K12 ACADEMICS — STUDY ABROAD SERIES

# Study Abroad in South Korea

A guide for students planning a semester or year abroad — program types, credit transfer, costs, the student visa, and how to find the right program.

K12 ACADEMICS

Find Your Community

2026 EDITION

ABOUT K12 ACADEMICS

# The world's largest education resource.

Online since 2004, K12 Academics has helped millions of families, students and educators **find the right school, college, camp, business and program in their community** — for every kind of learner.

### DYNAMIC, HIGH-TECH, AND TOP UNIVERSITIES

South Korea is a dynamic, high-tech study-abroad destination — top universities, a globally popular culture, safe cities, and many English-taught programs. This guide is for students planning a **semester or year abroad**: it covers **program types, credit transfer, costs, and the student visa**, and points you to the K12 Academics directory to find and compare programs.

**General guidance, not legal, immigration, academic, or financial advice.** Korean rules, fees, and program details change and vary by institution. The details here are recent examples and **must be confirmed with your home study-abroad office, the host institution or provider, and the relevant consulate**. K12 Academics does not run or endorse any specific program — use the K12 Academics directory to find and compare your options.

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STEP 01 OF 10

# Understand Why Students Choose South Korea

WHAT TO KNOW

South Korea offers **top universities, a globally popular culture (K-pop, film, food), high-tech, hyper-connected cities, and many English-taught programs** — one of the most rewarding places to spend a semester or year abroad.

BY THE NUMBERS

| Top | Popular | Many |
| --- | --- | --- |
| universities | culture & tech | English-taught |

HOW TO HELP

Weigh South Korea—s **academics, culture, and English-taught options** against a challenging language and higher costs in Seoul — for a dynamic, high-tech, culturally rich experience, it—s a strong choice.

WATCH OUT

South Korea pairs **top universities with a globally popular culture** — dynamic, safe, and English-friendly.

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STEP 02 OF 10

# Understand the Types of Study Abroad Programs

WHAT TO KNOW

Your main options: **direct enrollment** (you enroll at a local university — the most immersive), **exchange** (through your home university—s partnership — you pay home tuition), **third-party provider programs** (which bundle courses, housing, and support — the most guided), and **faculty-led short programs** (a few weeks with your own professors). Browse and compare options in **the K12 Academics directory**.

BY THE NUMBERS

| Direct enrollment | Exchange | Provider / faculty-led |
| --- | --- | --- |
| most immersive | pay home tuition | most guided |

HOW TO HELP

Match the **program to your goals** — direct enrollment for immersion, exchange for value, a provider for support, or a faculty-led program for a short taste — then find options in the K12 Academics directory.

GOOD TO KNOW

Find and compare **specific programs, providers, and host universities** in the K12 Academics directory — this guide stays program-neutral.

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STEP 03 OF 10

# Understand Credit Transfer & Academics

WHAT TO KNOW

Credits use the **the Korean credit system system** (converted for transfer via your home office). Before you go, **get your courses pre-approved by your home study-abroad and academic advisors** so credits transfer cleanly toward your degree. You—ll receive a **transcript** to bring home — keep syllabi and coursework in case of later evaluation.

BY THE NUMBERS

| the Korean credit system | Pre-approve | Transcript |
| --- | --- | --- |
| the local system | courses before you go | keep syllabi |

HOW TO HELP

Protect your credits — get courses **pre-approved by your home office**, understand the Korean credit system and local grading, and keep syllabi for transfer.

GOOD TO KNOW

**Pre-approve your courses** with your home study-abroad and academic advisors before departure — it—s the key to clean credit transfer.

4 STEP 04 OF 10

# Know the Costs & Funding

## WHAT TO KNOW

Costs vary by route: **exchange** students usually pay **home tuition**; **provider programs** charge a program fee (bundling tuition, housing, and support); **direct enrollment** means you pay the program or institution's fees and arrange housing (Seoul is expensive; other cities cost less). South Korea—s cost of living is **moderate to high (Seoul is pricey)**. Look into **scholarships** (the Gilman (US students), Erasmus+ (Europeans), and provider aid), and check whether your **financial aid travels** with you.

## BY THE NUMBERS

| Exchange | Provider | Scholarships |
| --- | --- | --- |
| pay home tuition | one bundled fee | Gilman, GKS scholarships, provider aid |

**HOW TO HELP**

Budget by route — exchange (home tuition), provider (one bundled fee), or direct enrollment; South Korea costs are moderate to high (Seoul is pricey). Pursue scholarships and check aid portability.

**GOOD TO KNOW**

Check whether your **home financial aid can be applied** to study abroad — many students fund part of the cost this way.

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STEP 05 OF 10

# Understand the Student Visa & Entry

WHAT TO KNOW

For stays **over 90 days**, you need a **D-2 student visa**, applied for at the Korean consulate with your **certificate of admission** from a host university (plus funds and insurance). You—ll typically show **proof of acceptance, sufficient funds, housing, and health insurance**. Shorter programs often need only the short-stay entry your passport allows (for programs under 90 days). Start early — the process takes time. Confirm current rules with the relevant consulate.

BY THE NUMBERS

| Over 90 days | Needs | Under 90 days |
| --- | --- | --- |
| D-2 student visa | certificate of admission | short-stay entry |

HOW TO HELP

Know your entry — stays over 90 days need a **D-2 student visa**, with a certificate of admission from your host university; shorter programs often use the short-stay entry your passport allows (for programs under 90 days); start early.

GOOD TO KNOW

The **D-2 student visa** is the standard route — apply at the Korean consulate with your certificate of admission.

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STEP 06 OF 10

# Plan Health, Safety & Insurance

WHAT TO KNOW

Arrange **health insurance** that covers you in South Korea (some programs include it). South Korea is **very safe**. Know your **program—s support and emergency contacts**, register with your **home country—s embassy** if advised, and keep copies of key documents.

BY THE NUMBERS

| Health insurance | Safety | Know |
| --- | --- | --- |
| required (some included) | very safe | program support |

HOW TO HELP

Cover the essentials — health insurance (some programs include it), sensible precautions, and your program—s support and emergency contacts.

GOOD TO KNOW

Know your **program—s in-country support and emergency contacts** before you go — a good provider makes this easy.

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STEP 07 OF 10

# Prepare Language & Culture

## WHAT TO KNOW

The main language is **Korean**, though **many programs are taught in English**, especially at top universities. Even basic Korean enriches daily life, so learn some before you go. Housing options include **university residences, homestays (great for language), and shared apartments**. Embrace the cultural differences — they—re the point.

## BY THE NUMBERS

| Language | Housing | Immersion |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Korean (many English-taught) | residence, homestay, apartment | the point |

## HOW TO HELP

Prepare to immerse — learn some Korean (many programs are in English), choose housing that fits your goals (a homestay boosts language), and embrace the culture.

## GOOD TO KNOW

A **homestay** is a fast route to immersion — a homestay is the fastest route to language immersion.

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STEP 08 OF 10

# Plan the Timeline & Apply

WHAT TO KNOW

Apply **well ahead** — typically **a semester or two before** you go. The usual order: **meet your home study-abroad office**, choose and apply to a **program**, secure **course pre-approval**, then arrange your **visa, housing, and insurance**. South Korea offers **fall, spring, summer, and full-year** options. Deadlines and visa processing drive the schedule.

BY THE NUMBERS

| Apply | Order | Intakes |
| --- | --- | --- |
| a semester+ ahead | home office → program → visa | fall, spring, summer, year |

HOW TO HELP

Plan the sequence — start with your home study-abroad office, apply to a program, pre-approve courses, then handle visa, housing, and insurance; apply a semester or two ahead.

GOOD TO KNOW

Start with your **home study-abroad office** — they guide approvals, credit, aid, and often have partner programs ready.

9 STEP 09 OF 10

# Make the Most of It

WHAT TO KNOW

Once in South Korea, **engage fully**: explore Seoul's neighbourhoods and Korean culture, join university clubs, learn some Korean, and build local friendships. Keep an eye on **credit and attendance requirements**, document your experience, and use your program—s support. A semester abroad is as much about growth as academics.

BY THE NUMBERS

| Engage | Travel | Track |
| --- | --- | --- |
| explore Seoul | Korea & Asia | credit & attendance |

HOW TO HELP

Thrive abroad — explore Seoul and Korean culture, join clubs, and build local friendships, and stay on top of credit and attendance while making the experience your own.

GOOD TO KNOW

Build friendships **beyond fellow exchange students** — local connections deepen both language and experience.

10 STEP 10 OF 10

# Find Your Program & Get Started

WHAT TO KNOW

Once you know your route, **find and compare specific study-abroad programs, providers, and host universities in the K12 Academics directory**. Work with your home study-abroad office, pre-approve credits, apply, and arrange your visa. Confirm current rules with your host university and the Korean consulate and the relevant consulate.

BY THE NUMBERS

| Find & compare | Work with | Arrange |
| --- | --- | --- |
| programs & providers | your home office | credits & visa |

HOW TO HELP

Use **the K12 Academics directory** to find and compare study-abroad programs, providers, and host universities, work with your home office, pre-approve credits, apply, and arrange your visa.

WATCH OUT

Browse **the K12 Academics directory** to find the specific programs and providers that fit your goals and field of study.

QUICK REFERENCE

# Study Abroad in South Korea: The Essentials

A snapshot — program-neutral. Confirm details with your home office, the host institution, and the consulate.

## The destination

A dynamic, high-tech study-abroad destination — top universities, a globally popular culture, and safe, hyper-connected cities — with bases in Seoul, Busan, and Daejeon.

## Program types

Direct enrollment (most immersive), exchange (pay home tuition), provider programs (bundled courses and support), and faculty-led short programs — find and compare in the directory.

## Credit & academics

Credits use the Korean credit system (converted for transfer via your home office); get courses pre-approved by your home study-abroad and academic advisors so they transfer cleanly; you receive a transcript — keep syllabi.

## Costs & funding

Exchange (home tuition), provider (one bundled fee), or direct enrollment; costs are moderate to high (Seoul is pricey); pursue scholarships (Gilman, GKS scholarships, provider aid) and check whether home aid travels with you.

## Visa & move

Stays over 90 days need a D-2 student visa (with an admission certificate); shorter programs use short-stay entry; arrange health insurance and apply a semester or two ahead.

YOUR STUDY-ABROAD-IN-SOUTH-KOREA JOURNEY STARTS HERE

# Find Your Community.

Explore our other Study Abroad in [Country] guides, and find and compare programs and providers in the K12 Academics directory — among **1,297 free resources**.

**tools.k12academics.com →**

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