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## **EDUCATION FOR FOREIGN STUDENTS IN FRANCE**

The French higher education system is one of the best in Europe, and in the world. Dozens of French universities are regularly placed high in international university rankings. There are also many great options to study for an MBA in France. The country is home to many of the best-ranked elite business schools in Europe [1]. It is a French tradition to welcome foreign students from all across the world. Since the Middle Ages, and the birth of La Sorbonne, the first French University, which occurred more than 800 years ago, students from all across Europe have come to France to study, especially in the areas of theology, medicine and law [4].

The purpose of the paper is to present the education system in France and make a brief overview of degrees taught in French Universities and career ambitions in France after graduation.

No matter what country you are coming from, you can expect to be welcomed with open arms. There is so much diversity in France. It is one of the things that keeps the country such an amazing place to be for all. It is always nice to know that you will fit right in with the crowd when you arrive. No one will question the fact that it can be hard to be the new kid on the block. If you are coming from another nation and culture and are unaware of the country and know no one, it can be far scarier. Knowing that no matter where you choose to go in France you can rest assured that you are going to be welcomed and feel right at home, really is a tremendous boon.

Not only do you get a world-class education in France – the tuition fees at public universities are relatively modest. Citizens and permanent residents of EEA countries and Switzerland can study tuition-free (except for an immatriculation charge of around 200 euros per year), whereas students from

outside Europe will have to pay around 3,000 to 4,000 euros per year at public universities. Private universities usually charge more, up to 20,000 euros annually.

Most degrees are taught in French, but you will find numerous study programs taught in English, particularly at Master's and PhD levels. Academic institutions in France accept such as language tests as DELF (Diploma of French-Language Studies) or DALF (Advanced Diploma in French Language) and TCF (French Language Proficiency Test).

Exemptions from the requirement to demonstrate proficiency in the French language are for 1) holders of the French baccalauréat, the international or European baccalauréat, and the Franco-German baccalauréat; 2) international recipients of scholarships from the French government, international organizations, or foreign governments whose grants are administered by an approved French entity; 3) nationals of states where French is the official language; 4) students graduating from bilingual programs, in which French was one of the languages.

Even when studying in France in English, you should not miss the opportunity to learn French. Not only because you will learn a beautiful language that enables you to speak to around 270 million people in almost 30 countries, but also because you will need some French in your everyday life. While many locals in France speak solid English, they simply prefer their native tongue, and will appreciate when foreigners make the effort. Even if that effort is limited to something like *je ne comprends pas* (French) – *I do not understand*.

The French language is also one of the larger hurdles if you plan to stay after your graduation from a Bachelor's or Master's degree in France. To find a job, you will almost inevitably need to be fluent or at least near-fluent in French. Other than that, when compared to other countries in Europe, it is relatively easy for international students to start their career in France after graduation.

The application procedure is actually different depending on your nationality: 1) European Union (EU) and European Economic Area (EEA)

students can apply directly to the university, under the same conditions as French students; 2) Non-EU/EEA students should apply through an online application system, formerly known as CEF and currently called the “Studying in France procedure”. Through this system, you may also apply for your visa online and track the progress of your application; 3) if you are already living in Europe but you don’t have European citizenship, you will have to apply through the French embassy or consulate in the European country where you are residing.

The system of higher education corresponds to the Bologna process and does not differ from the European one. The classical program has three degrees: License – Bachelor's degree, the term of study is 3 years; Master – Master’s degree, depending on the chosen study program, the study period is 1-2 years; Doctorate – Doctor of Science, 3 years are allocated for study and defense of the dissertation.

A significant number of European companies cooperate with French universities, so students always have the opportunity to undergo internships at well-known companies and gain the necessary experience.

There are certainly myriad reasons why attending a college in France is appealing to those from around the world. These include the lowest tuition costs, the chance to explore this amazing country and the benefit of receiving some of the most prestigious education and training from top instructors, but you can be certain that the benefits extend far beyond those that are listed above. No matter who you are or what you want to learn, attending a university in France is one of the best decisions that you will ever make in your entire life.

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