

Studying in Nigeria

A guide for international students & families — how Nigerian higher education works, the student visa, English-medium study at Africa's largest system, and the rules.

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ENGLISH-MEDIUM, AFRICA'S LARGEST SYSTEM & ECONOMY

Nigeria has **Africa's largest higher-education system and economy**, with respected, English-medium universities — the University of Ibadan (the oldest), the University of Lagos, and the private Covenant University — at costs well below the West. English is the official language (no barrier for English speakers), and Nigeria offers vast market and career opportunity. Students get a **student visa and residence card**. This guide walks it in **ten steps**.

General guidance, not legal or immigration advice. Nigerian rules, tuition, and the funds requirement change, and **security guidance varies by region**. The details here are recent examples and **must be confirmed with the Nigeria Immigration Service, your university, and the Nigerian mission (and current travel advisories)**.

Understand Why Students Choose Nigeria

WHAT TO KNOW

Nigeria offers **Africa's largest higher-education system; English-medium, internationally recognized universities; affordable costs; and enormous market and career opportunity** in the continent's biggest economy — a large, dynamic destination.

BY THE NUMBERS

Largest system

in Africa

English-medium

recognized universities

Opportunity

Africa's biggest economy

HOW TO HELP

Weigh Nigeria's **scale, English-medium quality, and opportunity** against checking regional safety guidance — for English-taught study in Africa's largest economy, it's significant.

GOOD TO KNOW

The University of Ibadan (1948) is **among the oldest and top-ranked universities in Africa** — genuine academic heritage.

Understand the System

WHAT TO KNOW

Public universities lead — the **University of Ibadan** (oldest, top-ranked), the **University of Lagos (UNILAG)**, the University of Nigeria (UNN), Obafemi Awolowo (OAU), and Ahmadu Bello (ABU) — alongside strong private universities, notably **Covenant University** (Ota; ICT and petroleum engineering). English is the medium throughout.

BY THE NUMBERS

Public

Ibadan, UNILAG, UNN, OAU

Private

Covenant University

English

medium throughout

HOW TO HELP

Choose a **public university** (Ibadan, UNILAG, and others) or a **private university** (Covenant) by field — all English-medium, mostly in Lagos, Ibadan, and other major cities.

GOOD TO KNOW

Covenant University is a **top private institution** (strong in ICT and petroleum engineering) with international scholarships — a well-regarded alternative to the public universities.

Get the Student Visa & CERPAC

WHAT TO KNOW

International students typically obtain a **Study/STR (Subject to Regularization) visa** through the **Nigeria Immigration Service** (with your admission letter and funds proof), then **regularize it into a CERPAC residence card** after arriving. Your university's international office guides the process; confirm the current route with immigration.

BY THE NUMBERS

STR visa

via Immigration Service

Admission + funds

required

CERPAC

residence card after arrival

HOW TO HELP

Apply for the **student (STR) visa** via the Nigeria Immigration Service with your admission letter and funds proof, then **regularize to a CERPAC residence card** after arrival — your university helps.

GOOD TO KNOW

The typical route is an **STR visa regularized into a CERPAC card** — confirm the current process with the Nigeria Immigration Service.

Apply to Universities

WHAT TO KNOW

Apply **directly to each university**. English is the medium, so no separate language test is usually needed for English speakers (non-native speakers may show proficiency). Provide your secondary results (WAEC or equivalent) and transcripts; note application fees (e.g., Covenant's ~\$25–100). Apply well ahead.

BY THE NUMBERS

Apply directly

to each

English

no test (English speakers)

WAEC

or equivalent

HOW TO HELP

Apply **directly** to your chosen university, with your secondary results (WAEC or equivalent) and transcripts — English is the medium, so it's accessible for English speakers.

GOOD TO KNOW

Have foreign qualifications ready for evaluation, and note that some private universities (e.g., Covenant) charge a **modest application fee**.

Plan for Tuition & Scholarships

WHAT TO KNOW

Public-university tuition is **affordable**; the top universities charge international students roughly **\$6,000–10,000/year for undergraduate programs** (postgraduate and MBA from ~\$4,000). Scholarships include the **David Oyedepo Foundation / Covenant awards** and **African Centre of Excellence** funding — check each university.

BY THE NUMBERS

Public

affordable

Top universities

~\$6,000–10,000/yr

Scholarships

Covenant, ACE

HOW TO HELP

Budget the tuition (public affordable; top universities \$6k–10k undergrad; postgrad from ~\$4k) plus living costs, and pursue Covenant/ACE or university scholarships.

GOOD TO KNOW

Private-university scholarships (e.g., the **David Oyedepo Foundation**) can cover 50–100% of tuition based on academic performance — worth pursuing.

Meet the Financial Requirement

WHAT TO KNOW

For the visa you show **proof of funds** covering tuition and living, plus **medical insurance** and standard documents (admission letter, passport). Dedicated international-student accommodation is available at many universities. Confirm the exact requirements with the Nigeria Immigration Service and your university.

BY THE NUMBERS

Funds

tuition + living

+ insurance

& documents

Housing

int'l accommodation available

HOW TO HELP

Prepare **proof of funds, medical insurance, and your admission documents** — many universities offer international-student accommodation; confirm requirements with immigration.

GOOD TO KNOW

Many universities provide **dedicated, secure accommodation for international students** — arrange it early through the international office.



Meet Language Requirements

WHAT TO KNOW

English is Nigeria's **official language and the medium of instruction** throughout, 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

No barrier

for English speakers

Proof

for non-native speakers

HOW TO HELP

Study **entirely in English** — no language barrier for English speakers, though non-native speakers may need to show English proficiency.

GOOD TO KNOW

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

Prepare for the Move

WHAT TO KNOW

After your visa, **complete your CERPAC, arrange housing, and set up banking**. Most students are based in **Lagos, Ibadan, or Abuja**. Nigeria is welcoming and vibrant, though **security guidance varies by region** — check current travel advisories, follow your university's guidance, and stay within recommended areas.

BY THE NUMBERS

CERPAC + housing

first tasks

Cities

Lagos, Ibadan, Abuja

Advisories

check by region

HOW TO HELP

Handle arrival admin — **CERPAC, housing, banking** — in Lagos, Ibadan, or Abuja, checking current regional travel advisories and following your university's safety guidance.

WATCH OUT

Security guidance varies by region — check current travel advisories and follow your university's guidance, as major university cities differ from advisory-flagged areas.

Understand Nigeria's Scale & Opportunity

WHAT TO KNOW

Nigeria is **Africa's most populous country and largest economy**, with a booming **technology and fintech scene (especially in Lagos)**, **energy sector**, and **creative industries (Nollywood)**. Studying here connects you to a huge market, a vast alumni and diaspora network, and real career opportunity.

BY THE NUMBERS

Largest economy

+ most populous

Tech/fintech

booming (Lagos)

Networks

huge market & diaspora

HOW TO HELP

Tap Nigeria's **scale and opportunity** — Africa's largest economy, a booming Lagos tech/fintech scene, and vast market and diaspora networks — to build career reach.

GOOD TO KNOW

Lagos is a leading **African technology and fintech hub** — strong for students in tech, business, and the creative industries.

Thrive & Work After Study

WHAT TO KNOW

Nigeria's **large economy and growing tech, energy, and business sectors** offer strong opportunities, and your networks span the continent and diaspora. Confirm the current post-study visa/work pathway (e.g., regularizing to a work permit) if you want to stay.

BY THE NUMBERS

Sectors

tech, energy, business

Networks

continental & diaspora

Post-study

confirm pathway

HOW TO HELP

Leverage Nigeria's **economy and your networks** for opportunities in tech, energy, and business, and confirm the current post-study visa/work pathway if you want to stay.

GOOD TO KNOW

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

Studying in Nigeria: The Essentials

A snapshot — figures and security guidance change, so confirm with the Nigeria Immigration Service, your university, the Nigerian mission, and current travel advisories.

The system

Public universities (University of Ibadan — oldest and top-ranked — University of Lagos, University of Nigeria, Obafemi Awolowo, Ahmadu Bello) plus the top private Covenant University; English is the medium throughout, mostly in Lagos, Ibadan, and Abuja.

Visa & CERPAC

International students typically obtain a Study/STR (Subject to Regularization) visa via the Nigeria Immigration Service (with admission letter and funds proof), then regularize it into a CERPAC residence card after arrival; confirm the current route.

Tuition & scholarships

Public universities affordable; top universities ~\$6,000–10,000/year undergraduate (postgraduate/MBA from ~\$4,000); scholarships include the David Oyedepo Foundation/Covenant awards and African Centre of Excellence funding.

Money & language

Show proof of funds plus medical insurance and admission documents; international-student accommodation is available; English is the official medium (no separate test usually needed for English speakers).

Scale & safety

Africa's most populous country and largest economy, with a booming Lagos tech/fintech scene; security guidance varies by region — check current travel advisories and follow your university's guidance.

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