



Study in the USA



Higher Education in the USA

- There are many types of higher education institutions to choose from including public and private universities as well as community colleges.
- In most cases students take core general education classes in subjects such as science, humanities, languages, maths and english alongside their major (main) subject. Unlike universities in England and Wales, students choose their major subject when they are at university (similar to Scottish system). This is usually during the second year. Students can also select a minor (secondary) subject.
- Students can specify a proposed major when applying, but usually they have the freedom to change their mind at a later stage. **Note: Some subjects, such as medicine and law, are not available at undergraduate level.**
- Bachelor degrees usually take 4 years to finish. Associate degrees take 2 years at community colleges and then students can often transfer to university to undertake a further 2 years of study to get a bachelor's degree.

Highest Ranked Universities

Massachusetts Institute of Technology (1)

Stanford University (3)

Harvard University (5)

<https://www.topuniversities.com/university-rankings/world-university-rankings/2022>

Fees

- Studying in the USA can be expensive and each university has a calculator on their website to allow you to work out the cost.
- There is financial aid available for both merit and need. Need-based aid depends on an assessment of the student's financial circumstances, while merit-based aid considers academic grades, athletic performance, involvement in organisations and other outstanding talents
- 5 universities: Amherst, Yale, Princeton, MIT and Harvard, offer a 'needs blind' application, where they do not consider the cost of taking the student but will work out the financial support required post offer.

Entry Requirements & Application Process

- It's important to start your research early, ideally 18 months before applications are due.
- Nearly 900 universities/colleges use a scheme known as the Common App for applications. Many also require supplementary tests/essays and references. Universities outside the Common App recruit independently.
- You can apply for as many or as few universities as you like but there are application fees to consider and it can be a time consuming process for the applicant.
- Entry requirements vary enormously, but American universities take a more holistic approach to their recruitment process and are more impressed by students who have challenged themselves both academically and personally.
- Actual and predicted examination grades are used to calculate GPA (Grade Point Average, universities will calculate this for students). Universities also use aptitude testing known as SAT/ACT. It is important to sit the right one and ensure it is the one where you will do best.
- Students need to nominate people to write references to show the best possible light. Again this can be time consuming. Some UK schools have a school co-ordinator who can help you



Visa

Getting a visa for the USA can be quite complicated and is an ever-changing process, so check with the American Embassy and the university you are intending to study at. To proceed with the visa you will need to have received an offer of admission and an I-20 form.

Working

It is usual for students to work whilst studying in the USA and a student visa allows you to work up to 20 hours a week on campus. Students are not allowed to work off campus on a student visa.

Further Information and Useful Websites

Many agencies offer to obtain merit based scholarship, especially for sports people and for a fee. If you chose to work with one of these, you should research them and be aware, a significant number of students going to the USA will get scholarship funding, although it may be a smaller amount and not the full ticket funding that is often suggested.

The Fulbright Commission exists to help students from the UK study in the USA and it has excellent resources and organises a college day each autumn when the USA universities visit London.

www.fulbright.org.uk



Advice for international students can also be found at www.internationalstudent.com/study_usa/

Registration site for the SATs admissions exam www.collegeboard.org

Registration site for the website for the ACT admissions exam. <http://global.act.org/>

Common application process used by nearly 700 universities www.commonapp.org

The QS World Rankings guide to studying in the USA <https://www.topuniversities.com/where-to-study/north-america/united-states/guide>