

Study in Switzerland

DXB → ZRH • Zurich, Switzerland



Switzerland offers international students high-quality education, internationally respected institutions and access to one of Europe's strongest environments for research, innovation and professional development. Its multilingual society, central European location and close links between universities and industry make it an attractive destination for ambitious students.

AT A GLANCE

Quick Facts

PUBLIC TUITION

CHF 435 – 2,550 / semester at many public universities

LIVING COST

CHF 20,000 – 30,000 / year (ETH Zurich and EPFL guidance)

TEACHING LANGUAGE

German, French or Italian; many master's programmes in English

WORKING WHILE STUDYING

Up to 15 hours per week; non-EU/EFTA students only after six months

WHY SWITZERLAND

Why Study in Switzerland?

- ✓ Research universities, federal institutes of technology, universities of applied sciences and specialist schools
- ✓ Widely respected qualifications that combine academic study with research, laboratory work, projects or professional practice
- ✓ Particularly strong in engineering, life sciences, pharmaceuticals, finance, precision manufacturing, AI, hospitality and sustainable technology
- ✓ Links with international companies, research institutes and organisations
- ✓ A multilingual environment, with a substantial number of master's and doctoral programmes available in English
- ✓ Convenient access to neighbouring France, Germany, Italy, Austria and Liechtenstein
- ✓ Internationally connected cities hosting multinational companies, financial institutions, research organisations and international bodies
- ✓ Reliable public transport, well-managed cities, natural scenery and a high standard of living

Tuition & Living Cost

Tuition is set by each institution and normally charged per semester. Current official figures show that fees for international students at many public universities range from approximately CHF 435 to CHF 2,550 per semester, before additional compulsory or administrative charges. Examples from the current swissuniversities fee table include:

INSTITUTION	INDICATIVE TUITION FOR FOREIGN STUDENTS
University of Geneva	CHF 435 per semester
University of Lausanne	CHF 500 per semester
University of Basel	CHF 850 per semester
University of Fribourg	CHF 870 per semester
University of Lucerne	CHF 1,025 per semester
University of Bern	CHF 2,550 per semester
ETH Zurich and EPFL (standard international category)	CHF 2,190 per semester, plus semester charges

At ETH Zurich and EPFL, many newly arriving international students who do not qualify for the lower-fee category pay the standard rate shown above. Exact classification and exemptions are determined by the institution.

Universities of applied sciences use different fee structures. Private business, hospitality and specialist schools can charge several times more than public institutions; some programmes may cost tens of thousands of Swiss francs per year.

Entry Requirements

| Bachelor's programmes

Applicants normally require:

- ✓ A recognised upper-secondary school-leaving certificate
- ✓ Subjects and grades equivalent to the institution's Swiss entry standard
- ✓ Evidence of proficiency in the programme's teaching language
- ✓ Official transcripts and graduation documents
- ✓ Passport or identity documentation
- ✓ An entrance or reduced entrance examination where the qualification is not considered fully equivalent
- ✓ Additional assessment, portfolio or interview for certain programmes

Bachelor's recognition rules can differ by the country where the school qualification was awarded.

| Master's programmes

Applicants normally require:

- ✓ A recognised bachelor's degree in a relevant subject
- ✓ Sufficient previous credits in required academic areas
- ✓ Strong academic performance
- ✓ Proof of English, German, French or Italian proficiency as specified
- ✓ CV and motivation letter
- ✓ References, portfolio, GRE/GMAT or other materials where required

Meeting the minimum conditions does not guarantee admission, particularly at selective institutions such as ETH Zurich, EPFL and specialist business schools.

LANGUAGE

Language Requirement

Switzerland has four national languages: German, French, Italian and Romansh. The teaching language depends on the university and region. Many bachelor's programmes are taught in a national language, while a substantial number of master's and doctoral programmes are available in English. Applicants need evidence of proficiency in the programme's teaching language.

Student Visa Process

EU/EFTA students

EU/EFTA citizens generally do not need an entry visa but must register with the competent local authority and obtain the appropriate residence permit for studies if staying longer than three months. They must show admission, sufficient financial resources and adequate health insurance.

Non-EU/EFTA students

Students requiring entry clearance for study longer than 90 days normally apply for a national Type D visa. Issuance is subject to authorisation by the migration authority of the canton where the student will live. Requirements and financial thresholds can vary by canton and Swiss representation. The process generally includes:

- 1 Obtain an unconditional or final admission letter.
- 2 Check the country-specific requirements of the responsible Swiss embassy or consulate.
- 3 Prepare the Type D visa application and required copies.
- 4 Provide academic documents, study plan and language evidence where requested.
- 5 Provide proof of sufficient funds for tuition and living costs.
- 6 Provide accommodation information and any required declarations or sponsorship evidence.
- 7 Submit the application in person and provide biometrics or attend an interview if requested.
- 8 Wait for the cantonal migration authority's authorisation.
- 9 Receive the entry visa and travel only after approval.
- 10 Register with the local residents' office after arrival and obtain the appropriate residence permit.

Common documents

Common documents may include:

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| ✓ Valid passport | ✓ Proof of language ability |
| ✓ Completed national visa forms and photographs | ✓ Proof of financial means and sponsorship documents where applicable |
| ✓ University admission letter | ✓ Proof of accommodation |
| ✓ Academic certificates and transcripts | ✓ Confirmation concerning the applicant's intention and plans after study, where requested |
| ✓ CV, motivation letter and detailed study plan | |

Student visa processing commonly takes 8–12 weeks or longer, depending on the canton, representation and completeness of the application. Applicants should not make non-refundable travel arrangements before approval.

WHAT TO STUDY

Popular Courses

Popular subjects for international students include:

Mechanical, Electrical, Civil and Environmental Engineering

Computer Science, Artificial Intelligence, Robotics and Data Science

Biotechnology, Biomedical Engineering and Life Sciences

Pharmaceutical Sciences, Chemistry and Health Sciences

Banking, Finance, Economics and Wealth Management

Business Administration, International Management and Entrepreneurship

Hospitality, Hotel Management, Tourism and Culinary Arts

International Relations, Diplomacy and Development Studies

Mathematics, Physics and Materials Science

Architecture, Urban Planning and Design

Sustainability, Energy and Environmental Sciences

Luxury Brand Management and International Marketing

Students should assess the programme's teaching language, academic requirements, recognition, tuition, location, practical components and career relevance.

WHERE TO STUDY

Popular Universities

The following institutions are widely considered by international applicants. This is not a definitive ranking.

- ETH Zurich: engineering, computer science, natural sciences, mathematics and technology
- EPFL: engineering, technology, architecture, computer science and research
- University of Zurich: science, business, economics, law, humanities and medicine-related fields
- University of Geneva: international relations, science, law, economics and social sciences
- University of Basel: life sciences, pharmaceutical sciences, medicine-related research and humanities
- University of Bern: science, business, law, humanities and social sciences
- University of Lausanne: business, economics, life sciences, law and social sciences
- University of St. Gallen: business, economics, finance, management and international affairs
- University of Fribourg: business, law, humanities, science and multilingual studies
- Università della Svizzera italiana: architecture, communication, economics, computing and health sciences
- Zurich University of Applied Sciences: engineering, business, life sciences and applied professional education
- Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts: business, engineering, IT, design, music and social work
- EHL Hospitality Business School: hospitality management and business
- Graduate Institute Geneva: international affairs, development, economics, law and political science

Applicants should distinguish between public universities, universities of applied sciences and private institutions. Fees, admission rules and qualification recognition can differ considerably.

Ready to study in Switzerland?

From country-specific recognition checks to cantonal authorisation and your Type D visa file, our counsellors plan your Swiss application end to end.

+44 7442 978718 · +971 58 275 0963

info@edu-consultancy.com

www.edu-consultancy.com

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