

FINLAND APPLICATION ROADMAP & Complete FAQ Guide 2026

Step-by-step guide to applying for a visa, checklist & all your questions answered

Part 01

Application Roadmap Finland September 2026 intake

Use this roadmap to stay on track for the September 2026 intake. Most Finnish university applications close in January; early preparation is the key to a strong application and scholarship success.



01. Research

Aug – Sep 2025

Research universities and programs. Use studyinfo.fi to browse all English programs. Shortlist 3–5 universities aligned with your goals, grades and budget.

03. Apply

Nov – Jan 2026

Submit applications before deadlines (most due mid-January). Apply to multiple universities to maximise chances. Upload all documents- transcripts, English results, motivation letter, and passport copy.

05. Decisions

Feb – Mar 2026

University admission decisions are released. Compare offers and scholarship packages. Accept your preferred offer before the deadline (usually within 2–3 weeks of receiving it).

02. Prepare

Oct – Nov 2025

Request official transcripts from your school/university. Sit for IELTS/TOEFL if not yet completed. Begin drafting your motivation letter and CV. Research scholarship criteria for each university.

04. Scholarship

Jan – Feb 2026

Check if you have been considered for scholarships automatically. Some universities require a separate scholarship application form.

06. Confirm Enrolment

Mar – Apr 2026

Pay tuition deposit or confirm your scholarship award. Sign the enrolment agreement. Contact the international office to confirm your place is secured.

07. Visa Application

Mar – Apr 2026

Apply for your Finnish Residence Permit for Studies via the Enter Finland portal (migri.fi). Gather all required documents.

See Part 3 for the full visa checklist.

09. Pre-Departure

Jun – Aug 2026

Book flights. Arrange travel insurance. Open an international bank account if needed. Attend any pre-departure sessions run by GradStar.

See Part 4 for the full checklist.

08. Accommodation

Apr – May 2026

Apply to student housing (HOAS, TOAS, TYS, etc.) immediately. Waiting lists open early. So, do not delay. Book an airport transfer or arrange a temporary stay for arrival.

10. Arrive & Enrol

Aug – Sep 2026

Arrive in Finland. Register at the local Digital and Population Data Services Agency (DVV). Attend university orientation. Set up a Finnish bank account and SIM card. Begin your studies!

Part 02

Application Checklist

Every document and requirement you need to apply to Finnish universities

Academic Documents

- Official secondary school transcripts (Year 10, 11, 12 / HSC / Board results)
- University transcripts if applying for postgraduate study (all semesters)
- Predicted grades letter from school (if results not yet finalised)
- Degree certificate/diploma (for postgraduate applicants)
- Certified English translations of any documents that are not in English

All documents should be in English or officially translated.

English Language Tests

- IELTS Academic: minimum 6.0–6.5 overall
- TOEFL iBT: minimum 90 overall
- PTE Academic: minimum 59
- Cambridge B2 First / C1 Advanced: accepted at most institutions

Some universities accept proof of completing prior education in English as a substitute for a language test. Check each program page carefully before sitting a test.

Personal Statement / Motivation Letter

- Length: 500–800 words (check each program's specific requirements)
- Cover: Why this program, why Finland, your career goals, and relevant experience
- Tailored to each program. Do not use a generic template
- Proofread carefully. This is your strongest tool to stand out

Other Required Documents

- Passport copy (valid for at least 18 months beyond your intended study end date)
- CV / Resume (1–2 pages, including education, work experience, activities)
- Two letters of recommendation (for Master's programs- from academic supervisors or employers)
- Portfolio (for arts, design, architecture and film programs)
- Research proposal (for PhD / doctoral programs, 1,000–3,000 words depending on program)
- GMAT / GRE scores (required by some business and science programs)

Part 03

Student Visa Checklist

Everything you need to apply for your Finnish Residence Permit for Studies

Non-EU/EEA students must apply for a Finnish Residence Permit for Studies via the Enter Finland online portal (migri.fi). This is different from a traditional visa. It is a residence permit that allows you to live and study in Finland for your program duration.



When to Apply

Apply at least 3 months before your program start date. Processing typically takes 1–3 months. Do not book flights until you have received your permit decision.

Visa Document Checklist

- Valid passport: Minimum 15 months validity beyond your program end date
- Completed online application via Enter Finland (enterfinland.fi)
- University acceptance/offer letter confirming your enrollment
- Proof of tuition fee payment OR official scholarship/waiver letter from the university
- Proof of sufficient financial means: EUR 560/month for the duration of your stay (e.g. EUR 6,720 for 12 months), bank statement or scholarship documentation
- Health insurance covering Finland for the full period of your studies (minimum EUR 30,000 coverage)
- Passport-size photographs (biometric, as specified by Migri)
- Application fee payment confirmation

Visa Application Process: Step by Step

Step 1

Create your account at enterfinland.fi and begin the online application

Step 2

Select 'Residence permit for studies' as the application type

Step 3

Upload all required documents (clear scans or high-quality photos)

Step 4

Pay the application fee online (credit card or bank transfer)

Step 5

Submit the application and note your application reference number

Step 6

Book biometrics (embassy or VFS, if required)

Step 7

Attend biometrics with passport and originals

Step 8

Wait for a decision. You will be notified via email and the Enter Finland portal

Step 9

Collect residence permit card after arrival (from the police)

Step 10

Register at DVV (Digital and Population Data Services Agency) within 3 months

Part 04

Pre-Departure Checklist

Everything to do before you fly to Finland

3 Months Before Departure

- Receive and confirm your residence permit approval
- Book your flights to Finland (Helsinki-Vantaa Airport for most cities)
- Confirm your student housing booking and get your arrival instructions
- Set up an international bank account or travel card for initial expenses
- Arrange travel insurance for the journey

1 Month Before Departure

- Purchase a Finnish SIM card online in advance (e.g. Elisa, Telia, DNA) or plan to buy on arrival
- Download useful apps: HSL (Helsinki transport), Whim, Bolt, Google Maps offline (Finland)
- Organise certified copies of all key documents. Keep originals and copies separate
- Notify your bank of your travel plans to avoid card blocks
- Pack appropriately. Finnish winters are severe; invest in quality thermal layers and waterproof gear
- Attend any pre-departure briefing from GradStar

1 Month Before Departure

- Collect your Residence Permit card from the Finnish police (Poliisi).
- Bring your passport and permit approval letter
- Register your address at DVV (Digital and Population Data Services Agency). It is required within 3 months
- Register with FSHS (Finnish Student Health Service). Approximately EUR 70/year for comprehensive healthcare
- Open a Finnish bank account (OP, Nordea or S-Pankki recommended for students)
- Register with the student union at your university (gives access to student discounts and services)
- Set up your university email and student portal access
- Attend orientation week. This is essential for meeting fellow students and learning campus systems

Part 05

Frequently Asked Questions

25 questions answered for Indian & Australian students

About Finland & Universities

Q: Is Finland a good place to study for international students?

A: Yes. Finland is consistently ranked one of the best countries in the world for education quality, student safety and quality of life. Universities rank globally, English is widely used, and student support is strong.

Q: Which are the best universities in Finland for international students?

A: The top universities for international students include the University of Helsinki, Aalto University, University of Tampere, University of Turku, Hanken School of Economics and LUT University. Each has strong English-medium programs across different disciplines.

Q: How many English-medium programs does Finland offer?

A: Finland currently offers over 400 Bachelor's and Master's programs taught entirely in English across its universities and universities of applied sciences. Numbers are growing year on year as Finland actively recruits international students.



Fees, Scholarships & Cost

Q: Is studying in Finland free for international students?

A: EU/EEA students study free. Non-EU/EEA students pay EUR 4,000–18,000/year, with high-achieving students receiving scholarships often covering part or full tuition.

Q: What scholarships are available for Indian students to study in Finland?

A: Key options include university tuition waivers, EDUFI Fellowships (PhD), and Erasmus+ exchanges. Many universities automatically consider high-achieving applicants. No separate application needed.

Q: How much does it cost to live in Finland as a student?

A: Living costs are about EUR 800–1,200/month, including housing, food, transport, and personal expenses. Helsinki is the most expensive city; Tampere, Turku, and Oulu are more affordable.

Q: Are there affordable accommodation options for students?

A: Yes. Student housing (HOAS, TOAS, TYS) offers affordable studios/shared flats from EUR 300–500/month. Apply as early as possible; spots fill fast.

Visa & Legal Requirements

Q: Do I need a visa to study in Finland?

A: Non-EU/EEA students do not apply for a traditional visa. Instead, you apply for a Finnish Residence Permit for Studies through the Migri (Finnish Immigration Service) portal. This permit allows you to live, study and work part-time in Finland.

Q: How long does the Finland student visa/residence permit take to process?

A: Processing typically takes 1–3 months. Apply at least 3–4 months before your program start date to allow sufficient time. You can track your application status via the Enter Finland portal.

Q: How much money do I need to show for the Finland student visa?

A: Show at least EUR 560/month (\approx EUR 6,720/year). A scholarship letter can replace a bank statement.

Q: Can I work while studying in Finland?

A: Yes. You can work up to 25 hours/week during studies and full-time in holidays. Many students find part-time jobs due to strong demand.

Q: Can I bring my family to Finland while I study?

A: Yes. Spouse and dependent children can apply after your permit is approved. They may work; conditions and timelines vary.

After Graduation

Q: Can I stay and work in Finland after graduation?

A: Yes. Graduates can stay up to 24 months on a job seeker permit to find work or start a business. Demand is strong in tech, engineering, and healthcare.

Q: Is a Finnish degree recognised internationally?

A: Yes. Finnish degrees are globally recognised and respected, with strong value due to Finland's EU status.

Q: Can I apply for Finnish permanent residency after studying?

A: Yes. After 4 years of continuous residence (sometimes less), you can apply for permanent residency. With continued work, you may later qualify for citizenship.

For Indian Students

Q: Is Finland a good option for Indian students after HSC?

A: Yes. Finland offers high-quality, affordable education compared to the UK, Australia, and the USA. Scholarships and strong post-study work options add to its appeal.

Q: Do I need a NEET score to study in Finland?

A: No. NEET is not required. Finnish universities have their own admission criteria for medicine and related fields.

Q: Will my Indian school certificates be accepted?

A: Yes. Indian school board results (CBSE, ICSE, State Boards) are accepted. Provide English translations if needed and check university-specific requirements.

For Australian Students

Q: Can Australian students study in Finland?

A: Yes. Australian Year 12/HSC results are accepted. Tuition fees apply (EUR 4,000–18,000/year), with scholarships available.

Q: Do Australian students need a student visa for Finland?

A: Yes. Australian citizens staying longer than 90 days need a Finnish Residence Permit for Studies. Under 90 days, they can enter visa-free under Schengen rules.

Q: Is Finland in the Schengen Area?

A: Yes. Finland is in the Schengen Area. A residence permit allows free travel across 27 Schengen countries making Finland an excellent base for exploring Europe during your studies.



READY?



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