

Study in Albania for International Students: FAQs

Albania offers comparatively affordable European higher education, a growing selection of English-taught programmes and a welcoming Mediterranean environment. International students should nevertheless verify accreditation, teaching language, visa requirements and professional recognition before accepting an offer.

1. Why should international students consider Albania?

Potential advantages include:

- comparatively affordable tuition fees;
- lower living expenses than many Western European destinations;
- public and private universities;
- English-taught programmes at selected institutions;
- qualifications structured within the European higher-education framework;
- a Mediterranean lifestyle and climate;
- proximity to other European countries; and
- programmes in Medicine, Business, Engineering, Technology and Tourism.

The suitability of Albania depends on the student's programme, career objectives and recognition requirements.

2. Is Albania a member of the European Union?

No. Albania is an **EU candidate country**, but it is not currently an EU member state. EU accession negotiations are ongoing. Studying in Albania does not give an international student EU citizenship or unrestricted rights to work elsewhere in Europe. [EU–Albania relations](#)

3. Is Albania part of the Schengen Area?

No. Albania is not a member of the Schengen Area. An Albanian visa or residence permit should not be treated as a Schengen visa.

Students who want to visit a Schengen country must check the rules that apply to their nationality and may need a separate Schengen visa.

4. What currency is used in Albania?

The national currency is the **Albanian lek**, abbreviated as ALL. Although some accommodation providers and universities may quote prices in euros, students should confirm the payment currency and exchange-rate conditions. [Bank of Albania](#)

5. Is Albania part of the European Higher Education Area?

Yes. Albania participates in the European Higher Education Area and follows the main principles of the Bologna Process.

Higher education is generally organised into:

- first-cycle bachelor's degrees;
- second-cycle master's degrees; and
- third-cycle doctoral studies.

Many programmes use the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System, known as ECTS. Participation in the Bologna Process supports comparability, but it does not guarantee automatic recognition of every qualification in every country.

6. What types of universities operate in Albania?

Albania has:

- public universities;
- private universities;
- university colleges; and
- specialised higher-education institutions.

Students should verify the institution's legal status and the accreditation of the specific programme before applying.

7. How can I check whether a university is accredited?

The Albanian Quality Assurance Agency in Higher Education, known as ASCAL, publishes accreditation information for institutions and programmes.

Students should verify:

- the exact institution;
- programme title;
- qualification level;
- campus;
- teaching language;
- accreditation status; and
- accreditation expiry date.

The official list is available through [ASCAL's accredited-programme database](#).

8. What programmes are popular with international students?

Popular fields may include:

- General Medicine;
- Dentistry;
- Pharmacy;
- Nursing and Health Sciences;
- Business and Management;
- Economics and Finance;
- Computer Science;
- Information Technology;
- Engineering;
- Architecture;
- International Relations;
- Law;
- Tourism and Hospitality; and
- Albanian and Balkan Studies.

Availability in English must be confirmed directly with the university.

9. Are degree programmes taught in English?

Yes, selected universities offer programmes entirely or partly in English. English-taught options are more common at private institutions and in subjects such as Medicine, Business, Computer Science and International Relations.

Students should confirm:

- whether every year is taught in English;
- the language of examinations;
- the language used during placements;
- whether textbooks are available in English; and
- whether Albanian is required for clinical interaction.

A programme advertised in English may still require Albanian for internships or patient contact.

10. What are the requirements for bachelor's admission?

Requirements normally include:

- recognised secondary-school leaving certificate;
- academic transcripts;
- passport copy;
- proof of language proficiency;
- completed application form;
- passport photographs;
- certified translations;
- qualification-recognition documentation; and
- an entrance examination or interview for selected programmes.

Medicine, Dentistry, Architecture and Arts programmes may apply additional selection requirements.

11. What are the requirements for master's admission?

Master's applicants commonly need:

- a recognised bachelor's degree;
- academic transcripts;
- CV;
- statement of purpose;
- proof of English or Albanian proficiency;
- one or more references;
- passport copy; and
- certified translations.

Some programmes require a related undergraduate degree, professional experience, portfolio or admission interview.

12. What is required for PhD admission?

Doctoral applicants generally need:

- an appropriate bachelor's and master's degree;
- strong academic transcripts;
- research proposal;
- academic CV;
- references;
- proof of language proficiency;
- evidence of research capacity; and
- an available supervisor or suitable research department.

Applicants should assess the institution's research facilities, supervision arrangements and publication requirements before enrolling.

13. Do international applicants need IELTS?

It depends on the university and programme. Institutions may accept:

- IELTS Academic;
- TOEFL;
- Cambridge English;
- another approved examination;
- previous education completed in English; or
- an internal university language assessment.

Students applying to an Albanian-taught programme will need to meet the institution's Albanian-language requirement.

14. Do foreign qualifications need to be recognised?

Usually, yes. International academic qualifications may need formal recognition or equivalence assessment before final enrolment.

The process may require:

- original diploma or certificate;
- transcripts;
- apostille or consular legalisation;
- certified translation into Albanian;
- identification documents; and
- an official recognition application.

Students should begin this process early because document verification can delay enrolment.

15. Do documents require an apostille?

This depends on the country that issued the documents and the applicable legalisation arrangements.

Documents may need:

- an apostille;
- consular legalisation;
- authentication by the issuing authority; and
- translation by an authorised translator.

The university and Albanian authorities should confirm the exact procedure before the student pays for translation or legalisation.

16. How long do degree programmes take?

Typical durations are:

Qualification	Typical duration
Bachelor's degree	3 years
Professional bachelor's degree	3–4 years
Master of Science	2 years
Professional master's degree	1–2 years
Integrated professional programme	5–6 years
PhD	At least 3 years

Medicine, Dentistry, Pharmacy and Architecture may follow longer integrated structures.

17. When does the academic year begin?

The principal intake is generally in **September or October**. Some private universities may offer an additional intake for selected programmes.

Students should apply several months before classes begin to allow time for:

- admission;
- qualification recognition;
- document legalisation;
- visa processing;
- residence arrangements; and
- accommodation.

18. How much are tuition fees?

Fees vary according to the institution, programme and nationality. As a broad planning estimate:

- standard bachelor's and master's programmes may cost approximately **€2,000–€6,000 per year**;
- specialised private programmes may cost more; and
- Medicine, Dentistry and other clinical programmes may carry substantially higher fees.

Students should request a complete written fee schedule covering:

- tuition;
- registration;
- laboratory or clinical charges;
- examinations;
- insurance;
- residence documentation; and
- graduation fees.

Published fees should be confirmed directly with the institution for the relevant academic year.

19. How much does it cost to live in Albania?

Living costs depend on the city and accommodation type. A student may need approximately **€450–€800 per month**, excluding tuition, as an indicative planning range.

Typical expenses include:

- accommodation;
- utilities and internet;
- food;
- transportation;
- health insurance;
- books;

- residence-permit costs; and
- personal expenses.

Tirana is generally more expensive than smaller cities. Students should prepare a personalised annual budget rather than relying on one national average.

20. What accommodation is available?

Options may include:

- university residences;
- private student residences;
- shared apartments;
- private studios; and
- rooms in family homes.

Before paying a deposit, confirm:

- the property's address and condition;
- distance from the university;
- rent and deposit;
- included utilities;
- contract duration;
- notice and refund conditions; and
- whether the address can be used for residence registration.

21. Are scholarships available?

Scholarships may be available through:

- Albanian universities;
- bilateral government agreements;
- Erasmus+ programmes;
- international organisations;
- merit-based university awards; and
- research projects.

Most awards are competitive. A tuition discount should not be described as a full scholarship unless it also covers accommodation and living expenses.

Students should obtain written confirmation of the scholarship amount, duration and renewal conditions.

22. Do international students need a visa?

Visa requirements depend on nationality and intended length of stay. Students planning to remain for more than 90 days may need a **Type D long-stay visa for study purposes**, followed by a residence permit.

Some nationalities can enter Albania without a short-stay visa but may still need the appropriate long-stay or residence authorisation for full-time study. Students should check the official [Albanian visa regime](#).

23. What is a D/ST student visa?

The D/ST category is a long-stay visa for study purposes. It is intended for foreign nationals admitted to an educational institution in Albania who plan to stay beyond the short-stay period.

A Type D visa allows the holder to enter Albania and apply for the appropriate residence permit. It is not the same as the residence permit itself.

24. Which documents are needed for a student visa?

The application commonly requires:

- valid passport;
- university admission or enrolment document;
- proof of sufficient funds for tuition and living costs;
- evidence of accommodation;
- travel health insurance;
- supporting academic documents;
- completed application;
- photograph; and
- evidence of language ability where required.

The Albanian authorities may request additional documents based on nationality and circumstances. Current requirements are published on the official [visa application page](#).

25. How is the visa application submitted?

Albanian visa applications are generally initiated through the official online visa system. Applicants should:

1. Verify the visa requirement for their nationality.
2. Obtain admission from the university.
3. Prepare and legalise the required documents.
4. Submit the online application.
5. Respond to requests for further evidence.
6. Receive the decision before arranging final travel.

Students should use only official government systems and authorised payment channels.

26. Do students need a residence permit after arrival?

Students remaining in Albania for long-term study normally need a residence permit. Applications are handled through Albania's official electronic services.

Evidence may include:

- passport and visa;
- admission or enrolment confirmation;
- accommodation;
- financial resources;
- health insurance; and
- other immigration documents.

The official residence-permit service is available through [e-Albania](#).

27. Is health insurance compulsory?

International students should maintain valid health insurance for their visa, residence application and period of study.

The policy should ideally cover:

- emergency care;
- hospitalisation;
- outpatient treatment;
- prescriptions;
- medical evacuation; and
- repatriation.

Students should check whether the university's insurance arrangement provides sufficient coverage.

28. Can international students work while studying?

Students should not assume that a study visa or residence permit automatically gives unrestricted employment rights.

The right to work depends on:

- nationality;
- residence status;
- type of employment;
- working hours;
- employer registration; and
- whether separate work authorisation is required.

Students must obtain written confirmation from the Albanian immigration or employment authorities before starting work. Part-time employment should not be used as the primary financial plan for tuition and living expenses.

29. Can students stay in Albania after graduation?

Graduation does not automatically provide permanent residence or unrestricted employment rights.

A graduate wishing to remain may need to:

- secure eligible employment;
- obtain an employment contract;
- change to the appropriate residence and work category;
- demonstrate continuing financial resources; or
- qualify under another immigration route.

Post-study options should be checked under the rules in force at the time of graduation.

30. Can an Albanian student visa be used to travel through Europe?

An Albanian visa or residence permit does not automatically grant entry to EU or Schengen countries.

Travel eligibility depends on:

- the student's passport;
- destination country;
- required visa type; and
- applicable transit rules.

Students should obtain any necessary Schengen visa before travelling.

31. Are Albanian degrees recognised internationally?

A qualification from an accredited Albanian institution may be considered for academic recognition abroad, but recognition is never guaranteed solely because Albania participates in the Bologna Process.

Recognition depends on:

- institutional and programme accreditation;
- qualification level and credits;
- delivery location and study mode;
- rules of the receiving country; and
- professional licensing requirements.

Albania's recognition framework and competent authorities are listed through [ENIC-NARIC](#).

32. What should medical and healthcare applicants verify?

Before enrolling in Medicine, Dentistry, Pharmacy, Nursing or another healthcare programme, confirm:

- current programme accreditation;
- clinical-training arrangements;
- language used with patients;
- hospital affiliations;
- internship requirements;
- eligibility for licensing examinations;
- recognition in the intended country of practice; and
- whether the course satisfies that country's clinical-hour requirements.

Students should seek written guidance from the relevant medical or professional regulator in their destination country.

33. Is Albania safe for international students?

Albania is generally considered welcoming to international visitors and students. Normal precautions are still necessary.

Students should:

- use a written accommodation contract;
- avoid carrying large amounts of cash;
- use registered transport;
- protect passports and residence documents;
- avoid unofficial employment; and
- keep university and embassy contact details available.

34. What are the main cities for international students?

Important university locations include:

- **Tirana:** the capital and largest academic centre;
- **Durrës:** a coastal city close to Tirana;
- **Shkodër:** a historic northern university city;
- **Vlorë:** a coastal destination with university programmes;
- **Elbasan:** an established education centre;
- **Korçë:** a smaller student city in the southeast; and
- **Gjirokastër:** a historic southern university city.

The largest selection of English-taught and private programmes is generally found in Tirana.

35. What should students check before paying a deposit?

Verify:

- the institution's licence and accreditation;
- the programme's current accreditation period;
- teaching language;
- campus and delivery method;

- total tuition and additional charges;
- scholarship conditions;
- visa-refusal refund policy;
- accommodation terms;
- qualification recognition; and
- professional licensing eligibility.

Payments should be made only to the university's verified institutional bank account.

36. How can IEC support students applying to Albania?

IEC Edu Consultancy can assist with:

- academic and financial eligibility assessment;
- selection of accredited universities and programmes;
- admission applications;
- document translation and legalisation guidance;
- qualification-recognition procedures;
- English-language preparation;
- student-visa and residence-permit guidance;
- accommodation support; and
- pre-departure planning.

Call to action:

Planning to study in Albania? Book an initial assessment with IEC Edu Consultancy to compare accredited programmes, evaluate degree recognition and prepare a complete admission, budget and visa plan.

Important: Tuition, admission and immigration rules may change. Applicants should verify current requirements with the university, ASCAL and the Albanian authorities before applying or making a payment.