

SCRIPT: Studying Abroad on a Direct-Enroll program

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Hi! Thanks for joining us to learn more about studying abroad on a direct enroll program.

What is a direct enroll program?

On these programs, you work directly with your host institution, similar to how a local student would. It's important to understand cultural and academic differences to be successful.

Benefits

There are a lot of great things about studying abroad on a direct enroll program! You get to be in the driver's seat, manage all of your study abroad details, and communicate directly with your host institution. You'll get the true "local student" experience. Often, you'll have access to more course offerings than on a study center program. And, best of all, you'll be taking classes with local students and seeing what the life of a local is truly like.

Challenges

It's helpful to think of yourself like a transfer student on these programs.

Many direct enroll institutions view their students as fully self-sufficient adults. This means they may have different expectations that you're used to. It's important you stay on top of deadlines and requirements and try to avoid miscommunication.

You'll be communicating directly with your host program. Responses can be delayed because of time differences. You'll need to be patient, especially with cultures that have different timelines or schedules than here in the US.

Most foreign universities don't have the level of support American students are used to. It's important self-advocate and work with your local staff to problem-solve. If you don't understand something, ask!

FAQ

Speaking of asking questions, let's go through some of those that we commonly hear about direct enroll programs.

Is there any support on these programs?

While direct enroll programs may offer less support than other program structures, there will always be some level of support for you at your host institution. It is up to you to take advantage of the support that's available.

You'll need to know your resources well and be comfortable self-advocating when you need help. Direct enrolls can certainly be more challenging to navigate but they are not impossible!

What if I'm not very independent?

You'll need to be comfortable asking for help. And you should expect to become more independent on these programs. But every direct enroll program has a different level of support. Check your program brochure and talk to the OIE advisor to learn more.

How will I communicate in countries where they don't speak English?

Rest assured, you will have support options available in English. We always recommend learning the basics of the local language. But the staff at your host institution's international office will also speak some English.

Other Differences to Consider: Housing

There are other differences you should know about as you consider direct enroll programs. Academic systems vary across the world; be sure you know what to expect on your program.

Direct enroll programs aren't a good fit for students who want to do a homestay. Most have university-owned housing, and will help you secure a spot there. This housing isn't always on-campus. Commutes can be as long as 45 minutes, especially in big cities. Students usually live with a mix of local and international students, but there's no guarantee who will make up that mix.

Some buildings are much, much older than those at DU. This means you may need to adjust to smaller sizes and different aesthetics. Buildings won't look brand new like the ones on campus here. **There may be differences in heat, A/C, water. For example, most dorms around the world don't have central heating like in the US.**

Many programs require you to pay a refundable security deposit. It's your responsibility to pay the deposit and to keep your new home in good repair in order to get that deposit back.

Meal plans are rare on these programs, so you'll need to pay for and cook your own food. There are shared kitchens, but they don't always have cooking utensils so you may need to buy them.

Next Steps

As you continue researching study abroad programs, remember the different benefits and challenges of going to on a direct-enroll program. Question your assumptions about these programs, and remember to consider the different educational systems and housing options.

After watching this video, please come in to chat with an OIE advisor so we can talk about you, your goals, and finding the program that fits you best. Every program is different so it is important to talk to your OIE advisor about any concerns.