



How to Study Abroad in Sweden



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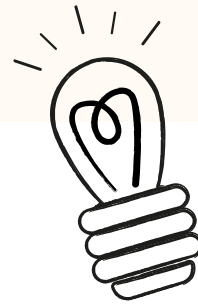
Introduction

Choose to study in Sweden, and you will find yourself in a nation which has always punched well above its weight. From being the centre of an empire in the 17th century, to being the home and birthplace of the Nobel Prize, its influence has long spread well beyond its borders, despite the fact its total population is no bigger than a large city.

Swedish businesses such as Ikea and Volvo are known around the world, and its contributions to popular culture range from bouffant-haired 70s pop aristocrats ABBA to the ground-breaking films of director Ingmar Bergman.

Modern-day Sweden is known for its sense of social justice and fairness. It has the highest level of wealth equality in the world, one of the world's lowest gender pay gaps, publicly funded healthcare for all, and equal rights for homosexual and heterosexual couples.

Add on striking northern European beauty, and free tuition for EU students (non-EU students must pay fees), and the appeal of studying in Sweden is pretty strong.



Why should you study in Sweden?

Want to know what makes Sweden stand apart as a fantastic study destination? Here are some of the key things to know before you apply.

Discussion-based learning model

Unlike other institutions in the Western world, Swedish schools and universities offer students an alternative approach to learning. In classrooms, students can discuss topics with each other in groups, where they're encouraged to think about issues in a creative and holistic way.

This approach is a far cry from the lecture-based teaching that's predominant in other parts of the world and, according to students, creates a more equal and less intimidating atmosphere. If you're looking for a study experience that keeps you truly engaged, there's no need to look any further than Sweden.

Get paid to study a PhD

Another thing which sets Sweden apart from other European countries is how it approaches PhD education. In Sweden, PhDs are viewed as jobs. Instead of having to pay for tuition, you'll earn a monthly salary.

The application process will vary depending on both the university and the department, but you'll find available PhD positions listed on university job boards. Studying a master's in Sweden (and perhaps learning Swedish in your spare time!) can be a great way to build a foundation that prepares you for a PhD opportunity.





Tuition fees in Sweden

If you're an EU national or from one of the other Nordic countries, you're in luck! Public Swedish universities charge no fees at undergraduate or master's level for these students.

If you're studying a bachelor's or master's and you're from outside the EU, you should expect to pay between €7,500 and €25,500 (£6,330–£21,520) per year as well as an application fee which varies depending on the university.

An inclusive, diverse study destination

As we mentioned in the introduction to this guide, Sweden has a superb reputation for social justice and is considered to be one of the most equal countries in the world. Almost 15 percent of the population are first-generation immigrants and this diverse melting pot of cultures means it's easy for international students to adjust to Swedish life.

Scholarships

While students outside the EU are required to pay tuition fees, financial aid is often available. For example, Chalmers University of Technology offers a range of scholarships, including:

- Avancez Scholarships – 75 percent tuition fee waiver, available to all fee-paying students
- IPOET Scholarships – 75 percent tuition fee waiver, funded by Swedish government and available to all fee-paying students
- Sievert Larsson Scholarship Fund – 100 percent tuition fee waiver and living expenses, offered to Thai citizens studying an engineering master's degree
- Volvo Group Scholarship Programme – 100 percent tuition fee waiver for Indian and Chinese citizens, also includes a summer internship opportunity, mentorship and possible employment at Volvo Group



Career opportunities

IKEA isn't the only business in Sweden – you'll have a wide range of multinational employers to choose from at the end of your degree. A highly innovative country, Sweden has a growing reputation for tech and engineering, and recent government investment has led to growth and increased job opportunities in technology, medicine and biotechnology. Global employers based in Sweden include Ericsson, Skype, Spotify and Volvo.

In 2019, the Swedish Migration Agency released a report in partnership with the Public Employment Agency identifying areas where there was a notable skills shortage. Roles listed included architects, civil engineers, psychologists, surveyors and lawyers.

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While it won't be essential for every role, many employers will expect you to have at least basic comprehension of Swedish so it's worth taking language lessons alongside your studies.

If you do choose to work in Sweden after graduation, you'll also benefit from extensive workplace benefits such as sick leave and 18 months paid parental leave per child.

Top universities in Sweden



As you'd expect from a nation with an economy driven by science and technology, Sweden offers a good selection of universities. It has eight entries in the QS World University Rankings 2022, all of which are in the top 400.

Chalmers University of Technology

Located in Gothenburg, Chalmers University of Technology is a very strong university focused on engineering, architecture and technology management, which is ranked joint 121st in the world overall.

With more than 70 nationalities represented and 39 English taught two-year master's programmes Chalmers is a highly progressive international university which places great emphasis on sustainability throughout its teaching. The learning atmosphere is open-minded and informal, encouraging independent thinking and creativity in the tackling of intricate real-life problems with theoretical knowledge – a fertile environment for innovation.

With this comes a genuine entrepreneurial spirit, embodied in the subsidiary Chalmers Ventures. Its highly ranked business incubators are making sure new ideas find their way to commercial use.

As part of a profound commitment to utilisation, Chalmers has strategic partnerships with internationally renowned high-tech companies such as Volvo, Ericsson, SKF and AstraZeneca. The close links to industry and society characterises the education as well as the research conducted at the university, and it provides excellent career opportunities for students.





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Other universities in Sweden

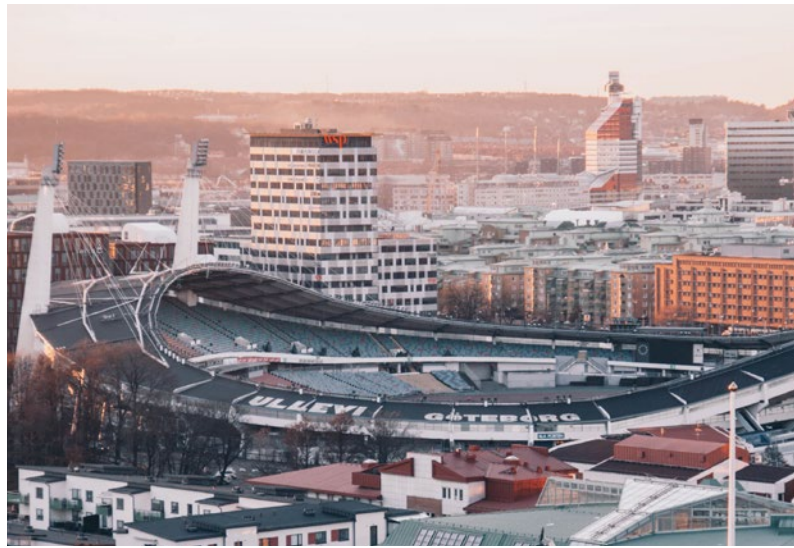
Gothenburg has one other university: the University of Gothenburg (ranked joint 180th).

Located in Stockholm, KTH, Royal Institute of Technology is Sweden's most international polytechnic university. Stockholm University is currently ranked 148th in the world and is one of Scandinavia's largest universities, educating more than 70,000 students in four faculties.

Lund University is one of the most prestigious universities in Northern Europe. With a large student body of 42,000, students make up almost half the population of the city of Lund.

Other universities include Uppsala University (124th), Linköping University (329th) and Umeå University (=365th). In addition, Sweden is home to a number of prestigious specialized institutions, including the medical-focused Karolinska Institute.

Studying in Gothenburg



Sweden's second-largest city, this port town is renowned for its continental feel and its friendly locals, with a fairly large student population. Home to many international companies, the city is particularly known for being eminent in design and computer game production.

Gothenburg is also the automotive capital of Scandinavia, with around 130 companies employing 25,000 people in this field. As well as opportunities in automotive engineering, Gothenburg also has a fast-growing life sciences sector, with northern Europe's largest university hospital located in the region.

Away from the workplace, there's a great deal of culture to explore here, as the city hosts some of the largest annual events in Scandinavia, including the annual Gothenburg Film Festival and the Gothenburg Book Fair. In summer, a wide variety of music festivals are held in the city, while sports fans can enjoy the annual Gothia Cup, the world's largest football tournament in terms of the number of participants.



Although not cheap, Gothenburg is more affordable than many other Swedish cities, and has plenty of pubs and bars. It's proved a hit with its students, claiming a position in the top 30 for student view, one of the indicators used to compile the QS Best Student Cities ranking.

Read on to learn more about what makes Gothenburg an ideal student city.

A friendly, intimate city

In 2017, Gothenburg was named the most sociable city in the world by Hostelworld, finishing ahead of fellow Swedish city Stockholm. That reputation for openness continues today, with the city providing students with plenty of opportunities to get to know each other and the local people.

Gothenburg is a hub for entertainment, thanks to its port, vibrant local culture and neighbourly environment. It's an ideal place for students who want to experience studying in a Nordic country and are looking for a small-town feel with a friendly vibe. An affordable Nordic city



According to Numbeo, the cost of living in Gothenburg is about 13 percent cheaper than in Stockholm. Eligibility for student accommodation will vary depending on the university, with rents in student dormitories likely to range between 3500 SEK and 6500 SEK a month (£295-550).

Students renting privately may also need to consider the cost of bills, insurance, WiFi etc.

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Rich in culture and things to do

Gothenburg is a youthful and dynamic city, ideal for students seeking a sociable study experience in a beautiful seaside town.

The city offers students beautiful indoor and outdoor amenities, including top-ranked museums, the Göta River, a huge botanical garden and the popular hipster neighbourhood of Haga.

Unlike Stockholm, Gothenburg has a more laid-down and continental atmosphere, allowing students to make the most out of their experience.



Things to know about living in Sweden



Ready to send off that application? To help you adjust to life as a student in Sweden, we've compiled a few useful things to know ahead of your first week.

How to say hello

There are some unwritten rules about how to say hello in Sweden that are great to know if you want to avoid awkward interactions.

If you're meeting someone for the first time and you've never talked to them before, you shake their hand. It doesn't matter if it's in a business meeting or at a party, that is the general way of introduction. Then if you meet them later in an informal setting, you can hug them.

'Fika' is essential

Fika is the act of grabbing a coffee and something sweet to eat to take a break from whatever else you're doing – perfect for when you're in the middle of a day-long study session in the library!

When studying in Sweden, don't hesitate to suggest taking a fika break to your study mates to get to know each other better. Just pop to the closest café and order a coffee and a cinnamon bun, and you're one step closer to becoming a local.

Call people by their first name

In Sweden you can skip the formal titles. They don't use Mr, Mrs, or Miss and don't even have Swedish equivalents that are still used.

Instead, you can just call people by their first name, even if it's your professor or landlord.

Shop with your card, not cash

Don't spend a lot of money on withdrawal fees. In Sweden, people almost never use cash, and a lot of stores don't actually accept cash as payment anymore. Just bring your card and shop away!

Pack for a cold winter (and a hot summer)

Depending on how long you're staying, make sure you bring clothes that fit the shifting climate.

Swedish winters get really cold, and their summers get really hot, so make sure you bundle up in the cold. You don't need to worry about how you look, practicality always comes first!





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