

Studying in Indonesia

A guide for international students & families — how Indonesian higher education works, the VITAS student visa and KITAS permit, affordable tuition, growing English programs, and scholarships.

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.

VERY AFFORDABLE, GROWING ENGLISH PROGRAMS, ASEAN'S LARGEST

Indonesia — Southeast Asia's largest country — offers **very affordable, increasingly English-taught education** at respected universities (Universitas Indonesia, Gadjah Mada, ITB), plus generous government scholarships (KNB, Darmasiswa) and a rich, multicultural setting. Non-EU students get a **VITAS student visa, converted to a KITAS permit** after arrival. This guide walks it in **ten steps**.

General guidance, not legal or immigration advice. Indonesian rules, tuition, and funds change. The details here are recent examples and **must be confirmed with your university, Indonesian immigration, and the relevant embassy.**

Understand Why Students Choose Indonesia

WHAT TO KNOW

Indonesia offers **very low tuition and living costs**, a **growing range of English-taught programs**, **respected universities (UI, UGM, ITB)**, **generous government scholarships**, and a **warm, multicultural society** — in the heart of dynamic Southeast Asia.

BY THE NUMBERS

Very affordable

tuition & living

English programs

growing

Scholarships

KNB, Darmasiswa

HOW TO HELP

Weigh Indonesia's **very low costs and growing English options** against the value of learning some Bahasa Indonesia — for affordable study in a vibrant setting, it's a rising choice.

GOOD TO KNOW

Indonesia's **tuition and living costs are very low** — and government scholarships (KNB) can cover everything.

Understand the System

WHAT TO KNOW

Indonesia has **960+ universities**. The leaders are **Universitas Indonesia (UI)**, **Gadjah Mada (UGM)**, and **Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB — engineering)**, plus Airlangga, IPB, and private universities like BINUS. **English-medium “international classes”** are growing, especially at postgraduate level.

BY THE NUMBERS

UI / UGM / ITB

the leaders

BINUS

+ private universities

English classes

growing (postgrad)

HOW TO HELP

Choose by field — UI/UGM for breadth, ITB for engineering, BINUS for English-taught business — and confirm whether your program is in English or Bahasa Indonesia.

GOOD TO KNOW

English-medium programs are **growing but concentrated at postgraduate level** — check availability for your field and level.

Get the VITAS & KITAS

WHAT TO KNOW

Non-EU students need a **VITAS (Limited Stay Visa for study)**, sponsored by the host university and applied for **before travel** through Indonesian immigration. After arriving, you must **convert the VITAS to a KITAS (Student Limited Stay Permit) within 7 days** (with biometrics). The KITAS is valid one year, **renewable up to four times**.

BY THE NUMBERS

VITAS

university-sponsored, before travel

KITAS

within 7 days of arrival

1 year

renewable up to 4x

HOW TO HELP

Let your university **sponsor the VITAS** (apply before travel), then **convert it to a KITAS within 7 days** of arrival (biometrics) — don't miss the 7-day deadline.

WATCH OUT

The **7-day KITAS conversion deadline** after arrival is important — your university usually assists.

Apply to Universities

WHAT TO KNOW

Apply **directly to universities**, typically in **April–July** for the August/September start. Requirements usually include transcripts, a motivation letter, English proof (TOEFL/IELTS) for English programs, a health certificate, and a passport valid 18+ months.

BY THE NUMBERS

Apply directly

April–July

English

TOEFL/IELTS (English programs)

Health certificate

+ documents

HOW TO HELP

Apply **directly to your chosen universities** in the April–July window, with transcripts, a motivation letter, English proof, and a health certificate.

GOOD TO KNOW

For Bahasa-Indonesia programs, **BIPA (Bahasa Indonesia for Foreigners)** courses help you build the language — some programs require it.

Plan for Tuition & Scholarships

WHAT TO KNOW

Tuition is **very affordable**: roughly **\$1,000–4,000/year** (higher for private, English, medical, or business programs — up to ~\$6,000+). Generous scholarships: **KNB** (full tuition + stipend + allowances + insurance + language training), **Darmasiswa** (non-degree language/culture), and **LPDP** (master's/PhD).

BY THE NUMBERS

Tuition

~\$1,000–4,000/yr

KNB

fully funded

Darmasiswa / LPDP

+ university awards

HOW TO HELP

Budget the **very affordable tuition**, and pursue the fully-funded **KNB scholarship**, **Darmasiswa** (for language/culture), or **LPDP** (postgraduate) — plus university awards.

GOOD TO KNOW

The **KNB scholarship** (for developing countries) covers tuition, a stipend, allowances, insurance, and language training — a full ride.

Meet the Financial Requirement

WHAT TO KNOW

For the visa/permit you must show **proof of funds** (bank statements, typically 3–6 months) covering tuition and living, plus a **medical certificate** and health insurance. A scholarship award letter can serve as financial proof. Confirm the current amount with your university and immigration.

BY THE NUMBERS

Funds

bank statements (3–6 mo)

Medical certificate

required

Or scholarship

as proof

HOW TO HELP

Prepare **proof of funds** (seasoned bank statements) covering tuition and living, plus a **medical certificate** — or use a scholarship award letter as your financial proof.

GOOD TO KNOW

Bank statements generally must show **3–6 months of history** — confirm the exact requirement with your university.



Meet Language Requirements

WHAT TO KNOW

Programs are taught in **Bahasa Indonesia** or, increasingly, **English** (proof via TOEFL/IELTS). Some programs combine English with Bahasa components. For Bahasa-taught study, **BIPA courses** build your Indonesian — which helps daily life either way.

BY THE NUMBERS

Bahasa Indonesia

or English

English

TOEFL/IELTS

BIPA

Bahasa courses

HOW TO HELP

Confirm your program's language, prove **English (TOEFL/IELTS)** for English programs, and use **BIPA courses** to build Bahasa Indonesia — useful for daily life.

GOOD TO KNOW

Some programs **combine English with Bahasa components** and may require basic Bahasa — no bad thing if you'll live in Indonesia.

Prepare for the Move

WHAT TO KNOW

After arriving, complete your **KITAS conversion (within 7 days, with biometrics), confirm insurance, and set up banking**. Living costs are very low (\$200–500/month). Indonesia's islands (Java, Bali, Sumatra) offer a rich cultural experience beyond campus.

BY THE NUMBERS

KITAS

within 7 days (biometrics)

Very low costs

\$200–500/mo

Rich culture

Java, Bali, Sumatra

HOW TO HELP

Handle arrival admin — **KITAS conversion (7 days), insurance, banking** — and enjoy Indonesia—s very low costs and rich, multicultural island setting.

GOOD TO KNOW

Complete the **KITAS biometrics and conversion within 7 days** — your university's international office assists.

Understand Work Rules

WHAT TO KNOW

Work options for international students on a study KITAS are **restricted** — don't assume you can work part-time; confirm with your university and immigration. Indonesia's very low living costs mean you can budget without relying on work.

BY THE NUMBERS

Work

restricted — confirm

Don't assume

part-time is allowed

Low costs

budget without work

HOW TO HELP

Treat work as **restricted**: confirm the rules with your university and immigration, and budget to fund your studies — Indonesia's low costs make this manageable.

WATCH OUT

Don't assume you can work on a study KITAS — confirm the current rules before any paid activity.

Thrive & After Study

WHAT TO KNOW

Make the most of Indonesia's universities, low costs, and vibrant culture, and build a network across dynamic **ASEAN**. Explore language study (BIPA) and cultural immersion, and confirm the current pathways for post-study stay or work if you wish to remain.

BY THE NUMBERS

ASEAN network

dynamic region

Cultural immersion

+ language

Post-study

confirm pathways

HOW TO HELP

Invest in **networks across ASEAN** and cultural immersion, use language study to deepen your experience, and confirm current post-study options if you want to stay.

GOOD TO KNOW

Confirm the **current post-study stay/work pathways** — they can change, and vary by field and situation.

Studying in Indonesia: The Essentials

A snapshot — figures change, so confirm everything with your university, Indonesian immigration, and the relevant embassy.

The system

960+ universities; leaders include Universitas Indonesia (UI), Gadjah Mada (UGM), Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB), Airlangga, and private universities (BINUS); growing English-medium programs (mostly postgraduate).

Visa & permit

Non-EU students get a VITAS (student visa, university-sponsored, before travel), then convert it to a KITAS (Student Limited Stay Permit) within 7 days of arrival; KITAS is valid one year, renewable up to four times.

Tuition & scholarships

~\$1,000–4,000/year (higher for private/English/medical/business); KNB (fully funded), Darmasiswa (non-degree language/culture), LPDP (postgraduate), and university scholarships.

Money & language

Prove funds (bank statements, 3–6 months) plus a medical certificate and insurance (or a scholarship letter); Bahasa Indonesia or English programs (TOEFL/IELTS); BIPA courses for Bahasa.

Work & after

Work is restricted (confirm before any paid activity); very low living costs; confirm current post-study pathways if you wish to stay.

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