

The background of the slide features a split image. On the left, the Statue of Liberty is shown against a clear blue sky, with a portion of the American flag visible in the top left corner. On the right, the Elizabeth Tower (Big Ben) in London is shown, with a portion of the Union Jack flag visible in the top right corner. The central text is overlaid on a white rounded rectangle.

Predicting 2026 University Application Trends

*United States • Canada • United Kingdom •
Singapore • Hong Kong • China*



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CLASS OF 2026 RESULTS

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR STUDENTS WHO RECEIVED
OFFERS FROM TOP UNIVERSITIES IN **THE UNITED STATES**



Columbia



Cornell



Dartmouth

Yale

Yale



UPenn



Stanford



UC Berkeley



UCLA



NYU



Northwestern



USC

Duke
UNIVERSITY

Duke

Tufts
UNIVERSITY

Tufts



Georgia Tech

MICHIGAN
UNIVERSITY

Michigan

Berklee
College of Music

Berklee

Pratt

Pratt



Babson



BC

BOSTON
UNIVERSITY

BU



Vanderbilt



Emory



Fordham



IU



Northeastern

THE NEW SCHOOL
PARSONS

Parsons



PennState

Penn State



Purdue



UC Davis



UC Irvine



UC San Diego



UC Santa Barbara



UC Santa Cruz

ILLINOIS
UNIVERSITY

UIUC



Minnesota



UT Austin



UVA



Washington

Washington
University in St. Louis

WUSTL



Wesleyan

and many more top universities

CLASS OF 2026 RESULTS

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR STUDENTS WHO RECEIVED
OFFERS FROM TOP UNIVERSITIES IN **THE UNITED KINGDOM**



IMPERIAL



University of
St Andrews



THE UNIVERSITY
of EDINBURGH



UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM



and many more top universities

CANADA RESULTS



Rotman School of Management
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

Rotman (Toronto business school)



Toronto



THE UNIVERSITY
OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

UBC



UNIVERSITY OF
WATERLOO

Waterloo



Western University

UBC SAUDER
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

Sauder (UBC Business school)



SIMON FRASER
UNIVERSITY

Simon Fraser

ST. FRANCIS XAVIER
UNIVERSITY

St. Francis Xavier University



York

and many more top universities

ASIA RESULTS



THE HONG KONG
UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE
AND TECHNOLOGY (HKUST)



香港大學
THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

THE UNIVERSITY OF
HONG KONG (HKU)



香港中文大學
The Chinese University of Hong Kong
THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY
OF HONG KONG (CUHK)



THE HONG KONG
POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY
香港理工大學

THE HONG KONG
POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY



NANYANG
TECHNOLOGICAL
UNIVERSITY
SINGAPORE

NANYANG TECHNOLOGICAL
UNIVERSITY



NUS
National University
of Singapore

NATIONAL UNIVERSITY
OF SINGAPORE



SINGAPORE
MANAGEMENT
UNIVERSITY

SINGAPORE MANAGEMENT
UNIVERSITY



早稲田大学
WASEDA University

WASEDA UNIVERSITY



TOHOKU
UNIVERSITY

TOHOKU UNIVERSITY



KYOTO UNIVERSITY OF
ADVANCED SCIENCE



SOPHIA UNIVERSITY



名古屋大学
NAGOYA UNIVERSITY

NAGOYA UNIVERSITY



Shape your world
Ritsumeikan
Asia Pacific University

RITSUMEIKAN ASIA
PACIFIC UNIVERSITY



KOREA ADVANCED
INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE
& TECHNOLOGY (KAIST)

and many more top universities



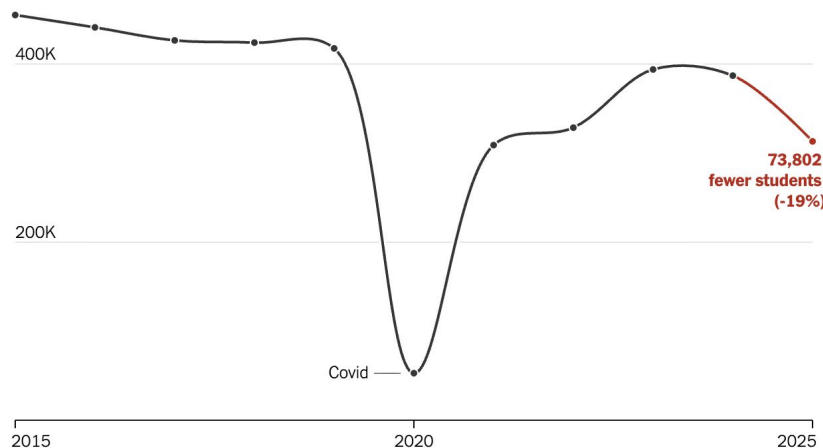
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US

Global Decline in international students to the US

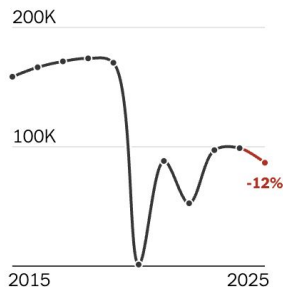
US

International student arrivals to the U.S. in August



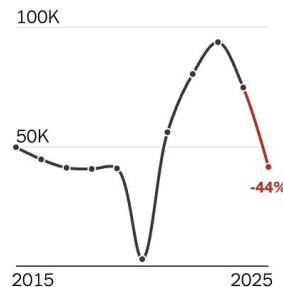
Source: [Trade.gov](https://www.trade.gov) - Note: The data for August 2025 is preliminary and excludes visitors who arrived from Mexico via land, and visitors from Canada.

China

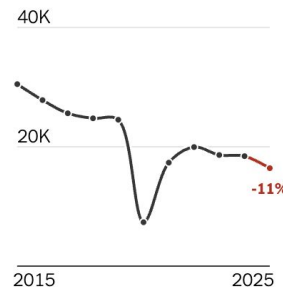


Source: [Trade.gov](https://www.trade.gov)

India



South Korea



PLACE OF RESIDENCE	AUG. 2024	AUG. 2025	CHANGE
▼ Asia	250,740	191,179	-24%
China	98,867	86,647	-12%
India	74,825	41,540	-44%
South Korea	18,429	16,412	-11%
Vietnam	9,521	7,883	-17%
Taiwan	8,403	7,844	-7%
Japan	7,413	6,116	-17%
Pakistan	3,728	2,968	-20%
Indonesia	2,256	1,874	-17%
Singapore	1,935	1,843	-5%
Thailand	1,875	1,760	-6%
Hong Kong	1,511	1,395	-8%
Malaysia	1,395	1,056	-24%
Philippines	1,075	847	-21%
Other Asian countries	19,507	12,994	-33%

Sharp drop in
students from
Asia =
*Advantage for
Thai Students*



The 3% Club: Ivy League and Top US unis are getting *even more competitive*!

US

School	Class of 2026	Class of 2027	Class of 2028	Class of 2029	Class of 2030
Harvard	3.19%	3.45%	3.65%	4.18%	~3.7%
Columbia	3.73%	4.00%	3.86%	4.94%	4.23%
Princeton	3.98%	4.50%	4.62%	4.42%	~3.9%
Yale	4.46%	4.50%	3.87%	4.75%	4.24%
Penn	4.39%	5.87%	5.40%	4.92%	~4.1%
Brown	5.03%	5.23%	5.39%	5.65%	5.35%
Dartmouth	6.24%	6.23%	5.40%	6.02%	~5.3%
Cornell	8.70%	7.90%	8.41%	8.38%	~6.9%

Source: <https://orieladmissions.com/ivy-day-2026-results-ivy-league-acceptance-rates-class-of-2030/>



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Key Insights and Strategies **for future applicants**

The Return of SAT/ACT

US

- 2026 marks the first full cycle where many top-tier universities have fully reinstated standardized testing requirements.
- List includes: Yale, Brown, Dartmouth, UT Austin, MIT

Yale



TEXAS
The University of Texas at Austin



School Grades are increasingly more important

US

- Many top universities now require self-reported grade report (STARS/SRAR)
- List includes: UIUC, NYU, U of Washington, etc.



UNIVERSITY OF
ILLINOIS
URBANA-CHAMPAIGN



AI detection is standard

US

- Colleges now deploy AI-detection tools to flag inauthentic essays.
- Authentic, personal storytelling is more important — and more necessary — than ever before.

Be genuine.



Emergence of *Direct Admissions*

US

- Lower-tier schools are now offering seats based on GPA to combat the enrollment declines





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UK

UK

Record-High Applications & Major Changes

758K+

**Total UCAS
applications**

UCAS System

All UK applications go through UCAS. Choose up to 5 universities — but Oxford or Cambridge only, not both.

Most Competitive Subjects

Medicine, Law, Economics, Computer Science & Engineering are the highest competition subjects nationally.

Entry Requirements

A*A*A – AAA at A-Levels, or IB 38–45 points for top universities. International equivalents accepted.



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Overall Acceptance Rates at Top UK Universities

University		Acceptance Rate
 Imperial College London		~14%
 London School of Economics (LSE)		~16%
 University of Oxford		~17%
 University of Cambridge		~18%
 Durham University		~33%





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2026 Insights:

**Be prepared for
*higher entry requirements***

More *Straightforward* UCAS Application

The 4,000-character freeform essay is replaced by
three targeted questions:

1. *Why do you want to study this course or subject?*
2. *How have your qualifications and studies helped you to prepare for this course or subject?*
3. *What else have you done to prepare outside of education, and why are these experiences useful?*



Evidence-Based & Subject-Based Activities for Top UK Unis

- Subject-Specific reading **beyond the A-Level/IB syllabus**
- **Research works, Learnings, Academic projects** that showcase your *passion* and *expertise* in that subject



Stricter Entry Requirements

Aim for

A*A*A
or IB 40+

- High predicted scores for top universities
- Major-specific tests will be crucial, especially for top universities:
 - UCAT (Medicine)
 - LNAT (Law)
 - ESAT (Maths/Science) at Oxbridge/Imperial
 - TMUA (CS/Econ) at Oxbridge/Imperial
 - TARA (Social Sciences) at Oxford. UCL for CS.





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CANADA

Major Policy Changes for International Students

CANADA

305,900

2025



155,000

2026 Target

International Study Permit Cap :

49% Reduction from 2025



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Prepare the Stats and Apply Early

CANADA

Academic Requirements

Excel at School

Excellent school grades, correct subject combination, and satisfactory TOEFL/IELTS give significant advantage

SAT/ACT Requirements

SAT/ACT re-emerge as competitive edge

SAT/ACT becomes a requirement for applicants in American curriculum

Heightened Competition

Submit Applications Early

- Submit applications early for higher chance and scholarships
- Prepare your best applications, especially for selective programs with essays and recorded interviews

Secure Your Spot Early

CANADA

Provincial Attestation Letter (PAL)

Apply for study permit after getting accepted

- Federal cap on study permits sounds scary but 96% of PALs are reserved for public universities.
- Prestigious universities like UBC, Waterloo, Toronto are given enough PALs to cover 100% of expected incoming class

Regular Stream Visa Processing

The fast-track is gone

- Previously, Thai students benefited from Student Direct Stream with 20-day visa processing
- Now, processing times have ballooned from 3 weeks to 3-5 months.

Post-Graduation Work Permit still automatic

Bachelor's degree exempt from field of study restrictions

- With bachelor's degree, students can still get a 3-year work permit regardless of their major.



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University-Specific Trends

CANADA

Waterloo

High academic threshold & co-op value

- IB 40+ or A*A*A predicted to be competitive

Year	Fall term (Sep to Dec)	Winter term (Jan to Apr)	Spring term (May to Aug)
1	Study (1A)	Co-op	Study (1B)
2	Co-op	Study (2A)	Co-op
3	Study (2B)	Co-op	Study (3A)
4	Study (3B)	Co-op	Study (4A)
5	Co-op	Study (4B)	-

McGill

New Quebec's policy

- Mandate that students reach level 5 French proficiency (B1 level) by graduation.

U of Toronto

Engineering Shift

- Engineering admissions emphasize integrated excellence.
- No longer want just **high scores**; they are looking for **social impact** in the personal profile.



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ASIA

ASIA

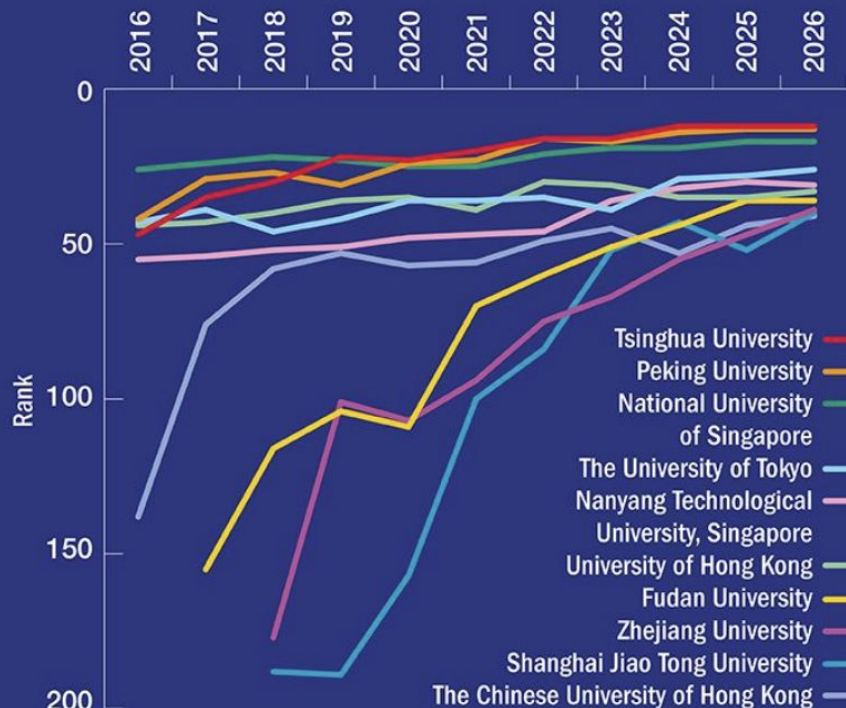
ASIA

World
University
Rankings 2026

Asia's top 10 universities over time

(only shows ranks in top 200)

www.thewur.com
#THEunirankings



The End of Transcript-Only Era & The End of US-China Partnerships

CHINA

CSCA Revolution

CSCA mandatory

- Mandatory for all applicants to Chinese Government Scholarship units
- Math required for every single major.
- Dual language perk. Math, physics, and chemistry available in both english and Chinese

Partnership Pivot

Global strategy to replace US partnership

- After the collapse of the UM-SJTU partnership, SJTU developed
 - SJTU + Waterloo
 - SJTU + CUHK/KHU
- Independent US unis (NYU Shanghai & Duke Kunshan) still going strong



English-Taught Program Expansion

University	English-taught programs
Tsinghua University  	Global Talents in Science & Engineering Tsinghua - CUHK dual undergrad degree in economics Urban Regeneration and Design Politics, Economics, and Sociology for Global Leaders in Smart Society
Peking University 	No 100% english-taught, but offer more english-taught courses
Shanghai-Jiaotong University 	Engineering
Fudan University 	International program in economics



Loosening Quotas and Work Rights

HONG KONG

50% Quota

Raise non-local student quota to 50%

- More seats available for Thai applicants
- One international student per two local students (1:2 ratio)

Generous IANG Visa

2-year open visa

- Any international graduate from a recognized HK university gets a 2-year stay-back visa automatically.
- the visa renewal window has been extended to 3 months (up from 1 month) to transition between jobs without losing residency.

Generous Scholarships

Subsidize Belt and Road talent

- Up to full-tuition scholarship specifically listing Thailand as a priority country
- Entrance Scholarships by HKU and HKUST for Thai students with IB/A-Level students with 42+ scores or 3 A*s

Ideal Destinations for ASEAN students

SINGAPORE

Integrative Degree

More options for students with diverse interests

- SMU's College of Integrative Studies
- NUS College

MOE Tuition Grant

Get the golden handcuffs

- Students receive a ~50% tuition discount in exchange for a 3-year work bond in a Singapore-registered company.
- One-year Long-Term Social Visit Pass (LTVP) specifically to stay in Singapore and search for work

Gap Year Needed for A-level

July 31st cutoff

- IB students: IB results released in early July. Students upload their actual results immediately, receive a final offer in mid-July, and matriculate in early August.
- A-level students: A-level results released in mid-August. A gap year is mandatory.

FINAL THOUGHTS:

2026 Success Strategies

- ✔ **Standardized Testing is Back:** High-achieving students should no longer assume "Test-Optional" is the default for top 30 US schools.
- ✔ **School Grades and Scores are the first screening test:** Many universities now pre-screen applicants using test scores and grades.
- ✔ **Avoid "AI-Flatness":** Write with specific, Intentional details. AI can be used to bounce ideas and check grammars, but not to write essays for you
- ✔ **Focus on Activities that matter:** Each country has their own preferred activity framework – be careful when planning your activities
- ✔ **Apply Early and Secure Your Spots:** Especially for US and Canada, where applying early will give you an advantage of special consideration

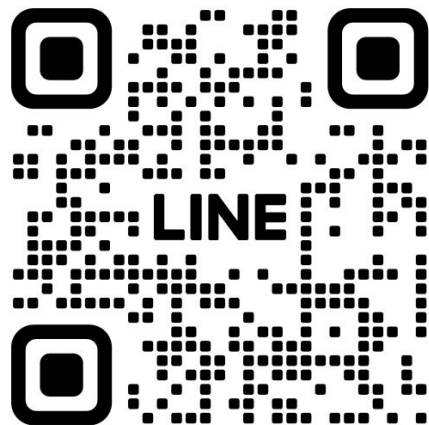


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