

Studying in Egypt

A guide for international students & families — how Egyptian higher education works, the student residence permit, very affordable English medicine, AUC's US degrees, and the rules.

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VERY AFFORDABLE, ENGLISH MEDICINE, AUC'S US EDUCATION

Egypt offers **very affordable higher education** with several distinct draws: **English-medium medicine and other tracks at public universities** (among the world's cheapest), the **American University in Cairo (AUC — a US-accredited, English-taught institution)**, and **Al-Azhar** (Islamic studies, free for many Muslim internationals). Students get a **student residence permit**, often by entering on a tourist visa and converting on arrival. This guide walks it in **ten steps**.

General guidance, not legal, immigration, or medical-licensing advice. Egyptian rules, tuition, and the funds requirement change (exchange rates matter), and **medical-degree recognition depends on where you'll practice**. The details here are recent examples and **must be confirmed with your university, the Ministry of Higher Education (Wafedeen), and the Egyptian mission**.

Understand Why Students Choose Egypt

WHAT TO KNOW

Egypt offers **very low tuition; English-medium medicine and other tracks at public universities; a US-accredited English university (AUC); Al-Azhar for Islamic studies; and rich history and Arabic immersion** — several strong, affordable routes.

BY THE NUMBERS

Very affordable

+ English medicine

AUC

US-accredited (English)

Al-Azhar

Islamic studies

HOW TO HELP

Weigh Egypt's **affordable English medicine and AUC's US degree** against a grey-area work situation — for budget medicine or a US education in the region, it's compelling.

GOOD TO KNOW

Public-university tuition is **among the world's lowest**, and even AUC's US-accredited fees sit below the UK/US/Australia.

Understand the System

WHAT TO KNOW

Three routes: **public universities** (Cairo, Ain Shams, Alexandria, Mansoura — English medicine/dentistry/engineering tracks plus Arabic programs); **English-medium private universities** (AUC — US-accredited; GUC, BUE, MUST, MIU, Future); and **Al-Azhar** (Islamic studies, its own system). Public admissions run via **Wafedeen**.

BY THE NUMBERS

Public

Cairo, Ain Shams (English medicine)

Private

AUC, GUC, BUE

Al-Azhar

Islamic studies

HOW TO HELP

Choose a **public university** (very cheap; English medicine tracks), an **English private university** (AUC for a US degree; GUC/BUE), or **Al-Azhar** (Islamic studies) — by goal and budget.

WATCH OUT

Public medicine/dentistry/engineering often has **English-medium tracks**, while other public programs are Arabic-medium — confirm your program's language.

Get the Student Residence Permit

WHAT TO KNOW

Two routes: apply for a **student visa at your home Egyptian embassy** (2–6 weeks), or — for many nationalities — enter on a **tourist visa (~\$25 on arrival)** and **convert to a student residence permit** at the **Mogamma (Cairo)** or **your governorate**. You'll need your acceptance, paid tuition receipt, funds proof, and (for the permit) a **medical exam including HIV screening**.

BY THE NUMBERS

Embassy visa

or convert on arrival

Residence permit

at the Mogamma

HIV screening

for the permit

HOW TO HELP

Get your **student residence permit** — either an embassy visa, or enter on a tourist visa (~\$25) and convert at the Mogamma — with your acceptance, paid tuition receipt, funds, and HIV screening.

GOOD TO KNOW

Many nationalities **enter on a tourist visa and convert to the residence permit on arrival** — your university's foreign-students office guides this.

Apply to Universities

WHAT TO KNOW

Apply via the right channel: **public universities through Wafedeen** (your university's international office liaises — long lead time), **private universities directly** (AUC, GUC, BUE), and **Al-Azhar via its own administration**. The main intake is **September/October**. You'll need apostilled, Arabic-translated documents and a **Supreme Council of Universities (SCU) equivalency certificate**.

BY THE NUMBERS

Public

via Wafedeen

Private

direct (AUC, GUC)

SCU equivalency

+ apostilled docs

HOW TO HELP

Apply through the right channel (Wafedeen for public, direct for private, Al-Azhar's own office), with apostilled/translated documents and an **SCU equivalency certificate**, for the Sept/Oct intake.

GOOD TO KNOW

The **SCU equivalency certificate** (1–3 months) and document apostille/translation take time — start early.

Plan for Tuition & Scholarships

WHAT TO KNOW

Costs vary hugely by route: **public universities EGP 5,000–15,000/year** (medicine higher; among the world's cheapest); English private universities **~\$5,000–15,000+** (or EGP 70,000–180,000); **AUC \$25,000–40,000** (US-accredited); **Al-Azhar free for many Muslim internationals**. AUC offers **Excellence Scholarships (up to 100%)**.

BY THE NUMBERS

Public

EGP 5k–15k/yr

AUC

\$25k–40k/yr

Al-Azhar

free (many Muslims)

HOW TO HELP

Budget by route — public (very cheap), English private (\$5k–15k+), AUC (\$25k–40k US-accredited), or Al-Azhar (free for many Muslims) — and pursue scholarships (AUC's go up to 100%).

GOOD TO KNOW

AUC's **Excellence Scholarships can cover up to 100%** of tuition — worth pursuing for its US-accredited degree.

Meet the Financial Requirement

WHAT TO KNOW

Egypt sets **no fixed minimum**, but plan to show roughly **\$3,000–5,000/year** via a bank statement, sponsor letter, or scholarship, alongside your acceptance and **paid tuition receipt**. **Private health insurance** (~\$300–600/year) is required by many private universities. Living costs are low (EGP 8,000–15,000/month in Cairo).

BY THE NUMBERS

Funds

~\$3,000–5,000/year

+ paid tuition receipt

& insurance

Low living

EGP 8k–15k/month

HOW TO HELP

Prepare **proof of funds** (~\$3,000–5,000/year), your **paid tuition receipt**, and **private health insurance** — living costs in Cairo are very low.

GOOD TO KNOW

Your bigger costs are often **document attestation** and **Arabic translation at home** — the Egyptian government fees themselves are modest.



Meet Language Requirements

WHAT TO KNOW

English-medium programs (AUC, GUC, BUE, and public medicine/dentistry/engineering tracks) require **English proof (TOEFL/IELTS)** — no Arabic needed to study. Arabic-medium programs require Arabic (sometimes a foundation year). Basic Arabic greatly eases daily life.

BY THE NUMBERS

English

AUC, private, medicine tracks

Arabic

Arabic-medium programs

Basic Arabic

eases daily life

HOW TO HELP

Prove **English (TOEFL/IELTS)** for English-medium programs (including public medicine tracks), or Arabic (perhaps a foundation year) for Arabic programs — and learn basic Arabic for daily life.

GOOD TO KNOW

You can complete an **entirely English-medium** degree (AUC, private, or public medicine tracks) — Arabic isn't required to study those.

Prepare for the Move

WHAT TO KNOW

After arriving, complete your **residence permit (Mogamma)**, **HIV screening**, and **university registration**, then arrange **housing**, **banking**, and **private insurance**. Most students are based in **Cairo** (or Alexandria/Giza). Living costs are very low, and Egypt offers extraordinary history and culture.

BY THE NUMBERS

Residence permit

+ HIV screening

Housing + banking

set up

Based

in Cairo

HOW TO HELP

Handle arrival admin — **residence permit (Mogamma)**, **HIV screening**, **registration**, **housing**, **banking**, **insurance** — in Cairo; living costs are very low.

GOOD TO KNOW

Complete the **Mogamma residence-permit run and HIV screening** in your first weeks — your university's foreign-students office assists.

Understand the English-Medicine & AUC Draws

WHAT TO KNOW

Egypt's two headline draws differ: **public-university English medicine** (very affordable, taught in English, with clinical training — verify recognition where you'll practice), and **AUC** (a US-accredited, fully English institution offering a US-style education in the Middle East). Choose by goal and budget.

BY THE NUMBERS

English medicine

affordable (public)

AUC

US-accredited (English)

Choose

by goal & budget

HOW TO HELP

Weigh Egypt's **affordable public English medicine** against **AUC's US-accredited education** — two very different value routes; verify medical recognition where you'll practice.

WATCH OUT

For medicine, **verify recognition and the licensing exam** where you'll practice; for a US-style degree, AUC is the standout.

Understand Work & After Study

WHAT TO KNOW

Be clear on this: Egypt has **no real student work-permit system**, so paid work is a grey area (on-campus roles and research assistantships via your university are the cleaner options) — fund your studies from savings, family, or a scholarship. For medicine, plan for your target country's licensing exam; confirm current post-study pathways.

BY THE NUMBERS

No work system

paid work is grey-area

On-campus/research

via university

Fund

savings/scholarship

HOW TO HELP

Understand that **there's no real student work system** (on-campus/research roles aside) — fund your studies fully, and for medicine plan for your target country's licensing exam.

WATCH OUT

Treat any local income as **pocket money** — fund the degree from savings, family, or a scholarship, since there's no formal work permit.

Studying in Egypt: The Essentials

A snapshot — figures and recognition vary, so confirm with your university, the Ministry of Higher Education (Wafedeen), and the Egyptian mission.

The system

Public universities (Cairo, Ain Shams, Alexandria, Mansoura — English medicine/dentistry/engineering tracks plus Arabic programs), English-medium private universities (AUC — US-accredited; GUC, BUE, MUST, MIU, Future), and Al-Azhar (Islamic studies); public admissions via Wafedeen.

Visa & permit

Apply for a student visa at your home Egyptian embassy, or (many nationalities) enter on a tourist visa (~\$25) and convert to a student residence permit at the Mogamma; a medical exam (HIV screening) and SCU equivalency certificate are required.

Tuition & scholarships

Public EGP 5,000–15,000/year (medicine higher; among the world's cheapest); English private ~\$5,000–15,000+; AUC \$25,000–40,000 (US-accredited); Al-Azhar free for many Muslim internationals; AUC Excellence Scholarships up to 100%.

Money & language

Show ~\$3,000–5,000/year plus a paid tuition receipt and (usually) private insurance; English-medium programs (AUC, private, public medicine tracks; TOEFL/IELTS) or Arabic (foundation year possible); low living costs.

Work & after

No real student work-permit system (on-campus/research aside — fund from savings/scholarship); for medicine, verify recognition and the licensing exam where you'll practice.

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