

Studying in Botswana

A guide for international students & families — how Botswana's higher education works, the residence permit, English-medium study, and life in a stable, safe country.

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ENGLISH-MEDIUM, EXCEPTIONALLY STABLE & SAFE

Botswana is one of **Africa's most stable, safe, and least-corrupt** countries, with **English-medium universities** — the University of Botswana and the science-focused BIUST — at affordable costs. English is the medium of instruction (no barrier for English speakers), and Botswana offers a welcoming, secure setting alongside the Okavango Delta and rich wildlife. Note: the **residence permit serves as the study permit**. This guide walks it in **ten steps**.

General guidance, not legal or immigration advice. Botswana's rules, tuition, and the funds requirement change. The details here are recent examples and **must be confirmed with Botswana Immigration, your university, and the Botswana mission**.

Understand Why Students Choose Botswana

WHAT TO KNOW

Botswana offers **English-medium universities; one of Africa's most stable, safe, and least-corrupt settings; affordable costs; strengths in science and technology (BIUST); and access to remarkable wildlife (the Okavango Delta)** — a secure, welcoming choice.

BY THE NUMBERS

English-medium
universities

Very stable & safe
low corruption

STEM
BIUST

HOW TO HELP

Weigh Botswana's **stability, safety, and English medium** — for secure, English-taught study in Southern Africa (especially STEM), it's a reassuring, value-driven choice.

GOOD TO KNOW

Botswana is consistently ranked among **Africa's most stable, safe, and least-corrupt** countries — a genuinely reassuring base.

Understand the System

WHAT TO KNOW

The flagship is the **University of Botswana (UB, Gaborone)**, with an International Education and Partnerships office; the **Botswana International University of Science and Technology (BIUST, Palapye)** focuses on science and technology, and private institutions include **Botho University**. English is the medium of instruction throughout.

BY THE NUMBERS

UB

flagship (Gaborone)

BIUST

science & technology

Botho

private

HOW TO HELP

Choose the **University of Botswana** (flagship, broad) or **BIUST** (science/technology) or a private university (Botho) by field — all English-medium.

GOOD TO KNOW

BIUST (established 2006) is Botswana's **science-and-technology university** — a strong option for STEM students.

Get the Residence Permit (Your Study Permit)

WHAT TO KNOW

Important: **Botswana does not issue a separate study permit — your residence permit serves as your study permit.** It's processed **only after admission and proof of registration**; your university's International Office assists. Depending on nationality you may also need an entry visa (check the Botswana mission); short exchanges (up to 6 months) use a residence waiver.

BY THE NUMBERS

No separate study permit

residence permit = study permit

After admission

& registration

Entry visa

check by nationality

HOW TO HELP

Obtain your **residence permit (which serves as your study permit)** after admission and registration, with your university's International Office assisting — and check whether you need an entry visa.

WATCH OUT

Remember: the **residence permit is your study permit**, processed after you're admitted and registered — not a separate document.

Apply to Universities

WHAT TO KNOW

Apply **directly to each university** (application forms are online or via the admissions office). English is the medium, so no separate language test is usually needed for English speakers. Provide your secondary certificate (with a certified English translation if needed) and transcripts; note the application fee (around BWP 200 for SADC / 400 for non-SADC applicants).

BY THE NUMBERS

Apply directly

online/admissions

English

no test (English speakers)

Fee

BWP 200/400

HOW TO HELP

Apply **directly** to your chosen university, with your secondary certificate (English-translated if needed) and transcripts — English is the medium, so it's accessible for English speakers.

GOOD TO KNOW

Foreign certificates not in English need a **certified English translation** — arrange this with your application.

Plan for Tuition & Scholarships

WHAT TO KNOW

Tuition is **affordable** (international students pay more than nationals; fees are set per program). **SADC (Southern African) students** may access regional scholarships or reduced rates via bilateral agreements; universities also offer internal aid. (Note: the national DTEF fund is for Botswana citizens.) Living costs are moderate.

BY THE NUMBERS

Affordable

int'l pay more

SADC

regional scholarships

Internal aid

per university

HOW TO HELP

Budget the **affordable tuition** (internationals pay more; set per program) plus living costs, and pursue SADC regional or university internal scholarships.

GOOD TO KNOW

SADC (Southern African) students may get reduced rates or regional scholarships via bilateral agreements — a benefit if you qualify.

Meet the Financial Requirement

WHAT TO KNOW

For the permit you show **proof of funds** covering tuition and living, plus **mandatory medical insurance** and standard documents (admission letter, valid passport — note that emergency travel documents aren't accepted). Confirm the exact requirements with Botswana Immigration and your university.

BY THE NUMBERS

Funds

tuition + living

Medical insurance

mandatory

Valid passport

(not emergency doc)

HOW TO HELP

Prepare **proof of funds**, **mandatory medical insurance**, and a **valid passport** — confirm the exact requirements with Botswana Immigration and your university.

GOOD TO KNOW

Medical insurance is mandatory, and only a **valid passport** (not an emergency travel document) is accepted for the permit — arrange both early.



Meet Language Requirements

WHAT TO KNOW

English is Botswana's **official language and the medium of instruction** (Setswana is the national language), so there's no language barrier for English speakers, and no separate language test is usually required (non-native speakers may show English proficiency).

BY THE NUMBERS

English

official & medium

Setswana

national language

Proof

for non-native speakers

HOW TO HELP

Study **in English** — no language barrier for English speakers, though non-native speakers may show English proficiency; Setswana is the national language.

GOOD TO KNOW

For English speakers, **language is not a barrier** — a key advantage of studying in Botswana.

Prepare for the Move

WHAT TO KNOW

After your permit, **arrange housing, complete registration, and set up banking and insurance.** Most students are based in **Gaborone**, the calm, safe capital (BIUST is in Palapye). Your university's International Office often assists with airport pickup and settling in. Botswana is welcoming, orderly, and close to remarkable wildlife.

BY THE NUMBERS

Housing + registration

first tasks

Gaborone

calm capital

Int'l Office

assists arrival

HOW TO HELP

Handle arrival admin — **housing, registration, banking, insurance** — in calm, safe Gaborone; your university's International Office often helps with arrival and settling in.

GOOD TO KNOW

University international offices often provide **airport pickup and arrival support** — share your travel details in advance.

Understand Why Botswana Stands Out

WHAT TO KNOW

Botswana pairs **exceptional stability, safety, and low corruption with prudent, diamond-backed economic management and a strong democracy**. Combined with English-medium education and access to the **Okavango Delta and world-class wildlife**, it's a secure, distinctive base — strong for STEM, mining/geology, wildlife, and conservation studies.

BY THE NUMBERS

Stable & safe

low corruption

Strong democracy

prudent economy

Wildlife

Okavango Delta

HOW TO HELP

Value Botswana's **stability, safety, and good governance**, plus its wildlife setting — a secure base especially strong for STEM, mining, and conservation studies.

GOOD TO KNOW

Botswana's **good governance and wildlife** make it distinctive — strong for conservation, geology/mining, and STEM students.

Thrive & After Study

WHAT TO KNOW

Botswana's stable economy (mining, services, tourism) and your **regional (SADC) networks** open Southern African and international opportunities. Confirm the current post-study visa/work pathway if you want to stay, and use your connections across the region.

BY THE NUMBERS

Economy

mining, services, tourism

SADC networks

regional

Post-study

confirm pathway

HOW TO HELP

Leverage Botswana's **stable economy** and your **SADC networks** for Southern African and international opportunities, and confirm the current post-study visa/work pathway if you want to stay.

GOOD TO KNOW

Confirm the **current post-study options** — they can change, and vary by field and situation.

Studying in Botswana: The Essentials

A snapshot — figures change, so confirm with Botswana Immigration, your university, and the Botswana mission.

The system

The University of Botswana (UB, Gaborone — the flagship, with an International Education and Partnerships office) and BIUST (Palapye — science and technology), plus private institutions like Botho University; English is the medium throughout.

Permit (= study permit)

Botswana does not issue a separate study permit — your residence permit serves as your study permit, processed only after admission and registration (the International Office assists); an entry visa may be needed by nationality; short exchanges use a residence waiver.

Applying & tuition

Apply directly (online/admissions), with your secondary certificate (English-translated if needed) and transcripts (application fee ~BWP 200 SADC / 400 non-SADC); English is the medium; tuition is affordable (internationals pay more), with SADC regional scholarships and university aid.

Money & language

Show proof of funds plus mandatory medical insurance and a valid passport (emergency travel documents aren't accepted); English is the official medium (Setswana is the national language).

Why it stands out & after

Exceptional stability, safety, low corruption, and good governance, with Okavango Delta wildlife (strong for STEM, mining, and conservation); a stable economy and SADC networks open regional careers — confirm the post-study pathway.

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