

# University preparation **checklist**

So you've chosen a university abroad and received an offer - congratulations! You're about to embark on the adventure of a lifetime.

Of course, any great adventure requires a little preparation. While you might be used to packing suitcases for holidays or even moving abroad, going to university is a unique experience which requires unique preparation.

To help you stay on top of different tasks and requirements, we've created this simple checklist. As you complete each item, you'll get the satisfaction of ticking it off! Of course, you don't have to complete every single task. A lot of them are suggestions which might not feel necessary for you. Some - like visa preparation and booking your accommodation - are less negotiable.

There are also sections for notes, so you can jot down anything interesting you learn, or important things you want to remind yourself about later.

## Academic

Going to university is going to involve all kinds of preparation and new experiences. But a familiar place to start might be with academic preparation. Plus, these are things which you can get on with whenever you have some spare time, or even at school. They're not time-sensitive, and don't require access to special documents or your possessions.

- Check what **email address** the university will contact me on, and **monitor it actively** during the summer break.
- Have a look at the compulsory and optional **modules for next semester**.
- Find out if I need to register for modules over the summer.
- Find any available **reading lists** for my modules and see if I can start reading some.
- Research and sign up to **online courses** to help prepare for academic life at university and/or in the subject area I'm studying.

Notes:

## Lifestyle

The academic side can feel daunting, but it will probably come naturally to you. Plus, you'll get lots of help from tutors and professors who'll ease you into studying in higher education!

But the lifestyle changes you'll encounter might be a bit more unfamiliar. With a few simple steps, you can get an idea of what to expect and avoid any nerves or culture shock as you set out to university.

- Research local customs, manners and etiquette.
- Learn some of my favourite recipes from home.
- Practice doing my own laundry.
- Complete any health insurance requirements needed.
- Check how to register with a doctor or medical practice when I arrive.
- Find out the most popular method of public transport and how to buy tickets.

Notes:

## Accommodation

Choosing where to live is such an important part of preparing for university! Here, we'll cover a couple of key questions you should ask yourself, and the tasks that follow.

- Decide if I want catered or self-catered accommodation.
- Decide if I only want to live with other international students.
- Research the accommodation options available at my chosen university.
- Check whether it's possible to stay in my top picks over the summer and Christmas breaks.
- Check whether I'll need a guarantor. Does it need to be a local one?
- Check what amenities are supplied by my chosen accommodation and ensure I don't double up!
- Create a packing checklist.

Notes:

## Social

A really exciting part of going to university is meeting new people. You might even make some friends you keep for life!

Of course, being surrounded by people you haven't met before can also feel overwhelming, especially in a new country. With these steps, you'll know what to expect, and might even have a few familiar faces when you arrive.

- Sign up for induction programmes and orientation activities, and check if any are specifically for international students.
- Research what organisations and societies exist and follow a social media page of at least one interesting society. Maybe even get in touch!
- Find international student organisations and the international student services university body on social media and follow their pages.
- Follow my university and/or department on social media.
- Find and join social media groups for students at my accommodation/on my course/international students. Reach out to someone!

Notes:

## Financial

Having to manage your own budget and take charge of things like grocery shopping and buying cleaning supplies might be very familiar, but it isn't for all students going to university! Plus, becoming a university student doesn't just bring more financial responsibilities, it also brings discounts and opportunities.

- Create a weekly and/or monthly budget.
- Research student banking options in my host country and get in touch with a bank about opening an account.
- Tell my current bank I'll be studying abroad.
- Find out whether I can transfer funds from my current bank to my new student bank account, and how much that would cost.
- Exchange some money so I have cash in the local currency.
- Apply for a student discount card and student travel card.
- Find out the visa conditions for a part-time job.
- Find out what kind of part time jobs are available for (international) students (don't forget on-campus jobs!)

Notes:

## Legal

One extra consideration which students studying abroad have compared to those who stay in their home countries is the legal requirements of their visas. These can feel overwhelming, but it's easy to stay on top of everything with a bit of preparation.

- Find out what documents I'll need for my visa application and make a checklist.
- Get in touch with the relevant embassy or consulate and the international student services at my university to begin the visa application process.
- Create a folder containing all of the documents I'll need to show at the airport upon entry.
- Research the conditions of my visa once I'm in the country (minimum hours spent in-class, minimum credits per semester, any implications remote-learning could have on the requirements).
- Get in touch with my national embassy or consulate to let them know I'll be living there as a student.

Notes: