

Guidebook for INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS STUDYING IN MALAYSIA





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Guidebook for International Students Studying in Malaysia



We take this opportunity to welcome you and also wish you a successful and happy stay in Malaysia. Venturing to Malaysia for futher studies will open up new experiences for you, as it has for other international students who made the decision to study here, as Malaysia is known for her diversity of cultures, natural beauty and modern business environment and workforce.

The objective of this guidebook is to provide the international students useful information related to studying in a Higher Educational Institution (HEI) in Malaysia.

This guidebook has been compiled to guide you through some of the procedures and requirements you need to take note of, both before and after your arrival in Malaysia. It contains information which

ranges from important immigration regulations to directions, transportation, services and activities available at the higher educational institution of your choice.

It also contains information on the weather, banking, some local customs, accommodation choices, emergency and useful telephone numbers and addresses of relevant embassies and high commissions in Malaysia.

We hope that you will find this guidebook useful in helping you settle into your new environment. Please take the time to read and understand the information it provides.

Guidebook for International Students Studying in Malaysia

Welcome Message

from the Minister of Higher Education Malaysia

Selamat Datang, Welcome to Malaysia

I take this opportunity to welcome all international students to Malaysia and also wish you a successful and happy stay in Malaysia.

The Malaysian National Higher Education Strategic Plan Beyond 2020 has implemented several thrusts for future directions, one of which is to establish Malaysia as an international hub of higher education excellence

The enrolment of international students in Malaysian Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) has risen significantly from about 18,240 in 2001 to almost 72,000 in 2009. According to the 2009 UNESCO Report: Trends in Global Higher Education - Tracking an Academic Revolution, the figure of international students in Malaysian HEIs in 2009 places Malaysia at the 11th position in the list of countries with numbers of international students, which means that about 2 % of international students in universities around the world choose Malaysia as their destination for higher education.

I sincerely believe that the choice to attend higher education in Malaysia is an exciting opportunity as the experience obtained from studying in a university in Malaysia should be a rewarding one, for the students will be able to learn the diversified cultures of the world and therefore enrich themselves with skills and experience. Our goal is to ensure that all students of Malaysian HEIs graduate with the mix of academic excellence and employment-related skills which will see them flourish in their chosen careers.

We are determined to continue our strong progress in Malaysia, building on our human capital key strengths. As we move forward, we look forward to you sharing in our success.

Selamat Datang dan Selamat Maju Jaya.

Welcome and Good Luck.

Sincerely,

Dato' Seri/Mohamed Khaled

Minister of Higher Education Malaysia

Foreword from the Secretary General Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia

I am pleased to have the opportunity to write a few words for the 'Guidebook for International Students Studying in Malaysia'.

Over the last two decades the requirement for providing good, quality higher education has increased tremendously worldwide, and the world market for education is currently estimated to have a value of USD 2.2 trillion.

Under the Malaysian National Higher Education Strategic Plan Beyond 2020, a strategy to create an excellent international hub of higher education in Malaysia has been identified, and targets at least 10 % overall international students enrolment in Malaysian Higher educational Institutions.

This policy of the Ministry to increase of the numbers international students is designed to ensure that there will be positive contribution towards the creation of a strong internationalization network will increase the quality of education and thereby enhance the capacity of research and intellectual development in the Malaysian higher education system. Efforts of internationalization of higher education will also ensure the building of reputation of HEIs and will in turn help generate income and foreign exchange savings through the enrolment of international students.

The Higher Educational Institutions in Malaysia presently support a wide variety of undergraduate and post graduate degree programs which are continually monitored by the Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA). The main role of the MQA is to implement the Malaysian Qualifications Framework (MQF) as a basis for quality assurance of higher education. This ensures that higher education institutions and their programs are assured of maintaining the required standards of learning, as well as their delivery mechanisms.

I sincerely hope that all students of HEIs in Malaysia will benefit greatly from their experiences of studying in a Malaysian Higher Educational Institution.

On behalf of the Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia, again I welcome all international students to Malaysia, and wish you the very best.

Sincerely,

Tan Sri Dr. Zulkefli Bin A. Hassan Secretary General

Minister of III along

Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia



Introduction from the Director General Department of Higher Education

On behalf of the Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) in Malaysia and the Department of Higher Education Malaysia, I would like to extend a warm 'Selamat Datang' and welcome to Malaysia for your studies program. The higher education opportunities available in Malaysia today offer students a truly diverse academic learning environment of collaboration, choice, and challenge.

distinctive characteristic that is particularly appealing to students and which serves as the basis for their campus life is that most HEIs in Malaysia are well endowed with abundant natural environment which is conducive for study, as well as also enabling students to develop their strengths in thought, discussion, and expression. The campuses in many Malaysian HEIs also serve as a gathering place for a diverse student body from more than 130 countries of the world, and are developing a rich international flavor as well as great esteem for diverse values.

This handbook has been compiled to guide you through some of the procedures and requirements both before and after your arrival. You will find information ranging from the important immigration regulations, directions, transportation, services, and activities available at the University or higher educational institution of your choice plus some of the everyday aspects of life in Malaysia.

I hope you will find this handbook useful to you as you settle in your new environment, and that your time in the HEI of your choice here will enrich your life both academically and socially, and fulfill your aspirations. Your stay here will, I hope, establish in your memory friendship and affection that will remain with you.

Finally, I wish to assure you of our commitment to delivering high quality student experiences and assisting you on your path to success.

With best wishes,



Dato' Ir. Dr. Radin Umar bin Radin Sohadi
Director General
Department of Higher Education



Introduction





i. Ministry of Higher Education

The mission of the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) is to create a higher educational environment that will foster the development of academic and institutional excellence. This is in line with the aspirations of the Malaysian Government to make Malaysia a centre of educational excellence and to internationalize Malaysian education.

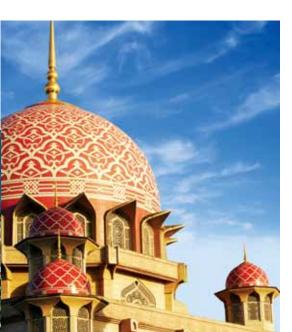
The Department of Higher Education is one of the three departments under the Ministry of Higher Education which regulates the nation's higher educational institutions' affairs (both public and private). The main objective of the Department of Higher Education is to drive universities and higher educational institutions in Malaysia to produce graduates who are competitive and able to generate new knowledge through world class quality research.

Within the Department of Higher Education there are several sectors or divisions that manage the vital processes that gears Malaysian higher educational institutions towards excellence through coordination of policies, funding and related activities. These divisions have specific functions aimed at improving the quality of educational services and ensuring that the programs offered by public and private higher educational institutions in Malaysia are of high quality and international standards.



These divisions are:

- Academic Development Management Division
- Institute of Higher Education Excellence Planning Division
- Industry Relations Division
- Governance Division, Public Higher Education Institutions
- Governance Division, Private Higher Education Institutions
- Enforcement & Inspectorate Division
- Registration & Standards Division
- Development and Student Affairs Division
- Student Admission Division
- Education Marketing Division
- Administrative and Finance Division
- Data Centre



ii. Brief Facts about Malaysia

Malaysia is known as a melting pot of cultures and religion which is blessed with a geographical landscape of natural beauty. Today, with its increasingly cosmopolitan business environment, Malaysia has become a choice destination for an overseas learning experience.

Population Approximately 28 million

Chief of State
The 'Yang Di Pertuan Agong'
(King)

Head of Government **Prime Minister**

Climate Average daily temperature 32 degrees C

Official Religion Islam

Monetary Unit
Ringgit or Malaysian Dollar (MR)

People
Malay, Chinese, Indian
and other ethnic groups

Culture

Multi racial culture

Capital City Kuala Lumpur

Pre-Arrival Information

- Please take note of the following when submitting your application to enter a HEI in Malaysia:
 - a. If you are applying to enter the HEI through a student recruitment agent, it is advisable that you check that the agent is registered with the HEI.
 - b. When your application has been approved and have decided to enroll in the HEI in Malaysia, please make sure that you have understood all the terms and conditions of admission.
 - Please make sure that you also read the refund policy of the HEI in case you may need to withdraw.
- ii. Before leaving your home country please make sure that you have the following documents:
 - a. Valid passport (with at least 6 months validity).
 - b. Letter of acceptance/ letter of admission from the HEI.
 - c. Entry clearance: Check on requirement at your local Malaysian Consulate or Embassy or High Commission well in advance of your departure. If you have difficulty obtaining a student visa/ student pass please inform the HEI's International Student Office.

d. Evidence of financial support (documents to show that you have enough money to allow you to complete your course, e.g. letter of scholarship award, bank statements, etc.)

Having all these documents with you will greatly ease your way through customs and immigration clearence.

iii. Other points to note:

- a. It is a condition of acceptance that you should not commence study at the HEI unless you have sufficient funds to finance yourself until the end of your course.
- b. There is a personal bond fee required by the Malaysian Immigration Department which is payable at your HEI when applying for a student visa. The fee varies from MR200 to MR2000. This fee will be refunded when you have completed your studies.
- A medical examination is compulsory for all local and international students in Malaysia.

If you have not done it prior to departure from your home country you may have your medical examination done at your HEI.

If your medical examination shows that you have tested positive for drugs, you will be refused admission into the HEI and you will be sent back to your home country.

d. Remember that in addition to tuition fees, you must also take into consideration expenses related to board and lodgings, books, stationery and equipment, clothing, travel expenses, holidays and entertainment.

If accompanied by spouse and children, it is advisable that the student and family members provide proof that they have sufficient funds to meet the financial requirements of the family as a whole. (e.g. letter of scholarship award with financial undertaking by the sponsor, bank statements, etc.). The estimated annual cost of living expenses (excluding tuition fees and accommodation costs) for each student is USD2,500, and USD2,000 for each family member.

The fees for schooling your children at international schools in Malaysia may vary, but on

- average it is about USD2500 per year per child. Please ensure that you enquire about schooling for your children from your HEI.
- e. It is strongly advised that all new students entering Malaysia via the Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA) or other entry points into Malaysia inform the International Students Office of the HEI important of their flight number, estimated time of arrival or other details of mode of entry into Malaysia.

For you to be easily recognisable, you are advised to display an indication of your HEI e.g. logo of HEI on your attire or any convenient place on your person or luggage.

Most HEIs have representatives waiting to receive you at KLIA (remember to notify them in advance!) or other points of entry into Malaysia and the campus.

Suggested arrival date: All students are expected to be in Malaysia one week prior to the actual enrolment day as stated in the offer letter.

Immigration Rules and Regulations

i. General guide

The Malaysian government policy, through the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) and the support of the Immigration Department of Malaysia, is to encourage international students to study in institutions of higher learning in Malaysia. Applicants will have to meet minimum visa requirements and will have to show evidence of their ability to finance their studies and living expenses in Malaysia.

The government agencies responsible for immigration matters in Malaysia are the Immigration Department of Malaysia and Malaysian Consulates or Embassies overseas.

"All students are advised not

"All students are advised not to enter Malaysia without a valid student pass"

As an international student studying in Malaysia, you will be required to follow various rules and regulations both academic and governmental. We urge you to abide by these regulations as failure to do so could result in unpleasantness or you may even be forced to leave the country and unable to achieve your ultimate degree objective.

In most cases, your HEI through its International Students' Office will submit approval of the student pass (student visa) for new students prior to their departure from their home country. This is to facilitate your entry into Malaysia.

In the event that your student pass has not approved or received before your departure from home, you are required to proceed to the nearest Malaysian Embassy or Consulate to obtain a single entry visa.

ii. Applying for a visa and student pass

All international students in Malaysia are required to have a student pass regardless of whether they are full time or exchange students.

Application for a visa/ student pass must be made through the Department of Immigration Malaysia (www.imi.gov.my). However, all HEIs in Malaysia will apply for a student pass for you if you are accepted into the HEI.

An international student can enter the country on a student pass provided:

- a. You have a letter of acceptance/ letter of admission from the HEI; and
- b. You have evidence of a recent medical examination completed certifying that you are of sound health. If you are taking prescribed medicines or drugs, please provide a letter from your doctor explaining what they are for.
- c. Additionally, students who have obtained acceptance to study in Malaysian HEIs are permitted to bring their immediate family members (spouse and children) to stay with them in Malaysia. Family members are given a Social Visit Pass and are only allowed to stay in Malaysia for the duration of study of the student.

Requirements and procedures to obtain a Social Visit Pass for dependents are as follows:

- Form Imm. 55
- Form Imm. 38 (if applicable)
- Photocopy of Passport/ Travel Documents of student
- Photocopy of Passport/ Travel Documents of applicant
- A verification letter from the University/ HEI

 Evidence of relationship (birth certificate/ marriage certificate/ letter from embassy)

It is also advisable for you to check the requirements to apply for a student pass (and dependents pass if applicable) at your local Malaysian Consulate or Embassy or High Commission well in advance of your departure.

If you have difficulty in obtaining a student visa/ student pass please inform your HEI's International Student Office. Your HEI may assist you in obtaining the student pass before you enter Malaysia or advice you accordingly on how to apply for a student pass after you have entered the country on an ordinary travel visa.

A visa application can be made through the respective HEI prior to entry. Please allow sufficient time of at least one month for your HEI to facilitate your student pass application.

The related fees are as follows:

- Student Pass is RM60 per year or part of the year.
- Visa fee (varies according to country of origin and does not exceed RM50).
- Payment of a personal bond fee to the HEI, refundable upon completion of your studies. The fee varies from MR200 – MR2000.

Applicants are required to send in two completed copies of Form Imm.14 accompanied by the letter of offer from an educational institution. Two copies of passport/ travel document and two passport-sized photographs. Once you have obtained approval to study through the respective educational institution or organization, you will be allowed direct entry into Malaysia.

For further information, please contact the Department of Immigration Malaysia at *www.imi.gov.my*. They can also be reached at +603 8880 1544 (or +603 8880 1408)

iii. Other immigration matters

- a. Please note that the student pass is not transferable *i.e.* you are not allowed to use the student pass to transfer to another HEI. If you transfer to another HEI you must obtain a release letter from your old HEI and an offer letter from your new HEI. Your new HEI will help you to cancel your existing student pass and make a fresh application for a new student pass.
- b. The HEI will have to notify the Immigration Department if the student:
 - Switches to another program of study
 - Terminates his/ her studies
 - Transfers to another HEI

- Has been absent from HEI classes or activities for more than 3 days
- · Applies for study leave
- c. Employment regulations:

A student is permitted to apply for permission to take on employment from the Immigration authorities (applications must be submitted through the International Office of the HEI) subject to the conditions below:

- The student is permitted to do part time work for a maximum of 20 hours a week during semester breaks or any holidays exceeding 7 days.
- Part time work is only permissible in restaurants, petrol kiosks, mini markets and hotels (not as entertainment artists, or other activities deemed unsuitable for students). The job should not involve financial aspects of the company.
- Permission to work part time may be extended by the Immigration authorities subject to receipt of good academic reports on the student from their respective HEIs.

Entering Malaysia



Although international students commonly enter Malaysia through the Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA), there are several other entry points i.e. Malaysia's other international Airports [Kota Kinabalu International Airport (Sabah), Kuching International Airport (Sarawak), Penang International Airport (Penang)] or via land routes from Singapore, Thailand or Indonesia.

Whichever entry point you choose, please ensure that you have all the necessary documents outlined in the pre-arrival section of this guidebook.

Arriving at KLIA

If you are entering Malaysia via KLIA, your international flight will arrive at the Satellite Building. Here are some guidelines for you to follow:

- Always look out for the signage indicating where you want to go.
- ii. Your immediate concern is to retrieve your baggage.
- iii. Board the aerotrain (automated train shuttle) to the Main Terminal Building (MTB).
- iv. You will arrive at the mezzanine level of the contact pier. Take the escalator down to the arrival level.
 - r. Follow the signboard and queue up for immigration checks. Make sure you are in the correct lane as some lanes are reserved for locals. You are required to complete a disembarkation card before reaching the immigration counter. Make sure you also have the other documents required.
- vi. After getting immigration clearance, collect your baggage at the international baggage claim section. Complimentary usage of baggage trolleys are available in the baggage claim area.

- vii. Having secured all your luggage, your last check point is the customs clearance. They may check the contents of your luggage.
- viii. You can now walk out and meet your HEI's representatives.
- ix. If the representatives are not available, follow the instructions sent to you by your HEI.
- x. If your HEI is in Kuala Lumpur, Putrajaya, Selangor, Negeri Sembilan or Melaka, take a taxi or limousine; follow the queue-system. The transportation cost is around

RM120 which is approximately USD35 for destinations in Kuala Lumpur or Selangor. For other HEIs follow the instructions sent to you.

Note: You are strongly advised to ensure that travel arrangements are made with your HEI before you arrive in Malaysia.



Study and Live in Malaysia

i. Malaysian Higher Educational Institutions

With more than 400 private and public higher educational institutions around the country, Malaysia offers international students a wide array of choices to pursue their studies.

Studying in Malaysia can provide you with opportunities to learn many things such as the social customs of various ethnic group and on how to handle lifestyles, beliefs and worldviews which may differ greatly from yours.

You can choose to experience one of Malaysia's twenty public universities, or pick the branch of a foreign university, or other private HEIs in Malaysia which all offer a wide variety of useful and highly rated degree or postgraduate degree courses.

Whichever you pick, you will have an enriching experience, inculcate greater cultural awareness, pick up new life skills and become more independent as you will be living away from home.

ii. Climate and clothing

a. Malaysian climate

- Average year-round temperatures of between 23°C and 33°C (and 15°C to 25°C in the highlands).
- Rainfall average between 2,000mm to 2,500mm per year.
- Predominantly sunny weather throughout the year.

b. Suitable clothing

Bring apparel suitable for warm and humid weather:

- Linen, light cotton and cotton blend clothing are a good choice.
- Sandals for informal occasions.
- Covered leather shoes for more formal situations.
- For men, lounge suits or shirts with a jacket are perfect for occasions that call for formality outside of school.
- For women, modest dresses work well, and you will see traditional costumes worn in everyday life, both at work, and after working hours.

In Malaysia visitors will be able to observe how people of various ethnic, religious and cultural backgrounds can live together in harmony.

iii. History, population and culture

Malaysia is a country located in Southeast Asia. It comprise of 13 states and 3 Federal Territories with a total landmass of 329,847 square kilometres (127,355 sq mi) which is divided into Peninsular Malaysia and the states of Sabah and Sarawak on the island of Borneo.

The capital city is Kuala Lumpur, while Putrajaya is the seat of the federal government. The population stands at over 28 million with 80% of the population living in Peninsular Malaysia. The following are the main ethnic groups in Malaysia:

- Malays
- Chinese
- Indians
- About 50 different indigenous groups
- Eurasians

Malaysians also celebrate numerous colourful festival and holidays. The main festival is the Hari Raya Aidil Fitr (Eid) which is celebrated by Muslims at the end of the fasting month of Ramadhan, the Chinese Lunar New Year is celebrated by Chinese Malaysians and the Hindus celebrate Deepavali, or the festival of lights.

A unique feature in Malaysia during these festivities is the practice of the 'open house' concept, where friends, family and neighbours are all welcomed into the homes of those celebrating a particular festival, for a meal and to enjoy the festivities together with their host families.

iv. From pre-history to ancient civilizations, colonial rule, and independence

This interesting melting pot of cultures emerged from hundreds of years of history. The ancestors of the Malays started arriving in Peninsular Malaysia in the first millennium BC. In 1400, a Sumatran named Parameswara prince founded the Sultanate of Melaka (Malacca) and built the foundation of the country's Muslim heritage with his conversion to Islam. This sultanate prospered and soon attracted the Portuguese, who conquered Malacca in 1511. They were followed by the Dutch, who overthrew the Portuguese in 1641.



However, the British, who arrived in this region in the form of the British East India Company in the late 1700s, sought to control the peninsula's rich resources, which at that time was tin. Thus between the early 1800s and early 1900s, all the states in the peninsula gradually fell under British control and became known as Malaya.

As British rule expanded in the peninsula, the population of Indians and Chinese also grew due to the influx of migrant workers who settled here while taking an active part in the various local economic activities, such as working in the rubber plantations and tin mines. This process built the foundation for the multiracial culture of today's Malaysia.

v. Self-rule and the legacy of the various prime ministers

Malaya was a British protectorate until 31 August 1957 when Tunku Abdul Rahman, the nation's first Prime Minister, declared her independence. In September 1963, Singapore, Sarawak and Sabah (then known as North Borneo) joined Malaya, whereupon the country's name was officially changed to Malaysia. However, Singapore left Malaysia in August 1965.

In 1970, Tun Abdul Razak succeeded Tunku Abdul Rahman to become the second prime minister of Malaysia.

When the third Prime Minister, Tun Hussein Onn retired, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad became the fourth and thus far the longestserving prime minister. During Tun Mahathir's term, he modernised the commodity-dependent economy turning it into a thriving industrial economy producing electronic products and even manufacturing Malaysia's own national car. Development of supporting infrastructure was also initiated at a fast pace with the building of roads, ports, airports, and iconic structures such as the Penang Bridge and the Petronas Twin Towers – the tallest buildings of the 20th century.

The current Prime Minister is Dato' Sri Mohd Najib Tun Abdul Razak, who is the 6th prime minister of Malaysia, having succeeded Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi (the 5th Prime Minister) on 3 April 2009.

Malaysia's charm lies in her rich history, the welcoming cultures of her people, as well as the modern economy and rule of law; all of which make the country a destination worth considering for your international studies program.

vi. Government structure and economy

Malaysia is a parliamentary democracy country with a prime minister as head of government, and the Yang Di-Pertuan Agong (King) as the constitutional head of state. Nine of the states in Peninsular Malaysia have hereditary rulers while the other four states of Melaka, Pulau Pinang (Penang) Sabah and Sarawak have titular governors appointed by the government.

The economy of Malaysia has performed beyond expectations over the last two decades with gross domestic product (GDP) often growing at 7.1% per annum, underpinned by positive expansion in all sectors including services, manufacturing, agriculture, mining and construction. In recent years domestic consumption has also been supportive with growth of over 11%. However, with the recent world economic slowdown, Malaysia, like most of the world, has been subjected to inflationary pressures.

However, Malaysia continues to be a country with a high standard but very affordable cost of living, making it identifiable worldwide as a very affordable place to live, study and work in.



vii. Modern and traditional in Malaysia

Malaysia's charm lies in her rich history, the welcoming cultures of her people, as well as the modern economy and rule of law; all of which make the country a destination worth considering for your studies.

For more general information on Malaysia visit www.tourism.gov.my.

You will gain international experience and skills working with diverse cultures during your studies in Malaysia.



viii. Diverse, cosmopolitan community

Malaysia is a multi-religious and multicultural country. Malaysians celebrate many festivals based on their varied religion and cultures, and the government has set aside national and state public holidays to cater to all the major ethnic groups.

There is also respect for the various cultural and religious norms such as dress codes and it is not unusual to see Malaysians attired in various styles of cultural attire at the office and institutions of higher learning. All these are modest and welcomed even in professional circles.

You will also hear an interesting variety of languages, including English; Malay (in different dialects); Chinese dialects; Indian dialect such as Tamil, Hindi, and Bengali; and other native tongues.

If the locals speak in their own languages in your precence, do not feel embarrassed to ask for a translation – they will quickly switch to English to accommodate you.

ix. A learning experience

Studying in Malaysia can provide you with opportunities to learn many things such as the social customs of various ethnic group and on how to handle lifestyles, beliefs and worldviews which may differ greatly from yours. This could help to broaden your outlook and understanding, which is important for both personal growth as well as for business purposes.

x. The Malaysian work culture

The internationally accepted business cultures of punctuality, modest corporate attire, loyalty to organization, teamwork and working harmoniously with co-workers are the norm in Malaysian work culture.

Some customs to observe:

- Address colleagues and clients using titles such as 'Mr', 'Miss', 'Encik', 'Puan', and so forth (the latter two being the Malay terms for 'Mr' and 'Mrs'), instead of just calling them by their first names.
- Introductions are normally acknowledged with a handshake. In the Muslim culture, handshakes are normally between people of the same gender.
- With many Malaysians, it is important to use the right hand in accepting or giving things.
- For business people it is usual to exchange business cards when meeting new business associates for the first time.



xi. Working hours

Office hours: Mondays to Fridays 8.00am or 9.00am to 5.00pm or 6.00pm

Lunch break is usually from: 1.00pm to 2.00pm except on Friday when it is from 12.30noon to 2.45pm

Banking hours:
Mondays to Fridays
9.15am to 4.00pm or 4.30pm
(varies from bank to bank)

Note: Working hours in the states of Kedah, Kelantan and Terengganu may differ as the working days in these states are from Sunday to Thursday.

Living in Malaysia

Being away from home as a student in a foreign country can be a daunting experience. The following information may help make your stay in Malaysia a comfortable one.

i. Accommodation

Types of accommodation and rental rates (all rates are monthly rates unless specified).

 a. The rates for residential accommodations offered to you by your HEI will vary. All HEIs usually offer very affordable residential accommodations at rates ranging between RM600 and RM3000 (about USD170 – USD850) per semester.

The residential accommodation usually includes:

- Shared or Single Bedroom furnished with bed, cupboard, desk and chair.
- Shared bathroom.
- Bedroom in an apartment or house in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor:
 - From RM350 (about USD100) per month.
 - Partially/ fully furnished bed, cupboard, desk and chair.



- Often with shared bathroom.
- More expensive if with own bathroom.
- Enquire if use of kitchen is allowed
- c. Studio apartment/ condominium in Kuala Lumpur:
 - From RM1,500 (about USD 430) per month.
 - Partially/ fully furnished.
 - Usually with facilities such as swimming pool, tennis courts and gym.
- d. 3-4 bedroom apartments/ condominiums in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor:
 - From RM1,500 to RM2,500 (about USD 430-USD715) per month.
 - Unfurnished/ furnished.
 - Facilities such as swimming pool, tennis courts and gym.



- e. Non-serviced 3-4 bedroom apartments in family neighbourhoods in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor:
 - From RM550 (about USD158).
 - Unfurnished/ furnished.

Rates in other states tend to be lower than in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor.

Other things to note:

- Hot water is not a standard feature in HEIs and all Malaysian homes. If you require this facility, please check if your rental accommodation is equipped with a water heater.
- Rented premise may not be equipped with a washing machine. You may send your dirty laundry to the neighbourhood laundry shop.
 For greater savings, you can

- opt to do your laundry by hand. Drying clothes is easy. Just hang them out on the clothesline provided and the hot Malaysian weather will dry them in no time.
- As a general rule, it is best to boil tap water before consumption.

ii. Financial matters

Malaysia has an internationally linked banking and financialservices sector. including Islamic banking services. There are usually banks and ATMs (Automatic Teller Machines) at all major HEIs in Malaysia where you can withdraw money using your credit cards, or ATM cards which are PLUS and Cirrus affiliated. All major shopping malls and large restaurants in Malaysia accept credit cards like VISA and MasterCard, and some also accept American Express and Diners Club cards.

If your study sponsorship include offers an allowance or stipend, you can either make arrangements to have the payment deposited directly into your account back home or open an account in Malaysia. Check

with your sponsors regarding this matter.

There are many international banks in Malaysia such as HSBC, Citibank, Standard Chartered, Al-Rajhi, UOB, OCBC, etc.

iii. Medical facilities

Some HEIs operate their own medical service facilities catering to their students. The students fees paid are usually inclusive of cost of treatment for minor ailments.

However, there are usually one or two private general-practitioner clinics within most neighbourhoods, which offer outpatient services:

- About RM40 to RM60 (USD11 to USD17) per consultation.
- Price includes medication, so you do not need to get a prescription to get the medication from an external pharmacy.
- All Malaysian doctors and pharmacists, with the exception of a very few, speak English.

Should you wish to seek medical treatment at a hospital, you may choose to go to either a private hospital or government hospital.

Generally, both offer their services to foreigners and can be found in every town.

Non-citizens pay a higher rate at government hospitals, but this still tends to be lower than the charges at private hospitals.

It is also wise to take note of the following information in case of emergencies:

- For a government-hospital ambulance and other emergencies, call 999.
- It is worthwhile to note that success within the academic realm usually requires good physical and mental health. In order to assist you with any physical or emotional problems, most HEIs have medical facilities or counseling services under the student affairs and development office which extends basic health care and emotional support to all registered students.
- For more information on looking after your health in the tropics (mosquito bites, sunburn, diarrhea, and heat exhaustion), visit www.tourism.gov.my.



iv. Travel and Medical Insurance

Before you depart, it is strongly recommended that you take out a comprehensive travel insurance policy that will cover any overseas medical costs. Confirm that your insurance covers you for the entire duration that you are away and check on the circumstances and activities not covered by your policy.

The Ministry of Higher Education of Malaysia has made it compulsory for all international students to register for insurance coverage in their respective HEIs.

It is important to remember that regardless of how healthy and fit you are, if you are unable to afford travel insurance, you cannot afford to travel.

v. Getting out and about

a. Driving

You need a licence to drive cars and ride motorbikes in Malaysia. If you prefer to drive, street directories can be purchased from your university bookshops or other major bookshops and even at some petrol stations. Also check out www.streetdirectory.com.my for online maps for Kuala Lumpur and Melaka

town. Cars can be easily rented from car rental companies.

As common in most commonwealth countries. Malaysians drive on the left side of the road, and all cars are right-hand drive. Some driving licenses from foreign countries and also international driving licenses are accepted for use in Malaysia for up to three months. Please check with your university international office for related advice.

For those wishing to acquire a Malaysian license, it is possible to convert your driving license from your country. To find out the procedure to do so, please get advice from your university's international office or check with the Road Transport Department of Malaysia or check out www.jpj.gov.my.

b. Public transportation

Public transportation is widely available in Malaysia. If you stay in a small town or rural area, relying on a car or motorbike is still the best option, followed by bus services. Here are some quick facts on the public transportation available in Malaysia:



Taxis

Taxis can be flagged down at the side of the road in most places. In most cities, there are also many dial-a-taxi companies that can be easily reached by a phone call.

For taxi services - from midnight to 6.00am, there is usually a surcharge that could amount to 50% of the fare, so be sure to check how much it is when you call or before you board.

In Kuala Lumpur, most taxis come with meters. Insist on the driver using the meter. If there is no meter in the taxi, make sure to agree on a price before your trip so that there are no unpleasant surprises later on. Ask the locals or other experienced visitors on what reasonable fares should be to your intended destination.

· City and town buses

Bus services are inexpensive and available in many areas.

RapidKL (www.rapidkl.com.my) is Malaysia's main service provider of public transportation in the Klang Valley via its integrated rail and bus network.

Other bus services do not always publish their schedules, so the best way to find out what goes where is to ask the people who are waiting for buses at the stations/ stops.

You could also check with your new colleagues and friends who use bus services.

Monorail and Light Rail Transit (LRT) Trains

Within the city of Kuala Lumpur, there is an excellent network of monorail and lightrail transit train services.

• Inter-city train services

- These services are offered by Keretapi Tanah Melayu Berhad (KTMB) (www.ktmb.com.my)

- There are dining carriages that provide hot meals and take-away snacks.
- Services to Singapore and Thailand are available.
- Sleeping berths and private rooms are available for overnight trips.

• Inter-city bus services

Numerous bus companies (www.myexpressbus.com) provide services between most cities and towns in Malaysia. They provide cheap and excellent mode of transport for travelling between towns.

 All these buses are airconditioned except for a very few.

- Always buy your tickets from the counters at the bus station.
- Buses to neighbouring countries such as Singapore and Thailand are also available

Malaysians are a friendly bunch, so be sure to make friends with the locals. They will be happy to show you around and make you feel more at home during your stay here in Malaysia.



Dining and Travel



Here are some ideas and recommendations for you to consider when planning what to do and where to go in Malaysia.

i. Shopping

Malaysia offers a wide range of shopping choices: from Westernstyle malls and boutique shops carrying the latest electronics goods, household items, and fashion labels to local neighbourhood night markets with a marvelous variety of goods, including fresh food, clothing, toys, tools and furnishings. Prices are usually considerably lower in the night markets when compared with the malls and shops.

Fresh cooking ingredients are easily obtainable from supermarkets, fresh markets and your local grocery store,

or mini markets and sundry shops, as Malaysians call them. Ingredients for virtually any cuisine in the world are imported and stocked by some shops, especially in major cities like Kuala Lumpur.

ii. Dining

You can find cuisine from many parts of the world in Malaysia, be it Malay, Indian, Chinese, Thai, Japanese, Mexican, Middle-Eastern or Western. Whether you live in an urban or rural area, you will be able to walk out and get food at any time of the day or night.

International fast-food outlets such as KFC and McDonald's are also found in all major cities and most towns, even small towns.

Most popular amongst the locals are open-air hawker stalls and food courts. You can find food courts in every town in the country.

Malaysia food courts generally feature a large variety of foods such as *satay* (meat on coconut skewers grilled over a charcoal fire) served with peanut sauce, compressed rice packets, fresh cucumber and onions, *ais kacang* (or 'ABC' – a dessert comprising shaved ice topped with a sweet syrup and a variety of toppings), *mee goreng mamak* (spicy

Indian fried noodles), *yong tau fu* (a large selection of fresh vegetables stuffed with meat and fish), and the list goes on.

A meal consisting of a main dish, dessert and a drink costs about RM7 to RM10 on average.

For restaurants in your area, simply ask your local friends for recommendations.



Malaysia's holiday destinations

Malaysia has many getaway places catering to a variety of tastes and budgets. Thousand-year-old rainforests, islands, white-sand beaches, waterfalls, caves, mountains, and lakes are usually no more than an hour or two away from any city.

Some popular destinations in Malaysia:

- Malacca
- Cameron Highlands, Pahang
- Mulu Caves, Sarawak
- Islands on the west coast-Pangkor, Langkawi, Penang
- Islands on the east coast-Perhentian, Redang, Kapas, Tioman
- Kuala Terengganu





Guidebook for International Students Studying in Malaysia

Top 10 Tips for Studying in Malaysia

- Be a smart traveler Before you depart, check www.mohe.gov.my for the latest information on studying in Malaysia.
- ii. Register yourself at your own embassy upon arrival in Malaysia.
- iii. Check your passport validity Make sure that your passport is valid for the entire time you are in Malaysia. Carry extra passport photos just in case your passport is lost or stolen and you need to replace it while in a foreign country.
- iv. Organize your money Organize a variety of ways to access your money overseas. Credit cards, travellers' cheques, cash cards and debit cards are used widely in Malaysia. Money changers are also easily available. However, do check with your bank to make sure that your ATM card works overseas. Also check with your bank about the process or cost of transferring money between accounts in your country and Malaysia.
- v. Make copies It is a good idea to make 2 or more copies of all important documents – passport, visas, tickets, credit card numbers, insurance policy, academic certificates, etc. before heading

- off. Leave one copy with someone at home and take the others with you on your travels. However it is advisable to keep the copies separate from the originals.
- vi. Insurance Take out comprehensive travel insurance to cover hospital treatment, medical evacuation, and any activities, like adventure sports, in which you plan to participate. In any case, the Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia requires all international students to have insurance for the duration of their studies in Malaysia. (All Malaysian Higher Education Institutions are required to facilitate the provision of insurance for students at the university with rates payable by the students).
- vii. Medical Consultation Consult your doctor about recommended vaccinations and the necessary health precautions to take. It is also useful to obtain information about your medication (if any) as certain medicines are not allowed in some countries.
- viii. Know the Laws When you are in Malaysia, local laws apply to you. These include penalties for drug related offences, including possession of even small amounts

of any type of hallucegenic drugs. Penalties are severe in Malaysia where drug offenders are subject to a mandatory death penalty.

- ix. Find out more about your HEI When you have received approval for admittance and will be enrolling into a HEI, do some research to keep yourself informed and know what to expect by finding out as much as you can about the HEI.
- x. Useful numbers to know Prepare a list of useful numbers to know (with one or two numbers which are available after office hours) so that you will have a contact person upon arrival in Malaysia. The

numbers may include a person at the HEI, your embassy in Malaysia, or someone you actually know from your country.

"Trafficking of Illegal Drugs carries the mandatory death penalty in Malaysia"



12

Arriving at Your Campus



i. When you first arrive at your Campus:

- a. Go to the International Students Office of your HEI
- b. Complete your HEI registration
- c. Register for accommodation or seek assistance to find accommodation
- d. If you have any immigration matters, refer to the International Students Office
- e. Some HEIs will insist that on registration you have to sit for the EPT (English Placement Test) or other language placement tests
- f. Note that participation in the Orientation Program under the Student Affairs and Development section of your HEI is compulsory
- g. Take note of other programmes for familiarization of HEI and KL city tour or others
- h. Complete your course registration with the respective faculties
- i. Commencement of classes

ii. Quick answers

Immigration matters, visa, passport International Students Office

Admission, registration, transcript Admissions and Records Office

Discipline, Complaints, Grievances Student Affairs Office

Financial assistance HEI sponsorship unit

Payments, disbursement Finance Office

Accommodation
Student affairs office or housing unit

Sports facilities, reservation Co-Curriculum, Student Affairs

Student Representative Council Co-Curriculum, Student Affairs Student societies, clubs

Co-Curriculum, Student Affairs Foster parents Student Affairs Office

Most Universities or HEIs require settlement of fees prior to enrolment for each semester



Some local words to help you get started

Apa khabar? How are you? (an informal greeting)

'Khabar baik' Fine

Nama saya
My name is

Berapa harga ini?
How much is this?

Tolong bawa saya ke
Please take me to

*Di mana klinik?*Where is the clinic?

ii. Counseling and advice

When you move to a new country, especially for the first time, it may be a difficult process to fit in, especially when starting studies at a HEI.

Some symptoms of culture shock may be feelings of loneliness, feeling isolated, withdrawal from social activities, hostility towards other cultures, depression, disorientation, etc. All HEIs in Malaysia offer support services for these types of ailments or in unusual cases may direct you to the supporting office or clinic.

Do visit the counseling office in your HEI quickly if you feel that you are experiencing these symptoms.

iii. International Students Office

Finally, do take note that all HEIs have an office dedicated to assist international students in areas such as orientation, immigration, visa, counseling, provision of academic and personal advice, liaison within campus departments, on-campus working opportunities and campus extracurricular activities.

In other words, do contact the staff of the international office with any questions you may have. They may not always be able to solve your problems, but they can certainly assist you in solving them yourself by referring you to the proper place and person, by instructing you in procedures and regulations, by showing you what alternatives are available and which might be most effective, and by helping you complete any required form or document.

It is important for you to remember not to wait until the last minute to contact the office. Call or visit them as soon as you see a problem developing which you believe you will require some help or guidance with. Important notice:

The Department of Higher Education is responsible for the publication of this guide book. The office address is:

Department of Higher Education Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia Level 2, Block E9, Parcel E, Precinct 1 Federal Government Administrative Centre, 62505 Putrajaya, Malaysia T 603-8883 5939/5833

E 402 0000 4250/ 5125

F 603-8889 4258/ 5135

Comments and enquiries on this guidebook may be posted at the following email address:

isu@mohe.gov.my

Selamat Datang dan Selamat Maju Jaya!
Welcome and Good Luck!

Contact Details

of some High Commisions and Embassies in Malaysia

BANGLADESH

High Commission for the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Block - 1, Lorong Damai 7, Jalan Damai 55000 Kuala Lumpur

T 03-2142 3271/ 21422505

HP 012-635 3486

F 03-2141 3381 (Diplomatic Wing) 03-2145 7376 (Labour Wing) 03-2148 2098 (Defence Wing) 03-2782 8650 (Commerce Wing)

E bddoot@streamyx.com

W www.bangladeshhighcomkl.com OH Monday-Friday 9.00 am-5.00 pm

BRUNEI

Embassy of the Brunei

Suite 19-01 Tingkat 19, Menara Tan & Tan Jalan Tun Razak 50400 Kuala Lumpur

603-2161 2800/2161 8282, 2161 21679 / 2161 2804

603-2163 1302/ 2163 0144 03-2162 1679 (Defense)

E bhckl@brucomkul.com.my

OH Monday-Friday

8.30am-12.30pm-1.30pm-4.30pm

CHINA

Embassy of the People's Republic of China

229, Jalan Ampang,

50450 Kuala Lumpur

603-2142 8495 - Protocol & Administration

603-2148 5936 - Cultural Affairs

603-2142 8585 - Consular Office (Visa, Passport)

603-4251 3555 - Commercial

603-2141 4552

603-4251 3233 - Commercial Office

W my.china-embassy.org/eng/ OH Monday-Friday 9.00 am-5.00 pm

INDIA

High Commission of India No. 2 Jalan Taman Duta Off Jalan Duta 50480 Kuala Lumpur

03-2093 3504 / 2093 350, 03-2093 3510

03-2093 3507/2092 5826

highcomm@po.jaring.my dhc002@po.jaring.my admn@indianhighcommission.com.my

W www.indianhighcommission.com.my/ OH Monday-Friday 9.00 am-5.00 pm

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03-2116 4000, 03-2116 4016

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kbrikl@po.jaring.my kbrikul@time.net.my

W www.kbrikl.org.my/

OH Monday-Friday 9.00 am-5.00 pm

IRAN

Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran No.1 Lorong UThant Satu,

Off Jalan U-Thant 55000 Kuala Lumpur 603-4251 4824/ 4829/ 4826/ 4830

603-4256 2904/ 4253 2767

ir_emb@tm.net.my

W www.iranembassy.com.my OH Monday-Friday 9.00 am-5.00 pm

IRAQ

Embassy of the Republic of Iraq

No. 2, Jalan Langgak Golf Off Jalan Tun Razak 55000 Kuala Lumpur

T 603-21480555

F 603-21414331

E quaemb@iraqmofamail.net

W www.sudanembassy-kl.org.my/ OH Monday-Friday 9.00 am-5.00 pm

LIBYA

Embassy of Libyan Arab Jamahiriya

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T 603 2141 1293, 2148 2112

F 603 2141 3549

OH Monday-Friday 9.00am-5.00pm

JORDAN

Embassy of the Hashemite

Kingdom of Jordan

No. 2, Jalan Kedondong Off Jalan Ampang 55000 Kuala Lumpur

T 603-4252 1268/4252 8549/ 4253 3685

F 603-4252 8610

E jorembkl@streamyx.com general@jordanembassy.org.my

W www.jordanembassy.org.my

OH Monday - Friday 9.30 a.m - 3.00p.m

KAZAKHSTAN

Embassy of The Republic of Kazakhstan

115, Jalan Ampang Hilir, 55000 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

T 603-4252 2999

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E kuala-lumpur@kazaembassy.org.my

W http://www.kazembassy.org.my/ OH Monday-Friday 9.00am-6.00pm

KENYA

High Commission of the Republic of Kenya

Kenya High Commission, Kuala Lumpur, No.8 Jalan Taman U-Thant

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T 603-4257 2431

F 603 21451087

E info@kenyahighcom.org.my

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KOREA

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F 603-4252 1425

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F 603 2164 7244

E mail@maldives.org.my

W www.maldives.org.my/

OH Monday-Friday 9.30am-4.30pm

MYANMAR

Embassy of the Union of Myanmar

No. 10 Jalan Mengkuang, off Jalang Ru, 55000 Kuala Lumpur

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NIGERIA

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E nighcomm@tm.net.my

W www.nigeria.org.my

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OMAN

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F 603-245-2826

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PALESTINE

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F 603-4252 9711 / 42570802

E embassyofpalestine@gmail.com

W www.palembassy.com

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High Commission of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan

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603-4257 8751

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SINGAPORE

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W www.mfa.gov.sg/kl/

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SRI LANKA

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SUDAN

Embassy of the Republic of Sudan 1 Persiaran Ampang, Off Jalan Rhu 55000 Kuala Lumpur

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TANZANIA

High Commission for the United Republic of Tanzania

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THAI

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> Defence: 603-2148 7783/6578 Commercial: 603-2142 4601

F Chancery: 603-248 6527; Consular: 603-2148 6573;

> Defence: 603-2148 0770; Commercial: 603-21489818

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