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How to Know if Studying Abroad is the Right Choice for You

How can you elevate your education?

Do you want to get more out of your education than just a degree? Why not also **have the adventure of a lifetime while you study**? Studying abroad is a great option to elevate your education, but **how can you know if it's the right choice for you?** Explore the benefits to studying abroad and ask yourself some questions to find out if you'll excel in another country.

Your study abroad options

One of the first decisions you have to make is deciding **what type of study abroad option is best for you**. Check out these common study abroad options:

1. Pursuing an entire degree in another country

If you want more of an adventure and greater independence, then pursuing an entire degree abroad may be a good option for you! Whether you're pursuing an undergraduate or a graduate degree, you could **spend anywhere from one to four years in another country**. Your degree will come from the school abroad, which may require you to do further education or exams to work in Canada.

2. Exchange program

This is a popular option for students who want to spend some time studying in another country, but want to earn a Canadian degree. An exchange program is when you're **enrolled in a Canadian school, but you spend one or two terms in another country** with a partner school. The credits you earn abroad will count towards your degree in Canada.

3. Summer / intersession programs

Some schools or programs will offer students the opportunity to participate in research or take courses during the summer or in the intersession between terms. This type of study abroad program is **shorter than an exchange and can last anywhere from two weeks to two months**.



Top six benefits of studying abroad

If you're still not sure whether studying abroad is for you, **check out these top benefits:**

1. Travel the world

The biggest benefit of studying abroad is that you're exploring the world outside your home. You'll get to **explore new food, landmarks, nature, museums, and activities**. You'll be able to **easily travel to surrounding areas or countries** during your weekends and breaks.

2. Develop your language skills and embrace a new culture

There's no better way to **become proficient in a new language** than to be fully immersed in it! So, if you want to learn French, study somewhere in France, or if you want to learn Spanish, study in Spain! Plus, you'll get to **experience and interact with the culture on a deeper level than if you were a tourist**.

3. Learn more about yourself and increase your skills

You'll **learn a lot about yourself** and pick up some new skills when you study away from home. You'll become incredibly independent and confident as you navigate the world on your own. You'll pick up skills such as **communication, flexibility, adaptiveness, curiosity, self-reliance, and plenty more!**

4. Boost your resumé

Employers and schools look highly on students with experiences studying abroad. It **shows that you aren't afraid to challenge yourself**, and you'll be able to provide a more global perspective. You'll have experience living internationally, learning about new cultures, and navigating social interactions with people from another country — all qualities that can help set you apart from other applicants.

5. Broaden your network

Building your network is a foundational part of your post-secondary experience. The more diverse your network, the more opportunities you'll have for **pursuing your career anywhere in the world**.



6. Shorter degree options

If you choose to pursue your entire degree abroad, then a benefit you may not be aware of is that **some bachelor's and master's degrees can be completed in a shorter amount of time than in Canada**. Bachelor's degrees in the UK or Australia typically take three years to complete, and some master's can be completed in one year.

Questions to ask yourself if you want to study abroad

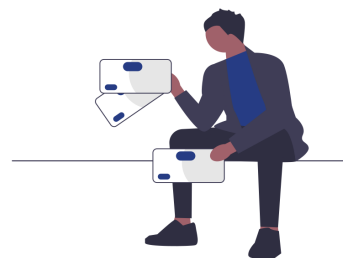
To find out if studying abroad is right for you, **consider these questions:**

1. Are there schools and programs that match my interests?

Make sure that there are schools and programs that match what you're looking for. While it'd be fun to study in another country, if that area doesn't offer the program you need for your career, then look somewhere else. Also, if you want a career in something specialized like medicine or law, **make sure that the degree you earn is equivalent to Canadian programs.**

2. Can I afford to study abroad?

Studying abroad is not cheap. You may have to pay **higher tuition fees** as an international student with **fewer scholarship and loan opportunities**. Make sure the study abroad opportunity you want is within your budget.



3. Student visa 101: applying and restrictions

When studying in another country, you're going to need a student visa. Do some research beforehand to find out **how long it takes to get a visa and what documents you'll need to provide**. Keep in mind that **student visas come with restrictions**, like how many hours you can legally work as a student.

4. What type of international community does the school have?

It can be difficult making connections when you first arrive. What **kind of support** does the school offer for international students? **Are there many other international students?**

5. Am I ready to live in another country?

Are you ready to live away from home? Consider what preparations you'll have to make before moving: sorting your banking so that you can access your money, updating your cell phone plan for international calls/texts, searching for an apartment online, knowing what healthcare you can access, and more.

Where in the world will you study?

So, if you've thought it through and you're set on studying abroad, the next step is to decide where in the world you'll want to study. **Good luck and have a fun adventure!**

