**Study Abroad Guide 2014**

Traditionally UK students have preferred to stay in the UK for undergraduate study but this is beginning to change. Since the rise in UK tuition fees in 2012 the number of students applying to study abroad has been on the increase.

The good news for UK students is that there are thousands of degrees taught in English in English speaking countries and increasingly in other countries where English is not the first language, offering a viable alternative to studying in the UK.

It is also worth noting that an increasing number of countries, including the US, France, the UK and Australia, operate international branch campuses.

For example, if you fancy studying your whole degree in China you can now do so at a campus run by The University of Nottingham at its Ningbo campus.

Bachelor’s degrees across the EU and much of the western world tend to be of a comparable standard. However, the length of degree courses can vary; in many countries a four year undergraduate honours degree is the norm. Less stringent entry requirements at many overseas universities, compared with the UK, can make study overseas an attractive and realistic option; but be warned that you may be under increased pressure to do well in the first year of the course.

**Why study abroad?**

The benefits of living and studying in another country are numerous.

* On a practical level you will experience a different lifestyle and climate.
* You may have the excitement and challenge of participating in sports and activities that you haven’t tried before.
* If you choose to live and study in a non-English speaking country you will have the opportunity to pick up some of the local language.
* Your new cultural experience will help you learn to tolerate differences, recognise and appreciate diversity, acquire new skills and grow as a person in independence, maturity, resourcefulness and initiative.
* Overall, the international awareness you will gain from your overseas experience is likely to enhance your long term career prospects.

**Cost of studying overseas**

It’s important to note that if you intend to study a full degree overseas you will not be entitled to any loans or grants through the UK system of student financial support. You must consider how you will fund your studies before applying. Most students finance their overseas study through a mixture of savings, scholarships and personal loans.

Many countries in Europe now offer courses taught in English where the tuition fees are lower than UK tuition fees. So if cost is an issue a degree in another EU country is well worth exploring. Or you could consider a country where the cost of living is lower than the UK, such as Eastern Europe, South Africa or China.

Tuition fees are generally higher in the US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand but there are other benefits. In the US, for example, some universities offer generous financial support packages and scholarships; in Canada, Australia and New Zealand there are schemes for graduates to stay in the country to work.

**Finding a university abroad: things to think about/first steps**

**1. Consider your own priorities, interests and abilities.**

* Why do you want to study abroad?
* What do you want from your university experience?
* Are you comfortable in any foreign languages?
* What are your longer term career plans and will these be served by studying abroad?

**Note:** some qualifications don’t transfer easily back to the UK if you want to return to practise a specific profession in the UK - it’s wise to check the transferability of professional qualifications with the relevant professional body in the UK before deciding to study abroad.

* What kind of lifestyle do you want?
* Do you have any strong extra-curricular interests?

**2. Do your research.** Once you know what you are aiming for you can set about researching countries, universities and the courses they offer. Start with international and regional rankings at www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/world-university-rankings/.

**3. Decide which countries interest you most.** Make a short list or identify the specific country you want to study in as a starting point for identifying universities you could apply to. Check if there are national organisations, like UCAS in the UK, which provide information and/or advice to overseas applicants.

**4. Try to meet people from an overseas university before you apply to it**. If it’s not feasible to visit the university in person contact their alumni association to find alumni nearer to home that you could talk to.

**Alternatives to a full degree abroad**

If a shorter period of study abroad appeals to you rather than your whole degree you could consider the following options;

* An exchange or study abroad scheme as part of a UK degree. Have a look at Erasmus www.britishcouncil.org/erasmus.htm, the European Union’s flagship educational exchange programme. Nine out of ten European higher education institutions participate in this scheme which enables undergraduates to spend a study abroad placement of three to 12 months at a university in another European country.
* A UK degree course which includes a study abroad year. Look for courses on the UCAS website www.ucas.com with year abroad in the title then ask for details at university open days or contact the study abroad offices at UK universities for further information.

If you study abroad as part of a UK degree you will be entitled to UK student financial support, which may include reduced tuition fees and additional grants and scholarships for your time abroad.

**Useful resources**

**Worldwide info**

[www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/world-university-rankings/](http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/world-university-rankings/)

[www.topuniversities.com/](http://www.topuniversities.com/)

[www.shanghairanking.com](http://www.shanghairanking.com)

Worldwide university rankings

[www.venture-uk.co.uk](http://www.venture-uk.co.uk)

Careers Europe, the UK’s National Resource Centre for studying, living and working abroad, manages and produces this website. It provides worldwide information on studying, living and working abroad and taking a gap year. You get 15 minutes of free access at your first visit to the website. Thereafter a three month individual subscription can be purchased for £14.99. This is a useful resource to help you research countries and courses overseas.

<http://studylink.com/>

Information on study in North America, Asia, Australasia and Europe

[www.topuniversities.com/student-info/choosing-university/university-branch-campuses](http://www.topuniversities.com/student-info/choosing-university/university-branch-campuses)

Information and advice about studying at an international branch campus

[www.globalhighered.org/branchcampuses.php](http://www.globalhighered.org/branchcampuses.php)

A listing of international branch campuses by institution name, host country and home country with weblinks

[www.britishcouncil.org/study-work-create/study-abroad](http://www.britishcouncil.org/study-work-create/study-abroad)

British Council opportunities for study abroad include the Erasmus exchange programme, Generation UK – China Scholarships, UKIERI study India programme and Competition Hong Kong.

**Europe**

[www.britishcouncil.org/erasmus.htm](http://www.britishcouncil.org/erasmus.htm)

Educational exchanges for undergraduates within Europe

[www.eunicas.co.uk/](http://www.eunicas.co.uk/)

Eunicas, the European Universities Central Application Support Service, offers a support service to UK and Irish higher education applicants -Apply through Eunicas for up to eight degree programmes at universities in Europe where the language of instruction is English.

[www.cao.ie](http://www.cao.ie)

The Central Applications Office processes applications to higher education institutions in the

Republic of Ireland- Search for degree courses and apply online via the CAO website.

**North America**

[www.fulbright.org.uk/](http://www.fulbright.org.uk/)

The Fulbright Commission is the primary source of information in the UK about studying in the US.

Visit the website for information and advice on choosing universities/courses, funding, admissions tests etc.

<http://educationau-incanada.ca/educationau-incanada/index.aspx>

Official Canadian government website for international students includes course search

**Australasia**

[www.studyinaustralia.gov.au/](http://www.studyinaustralia.gov.au/)

Official Australian government website for international students includes course, institution and scholarship search

[www.studyinnewzealand.com/](http://www.studyinnewzealand.com/)

New Zealand government funded website for international students includes course, institution and scholarship search

**Asia**

[www.chinaeducenter.com/en/](http://www.chinaeducenter.com/en/)

Click on ‘English taught program in China’ for information on studying in China and recommended schools (universities)

<http://univinjapan.com/>

Click on’ Undergraduate Program Search’ to search for courses taught in English in Japan

[www.edb.gov.hk/en/edu-system/postsecondary/local-higher-edu/institutions/index.html](http://www.edb.gov.hk/en/edu-system/postsecondary/local-higher-edu/institutions/index.html)

English is the language of instruction for the majority of courses at the eight publically funded universities in Hong Kong. Follow the links to their websites.

[www.topuniversities.com/where-to-study/asia/singapore/guide](http://www.topuniversities.com/where-to-study/asia/singapore/guide)

QS Top Universities Guide to studying in Singapore, where English is the language of instruction

www.topuniversities.com/where-to-study/asia/south-korea/guide

QS Top Universities Guide to studying in South Korea, where approximately 25% of degree courses are taught in English

**Events**

<http://thestudentworld.com/>

Meet university representatives from around the world at a forthcoming Student World Fair. Dates of forthcoming events listed on the website.

[www.fulbright.org.uk/news-events/usa-study-events/usa-college-day](http://www.fulbright.org.uk/news-events/usa-study-events/usa-college-day)

Information about the annual USA College Day in London

KS/July2014

Information provided through ISCO (Independent Schools Careers Organisation)