



USM

UNIVERSITI
SAINS
MALAYSIA



USM STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMME (OUTBOUND)

www.usm.my/io

CONTENTS

2 **USM Study Programme (Outbound) In Brief**

Why Should I Join ?

3

4 **Am I Eligible to Join?**

Application Guide

5

10 **Application & Selection Checklist**

Pre-departure Reminders

15

20 **FAQs**



 **USM Study Programme
(Outbound) In Brief**

If you wish to experience something new in life, go for Study Abroad! This programme offers exciting of learning experience which you can't miss. You may choose to go for one or two semesters and earn some credits which can be transferred into your academic programme! We have nearly **100 active partners' universities** which you can choose for your study abroad destination.



Why Should i Join ?

Participating in the study abroad programme is an investment for your future. Going from the familiar to the unfamiliar provides a unique opportunity for your personal development. These will give you a glimpse of what you will gain by participating in a study abroad programme:

1 Chance of lifetime! It is an adventure that you can only do when you are a student! After you graduate, you will have fewer opportunities to experience the world because you will be tied down with a career and commitments. Seize the moment!

2 Looks great for your career! Going on a study abroad will help prepare you for the challenges of a global marketplace. Employers look favourably on applicants who have international experience or demonstrate the ability to adapt to new environment.

3 It is an amazing opportunity to **meet people from all over the world** and immerse yourself in an exciting new culture and society.

4 It is a great way to **improve your language skills.**

5 **Broaden your perspective and outlook on life.**



Am I Eligible to Join ?

Possess **good language skills** and **understanding of cultural differences**

Has a good academic standing, CGPA of **3.00 or above**

Students who wish to apply for USM Study Abroad Programme (Outbound) must fulfill the following criteria:

Possess awareness and abilities to **represent USM & Malaysia**

Has **completed at least 2 semesters** of studies.

Not in the final year

Note:

Fulltime international students are also eligible to apply but not permitted to attend a host institution in their home country. The selection criteria listed above also applies to international students.



Application Guide

To help you keep track of everything you need to know and do throughout the study abroad process, we've prepared the USM Study Abroad Programme (Outbound) Application Guide.

As you complete an action, check it off, and then move onto the next step.

You should have a folder containing all the information and progress of your study abroad application. Each application that you submit, make sure you photocopy and keep it as a reference for your own use.

Before you turn in your USM Study Abroad Programme (Outbound) Application

- Be sure to download a copy of the Application and Selection Checklist.
- Visit the USM Study Abroad Programme (Outbound) web page (www.usm.my/io) and select at least 3 to 5 universities that are of interest to you.
- Do research on study abroad options by reviewing electronic course catalogues, and other web-based materials of the universities of your choice.
- Consult the Dean or Deputy Dean of your school and your academic advisor to identify appropriate study abroad options and discuss the courses that you are interested to take in the university of your choice. A flexible academic plan is a must for the study abroad participation.
- Discuss your participation in USM Study Abroad Programme (Outbound) with your family, friends and former study abroad participants.
- Complete the USM Study Abroad Programme (Outbound) application.
- Submit your application by the designated deadline.





Selection / Interview

- If your application is successful, you will be called for an interview via e-mail or telephone call.
- Interviews are brief so be prepared to discuss coherently where you want to go to and why.
- You will probably be asked questions concerning the various aspects of your study abroad plans: have you spoken to your advisor or parents, what are your financial plans, etc.
- You will also be given a chance to ask questions that you might have.
- As a representative from USM and Malaysia, you will need to equip yourself with :-
- General knowledge, facts about Malaysia.
- General knowledge about USM,
- Malaysian culture, e.g. music, food, history, way of life.
- Cultural differences between Malaysia and the country that you intend to study.

Completing the host university's application form

If you have passed the selection / interview process, you would be informed of your designated university. The USM financial assistance results will also be announced at this time. You would then have to:

- Complete the host university's application (online and/or hard copy) and prepare all other necessary documents (varies according to university):
 - Nomination letter from USM.
 - Translated academic transcript (IO will provide an original copy for you)
 - Passport and Visa
 - Health examination / Medical check-up
- Prepare all the supporting documents required (e.g. proof of financial status or IELTS/TOEFL certification - depending on the host university's requirements).
- Return the **host university's application and all supporting documents** to the USM Study Abroad Programme (Outbound) Coordinator for the application to be sent.
- It takes approximately **8-12 weeks** for partner universities to respond to applications.



Acceptance into the partner university

- We will contact you immediately once we have received notification from the partner university.
- If the partner university contacts you directly, please inform us immediately and provide us with a copy of the acceptance letter.

Note: You may be required to pay certain fees and/or deposits to complete the application.

After your acceptance into the partner university (but before you leave!)

- Read all information sent by the host university and meet all specified deadlines.
- Once accepted by the partner university, concurrently, you should:
 - **book your flights**
 - **apply for your visa** (at least 3 months before leaving)
 - **confirm your accommodation with host university**
 - **purchase insurance** (if required)
- Complete host university application for on-campus housing, meal plans, etc. (pay any required deposits)
- Fill in the **Drop Course Form** for current USM courses and return it to the USM Study Abroad Programme Coordinator.
- Sign and return the **Learning Agreement** to the USM Study Abroad Programme (Outbound) Coordinator within 1 week of receipt.
- Consult your coordinator to arrange disbursement of financial aid (if any) while on study abroad.
- Pay all tuition / fees / deposits (of room and board if appropriate) to respective university.
- Do bring some souvenirs or gifts for your host family and new friends if applicable.



During your study abroad

- Notify the host coordinator when you arrive at the campus.
- Attend your orientation program.
- Arrange payment of housing or any fees (as appropriate).
- Forward your host university address to your home coordinator.
- Notify your home coordinator and academic advisor of any adding/dropping of courses in the host university.

Preparation to return to Malaysia

- Complete home university course registration procedures. Contact home coordinator should you encounter any problems.
- Contact your home coordinator to apply for on-campus housing (if needed).
- Complete **Academic Registration Records** (with respective lecturer's / advisor's initials, signature and stamp)
- Visit your host coordinator to evaluate the study abroad experience and to say good-bye.
- Check that your personal record at the host university is up-to-date (e.g. mailing address in Malaysia, e-mail, contact no. etc.).





After your return

- Notify your home coordinator of your return as soon as you arrive in Malaysia.
- Report back to your home coordinator (USM International) to evaluate the study abroad experience and submit the **Academic Registration Records**
- Submit a full Study Abroad Report, within two (2) weeks after returning to USM.
- Presentation to prospective students.
- Participation in the international activities.

The report should include:

- a) Pre-departure preparation (Detailed Application Process, Visa, Flight tickets, Accommodation etc.)
 - b) Experiences while studying abroad (people, culture, activities, etc.)
 - c) Learning environment at the host university
 - d) Expenses incurred throughout the programme
 - e) Tips for future students of USM Study Abroad Programme (Outbound)
** Including some interesting pictures are fine but a report is **NOT** a photo album.
- Once your overseas transcript has been received by home university (in approximately 8 weeks), visit your home coordinator to discuss credit transfer procedures.
** Please follow up to make sure this is done before completing your final semester in USM.
 - Verify that courses/work completed at the host campus has been entered into your home campus permanent record by checking your Campus Online account.





Application and Selection Checklist



The following guidelines are intended to assist USM Study Abroad Programme (Outbound) participants, coordinators and institutional academic advisors with the application and selection process. Students are encouraged to keep this checklist with their study abroad materials.

Note: It is very important that students and their advisors allow as much flexibility as possible in determining an overseas study plan and in determining course equivalents.



Before the application deadline: Choosing a program

- I have informed my Academic Advisor about my plans to participate in a study abroad programme.
- I have spoken to USM Study Abroad Programme (Outbound) Coordinator about applying for study abroad (I picked up brochures and general information sheet).
- I have examined the electronic catalogues / course information of the various universities in which I am interested by visiting the USM Study Abroad Programme (Outbound) website (<http://www.usm.my/io>) for program information and made copies of the potential courses I might take.
- I have discussed with my Dean / Program Chairperson / Deputy Dean about my plans and the courses I am interested to take during my study abroad at the host university. (Please see the advisor responsible for assigning credits or approving course substitutions. If you are not sure, be sure to ask your USM Study Abroad Programme (Outbound) Coordinator).



** Some suggested points for discussion:

- Which host institution and why?
- Are the courses you wish to take overseas available in the relevant semester/study period and offered in English?
- Do you have the pre-requisites to take those courses?
- Is your overseas program equivalent to a full-time load at USM?
- Does your planned program enable you to satisfy the requirements of your USM program within the normal time-period?

- I have given considerable thought to my various options (e.g., first, second, third choices). (Keep in mind that almost all students who apply are placed, but sometimes for various reasons students will be placed at their second or third choices. Consider all viable options: be able to give good reasons for your first choice and reasons for eliminating other sites.)
- I have discussed my plans with my parents.
- I have discussed general non-academic concerns with my USM Study Abroad Programme (Outbound) Coordinator.

Application

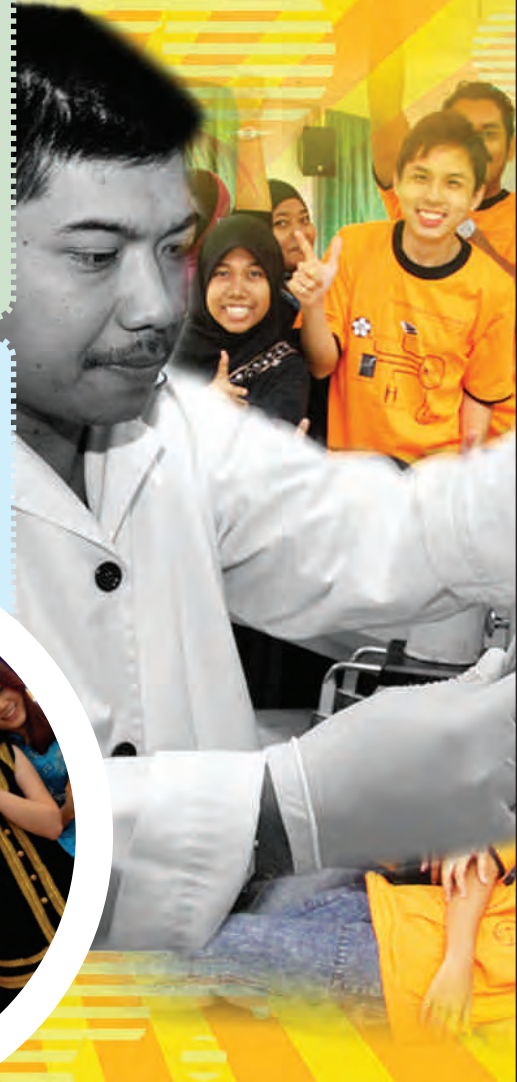
- I have completed the **Application for Study Abroad Programme (Outbound)** and included all supporting documents:
 - 2 recent passport size photos, with my name and Student ID number on the back
 - Certified copies of transcripts and also any certified copies of certificates that will support my application, including English language proficiency documents (**MUET/IELTS/TOEFL**)
 - Latest resume/CV

- I have checked to see that my application is completed.

Selection / Interview

Once you have submitted your application, it will be processed as quickly as possible. If your application is successful, you will be called for an interview.

- I have sent in confirmation of my attendance for the interview and prepared myself for the interview.



After selection / interview

- I have now begun the process of completing the host university's application form and with all the necessary documentation.
- I have now begun the process of completing the **Learning Agreement** . [Check with the USM Study Abroad Programme (Outbound) Coordinator]
Note: Academic Registration Records should be filled up at respective host university
- I have booked my flight and completed my visa application.
- I have completed my accommodation arrangement and paid any fees necessary.
- I have completed the Drop Course process with the USM Study Abroad Programme (Outbound) Coordinator.
- If I had questions on how to proceed, I have spoken to my USM Study Abroad Programme (Outbound) Coordinator.
- I have signed and returned the **Study Abroad Contract** to the USM Study Abroad Programme (Outbound) Coordinator.
- All application forms are completed and I have brought it back to my USM Study Abroad Programme (Outbound) Coordinator.
- I have photocopied a set of all my application documents for my own reference.

Important matters

I know that I cannot go on my study abroad program if:

- I have not gone over the final check list with my USM Study Abroad Programme (Outbound) Coordinator.
- Returned my learning agreement form.
- Dropped all current USM courses.

Additional important matters

- I am aware that if I take any course while abroad which was not given prior approval I should contact my academic advisor and my USM Study Abroad Programme (Outbound) Coordinator for clarification as early as possible.
- I am fully aware that I am responsible for any course pre-registration for the period I am abroad. Information concerning pre-registration should be discussed with my USM Study Abroad Programme (Outbound) Coordinator.
- I have made arrangements for payment of my programme fee.
- I know that it is my responsibility to check on the status of my credit transfer within **one (1) month** after my return to my home campus. I will check with my USM Study Abroad Programme (Outbound) Coordinator approximately 6 weeks after the new semester has begun. I will then follow through with my transfer credit so that I will be cleared within the semester following my return. Even if I do not return to my USM campus, I will follow through on my transfer credit.
- I know that I must submit a full report of my study abroad experience latest by 2 weeks after my return to my home university.

Common study abroad issues:

Be sure to download a copy of the USM Study Abroad Programme (Outbound) Application Guide

Pre-departure checklist:

Be sure to download a copy of the Pre-departure Reminder



Pre-departure **Reminder**

10

things you should not miss when you prepare for a study abroad program.

1. Communicating with the Host Institution

- Reply them to confirm your enrolment in the study abroad program.
- Fill in application forms and check their course listing for subjects you plan to take at the host university.
- Inform them whether you would need their pickup service (If available).
- If on campus accommodation is offered, please reply promptly.
- Make any necessary payments promptly (e.g. Accommodation application fee).

2. Visa & Passport

- Make sure your passport is still valid (at least 6 months); if not, please renew it.
- Use your certificate of eligibility to apply for the visa (e.g. Acceptance letter from the study abroad university, recommendation letter from USM, etc).
- Check the immigration website of the respective country for terms and conditions for visa application.

3. Insurance and Medical Check-up

- Do bring along the insurance premium from your home country.
- Check with your insurance agent to verify the coverage (if worldwide coverage is available).
- If the country offers national health & insurance program, you may apply for it.
- Some universities would automatically include medical insurance for students; some universities make it compulsory for students to purchase medical insurance in their country (which you will have to pay).
- Some countries may require you to do a medical checkup and provide medical records for your study abroad and visa application to ensure that you are fit and healthy to stay in foreign countries for a period of time.

PASSPORT






4. Flight Tickets

- Contact local travel agencies to arrange for a return (open) air ticket, open air ticket would be able to provide the student with more freedom on the returning date.
- Check airline websites for online deals and offers or directly buy flight ticket online (no agent fee).
- Try to ask the airline for student discount, no harm of trying!
- If you are being offered USM scholarship for flight tickets, you are required to book your own flight and print out prove of the payment, USM will reimburse your flight ticket later.




5. Financial Matters

- Calculate the total expenses needed, such as accommodation expenses and administration fees that would need to be paid at the respective study abroad university.
 - Estimate the amount needed to cover your monthly living expenses.
 - Check the procedures for transferring funds to a bank in foreign countries.
 - Try looking for banks that are available locally and in the study abroad country to avoid expensive transfer fee.
 - Make sure you bring some bank drafts and traveller's cheques for the initial period to pay for the fees.
 - If you have a credit card, please bring it along with you.
- 



6. Student Accommodation

- You can choose to stay with on-campus accommodation, off-campus accommodation or a host family.
 - If you are staying with a host family, you are advised to buy some gifts for the host family.
 - Prepare some souvenirs like postcards and keychain for new friends from all over the world!
- 

7. Course Registration and Credit Transfer

- a. Take the **Drop Course Form** from International Office and fill in the subjects that you are going to drop with signatures of the respective lecturers and your dean.
- b. Again, check the course listing on the respective university's website and download the course description of all the subjects you plan to take.
- c. Compare the course description of the subjects you'll be taking at the host university with your respective course description in USM.
- d. Fill in the **Learning Agreement** complete with your dean's signature.
- e. Print and bring along the **Academic Registration Records** to your host university for credit transfer purposes. Near the end of your study abroad programme, fill in the courses you've taken throughout the period at the host university, get the required signatures and return the form to USM Study Abroad Coordinator on the day you reported back to USM.

8. Study Abroad Report

- a. You are required to write a Study Abroad Report regarding your study abroad experience, from start to end, anything that you think would be useful / helpful to the upcoming students that are looking to apply to the same institution.
- b. You are required to turn in the report **within 2 weeks** after you report back to USM.
- c. Throughout your study abroad process, take note of the following suggestions to be included in your report:
 - Process of filling up applications to the host university (e.g. accommodation application, university application etc.)
 - Visa matters
 - Flight ticket matters
 - Pre-departure issues to be paid attention to (e.g. medical supplies, winter clothing, etc.).
 - Situations or experiences at the foreign country and university (people, culture, activities, etc.)
 - Teaching method / class atmosphere at the host university
 - Things that would help USM move towards a world class university
 - Travelling spots and tips
 - Anything else that you think is important and relevant.



9. Emergency Contact

- Search for Malaysian Embassies / Representatives contact details in the respective country.
- Make a list of emergency contact numbers for safety purposes.

10. Luggage Check List prior to Departure

I. Important Documents

- Original and photocopies of passport / travel documents
- Original and photocopies of offer letter from your host university
- Certified transcript copies
- Medical documents



II. Medicine & Supplies

- Ask for some basic medical supplies from your doctor and also prepare a basic first aid kit for the use of your stay in the foreign country.
- If you have allergies, please bring sufficient medical supplies throughout your stay.
- You can bring along your medical records if you have any.
- Basic medical supplies are to be put in your check-in luggage.

III. Clothing & Necessities

- Check for the climate and the seasons of the country when you are going and prepare the right clothing (e.g. Fall / Winter clothing.)
- Bring your personal hygiene necessities (e.g. toiletries, towel, nail clipper, etc.).
- Moisturiser and lotion are important for dry weather conditions.
- You can buy all the necessities there if you need extra space in your luggage.
- If you are wearing contact lenses, bring along extra casing and contact lenses solutions as the solutions that you normally use may not be available there.



IV. Electric & Electronic Devices

- ❑ Please check the electric voltage of the country that you are going to.
- ❑ Be sure you identify the plug used in that respective country.
- ❑ Bring a universal adapter, and a multiple adapter.
- ❑ A transformer might be needed for certain electrical appliances such as hair dryer or chargers.

Some electrical and electronic devices are equipped with internal transformer (e.g. laptop, handphone chargers, camera chargers etc.).

V. Luggage and Travelling Bags

- ❑ The maximum weight for check-in luggage depends on the country that you are going to. Check for the luggage terms and regulations on the airline's website.

As students going to study abroad, if your luggage exceeds 3-6kg, you might still be allowed to check-in without penalty. ***Depending on the airline and your luck but don't bet on it.**

- ❑ Only 1 hand carry luggage is allowed (maximum weight for hand carry luggage is 7kg), but usually, you may bring your laptop bag along with 1 hand carry bag on-board. ***Still, it depends on the airline you're taking.**

- ❑ Pack clothing for 1-2 days in your hand carry bag. Just in case your check-in luggage is delayed or lost, you'll still have 1-2 days of clothing while making necessary arrangements.

- ❑ If you're going to a country during fall/winter, pack a thick jacket in your hand carry to avoid the hassle of opening your check-in luggage upon arrival at the airport.

- ❑ Check airport regulations on what is allowed on-board and what is not (e.g. fluids exceeding 100ml and sharp objects such as scissors are not allowed on-board, etc).

- ❑ Consider bringing extra smaller bags for short travelling trips during your study abroad period.

If you are bringing your laptop with you, bring along a good laptop bag. It will come in handy as your multi-purpose bag. Always have your laptop with you at all times.





FAQs

What is the USM Study Abroad Programme (Outbound)?

Our programme runs by an agreement between USM and the partner university. According to the agreement, USM will send and receive students for the duration of one to two semesters per study abroad period. You are directly enrolled in an overseas partner university, taking courses and sitting for exams with regularly enrolled students.

How long is a study abroad?

The duration for most programmes under USM Study Abroad Programme (Outbound) is for ONE semester (approx. 6 months). However, there are options that you could undergo the programme for two semesters.

Will the International Office be responsible for any arrangement?

The International Office will only facilitate the application process. Students are responsible to deal with their respective schools as well as their preferred universities.

Will I receive credit?

Yes! With prior planning, credits earned abroad for USM approved programmes will be applied toward your degree. Early approval from your Dean regarding credit transfer will reduce later worries. If your credits are not transferable, you will be required to extend your education here until you have completed graduation requirements.

How much does it cost?

Students will still pay their normal tuition fees to Universiti Sains Malaysia. There are no additional tuition fees at the host institution. However, other costs such as the costs for accommodation, meals, and other expenses will have to be paid to the host institution by the students. These costs vary in different host institutions and can normally be found on the website of the host institution.

Is there any funding available?

Students who apply for USM Study Abroad Programme (Outbound) will automatically be considered for USM financial aid. However, only selected few among qualified applicants will receive financial aid from the university.





Do I have to speak a foreign language?

Many opportunities are available in English speaking countries. There are also many programmes in non-English speaking countries that offer instruction in English including Mexico, Japan, Korea, Germany, Finland, and Sweden. Nevertheless, you will need language skills in order to enjoy life in the host country - shopping, eating, and socializing!

Note: Students may be required to take a TOEFL/IELTS test at their own expense to apply to some partner universities.

How can you apply?

You can find out more about USM Study Abroad Program (Outbound) by visiting us through our website at <http://www.usm.my/io> or dropping by at USM International Office. Application and instructions are all available online.

Where can I go?

Refer to List of Partner Universities or check out for information at the notice boards in International Office.

Can I still apply if I am a final year student?


All final year students are NOT ENCOURAGED to apply for the USM Study Abroad Programme (Outbound) as they might not be able to get their credit transfer done in time for them to graduate.

Why do I have to choose 3 universities in my application?

Students are required to select 3 universities during application is because if the quota of the first choice is full, USM will select the next best university for students based on their second and third choice.

When are the information enquiry sessions and deadlines?

- Information sessions are usually held in mid September. Please check with the International Office for the exact dates and times of these sessions on early September. Students are encouraged to attend these sessions.
- The application submission deadline is at the end of October.



How do I submit the application forms and the supporting documents if I am from USM Engineering / Health Campus? Do I have to submit personally to the International Office or can I just submit by post?

You can either come to the International Office in person or post your application to us, whichever ways that work for you. However, you are encouraged to come to the International Office in person should you have any uncertainties or doubts that you wish to clear with the USM Study Abroad (Outbound) Coordinator before you hand in your application.

Which countries require IELTS/TOEFL certificate and what is the minimum requirement?

Applying for USM Study Abroad Programme (Outbound) selection does not require IELTS/TOEFL certificate. However, once you have been successfully selected by USM, the application to the respective host universities may require IELTS/TOEFL certificate. Please check on the website of the respective university for their language requirement when applying. For e.g.:

- Australia, Canada and USA.
- The minimum requirement for IELTS is 6.5 overall with at least 6.0 in each of the 4 components.
- The minimum requirement for TOEFL:
 - Paper based: minimum 570 and 4.5 Test of Written English (TWE)
 - Internet based: minimum 90 and minimum of 20 in each 4 sections
 - Computer based: minimum 230 and 4.5 TWE

**** Different universities might have different requirements.**

Can I submit my USM application first, then followed by my IELTS/TOEFL results?

Yes, you can submit the USM application first, but you have to submit the IELTS/TOEFL results upon your application to the host university.

Where will the interview/selection be held?

The selection process for suitable candidates will take place **ONLY** in Main Campus of Universiti Sains Malaysia. Students from the Engineering/Health Campus are required to be present at the Main Campus for interview.



When will the financial assistance selection be held?

The selection for financial assistance recipients will run simultaneously with the interview sessions.

Which university offer financial assistance to study abroad students and/or free accommodation to study abroad students?

This piece of information is confidential. Students' main responsibility would be to complete the USM Study Abroad Programme (Outbound) application, be well-prepared for the interview and complete the application to the respective partner university.

If I have received an offer from the partner university for a certain semester, am I allowed to defer the offer until I am available for the programme if I cannot make it for the semester they are offering?

Once you have been offered for a certain semester, you are not allowed to change or defer it. It is the student's responsibility to choose and decide which semester in USM and in the respective partner university they wish to go for their study abroad programme. Therefore, before you apply to certain universities please go through the commencement date of the university and plan your academic calendar.





Will my PTPTN be discontinued while I am undergoing the Study Abroad Programme?

You are required to go to the Division of Students Affairs & Development, see the officer in charge of JPA and PTPTN and discuss your plan to go for the study abroad programme. Inform the officer that you would like to deactivate your JPA or PTPTN while you are undergoing the Study Abroad Programme. You are also required to see the officer in charge once you are back from your Study Abroad Programme to reactivate your JPA or PTPTN.

How can I keep track of everything I need to know and do?

We have prepared a USM Study Abroad Programme (Outbound) Application Guide and an Application and Selection Checklist which you are encouraged to print out and keep with you as you go through the study abroad process. As you complete a step, you can check it off and then move onto the next one!





USM STUDY
ABROAD PROGRAMME (OUTBOUND)
@International Office

.....
T : +604 – 653 2772 / 2770

E : international@usm.my