



HOW TO

Study Abroad in **Denmark**





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Introduction

Danes enjoy an unusually egalitarian society with a distinctive identity as the gateway between Scandinavia and continental Europe.

Scandinavian countries are increasingly popular with international students, with thousands attracted to living and studying there by the region's strong academic reputation and extremely high quality of life. In fact, the happiest country in the world, according to the World Happiness Report, is currently Finland, followed by Denmark.

Danes enjoy an unusually egalitarian society with a distinctive identity as the gateway between Scandinavia and continental Europe. A nation of just over five million people, Denmark offers a range of pursuits and attractions that will appeal to any prospective undergraduate student – from the attentively designed urban chic of Copenhagen to the remote beauty of the fjords.

In Bloomberg's recent list of the world's 50 most innovative economies, Denmark is ranked eighth, achieving the top score in the list globally for researcher concentration. The economy is strong and stable, with many global companies like shipping conglomerate Maersk and pharmaceutical giant Novo Nordisk having their headquarters in Copenhagen.

So, how can you study abroad in this nation of hard work and *hygge*? Read on to find out more about the Danish higher education system, how to apply for university in Denmark, what you can get up to in the best student cities, and more...



Higher Education in Denmark

Denmark is one of the most popular study destinations in Europe. Five universities in Denmark make the top 400 in the **QS World University Rankings 2021**, with the **University of Copenhagen** coming out on top, placing 76th. The lively capital of **Copenhagen** also achieved 46th place in the **QS Best Student Cities ranking**.

Other featured universities in Denmark include: **Technical University of Denmark** (103rd), **Aarhus University** (147th), **Aalborg University** (joint 305th) and **University of Southern Denmark** (SDU) (joint 353rd).

While the majority of undergraduate teaching in Denmark is conducted in Danish, there's a huge range of postgraduate programs taught in English, including many fully funded PhD programs. Most undergraduate programs take between three and four years to complete, whereas master's programs take between one and two years.

Higher education in Denmark is divided into five different types of learning institutions:

1. **Erhvervsakademi** (business academies) – teaching professionally-orientated short and first cycle degree programs.
2. **Professionshøjskole** (university colleges) - professionally oriented first cycle degree programs.

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3. **Maritime Education and Training Institutions**, which offer first cycle degree programs in this field.
4. **Universitet** (General and specialized research universities) which offer first, second and third cycle degree programs in academic disciplines.
5. **Specialized university level institutions** offering first, second and third cycle degree programs in fields like architecture, fine art, performing arts and music.



Admission requirements & applications

Before applying to university in Denmark, you'll need to check your qualifications are recognized by your chosen university. To gain entry to a Danish university, your qualifications must be the equivalent of a Danish upper secondary school leaving certificate. However, for certain undergraduate programs, a relevant vocational qualification may be sufficient.

Some courses may require additional admissions requirements. These requirements may be certain subjects passed with a particular grade, a passed admissions test or interview, or a diploma that has been passed with a minimum GPA.

If you don't meet the requirements, you may be able to take a supplementary course, which will make you eligible for admission. This course, however, will not increase your GPA score.

Language Requirements

English language tests

Many non-Danish applicants apply for programs taught in English. To study a course in English, you must submit proof of English proficiency equivalent to an English level B in Denmark. Universities will usually state the exact scores they require on their websites.

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If you are from outside the EU/EEA, you will be required to pay tuition fees in Danish universities.

These are, on average, US\$8,000-21,000 per year.

Danish language tests

If you're applying to study a course taught in Danish, you will have to pass a Danish language test to prove a level of proficiency. You can take either 'Danish as a Foreign Language' ('Studieprøven i dansk som andetsprog') or 'Danish Test 2' ('Danskprøve 2'). Some programs may require that you have passed 'Danish Test 3' ('Danskprøve 3').

If you are a student from one of the Nordic countries you will not be required to pass a Danish test if you studied Danish, Norwegian or Swedish as part of your entry requirement.

Fees and Funding

For students from the EU/EEA and Switzerland, higher education in Denmark is free for both undergraduate and postgraduate courses.

If you are from outside the EU/EEA, you will be required to pay tuition fees in Danish universities. These are, on average, US\$8,000-21,000 per year.

There are several scholarships on offer, both from the government and from specific schools. Some of the government scholarships include the Danish Government Scholarships for Foreign Nationals, the Denmark Government Scholarships for non-EU Students and Fulbright Commission Scholarships to Study in Denmark.

You can find out more about fees and funding later on in this guide.



Submitting Applications

Applications to study in Denmark should be made through the national admissions site www.optagelse.dk.

Here you will apply to universities and attach the relevant documents required by the university you're applying to.

Signature

To apply, you'll need a signature and verification of your ID for each of the courses you are applying to.

If you are a Danish citizen or hold a residence permit, this is done with electronic signature NemID, a digital identification tool that will have been issued to you previously.

If you're an international student, you will be required to print a signature page from optagelse.dk, sign it and send it to the universities you are applying for. The page will contain an application ID which the universities use to download your application

Other documents

You will need to attach the diploma of your upper secondary education in the 'attachments' section of the application. You may also be required to attach a personal essay, but this depends on the course and the institution.

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Applying for courses and receiving responses

You can apply for up to eight programs. You must list these in order of priority and each application must have a signature sent with it.

You will then receive a single response. This will be in the form of a letter. If you receive an acceptance letter, this may not be from your first choice, if they don't have a place available for you. It may be from your second choice, or even lower. If you receive a rejection letter, this means you have been rejected from all of your choices. You must respond to this letter by early August.



Health Insurance

Once you've accepted your university offer, it's time to sort out the boring (but incredibly necessary) parts of preparing to study abroad.

If you are an EU/EEA citizen or Swiss national and are staying in Denmark for less than three months, you can use your European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) to access medically necessary healthcare services.

If you're an EU/EEA or Swiss national and plan to stay in Denmark for more than three months, you must register with the Civil Registration System. To do this, you'll need a S1 Portable Document or a valid EHIC card issued by your statutory health insurance.

International students will need to purchase travel insurance coverage for the time they'll be studying in Denmark. However, all non-residents staying in Denmark are entitled to emergency hospital care, free of charge, in event of an accident, childbirth, acute illness or sudden aggravation of chronic disease, under the Danish Health Act.

Getting a Visa

If you're a citizen of Norway, Sweden or Finland, you won't need any documentation to live, work and study in Denmark. All you'll need is your Danish personal identification number.

If you're from the EU/EEA or Switzerland you can study, work and live in Denmark for up to three months without documentation. After this,

International students will need to purchase travel insurance coverage for the time they'll be studying in Denmark.



If you're from outside the EU/EEA or Switzerland, you'll need to obtain a residence permit if you'll be studying in Denmark for more than three months.

you will need to get a Danish registration certificate. To get this, you'll need to present your passport, two passport-sized photos and a letter of admission from your university to the Regional State Administration (*Statsforvaltningen*). You will then be issued with a personal identification number.

If you're from outside the EU/EEA or Switzerland, you'll need to obtain a residence permit if you'll be studying in Denmark for more than three months. If you're staying for less than three months, you'll need a tourist visa.

To obtain a residence permit you will need:

- An acceptance letter from your university
- Proof of language proficiency
- Proof that you have the financial resources to support yourself (usually around €1,000 per month [approx. US\$1,080])
- Proof that you have purchased travel insurance
- A valid passport
- Passport photo



Study in Denmark in English

The majority of university teaching in Denmark is conducted in Danish, but there are more than 700 internationally renowned programs taught in English, with around 86 percent of Danish citizens speaking English.

Universities in Denmark are free to attend at all levels for all EU/EEA/Swiss students – however, no information has been released as of yet about how British students will be affected post-Brexit. If you're from outside the EU/EEA, you will have to pay fees of around €6,000 – 16,000 per annum (approx. US\$6,490 – 17,306).

International students in Denmark can take Danish lessons for free during their studies. It's possible to enroll first in an English-taught undergraduate program then continue your graduate studies in Danish once you've reached the required language capabilities.

You can either study for a full degree in Denmark or add credits to your current degree, in the form of a study abroad or summer school program. According to the website Study in Denmark, there are around 70 English-taught undergraduate courses and 390 masters programs in the country.

Research is of high importance in Danish society, and there are a number of internationally renowned PhD programs that can be undertaken in English. Universities offering PhD study include [Aalborg University](#), [Aarhus University](#), [Copenhagen Business School](#) and

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Roskilde University, among others. Danish PhD scholarships are fully funded – you will receive a salary and there are zero tuition fees.

See below for a (non-exhaustive) list of universities in Denmark where you can complete your studies in English:

Universities in Denmark where you can study in English

University	Location	Undergraduate/postgraduate?
Aalborg University	Aalborg	Both
Aarhus School of Architecture	Aarhus	Postgraduate
Aarhus University	Aarhus	Both
Copenhagen Business School	Copenhagen	Both
Design School Kolding	Kolding	Postgraduate
IT University of Copenhagen	Copenhagen	Both
Roskilde University	Roskilde	Both
Technical University of Denmark (DTU)	Copenhagen	Both
The Royal Academy of Music	Aarhus/Aalborg	Postgraduate
The Royal Danish Academy of Music	Copenhagen	Both
University of Copenhagen (KU)	Copenhagen	Postgraduate
University of Copenhagen (UCPH)	Copenhagen	Postgraduate
University of Southern Denmark	Odense	Both
VIA University College	Multiple campuses	Undergraduate



Student Cities & Things to Do

The country has an abundance of interesting cities, all of which are steeped in history and culture. Within these cities are some of the world's top universities, featured in the [QS World University Rankings 2021](#).

Denmark's capital, [Copenhagen](#), can be found in the most recent [QS Best Student Cities](#) ranking, where it ranks 46th in the world. Outside of the capital, there are numerous exciting cities for students, including, Aalborg, Aarhus and Odense.

Read on to learn more about student life in these incredible Danish cities.

Aalborg

Aalborg is Denmark's fourth largest city, with stunning architecture located on the waterfront. The city is now a buzzing hub for culture, knowledge and research – great for students studying at the academically renowned [Aalborg University](#).

The city has a range of theatres and performance venues, as well as museums such as Aalborg Historical Museum and Aalborg Museum of Modern Art. Aalborg also holds the Aalborg Carnival in May, which attracts more than 100,000 people annually. Aalborg's nightlife is buzzing, and students can enjoy one of the city's many clubs or grab a drink at one of the bars.

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Aarhus

Home to [Aarhus University](#), Aarhus is the second largest city in Denmark and is located on the east coast of the Jutland peninsula. You can get around the attractions using Aarhus' free city bike scheme, where you can pick up a bike from one of the 56 stands in the city. Most amusements are within close proximity to Aarhus University, making them easy for students to visit after lectures.

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Aarhus has loads of parks and green spaces for students to enjoy. These include the Central Botanical Gardens, which hold a number of events throughout the year; the Den Gamle By open-air museum, depicting an old Danish town from around 1927; the Memorial Park, offering a panoramic view across the Bay of Aarhus; and Marienlyst Park, which holds the title of the largest park in Aarhus.

For those who prefer to look forward, wait until the sun goes down and head out to sample the happening Aarhus nightlife – you'll see a very different side to the city. A student city with a lively cultural scene, every year Aarhus hosts Aarhus Festuge, or 'Aarhus Partyweek', the largest cultural festival in Scandinavia.

The city is a hub for foodies, offering traditional Danish food, new Nordic cuisine as well as Mediterranean and Asian food. Aarhus serves as Denmark's principal port, making it a great place to find fresh seafood. You can also travel to Denmark's capital in about three hours by car, or by bus, boat or air.



Copenhagen

Founded in 1167, Copenhagen is the capital of Denmark and is one of Europe's oldest cities. It's located in the East of Denmark, on the coastal islands of Amager and Zealand. A former Viking fishing village, the city now houses the top university in Denmark, the **University of Copenhagen**. The **Technical University of Denmark** is also located in the suburbs of Copenhagen, in the province of Lyngby.

Make buying a bike your top priority if you move to Copenhagen – there are bike shops all over the city, and you can find second-hand bikes easily over Facebook and student groups. Cycling is how most students get around and is a great way to explore this cyclist-friendly city, with 49 percent of Copenhageners commuting to work or university by bike.

Students won't have to look hard for things to do in Denmark's largest city, with the Rosenburg castle and the incredible King's Garden, the Tivoli Gardens amusement park and the Langelinie pier, where you can see the famous Little Mermaid statue. On top of all of this, students can enjoy the many restaurants, cafes, bars and nightclubs that Copenhagen has to offer.

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Odense

Odense is a city of just under 200,000 people and was formerly one of Denmark's industrial centers. Today, it is still the commercial hub of Funen (one of Denmark's islands) and has a notable shopping district. **University of Southern Denmark** first welcomed students to their main campus in Odense in 1966 and has since expanded to more than 27,000 students across their five campuses.

The city was the birthplace of Hans Christian Andersen, author of hundreds of globally beloved fairy tales. There are a great number of museums, sculptures and attractions in Odense dedicated to his works. Alongside these, Odense offers plenty of museums, art galleries and even a zoo, to keep students entertained between lectures.

Odense is the up and coming location of choice for many large industries, particularly robotics, making it a good choice for students looking to benefit from its excellent employment prospects.



Tuition Fees & Living Costs

Students from the EU, EEA and Switzerland can study for free in Denmark. However, if you're from outside these areas, you'll have to pay tuition fees. The tuition fees are different at each institution and vary depending on what you choose to study.

Student cost of living in Denmark

Student visa requirements

If you need to obtain a student visa, you'll need to prove that you are able to financially support yourself. This means having access to around €1,000 per month (approx. US\$1,080).

Accommodation

Once you have been accepted into a Danish university, you will need to sort out accommodation.

Most students in Denmark live in off-campus halls of residence. These usually cost around €240-460 per month (approx. US\$280-496).

If you choose to live in private accommodation, a one-bedroom apartment in a Danish city center will cost around US\$1,020 per month. This will be slightly higher if you're studying in Denmark's capital, Copenhagen, where a one-bedroom apartment in the city center will cost US\$1,465 per month on average.

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A monthly transport pass will cost US\$59 per month on average, however, many students in Denmark use their bikes to travel to university.

Other average living costs in Denmark

- Books and course materials for courses in Denmark will cost €30-65 per month (approximately US\$5-10)
- Your mobile phone bill in Denmark will cost around 150 DKK per month (approximately US\$22)
- A gym membership in Denmark will cost you an average of US\$36 per month.
- A monthly transport pass will cost US\$59 per month on average, however, many students in Denmark use their bikes to travel to university.
- A meal out at a mid-range restaurant will cost US\$44 per person.

Danish Tuition Fees

For domestic students and students from the EU, EEA and Switzerland, higher education is free for both undergraduates and postgraduate courses.

If you are an international student from outside the EU/EEA or Switzerland, you will be required to pay tuition fees at Danish universities.

These fees will depend on the university and the course you choose to study, so check the university's website for the exact rates.



Here are the tuition fees at some of Denmark's top universities:

- **Aalborg University** \$15,000 per year for undergraduates and ranging from 48,450DKK per year to 100,800DKK (approximately US\$7100-14,780) for postgraduate courses.
- **Aarhus University** €8,000 to 15,300 (US\$8,690 to 16,620) for non-EU/EEA undergraduates and for master's programs.
- **Technical University of Denmark** €15,000 per year for both undergraduates and postgraduates.
- **University of Copenhagen** €10,000-17,000 (US\$10,860 to 18,470) for non-EU/EEA undergraduates and DKK 75,000 per year (around US\$10,920 for two years) for master's programs.
- **University of Southern Denmark** €6,200-13,900 (approximately US\$6,778- 15,200) for undergraduates. Master's students will pay €8,500 for two years (approximately US\$9,291).

Danish scholarships and student funding

Education is free for Danish students and those from the EU, but for international students, there are a range of scholarships and grants available to help with tuition fee costs.

Danish students are entitled to public support for their living costs whilst at university. This support is awarded by the State Educational Grant

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You can view the full list of scholarships on the Study in Denmark website. Alternatively, universities may have their own list of scholarships, so check the university's website before applying.

and Loan Scheme (SU), which is managed by the Danish Agency for Institutions and Educational Grants. The Ministry of Science, Innovation and Higher Education is the main provider of grants in Denmark.

Danish Government Scholarships under the Cultural Agreements are aimed at exchange students and researchers who wish to immerse themselves in the studies of Danish language and culture, or other Denmark-related fields of study, including architecture, environmental studies and design.

Danish government scholarships for international students are given to Danish universities to fund full-degree students from non-EU/EEA countries and Switzerland. To be eligible, students must be enrolled in a full degree higher education program and granted a time-limited residence permit in Denmark due to education.

You can view the full list of scholarships on the Study in Denmark website. Alternatively, universities may have their own list of scholarships, so check the university's website before applying.



Working in Denmark After Graduation

Living and working in Denmark is an attractive prospect for graduates, with the country having one of the world's strongest and most stable economies, along with generally high incomes and living standards. The country follows the Nordic model, characterized by an internationally high tax level and correspondingly high levels of government-provided services such as healthcare and childcare.

Around a third of graduates from English-language master's programs in Denmark remain working in the country after two years. Whilst this figure is not as high as some countries like the UK and Germany, it still represents a significant proportion of graduates.

Nordic citizens (e.g. citizens of Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden) can enter, study, live and work in Denmark without needing visas or residence permits. EU/EEA/Swiss citizens don't have to apply for a work permit, but if you wish to stay for longer, you'll have to apply for a registration certificate under EU law.

Non-EU/EEA/Swiss citizens will need a residence permit to work in Denmark. However, when you graduate from a Danish higher-education institution, your residence permit remains valid for another 6 months to enable you to seek employment in Denmark.

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It's definitely beneficial to have some level of fluency in Danish when applying for jobs in Denmark, although in some larger international corporations English may be the language spoken at work. Some of the most popular companies with a global outlook to work for in Denmark include Møller-Maersk, Carlsberg, Novo Nordisk and ISS Global.