Consistent:**

Consistency is key. Stay committed to your study plan and practise regularly.

**Manage Test Anxiety:**

Practice relaxation techniques and stress management strategies to handle test anxiety on the actual test day.

**Register for the TOEFL Exam:**

Register for the TOEFL test on the official ETS website ([www.ets.org/toefl](http://www.ets.org/toefl)) well in advance of your desired test date.

**Review Test Day Guidelines:**

Familiarise yourself with the test day procedures, including ID requirements, reporting time, and what to bring to the test centre.

**Take Care of Your Health:**

Ensure you get a good night's sleep before the test, eat a nutritious meal, and stay hydrated.

**On Test Day:**

Arrive at the test centre early, follow all instructions, and stay focused during the test.

Remember that TOEFL preparation is a gradual process, and improvement takes time. Tailor your study plan to your individual needs and commit to regular practice to achieve your target score.

## **What results do I need to achieve?**

The specific TOEFL score requirements for university admissions can vary from one institution to another and also depend on the program and level of study you are applying to. Generally, the higher your TOEFL scores, the better your chances of being admitted. However, there is no one-size-fits-all answer to what scores are required, as each institution sets its own standards.

Here are some general guidelines for TOEFL scores and university admissions:

**Research the specific requirements:** Before taking the TOEFL, research the admission requirements for the universities or programs you are interested in. They may specify minimum TOEFL score requirements, so make sure to meet or exceed these requirements.

**Minimum scores:** Many universities set a minimum total TOEFL iBT (Internet-based test) score requirement, which typically ranges from 80 to 100. This score includes individual section scores for reading, listening, speaking, and writing.

**Program-specific requirements:** Some programs within universities may have higher TOEFL score requirements than the university's overall minimum. For example, graduate programs, especially in fields like law, medicine, or engineering, may require higher TOEFL scores.

**Competitive scores:** To improve your chances of admission and to be competitive in the application process, aim for a TOEFL score higher than the minimum requirement. Scoring in the 100-110 range or higher can be advantageous, especially for graduate programs and highly competitive universities.

**Conditional admission:** In some cases, if you do not meet the minimum TOEFL score requirement, universities may offer conditional admission. This means you can be admitted on the condition that you attend English language courses or demonstrate English proficiency in some other way.

**Other English proficiency tests:** Some universities also accept alternative English proficiency tests like the IELTS (International English Language Testing System), TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication), or Cambridge English exams. Check if your target institutions accept these tests.

Meeting the admissions criteria: Remember that your TOEFL scores are just one part of your application. Universities also consider other factors like academic records, letters of recommendation, and personal statements when making admission decisions.

It's important to thoroughly research the admission requirements of the specific universities and programs you're interested in to understand their TOEFL score expectations. Additionally, make sure to prepare adequately for the TOEFL to maximise your chances of achieving the necessary scores.

## **PTE Academics**

PTE Academic, which stands for Pearson Test of English Academic, is an English language proficiency test designed for non-native English speakers who want to study, work, or immigrate to English-speaking countries. The test is developed and administered by Pearson, a leading education company.

PTE Academic assesses a test taker's English language skills in the following areas:

**Speaking:** This section evaluates your ability to speak English fluently and coherently. You will be required to respond to questions, describe images, and engage in discussions using a computer microphone.

**Writing:** In this section, you'll have to demonstrate your writing skills by responding to prompts and essays. You'll type your responses using a computer keyboard.

**Reading:** The reading section assesses your ability to understand written English. It includes multiple-choice questions, reading comprehension, and summarising information from a text.

**Listening:** This section evaluates your listening skills through various audio clips, including listening to conversations, lectures, and summarising spoken text.

The test is computer-based, and it typically takes about 3 hours to complete. PTE Academic is known for its quick score reporting, usually within 2 to 5 business days, making it a popular choice for students and professionals who need to demonstrate their English proficiency for academic or immigration purposes.

PTE Academic is widely accepted by universities, colleges, and organisations in English-speaking countries like the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, and Canada. It's essential to check with

the specific institution or organisation you plan to apply to for their English language proficiency requirements and whether they accept PTE Academic scores.

The scoring system for PTE Academic can vary depending on the institution or organisation to which you are applying. PTE Academic uses a scoring scale from 10 to 90 points, with 10-point increments. Here are some general guidelines for what is considered a good score in PTE Academic:

**79-90: Excellent:** Scores in this range are considered excellent, and most institutions will consider you highly proficient in English. These scores open doors to competitive programs and institutions.

**65-78: Good:** Scores in this range are generally seen as good and are likely to meet the English language proficiency requirements of many universities and colleges. You should be able to access a wide range of academic programs with scores in this range.

**51-64: Average:** Scores in this range are considered average, and while they may meet the minimum requirements for some programs, it's a good idea to aim for higher scores if possible to increase your options.

**Below 51: Below Average:** Scores below 51 are generally considered below the average level of English proficiency. You may need to work on improving your English skills before applying to academic programs that require a higher level of language proficiency.

Keep in mind that different institutions and programs may have specific score requirements, so it's essential to check with the institution you plan to apply to for their specific PTE Academic score requirements. Additionally, some programs may have different score requirements for individual sections of the test, such as speaking, writing, reading, and listening, so be sure to understand their requirements thoroughly.



Ultimately, what constitutes a good score depends on your specific goals and the admission requirements of the institutions or organisations you are targeting. It's always a good idea to aim for the highest score possible to maximise your opportunities and demonstrate a strong command of the English language.

# Types of degrees

## Associate

An associate degree is a type of undergraduate degree awarded by many colleges and universities around the world. These are more common in the United States. It typically represents two years of full-time study, although the exact duration may vary depending on the educational system and specific program.

Here are some key characteristics of an associate degree:

**Duration:** An associate degree program generally takes two years of full-time study to complete. However, some programs, particularly in technical or vocational fields, may be shorter or longer.

**Academic Focus:** Associate degree programs provide a well-rounded education in a specific field of study. They often include a combination of general education courses (such as mathematics, English, and social sciences) and courses related to the chosen major or concentration.

**Transferable Credits:** In many educational systems, the credits earned during an associate degree program can be transferred to a four-year university or college. This allows students to continue their education and work toward a bachelor's degree.

Types of Associate Degrees:

**Associate of Arts (AA):** This degree often focuses on liberal arts and humanities subjects and is designed to provide a well-rounded education. It's commonly chosen by students who plan to transfer to a four-year institution.

**Associate of Science (AS):** AS degrees typically have a stronger emphasis on mathematics and natural sciences, making them suitable for students pursuing careers in technical or scientific fields.

**Associate of Applied Science (AAS):** AAS degrees are often more vocationally focused and are designed to prepare students for specific careers. They may include hands-on training and practical skills development.

**Career Preparation:** Some associate degree programs are designed to prepare students for specific careers, such as nursing, computer programming, or automotive technology. These programs often include practical training and internships.

**Cost-Effectiveness:** Associate degree programs are often more affordable than bachelor's degree programs, making them an attractive option for students looking to save on tuition costs.

**Entry-Level Qualification:** An associate degree can qualify individuals for certain entry-level positions in their chosen field. For example, an associate degree in nursing can allow someone to work as a registered nurse.

**Flexibility:** Some associate degree programs offer flexible scheduling options, including evening or weekend classes, which can be beneficial for students who work or have other responsibilities.

**Credential in its Own Right:** While many students choose to use an associate degree as a stepping stone toward a bachelor's degree, an associate degree is a standalone credential that demonstrates a level of expertise and accomplishment in a specific field.

It's important to note that the specific requirements and offerings of associate degree programs can vary widely depending on the institution and the country's education system. Students considering an associate degree should carefully research and choose a program that aligns with their educational and career goals.

## **Bachelors degree programs**

A bachelor's degree is an undergraduate academic degree awarded by colleges and universities upon completion of a specific course of study. It is considered the first level of higher education and is typically a prerequisite for many professional careers and for admission to graduate programs (such as master's or doctoral degrees).

Here are some key characteristics of a bachelor's degree:

**Duration:** A bachelor's degree program generally takes about four years of full-time study to complete. However, some programs may be shorter or longer, and there are also accelerated or part-time options available.

**Academic Focus:** Bachelor's degree programs provide a comprehensive education in a specific field of study. They include a combination of general education courses (covering a range of subjects) and courses related to the chosen major or concentration.

**Types of Bachelor's Degrees:**

**Bachelor of Arts (BA):** This degree often focuses on liberal arts and humanities subjects, such as literature, history, philosophy, and social sciences.

**Bachelor of Science (BS):** BS degrees typically have a stronger emphasis on mathematics, natural sciences, and technical subjects, making them suitable for fields like engineering, computer science, and health sciences. However, in Pakistan, there are often more abbreviations, such as B.Econ or B.Comm or BCS - for economics, commerce or computer science. All of them are at the same level.

**Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA):** BFA programs are designed for students pursuing degrees in visual or performing arts disciplines, like painting, sculpture, music, or theatre.

**Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA):** This degree is focused on business-related fields and provides a strong foundation in areas like finance, marketing, management, and economics.

**Major and Minor:** Students pursuing a bachelor's degree choose a major, which is their primary area of study. Some programs also allow students to choose a minor, which is a secondary area of focus that complements the major. This is common in the USA but less so in the UK.

**Capstone Projects:** Many bachelor's degree programs culminate in a capstone project, thesis, or comprehensive examination that allows students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills in their field of study.

**Elective Courses:** Alongside required courses for the major and general education requirements, students often have the opportunity to take elective courses that align with their interests or career goals.

**Practical Experience:** Some programs incorporate internships, co-op experiences, or practical training to provide hands-on, real-world exposure to the field of study.

**Preparation for Career or Further Study:** A bachelor's degree is often seen as a necessary qualification for many professions and can open doors to a wide range of career opportunities. It also serves as a prerequisite for pursuing graduate education.

**Transcript and Diploma:** Upon successful completion of a bachelor's degree program, students receive a transcript that lists the courses they've taken and the grades they've earned. They also receive a diploma, which is the official certificate of completion.

It's important to note that the specific requirements and offerings of bachelor's degree programs can vary widely depending on the institution, the country's education system, and the chosen field of study. Students considering a bachelor's degree should carefully research and choose a program that aligns with their educational and career goals.

## **What does a bachelors with honours mean?**

A "BA" stands for Bachelor of Arts, which is an undergraduate academic degree typically awarded after completion of a specific course of study at a college or university. On the other hand, a "BA with Honours" (or "BA Hons") is a degree that indicates a higher level of academic achievement and specialisation within the chosen field of study.

Here are the key differences between a BA and a BA with Honours:

**Level of Academic Achievement:**

**BA:** A standard Bachelor of Arts degree indicates that the student has successfully completed the required coursework for their chosen major and has met the general degree requirements of the institution.

**BA with Honours:** This designation signifies a higher level of academic achievement. It's typically awarded to students who have achieved a higher overall grade point average (GPA) and have often demonstrated exceptional performance in their major or concentration.

**Coursework and Rigour:**

**BA:** A standard BA degree program includes the required courses for the major, general education courses, and electives. It provides a well-rounded education in the chosen field of study.

BA with Honours: This program often involves more advanced and specialised coursework. It may include additional seminars, independent research projects, or other advanced study options.

Thesis or Capstone Requirement:

BA: While some BA programs may have a capstone project or senior thesis requirement, it may not be mandatory for all students.

BA with Honours: This designation often requires the completion of a more substantial and rigorous capstone project, thesis, or research paper, which demonstrates a deeper level of understanding and scholarship within the chosen field.

Duration of Study:

BA: A standard BA program typically takes about four years of full-time study to complete. In some countries, it can be three years - such as the UK. The length of the degree will have a huge impact on the cost, so it may be better to go to a more expensive university for a shorter time.

BA with Honours: In some cases, a BA with Honours program may extend the duration of study by an additional year or involve additional coursework.

Recognition and Distinction:

BA: A standard BA degree is a recognized undergraduate credential, indicating successful completion of a program of study.

BA with Honours: This designation is often viewed as a mark of distinction and may be valued more highly by employers and graduate schools due to the additional academic rigour and achievement associated with it.

Post-Graduate Opportunities:

BA: Graduates with a standard BA degree may choose to enter the workforce directly or pursue further education, such as a master's degree or professional certification.

BA with Honours: This designation can be particularly advantageous for students who plan to pursue advanced degrees, research-oriented careers, or positions that require a higher level of specialisation within their field.

# Masters Degree Programmes

## Taught Masters

There are various types of master's degrees, each designed to provide advanced education and specialised knowledge in specific fields. Here are some of the most common types of master's degrees:

### Master of Arts (MA):

The Master of Arts degree is typically awarded in fields related to humanities, social sciences, and liberal arts. This degree emphasises theoretical and research-based knowledge.

### Master of Science (MS):

The Master of Science degree is commonly awarded in fields related to natural sciences, engineering, technology, and mathematics. It focuses on practical applications and research.

### Master of Business Administration (MBA):

The Master of Business Administration is a professional degree that provides advanced knowledge in business management, leadership, and strategic planning.

### Master of Education (MEd):

The Master of Education degree is designed for educators and focuses on advanced teaching techniques, educational leadership, curriculum development, and related areas.

### Master of Fine Arts (MFA):

The Master of Fine Arts degree is typically awarded in fields related to visual and performing arts, creative writing, and design. It emphasises creativity, artistic expression, and the development of a professional portfolio.

### Master of Public Administration (MPA):

The Master of Public Administration degree is geared towards individuals interested in careers in public service, government, non-profit organisations, and policy analysis.

### Master of Social Work (MSW):

The Master of Social Work degree is designed for individuals pursuing careers in social work and emphasises clinical practice, research, and policy development.

Master of Engineering (MEng):

The Master of Engineering degree is focused on advanced engineering principles and applications, often with a strong emphasis on practical engineering skills.

Master of Public Health (MPH):

The Master of Public Health degree is aimed at individuals interested in public health practice, policy, and management. It covers areas such as epidemiology, biostatistics, health policy, and environmental health.

Master of Science in Nursing (MSN):

The Master of Science in Nursing degree is designed for registered nurses seeking advanced roles in nursing practice, administration, education, or specialised fields like nurse practitioner or nurse anaesthetist.

Master of Information Technology (MIT):

The Master of Information Technology degree focuses on advanced knowledge and skills in information technology, including areas like software development, cybersecurity, and database management.

Master of Environmental Science/Studies (MES/MEnvS):

These degrees are focused on environmental issues, sustainability, and natural resource management, providing a multidisciplinary approach to understanding and addressing environmental challenges.

Master of International Business (MIB):

The Master of International Business degree is tailored for individuals interested in global business, international trade, and cross-cultural management.

These are just some of the many types of master's degrees available. Each type of degree is designed to provide specialised knowledge and skills in its respective field, preparing graduates for advanced roles in



academia, industry, government, and various professional settings. Keep in mind that the specific names and offerings of master's degree programs can vary by institution and country.

LLM (Latin Legum Magister):

Hardly anyone remembers what LLM stands for - it is a Master's in law.

## **What is the difference between a taught and research**

### **Masters?**

A taught master's program (often abbreviated as MA/MSc/MBA/MEd, depending on the field) and a research master's program (often abbreviated as MRes in the USA, often MPhil elsewhere) are two distinct types of master's degree programs, each with its own focus and objectives.

Here are the key differences between taught and research master's programs:

**Taught Master's Program:**

**Focus:** Taught master's programs are primarily focused on structured, instructor-led coursework. They provide a comprehensive education in a specific field of study.

**Coursework:** Students in a taught master's program typically complete a set of required courses, along with the option to choose from a selection of elective courses related to their field of study.

**Duration:** Taught master's programs usually take one to two years of full-time study to complete.

Part-time options may be available for students who want to spread their studies over a longer period.

**Assessment:** Evaluation is based on assignments, projects, examinations, and sometimes a dissertation or final project. The emphasis is on demonstrating knowledge and understanding through coursework.

**Research Component:** While taught master's programs may include a research component, it is typically less extensive than in a research master's program. The research component often takes the form of a final project or dissertation.

**Practical Application:** Taught master's programs are designed to provide practical knowledge and skills that can be directly applied in professional settings or further academic pursuits.

**Preparation for Professional Practice:** These programs are often seen as excellent preparation for specific careers or industries. They may lead to specialised roles or positions that require advanced knowledge in a particular field.

Examples: Master of Science (MSc), Master of Arts (MA), Master of Business Administration (MBA), Master of Education (MEd), etc.

**Research Master's Program (MRes or MPhil):**

**Focus:** Research master's programs are primarily focused on independent research and the development of research skills. They are designed for students interested in academic or research-oriented careers.

**Research Emphasis:** The core of a research master's program is a substantial research project or thesis. This project is typically conducted under the supervision of a faculty member and allows the student to make an original contribution to their field.

**Coursework:** While research master's programs may include some coursework, the majority of the program is dedicated to the research project. The coursework is often tailored to support the research endeavour.

**Duration:** Research master's programs typically take one to two years to complete. The majority of the time is spent on the research project.

**Assessment:** Evaluation is heavily focused on the quality and originality of the research project or thesis. There may also be some coursework assessments related to research methodology.

**Academic Research Skills:** Research master's programs aim to develop advanced research skills, including critical analysis, experimental design, data collection, and academic writing.

**Preparation for Further Research:** Research master's programs are excellent preparation for pursuing a PhD or further academic research. They are geared towards individuals interested in contributing to the body of knowledge in their field.

Examples: Master of Research (MRes), Master of Philosophy (MPhil), and in some cases, Master of Science (MSc) by Research.

It's important to choose a master's program based on your career goals and interests. If you are more inclined toward applied knowledge and practical skills, a taught master's program may be the best fit. On

the other hand, if you are passionate about conducting original research and potentially pursuing a research-oriented career, a research master's program may be more suitable.

## **MRes and MPhil**

A Master of Philosophy (MPhil) is an advanced postgraduate research degree that is awarded by universities in various countries. It is often considered a stepping stone toward a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) and is designed to develop research skills and expertise in a specific field of study.

Here's how an MPhil program typically works:

**Admission:** To enrol in an MPhil program, you usually need to have completed a bachelor's degree in a relevant field. Some programs may also require a strong academic record and a well-defined research proposal.

**Duration:** The duration of an MPhil program can vary depending on the country, institution, and field of study. It typically takes one to two years of full-time study. Part-time options may be available for students who want to spread their studies over a longer period.

**Research Proposal:** As part of the application process, you may be required to submit a research proposal outlining the topic you intend to study, your research questions, and your proposed methodology.

**Coursework (if applicable):** Some MPhil programs may include a component of structured coursework, especially in the early stages. This coursework is designed to provide necessary background knowledge and research skills.

**Supervisor and Research Project:** Once admitted, you will typically be assigned a supervisor, who is an experienced academic or researcher in your chosen field. Together, you will develop a detailed research project or thesis topic.

**Research Work:** The core of an MPhil program is the independent research work you will undertake. This involves conducting original research, collecting and analysing data (if applicable), and synthesising your findings.

**Regular Meetings with Supervisor:** You will have regular meetings with your supervisor to discuss your progress, receive feedback, and address any challenges or questions that may arise during the research process.

**Thesis or Research Paper:** The culmination of your MPhil program is the submission of a thesis or research paper. This document should present your research question, methodology, findings, and conclusions in a clear and structured manner.

**Examination:** After submitting your thesis or research paper, it will be evaluated by a committee of experts, which may include your supervisor and other faculty members. You may also be required to defend your research in an oral examination (*viva voce*).

**Award of Degree:** Upon successful completion of the program, you will be awarded the Master of Philosophy degree.

**Publication and Further Studies (Optional):** Depending on the quality of your research, you may have the opportunity to publish your findings in academic journals. Additionally, some students may choose to continue their studies by pursuing a PhD.

It's important to note that the specific requirements and process for an MPhil program can vary depending on the institution and country. Therefore, it's advisable to refer to the specific guidelines and regulations provided by the university where you are pursuing your MPhil.

## **What is a PhD?**

A Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) is the highest academic degree awarded by universities in many countries. It is a prestigious qualification that represents the culmination of advanced education and independent research in a specific field of study. A PhD is not limited to philosophy; it is awarded in various academic disciplines, including sciences, humanities, social sciences, engineering, and more.

Here is a general outline of how you complete a PhD:

**Preparation and Admission:**

**Eligibility:** You typically need to have completed a bachelor's and often a master's degree in a relevant field to be eligible for admission into a PhD program.

**Research Proposal:** Once admitted, you'll work with a supervisor to develop a research proposal. This outlines the research question, objectives, methodology, and expected contributions to the field.

**Coursework (if applicable):**

Some PhD programs include a component of structured coursework, especially in the early stages. This coursework is designed to provide necessary background knowledge and research skills.

**Comprehensive Examinations (Comps):**

Some PhD programs require comprehensive exams to assess your mastery of the field's core concepts. These exams can cover a broad range of topics within your discipline.

**Research Work:**

The core of a PhD program is the independent research work. This involves:

- Defining and refining your research questions.
- Developing a research methodology.
- Conducting experiments, surveys, archival work, or other research activities.
- Analysing data and synthesising findings.
- Writing up your research in the form of a dissertation or thesis.

**Regular Meetings with Supervisor:**

You'll have regular meetings with your supervisor to discuss your progress, get feedback, and address any challenges or questions that may arise during the research process.

**Dissertation/Thesis Writing:**

The culmination of a PhD program is the completion of a substantial research document known as a dissertation (in the US) or thesis (in some other countries). This document typically includes:

- Introduction (including research questions and objectives).
- Literature review.
- Methodology.
- Results and analysis.
- Discussion and conclusions.
- Recommendations for future research.

**Examination:**

After submitting your dissertation or thesis, it will be evaluated by a committee of experts, which may include your supervisor and other faculty members. You may also be required to defend your research in an oral examination (viva voce).

**Revisions (if needed):**

Based on the feedback from your committee, you may need to make revisions to your dissertation or thesis before it is accepted for final submission.

**Award of Degree:**

Once your dissertation or thesis is accepted, and any necessary revisions are made, you will be awarded the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree.

**Publication and Further Research (Optional):**

Depending on the quality of your research, you may have the opportunity to publish your findings in academic journals. Additionally, many PhD graduates choose to continue their research through postdoctoral positions or faculty positions at universities.

Remember that the specific requirements and process for earning a PhD can vary depending on the institution, country, and field of study. It's important to follow the guidelines and regulations provided by the university where you are pursuing your PhD.

## **What is post doctoral research?**

Postdoctoral research, often referred to as a postdoc, is a period of advanced research undertaken by individuals who have recently completed their doctoral (PhD) studies. It is a temporary position that allows these researchers to gain further expertise, deepen their knowledge, and contribute to ongoing academic or scientific projects.

Here are some key aspects of postdoctoral research:

**Duration:** Postdoctoral positions typically last from one to three years, although they can sometimes be shorter or longer depending on the specific research project and funding availability.

**Purpose:**

**Advanced Research:** Postdocs engage in advanced research in their field of expertise, building on their doctoral work.

**Specialisation:** They have the opportunity to specialise further within a specific area of their discipline or explore new research directions.

**Mentorship and Collaboration:**

Postdocs work under the supervision of a senior researcher, often a faculty member at a university or a principal investigator in a research institution. This mentor provides guidance, expertise, and support for the postdoctoral project.

**Research Autonomy:**

While postdocs work in collaboration with their mentor, they are expected to demonstrate a high level of independence and initiative in carrying out their research.

**Publication and Dissemination:**

Postdocs are encouraged to publish their research findings in peer-reviewed journals and to present their work at conferences and academic meetings.

**Career Development:**

Postdoctoral positions offer opportunities for professional development, including networking with other researchers, attending workshops and seminars, and gaining experience in grant writing and project management.

**Preparation for Academic Careers:**

Many individuals pursue postdoctoral research with the goal of eventually securing a faculty position at a university. Postdoc positions provide additional research experience and help build a strong academic record.

**Interdisciplinary Research:**

Some postdocs may choose to work in interdisciplinary research environments, collaborating with experts from multiple fields to address complex research questions.

**Funding:**

Postdoctoral positions are often funded through research grants, fellowships, or institutional funds. Researchers may apply for postdoctoral fellowships from funding agencies or institutions.

Transition to Independence:

In some cases, postdocs may transition to becoming principal investigators (PIs) and lead their own research projects. This can lead to a more independent research career.

Global Opportunities:

Postdoctoral positions are available at research institutions and universities around the world, providing opportunities for international collaboration and exposure to different research cultures.



# What to do

There has been a lot of information set out - if you read this book all the way through, this will be dizzying. But it all starts with the central questions:

Who and what do you want to be?

You can certainly try to figure out the next steps yourself. But like any step into a new world, it is best to have a guide or a map.

That is where I come in. I see my role as providing guidance that is centred around an individual and their circumstances. I will talk to you and, if you want, your parents. I will ask what your dreams are and help you work out what can be made real.

Those who can throw thousands of dollars at agents who are out to sell you whatever they can. But I am interested in you and what is best for you. I am a neutral advisor - if the advice is not to go to university or to stay in Pakistan, that is what I will advise.

Get in touch!

And if you don't get in touch, take time to think hard about your options, take as much advice as you can and research your options.

Dream and fly!