K12 ACADEMICS — INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SERIES

Studying in the Dominican Republic

A guide for international students & families — how Dominican higher education works, the student visa, affordable tuition, English-medium medicine (with a USMLE track), and Spanish study.

K12 ACADEMICS

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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.

AFFORDABLE, ENGLISH-MEDIUM MEDICINE, HISTORIC UNIVERSITIES

The Dominican Republic offers **affordable, quality higher education** — including **English-medium medicine (MD)** at UNIBE, with a US-focused (USMLE) track — alongside historic Spanish-language universities like UASD (among the oldest in the Americas) and PUCMM. Add a safe, welcoming Caribbean setting. Students get a **student visa** for longer programs. This guide walks it in **ten steps**.

General guidance, not legal, immigration, or medical-licensing advice. Dominican rules, tuition, and recognition change, and **medical licensing depends on where you'll practice — verify with the relevant council.** Confirm details with your university, Dominican immigration (Migración), and the consulate.

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STEP 01 OF 10

Understand Why Students Choose the Dominican Republic

WHAT TO KNOW

The Dominican Republic offers **affordable, English-medium MD programs (with a USMLE-focused track); historic Spanish-language universities; a safe, welcoming Caribbean setting; and low living costs** — a practical route, especially for medicine.

BY THE NUMBERS

Affordable	USMLE track	Safe
English MD	US-focused (UNIBE)	Caribbean setting

HOW TO HELP

Weigh the DR's **affordable English-medium medicine and USMLE track** against the need to pass licensing exams where you'll practice — for a US-oriented MD on a budget, it's attractive.

WATCH OUT

UNIBE's **International Track is English-taught and USMLE-focused**, with clinical clerkships including US placements — a route toward US practice.

2

STEP 02 OF 10

Understand the System

WHAT TO KNOW

The leaders are **UASD (public — among the oldest universities in the Americas; very affordable; humanities, law, social sciences)**, **PUCMM (ranked among the best in the DR)**, **INTEC (engineering, economics, technology)**, and **UNIBE, UNPHU, and UTESA (medicine)**. Most domestic programs are in Spanish; medical/international tracks are in English.

BY THE NUMBERS

UASD	PUCMM / INTEC	UNIBE
oldest (public)	+ others	English MD

HOW TO HELP

Choose by goal — UASD/PUCMM for affordable Spanish-language degrees, or **UNIBE (and others)** for an English-medium MD — confirming accreditation and recognition.

GOOD TO KNOW

For an English-medium MD, confirm the university is **WHO/WDOMS-listed and recognized** where you'll practice (e.g., ECFMG for the US).

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STEP 03 OF 10

Get the Student Visa

WHAT TO KNOW

For programs over 90 days you need a **student visa**, applied for at a Dominican consulate with your acceptance letter, proof of funds, and standard documents (translated/legalized). Shorter programs generally don't need a special visa. Register with Dominican immigration (Migración) as required after arrival.

BY THE NUMBERS

Student visa	Via consulate	Register
for >90 days	acceptance + funds	with Migración

HOW TO HELP

Apply for the **student visa** (programs over 90 days) with your acceptance letter and funds proof, and complete any immigration registration after arrival — your university guides the process.

GOOD TO KNOW

Short programs (under 90 days) generally **don't need a special visa** — confirm your program's requirement.

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STEP 04 OF 10

Apply to Universities

WHAT TO KNOW

Apply **directly to each university**. Requirements vary: domestic programs need **Spanish**; English-medium MD programs (UNIBE) need English proof and, for the **International Track, prepare for USMLE**. Provide transcripts and legalized/translated documents.

BY THE NUMBERS

Apply directly	Spanish	MD
to each	domestic programs	English + USMLE (UNIBE)

HOW TO HELP

Apply **directly** to your chosen university — Spanish for domestic programs, or English for an MD — and prepare for the USMLE if on UNIBE—s International Track.

GOOD TO KNOW

UNIBE's International Track requires passing **USMLE Step 1 before clinical clerkships**, and USMLE Steps 1, 2 CK, and 2 CS to graduate — plan for it.

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STEP 05 OF 10

Plan for Tuition & Scholarships

WHAT TO KNOW

Tuition is **affordable**: UASD (public) is very low; **English-medium MD/MBBS programs run roughly $5,000–10,000/year**. Some private and medical universities offer **scholarships or discounted tuition** (sometimes for students from specific countries) — ask each institution.

BY THE NUMBERS

UASD	MD/MBBS	Scholarships
very low (public)	~$5,000–10,000/yr	some universities

HOW TO HELP

Budget the **affordable tuition** (UASD cheapest; MD $5k–10k/year) plus low living costs, and ask each university about scholarships or country-specific discounts.

GOOD TO KNOW

MD/MBBS tuition (~$5,000–10,000/year) is **far below Western fees** — the main draw for international medical students.

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STEP 06 OF 10

Meet the Financial Requirement

WHAT TO KNOW

For the visa you show **proof of funds** covering tuition and living, plus **health insurance** and standard documents (legalized/translated). Living costs are low. Confirm the exact requirements with your university and the Dominican consulate.

BY THE NUMBERS

Funds	+ insurance	Confirm
tuition + living	& documents	per consulate

HOW TO HELP

Prepare **proof of funds and insurance** plus legalized/translated documents — confirm the exact requirements with your university and the Dominican consulate.

GOOD TO KNOW

Requirements are modest — follow your university's and the consulate's official checklist.

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STEP 07 OF 10

Meet Language Requirements

WHAT TO KNOW

Domestic programs are taught in **Spanish** (proficiency required); **English-medium MD/MBBS programs** need English proof (no language barrier for English speakers), with Spanish often taught as a **secondary language** for clinical practice. Some Spanish helps daily life.

BY THE NUMBERS

Spanish	English	Spanish
domestic programs	MD/MBBS	secondary (clinical)

HOW TO HELP

Confirm your program's language — Spanish for domestic study, English for an MD — and pick up some Spanish (often taught) for clinical practice and daily life.

GOOD TO KNOW

English MD programs often teach **Spanish for clinical rotations** — useful for patient communication.

8 STEP 08 OF 10

Prepare for the Move

WHAT TO KNOW

After arriving, complete any **immigration registration, arrange housing, and set up banking and insurance**. Most students are based in **Santo Domingo or Santiago**. The country is safe and welcoming, with low living costs and a rich Caribbean culture (and Taíno heritage).

BY THE NUMBERS

Registration + housing	Cities	Safe
first tasks	Santo Domingo, Santiago	+ low costs

HOW TO HELP

Handle arrival admin — **registration, housing, banking, insurance** — in Santo Domingo or Santiago; the DR is safe, affordable, and culturally rich.

GOOD TO KNOW

The Dominican Republic is **safe, welcoming, and affordable** — a comfortable base for international students.

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STEP 09 OF 10

Understand the English MD & USMLE Pathway

WHAT TO KNOW

For English-medium MD students, the pathway is key: universities like **UNIBE run an International Track that is English-taught and USMLE-focused**, with basic sciences in the DR, USMLE Step 1 before clinical clerkships, and clerkships including US placements. Degrees are typically **WHO/WDOMS-listed and FAIMER/ECFMG-recognized**.

BY THE NUMBERS

English MD	USMLE	Recognized
International Track	Step 1 before clerkships	WHO/WDOMS/ECFMG

HOW TO HELP

Understand the **English MD + USMLE pathway** (basic sciences in the DR, USMLE Step 1, US clerkships), and confirm your university's WHO/WDOMS listing and recognition.

WATCH OUT

The **International Track prepares you for the USMLE and US clerkships** — verify the specific requirements and recognition before committing.

10 STEP 10 OF 10

Thrive & Practice After Study

WHAT TO KNOW

An English-medium MD from a recognized Dominican university is **globally portable**, but to practice you must **pass the licensing exam of your target country** (USMLE for the US, FMGE/NExT for India, etc.). **Verify recognition and requirements** before committing — the crucial final step.

BY THE NUMBERS

MD	Licensing exam	Verify
globally portable	in your target country	before you rely on it

HOW TO HELP

Plan early for your target country's **licensing exam** (USMLE, FMGE/NExT, etc.), and **verify recognition** for your medical university before committing.

GOOD TO KNOW

The MD opens the door, but **passing your country's licensing exam is essential to practice** — prepare throughout your studies.

QUICK REFERENCE

Studying in the Dominican Republic: The Essentials

A snapshot — recognition and licensing vary, so verify with your university, the relevant medical council, and Dominican immigration.

The system

UASD (public — among the oldest universities in the Americas; very affordable), PUCMM (among the best in the DR), INTEC (technology), and English-medium MD schools (UNIBE, UNPHU, UTESA).

The visa

Programs over 90 days need a student visa (via a consulate; acceptance letter, funds, legalized/translated documents), plus immigration registration after arrival; shorter programs need no special visa.

Tuition & scholarships

UASD (public) very low; English-medium MD/MBBS ~$5,000–10,000/year (far below Western fees); some universities offer scholarships or discounts; low living costs.

MD & USMLE

Universities like UNIBE run an English-taught, USMLE-focused International Track (basic sciences in the DR, USMLE Step 1 before clerkships, US clerkships); confirm WHO/WDOMS listing and recognition.

Recognition & after

MD degrees are typically WHO/WDOMS-listed and FAIMER/ECFMG-recognized, but practicing requires your target country's licensing exam (USMLE, FMGE/NExT) — verify recognition first.

YOUR DOMINICAN REPUBLIC JOURNEY STARTS HERE

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