



BRINGING GI BILL BENEFITS OVERSEAS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Introduction
- Reasons to Pursue an Education Internationally
- Studying Abroad vs. Foreign Education
- Finding a Program of Study
- Payment Rates and Restrictions
- List of Information Resources

THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY

- Large, prestigious university (4-year college) with a modest US Veteran population
- 65,000 students
- Approximately 1,200 US citizens
- 4 Fulbright scholars
- 8 GI Bill supported students

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

- Open public university with a large US Military & Veteran population
- 140 locations worldwide
 - 10 states, 22 countries/territories
- Over 86,000 students (54,000 are military-affiliated)
- Over 16,000 GI Bill supported students

WHY PURSUE AN INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION?

According to a 2016 focus group at The University of Sydney, reasons include:

- Something different, get an edge, stand out
- Adventure, challenge
- Affinity to culture, language
- Program-related
- Crucial Location, world-renowned research center

TWO WAYS TO STUDY INTERNATIONALLY

STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM

Attend a US university with study-abroad program

FOREIGN EDUCATION

Attend a foreign or international university toward completion of program

STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM

- "Home" School is where degree is earned.
- "Host" school is located outside the US.
- Varying levels of partnership between home school and host school.
- Program of study must be approved for VA benefits.
- More information here:
https://www.benefits.va.gov/GIBILL/docs/factsheets/Post_911_study_abroad_fact_sheet.pdf

FOREIGN EDUCATION

- VA beneficiaries may only pursue a foreign program outside of the United States if program is approved and leads to a standard college degree (e.g. foreign language certificate is not approvable).
- Independent study (distance learning) courses taken at foreign schools cannot be certified for VA benefits.
- Programs offered by foreign schools are subject to approval by the Director of Education Service.
- More information here:
https://benefits.va.gov/gibill/foreign_school_information_for_students.asp

FIND A PROGRAM OF STUDY

- All approved programs available at WEAMS Institution Search:
<https://inquiry.vba.va.gov/weamspub/buildSearchCountryCriteria.do>
- If program is not listed, does not mean it cannot be approved.
- Once program is approved, VA may allow retroactive certifications up to a year.
- Student should weigh the risks of pursuing a program that is not yet approved.
- Check out the VA Comparison Tool:
<https://www.vets.gov/gi-bill-comparison-tool>

WHAT IF PROGRAM IS NOT APPROVED?

- School Certifying Official (SCO) must apply for program approval.
- The school that controls the cost, course, and faculty must apply for approval.
- If control of cost, course, or faculty are shared, both schools must apply for approval.
- Students should work closely with the home institution's School Certifying Official.

PAYMENT RATES AND RESTRICTIONS

- Study Abroad Program - 3 Scenarios
 - 1) home school charges lump sum and pays host school
 - 2) home school charges tuition, host school charges fees
 - 3) host school charges tuition and fees
- Foreign Education
 - Currency exchange
 - Student should maintain financial reserve
- These Are Never Payable
 - Travel/Flight, Campus Housing/Lodging, Food
 - Third-Party Fees

PAYMENT QUESTIONS FOR THE SCO

Study Abroad

Are the fees broken down so that travel, lodging, food, and third party fees are easily visible? Students will always be responsible for these fees.

Foreign Education

Is the school set up to accept VA funds – e.g. does it have a direct deposit account or can it cash paper checks? Without one of these methods, the VA will be unable to make the Tuition & Fees payment.

INFORMATION RESOURCES

- Information for students looking to attend foreign schools:
http://benefits.va.gov/gibill/foreign_school_information_for_students.asp
- Information for international institutions and school certifying officials:
http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/foreign_program_approval_information_for_schools.asp
- WEAMS Institution Search:
<https://inquiry.vba.va.gov/weamspub/buildSearchCountryCriteria.do>
- VA's School Comparison Tool:
<https://www.vets.gov/gi-bill-comparison-tool>
- VA's Facebook:
www.facebook.com/gibillEducation
- VA's customer service line for information about education benefits:
888-GI BILL-1 (888-442-4551)