



Study Abroad



Get accepted at world leading universities

August 2021

What we would like to take you through...

- 1** What are the two “acceptances” you need to pursue a study abroad?
- 2** What documents are required and when should you prepare them?
- 3** How to select the right program and university?
- 4** How to prepare required documents?
- 5** How to follow up your application process?
- 6** Important websites

Getting admitted to a university and securing a scholarship are the two most important steps to pursue a study abroad

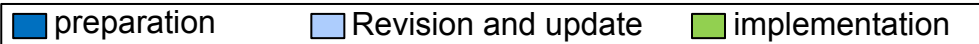
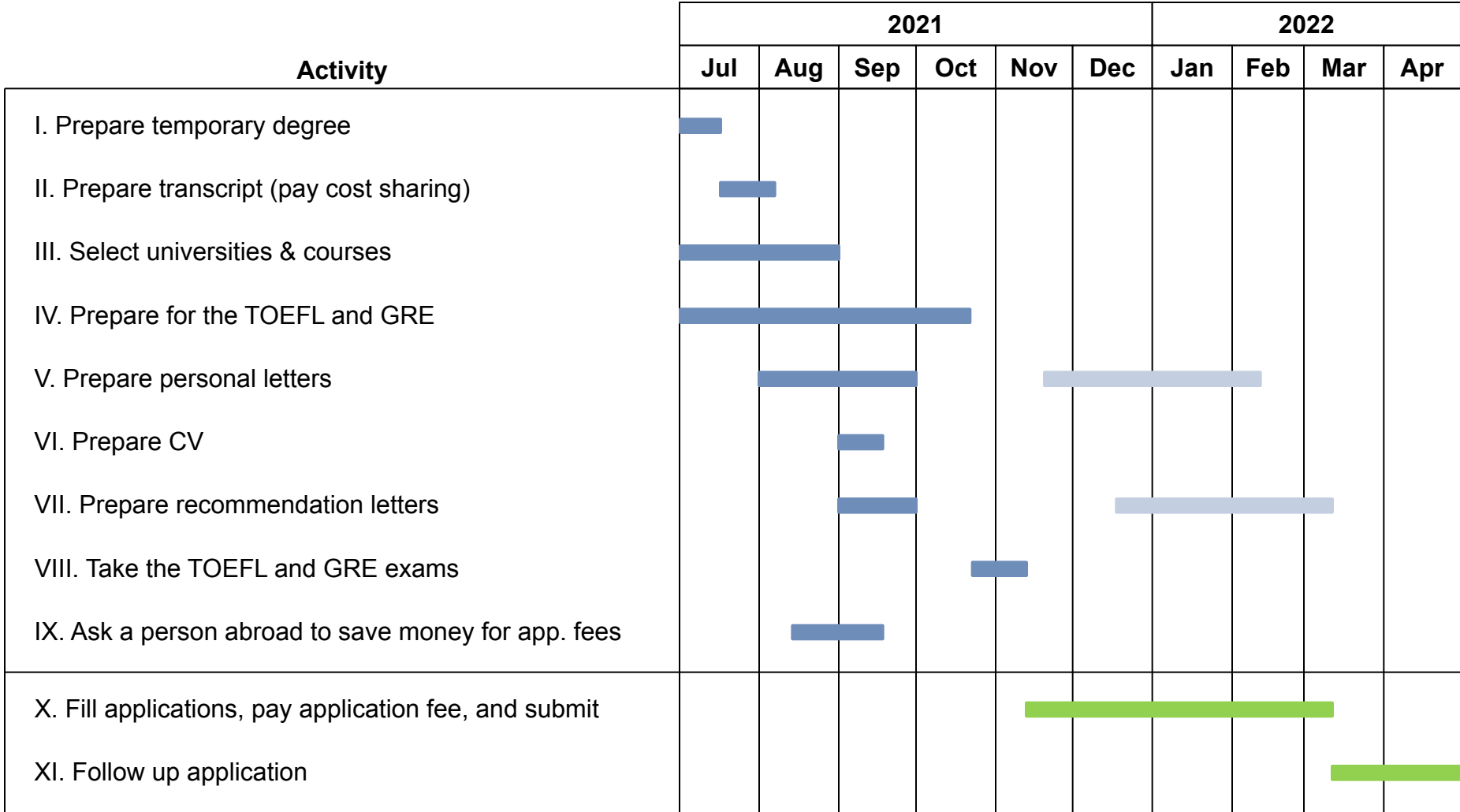
Search for a university with good scholarship opportunities

- There are **different types of scholarships**; university scholarships, government scholarships and institutional (company) scholarships
- Scholarships **can be full or partial**, e.g., may cover both tuition and living expenses or either of the two... and hence, you need to look thoroughly to understand what each scholarship covers
- Most universities conduct **admission and scholarship assessments** as two distinct process; you need to get admitted first
- Most of the times the scholarship application is embedded within the admission application itself; however, in some cases you need to apply for the scholarship separately
- Some university and government scholarship programs (such as Turkey Bursary and KGSP) integrate the two processes, and thus, if you are admitted to a program or offered the scholarship then you will automatically get the other

Then, apply for admission...

- In addition to the scholarship, you should check if the university have the **program you are interested in**
- Check if the program is **accredited**
- You may also want to look into the university's **world ranking** and international outlook
- Then check the **required documents** for application, the application deadline and the application fee
- Prepare the required documents and apply
- Admission is the first step in most application processes; if you are admitted then you will be considered for the scholarship selection
- You can also look into **other available funding options** like teaching or research assistantship at the university
- In the US, undergraduate students can **apply for Ph.D. programs directly**
- Most Ph.D. programs offer scholarships or fellowships that cover tuition fee and living expenses

Prepare required documents ahead of time to meet critical deadlines



Search and select the university and the program that best fits you

What you should do...

Specific Actions

Decide the program you want to pursue

- Decide what you want to study; choose a field that is related with your BSc degree and meets your passion and future plans
- Choose two or three fields of study and rank them in order of your preference

Surf scholarship websites to find universities

- Instead of searching for universities randomly, search for scholarships that you are eligible¹ to on scholarship websites, and look into the universities' website that offer the courses
- Prioritize universities that have good scholarships that can cover your costs of study

Check accreditation of the program

- Check the university's world ranking and reputation, the higher it is the smaller the chances of your admission but the better the education and the scholarships (at least, in most cases)
- Check if the program you chose at a university is accredited

Check the courses and research facility

- Go to the specific program website to understand what courses you will be taking and see if they are important to your future plans
- See if the university has good research facilities

Select universities and program

- Select around 10 universities that you would apply to and rank them in order
- While prioritizing you may want to consider: whether (cold vs. warm vs. rainy), location of university (Europe vs. US vs. Canada), country work permit laws (tight vs. loose laws) or any thing that is relevant to you

1. Not all scholarships are offered to all international students, check your eligibility and prioritize the ones that are offered to your specific regions/country

Prepare for the TOEFL and GRE exams

Register for an exam and collect materials

- You need to take both the **TOEFL** and the **GRE** if you plan to study in USA, otherwise the TOEFL will suffice in most cases
- **Register** for the exam(s) either online (if you have a relative abroad who will pay the fees for you) or through exam centers in Ethiopia
- **Collect materials** like book and previous exams from friends or search online and download them
- **Check if the materials are relevant and up to date**
- If you can afford it, consider buying online preparation materials such as **Magoosh GRE prep**

Develop a study plan

- Understand the difficulty of the exams, even though they look easy at first glance, they are not, trust me
- **Allocate reasonable time** to prepare for your exams by blocking certain time of the day
- If your study plan is, say, three months long, decide what you will be studying each day and review it every two weeks or so

Stick to your plans and study hard

- Never miss an hour from your study plan as this will ruin the next plan and so on (and if you miss one, this is where make up hours fit in)
- **Identify the sections that you are strong and weak at** and use this to review your study plans so as to focus more on your weakness
- **Take timed exams** every two or three weeks to see your progress and get used to the time pressure

Take the exams

- Prepare well for the exam day in terms of the things you need to take with you
- **Go to the exam place early**, and familiarize yourself with the venue, e.g., check where the toilet is in case you need to use it in the last minute
- Take the exam

Prepare personal letters and CVs that are specifically tailored for each program and university

Personal letters are your only chance to stand out in the crowd

- Carefully review personal letters written for admission in the top universities in the world; you can download a lot of them for free
- Each personal letter should describe why you are interested in the program and the university, your motivation, why you should be selected, your plan after completing the study and what you already did or are doing to reach your goals
- Be genuine and focus only on relevant points
- Tailor each letter to a single program or university
- Proof read your letters to correct it both in terms of content and grammar
- Send the letters to a friend or relative that you think can make constructive comments and corrections
- Incorporate comments and iterate it with other people
- Polish it and save your last version

Your CV is your representative

- Look into different CV formats on the internet to choose the best that fits your choice
 - suggest using a **one-page CV format** for masters applications, e.g., check out sample CVs at https://www.mcgill.ca/caps/files/caps/guide_cv.pdf OR https://beam.stanford.edu/sites/g/files/sbiybj10676/f/resume_and_cover_letter_examples.pdf
 - for Ph.D. application longer **academic type CV** may be advantageous, e.g., check out <https://web.stanford.edu/class/inde231/CVs%20and%20Cover%20Letters%2005-06.pdf>
- Decide what to include in your CV for your preferred programs
- Write your CV, proof read and send it to others to review it for you
- Incorporate relevant comments and update your CV
- Tailor your CV as needed when submitting it to different programs

Ask your teachers to prepare a general recommendation letters for you and tell them you will request for specific ones later on

General recommendation for universities that accept recommendation submitted by students

- Ask at least **3 teachers** to write you a recommendation letter for a study abroad
- Tell them to include some **points you want to highlight** for the admission committee (e.g. your overall performance in teams, your grade and accomplishments, research ability, internship experience, participation in clubs and voluntary activities etc...)
- Have them **print two or three copies** in case you need to send one to a school
- Scan the recommendations
- Ask your teachers if they are willing to write you a specific recommendations to the universities that require teachers to submit recommendation directly (mostly through an online portal)



Specific recommendation for universities that accept recommendation submitted directly by the teacher

- You need to give your teachers' email address to the universities so that the universities can send them a link to fill a recommendation
- Tell your teacher (preferably in person or by phone) that the university will contact them soon; you should also tell them about the **program you applied to and the deadline** to submit the recommendation
- **Send your personal letter to your teachers** so that they can refer to it to remember important points about you
- Never forget to **thank your teachers!**

Fill applications, submit required documents before deadlines

Now that you have prepared all the necessary documents, you should fill in the application form, attach supporting documents and submit the application before deadlines

While filling applications:

- Read all required questions carefully and submit **truthful answers only**, do not write anything that you cannot prove if asked
- **Do not fill them in one sitting** and send them on the same day; you need to check whether you have filled the right information on another day with a fresh mind
- **Submit them 2 or 3 days before the deadline**; give enough time, about a week or two, if someone else will be submitting the applications for you

Deadlines can be a bit tricky, pay due attention to the following point;

- There may be **several deadlines for a single application**: deadlines for a country, university, faculty, department, program, or scholarship
- **Deadlines may be conflicting** (two or more deadlines for one program), and thus, you should abide by the earliest one (e.g. If the program deadline is January 15th and the scholarship deadline is December 1st, you should apply before the later date in order to be considered for the scholarship)
- **Check all deadlines** to understand when you should apply for the program of your choice

Follow up applications and accept your offers

Following up your application can be **as important as applying**; you should provide documents and respond to inquiries when requested

- If offered a place you should respond to it before the **deadline to accept the offer**
- If the university is not responding by the date posted on the website, you should **write emails** to the coordinators of the program to understand the reasons (trust me, that specific program may be your only chance)
- If admitted but not offered a scholarship, ask for a letter of admission and search for **external scholarships** that are offered by other companies or institutions
- Ask the coordinators of the programs for advice – where to look for other scholarships to secure funding for the studies, if you can defer the offer to the next year, etc...

Important websites

- https://www.eacea.ec.europa.eu/scholarships/emjmd-catalogue_en
- <https://mastercardfdn.org/all/scholars/becoming-a-scholar/apply-to-the-scholars-program/>
- <https://si.se/en/apply/scholarships/swedish-institute-scholarships-for-global-professionals/>
- <http://www.chalmers.se/en/education/fees-finance/Pages/iPOET.aspx>
- <https://www.gatescambridge.org/>
- <https://www.tudelft.nl/en/education/practical-matters/scholarships/justus-louise-van-effen-excellence-scholarships/>
- https://www.studyinkorea.go.kr/en/sub/gks/allnew_invite.do
- <https://www.utwente.nl/en/education/scholarship-finder/university-of-twente-scholarship/#application-deadlines-details>
- <https://www.aauw.org/resources/programs/fellowships-grants/current-opportunities/international/>
- <https://www.turkiyeburslari.gov.tr/>