

# STUDY ABROAD AND FINANCIAL AID PROGRAM INFORMATION

## ARE YOU THINKING OF STUDYING ABROAD?

Studying Abroad can be an extremely enriching experience that can greatly enhance your academic degree. As you begin to research which international program is right for you, it is important that you understand the cost and have the ability to finance your trip. Your financial aid can be used to help finance your trip. There are several stages to the Study Abroad process for Financial Aid. Please use the steps below to help guide you through the process.

## IMPORTANT REMINDERS:

1. You must be making [Satisfactory Academic Progress \(SAP\)](#) and be enrolled at least half-time (6 credits) to qualify for Federal Direct Subsidized, Unsubsidized and PLUS Loan funds.
2. **Students who are enrolled in a course that is less than four weeks, may not be able to use federal aid towards their study abroad program.** Contact the *Office of Financial Aid* to determine eligibility for federal aid if your study abroad program is close to the four week minimum. Students can apply for private student loans for programs less than four weeks.
3. Assume that your current financial aid **will not be enough** to cover your bill. Most likely, you will need additional loan funds (Parent PLUS Loan/ Private Loan) or cash on hand to cover all of your study abroad expenses.
4. Please be prepared to pay for certain study abroad fees in advance. For example, study abroad application/program fees and travel related expenses such as: airfare, visa, and passport fees.
5. Per federal regulations, the *Office of Financial Aid* will disburse funds on specific dates set by the university. Federal and state financial aid disburses after the add/drop period of each term. The *Office of Financial Aid* will not be able to disburse federal and state funds prior to these dates. Therefore, you may have to use personal funds to cover program costs due prior to the disbursement dates. You can contact the *Office of Financial Aid* to verify the disbursement date for the term you are studying abroad.
6. It is recommended that you set up a power of attorney while you are studying abroad, as it gives the designated person (family member or trusted friend) the power to act in your behalf if a legal document requires a signature.
7. Set up direct deposit with the *Office of Student Accounts* online at [www.millersvillechoice.afford.com](http://www.millersvillechoice.afford.com)
8. If you have applied for a Private/ Alternative Loan it is possible that you can have funds disbursed 30 days prior to your departure date. You must request this and provide proof of your airfare and departure.

# STUDY ABROAD FINANCIAL AID CHECKLIST

## □ ADVISING

1. Contact the *Office of International Programs and Services* (IPS) to get started! [Education.Abroad@millersville.edu](mailto:Education.Abroad@millersville.edu)
2. Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) online at [fafsa.ed.gov](https://fafsa.ed.gov)
3. Complete any outstanding requirements with the *Office of Financial Aid*
  - a. To view your Financial Aid Requirements, log into your [myVILLE Student Portal](#) and click on the Finances tab
  - b. If you are studying abroad in the summer, you must also complete a Summer Aid Application online through your [myVILLE Student Portal](#). For Directions, please click [here](#).
4. After you have had your advising and program meetings with *IPS* make an appointment with Emi Alvarez or Giselle Fernandez in the *Office of Financial Aid*. To make an appointment, please call 717-871-5100.
5. Bring your estimated study abroad cost sheet to your appointment – without your estimated cost sheet it makes it difficult to advise you properly!

## □ APPLICATION

The *Office of Financial Aid* will process your aid through Millersville University using your Study Abroad costs and the number of credits that you will be enrolled for in your program. Study Abroad programs usually have higher costs than Millersville University; however, this does not mean that your federal or state awards will be increased (this includes your Direct Loans).

Once you have completed your Study Abroad application and have been approved by *IPS* to study abroad you should know at this point in the process if you are in need of additional financial aid options. Please consider the following:

### **Parent PLUS Loan:**

- A [Parent PLUS Loan](#) allows for a parent to help pay for their child's education through a fixed rate federal loan. PLUS Loans can help cover educational expenses not covered by other financial aid resources.
- The loan is in the parent's name; not the student's and in order to be approved, the borrower must not have adverse credit. The US Department of Education is the lender for the loan and the parent is responsible for repaying any amounts borrowed.
- In order to have a PLUS Loan awarded on the student's account, the student must have a FAFSA application on file and be enrolled in at least 6 credits per semester.
- PLUS Loan funds will not disburse for the term in which you are enrolled until after the add/drop period for Millersville
  - If you are studying abroad over the summer and wish to have federal financial aid processed, you must complete a Summer Aid Application online through your [myVILLE Student Portal](#).

### **Alternative / Private Loan:**

- [Private Education Loans](#), also known as Alternative loans are educational loan programs established by private lenders to supplement the funding that students and parents receive from federal and state sources. Private loans have different lending criteria than government lending programs.
- These loans are credit based and in the student's name. The student may need to obtain a co-signer to qualify for the loan. Most Lenders offer both fixed and variable interest rates. The rates offered will be based on the individual's credit.
- Alternative/private loans can be disbursed 30 days prior to your study abroad program start date and/or departure date. If you wish to have your alternative/private loan disbursed early, you must provide a copy of your flight itinerary and program information to the *Office of Financial Aid*.
  - If you are studying abroad over the summer and wish to have an Alternative/ Private Loan processed, you must select the loan period dates for the summer term when completing your application with the lender. You can also submit a Summer Aid Application online through your MAX Account.

If you have already applied for additional aid (Parent PLUS Loan/Alternative Private Loan) and we do not yet have your costs, please contact the *Office of Financial Aid* to notify us of your plans to study abroad so we can hold off processing your aid until costs are updated to ensure the accuracy of your awards.

## □ PRE-DEPARTURE

If you need funds early to pay for deposits or air fare, you need to make sure you have other funding options to cover these costs until your financial aid disburses.

### **Federal Aid Disbursement:**

- All federal funds (federal grants, direct loans, and plus loans) will disburse as they normally would at the beginning of each semester to your account at Millersville University and they cannot be disbursed early. If no balance is due to the *Office of Student Accounts*, then a refund will be issued to you at that time. Be aware that any balance owed to the *Office of Student Accounts* will be deducted before a refund is sent to you.

### **Alternative Loan Disbursement (30 day prior):**

- Alternative/private loans can be disbursed 30 days prior to your study abroad departure. If you wish to have your alternative/private loan disbursed early, you must provide a copy of your flight itinerary to the *Office of Financial Aid*. If no balance is due to the *Office of Student Accounts*, then a refund will be issued to you at that time. Be aware that any balance owed to the *Office of Student Accounts* will be deducted before a refund is sent to you.

### **Direct Deposit:**

- If you are expecting a refund, make sure to sign up for [Direct Deposit](#) for a quicker and more secure delivery of your refund!
- If you do not sign up for [Direct Deposit](#), any refund you receive from the *Office of Student Accounts* will be sent to your home address in a check made payable to you, the student. It is possible the check will not arrive until after you have embarked on your trip; therefore it is highly encouraged that you sign up for [Direct Deposit](#) or make necessary arrangements for someone else to deposit/negotiate your check for you.

## □ WHILE ABROAD

The FAFSA becomes available October 1<sup>st</sup> each year – depending on when you are studying abroad you may need to complete this and other financial aid requirements. Make sure you are logging into your [myVILLE Student Portal](#) and checking your Millersville e-mail and financial aid requirements while abroad!

Below are some other important reminders of what you will need to do for financial aid for the upcoming semester:

- Study abroad credits do not always transfer back immediately, therefore it may appear as if you are not making Satisfactory Academic Progress for financial aid purposes at the end of the academic year. This would hold up the processing of any federal or state aid. To avoid this happening, we encourage you to submit a federal aid appeal.

### **Federal Aid Appeal (Direct Loans and Federal Grants):**

- To obtain an appeal form, contact the *Office of Financial Aid*

### **PA State Grant (PHEAA):**

- The Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA) does not consider studying abroad to be an appealable reason. Therefore your PA State Grant will not appear on your account until your study abroad credits have actually transferred in to Millersville and your Academic Progress has been reviewed by the *Office of Financial Aid*.

## □ WELCOME BACK

We hope you had an enriching experience while abroad! Please keep in mind that if you filed a federal aid appeal with the *Office of Financial Aid* due to late transfer credits, The *Office of Financial Aid* is **not** notified when your transfer credits have been posted to your record. It is important to notify The *Office of Financial Aid* as soon as your credits have been posted so that your [Satisfactory Academic Progress \(SAP\)](#) can be reviewed.

## □ NEED MORE INFORMATION?

Contact the Office of Financial Aid:

**Office Hours:**  
Mon.-Fri. 8:00am to 4:30pm

**Phone:** 717-871-5100  
**Email:** [fa.mail@millersville.edu](mailto:fa.mail@millersville.edu)