

Study abroad preparation checklist



STUDY ABROAD CHECKLIST

PREPARATION LIST

- UNIVERSITY RESEARCH
- TEST SCORECARDS
- LOR AND SOP
- FINANCIAL SUPPORT PROOF
- TRANSCRIPTS
- PASSPORT
- OFFER LETTER
- VISA
- PACKING TIPS

Introduction:

There are endless amount of items on every student's study abroad checklist. The overall process of putting together all the documents can be a bit overwhelming. To help you with this, we've made a study abroad checklist of all the must-have documents right from your university application to the process for your visa.

University research:

Researching schools is not that easy. It is important to identify schools that have the field of study you are interested in, have the type of student organizations and extra-curricular groups that you want to involve yourself in, and most importantly have a good job placement rate. Not to forget, countries like USA, UK, Australia, Canada, etc. all have a variety of weather conditions and you need to pay attention to the location of the school. We recommend that you apply to at least 5 schools to increase your chances of getting admitted.

Two 'Dream schools' – These should be schools with a rank higher than what you might expect to get into. You never know – if luck is on your side or if you underestimated your worth, you might actually get accepted!

'Within Reach' schools – These are the schools where you might have a fair chance of getting in. Pay extra attention to detail on your applications to these schools. Thoroughly research and pick these ones.

One 'Guaranteed Accept' School – This can be a lower-tier school that you have almost a 90-95% chance of getting in. This option is for students who are desperate to start a school year when they apply. We recommend that if you don't get through your dream school or 'within reach' school, you might actually benefit from waiting another year.

You could talk to an [iSchoolConnect](#) advisor and get some help when selecting your schools. The more schools you apply to, the better. However, you need to be mindful of the money you spend on application fees.

Test scorecards:

Common study abroad tests

IELTS	TOEFL	GRE	GMAT
English language proficiency test	English language proficiency test	Graduate-level university admission test	Graduate management program test
Duration: 2 hrs & 45 mins	Duration: 3 hrs	Duration: 3 hrs & 45 mins	Duration: 3 hrs & 30mins
Total score: 0-9 bands	Total score: 0-120	Total score: 0-340	Total score: 200-800
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IELTS and TOEFL are language proficiency tests mandated by most universities for an international student. Test scorecards are probably at the top of a student's study abroad checklist. IELTS or TOEFL are supposed to be taken as a language proficiency test by an international student. Similarly, some of the universities might ask for additional test scores like GRE\GMAT for the program of your choice. Not every university mandates these tests. But if asked, make sure you have the test scores ready before the application process starts. Some universities have different deadlines for submission of test scores but it is better to send the scores with the application.

LOR and SOP:

Your Letters of Recommendation (LORs) and Statement of Purpose (SOP) are as important as any academic score and test scores. A letter of recommendation is an account of one's character from a third person's point of view. SOPs focus strongly on the field of your choice and also shows a sense of purpose of applying for the particular field. Make sure the SOP is original and not too lengthy. Stick to the word limit given. A well-written SOP and a favorable LOR will definitely help you in securing the place.

Financial support proof:

Examine your financial support proofs thoroughly before you apply for your visa. Financial support proof shows the current financial circumstances and is available at the bank as a bank statement. It is an essential document for the student visa application. Financial proofs show if the student will be able to support himself during his stay while paying the tuition fees. If your parents are the ones supporting your education, present the statement accordingly.

Transcripts:

Universities require academic scripts of certain grades depending on the degree level you are applying for. Get all the scores converted into a transcript. Transcripts are a record of scores throughout your academic course. The last university or school you have been to will help in getting the transcripts ready. Some universities charge a certain amount for these transcripts. Keep at least 4 to 5 transcripts ready according to the number of universities you are applying for.

Passport:

Your passport is your identity and nationality when living in a foreign country. Right from the standardized test registration to the visa application, the passport will be required everywhere. Use only the original passport while traveling or for your student visa application. However, since using your original passport as an ID proof everywhere is risky, keep the spare photocopy around. In the event of misplacing your passport, contact the embassy in that particular country. One can also contact the university for assistance.

Offer Letter:

Your offer letter is your proof of acceptance by a particular university. It is an essential document in the study abroad checklist for the student visa application process. You should also keep a copy of the letter as well as your I-20 form issued by your university and carry the original as well the photocopies when joining the university.

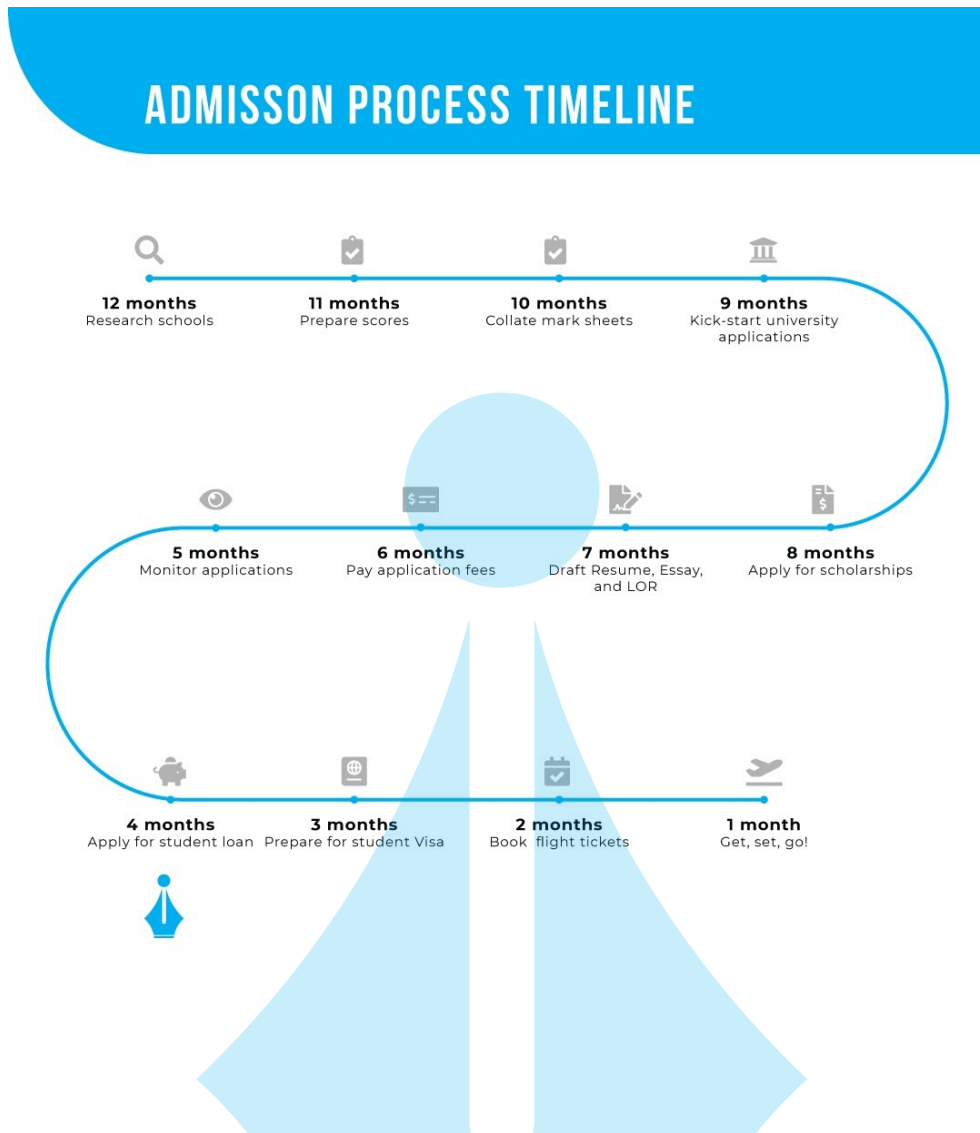
Visa:

Your Visa is the final step and the most important document in your study abroad checklist. With the right documents, obtaining a visa is not as difficult as it seems. Apply for F1 visa if going for a masters degree. Get the visa ready about 120 days prior to the beginning date of your course. Student visa for USA from India costs around \$160(11398 INR). For your F1 visa application form, DS-160 form, your I-20 form which the university provides on getting accepted, and the bank statement of last 3 months are the documents you need to keep ready.

Packing:

As you plan for your journey abroad, you obviously need to pack all the essentials. So, here are a few helpful tips on what to pack when studying abroad. Be smart while you pack. Always consider the weather of the destination country and pack accordingly. There are limitations on the weight of your luggage, so make sure to check that before you start. Another quick tip for packing, rolling your clothes rather than folding them helps you in saving some room in your suitcase for the other things and keeps your clothes wrinkle-free. Be sure to add some just-in-case clothes in your study abroad [packing list](#).


To help you get a clear understanding of the study abroad timeline, here is a clear representation of the process:




Remember, no matter which document it is, always keep multiple photocopies of the same. A study abroad checklist helps in keeping a track of things so that you don't miss out on anything. [iSchoolConnect](#) helps you with everything you need for studying abroad. Right from shortlisting universities to arriving at the destination. So reach out to us on our website or call us on +91 9145332283.



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