Scholarship application document checklist

List the documents each application needs, who issues them and how long they take. Then track your applications online, or in the Word version of this file.

The full page on our website
scholarmena.com/resources/templates/document-checklist/

Lead times differ by issuer and country. Official figures are shown; otherwise ask the issuer and write the answer in. Tick "Needed?" after reading each programme's own list.

Part 1: the documents

Academic transcripts

Who issues it	Your university's registrar
Typical lead time	Ask the registrar: ____ days
Translated or attested?	Translate if not in the language the programme asks for. Check whether it wants certified copies.
Notes	Check whether the programme wants them sent directly by the university.

☐ Needed? ☐ Done

Degree certificate

Who issues it	Your university's registrar
Typical lead time	Ask the registrar: ____ days
Translated or attested?	As for transcripts.
Notes	Final-year students: ask for a letter with your expected graduation date, if the programme accepts one.

☐ Needed? ☐ Done

English test score e.g. IELTS or TOEFL

Who issues it	The test provider
Typical lead time	IELTS on computer: results usually in 1-2 days. On paper: up to 13 days. TOEFL iBT: 3 days after the test.
Translated or attested?	No
Notes	TOEFL scores are valid for 2 years; IELTS results older than 2 years are usually not accepted. Check the minimum score per section.

☐ Needed? ☐ Done

CV

Who issues it	You
Typical lead time	You set it
Translated or attested?	Write it in the language the programme asks for.
Notes	Use the ScholarMENA academic CV template.

☐ Needed? ☐ Done

Statement of purpose or motivation letter

Who issues it	You
Typical lead time	You set it
Notes	One version per programme.

☐ Needed? ☐ Done

Reference letters

Who issues it	Your professors or managers
Typical lead time	Our advice: ask at least 4 weeks before the deadline.
Notes	Check whether the referee uploads the letter or you do. Use the reference request emails.

☐ Needed? ☐ Done

Passport

Who issues it	Your country's passport authority
Typical lead time	Ask the authority: ____ days
Translated or attested?	No
Notes	Check its expiry date against the visa rules of your destination.

☐ Needed? ☐ Done

Research proposal PhD and some master's

Who issues it	You, with feedback from a supervisor
Typical lead time	You set it
Notes	Follow the programme's length and headings.

☐ Needed? ☐ Done

Portfolio art, design, architecture, media

Who issues it	You
Typical lead time	You set it
Notes	Check the file format and size limits on the portal.

☐ Needed? ☐ Done

Financial documents bank statement, sponsor letter

Who issues it	Your bank or sponsor
Typical lead time	Ask the bank or sponsor: ____ days
Translated or attested?	Translate if not in the required language.
Notes	Some are needed only at the visa stage. Check both lists.

☐ Needed? ☐ Done

Certified translations

Who issues it	A certified or sworn translator
Typical lead time	Ask the translator: ____ days
Notes	Check which translators the programme or embassy accepts.

☐ Needed? ☐ Done

More checks before you apply

- **Name spelling.** Your name must be spelled the same way on your passport, degree, transcript, test score and application. The passport spelling is the one to match. Check now: fixing a certificate can take weeks, so ask the issuer how long.
- **Medium of Instruction letter.** A letter from your university stating that your degree was taught in English. Ask your registrar for it only if a programme accepts it in place of an English test; the programme's page says so. Ask the registrar how long it takes.
- **Apostille or legalisation.** Official confirmation that a document is genuine, for use abroad, issued by the competent authority in the country that issued the document, as the university specifies. Get it

only if the university or the visa asks. Ask the issuing office how long it takes.

- **Passport validity.** Check the expiry date against each country's visa rules on the embassy's official page.

Our advice: an order that saves time

1. Check your name spelling on every document.
2. Request transcripts, certificates and any Medium of Instruction letter from your university.
3. Start any apostille or legalisation the university asks for.
4. Order certified translations.
5. Ask your referees.

Start about three months before your first deadline.

Track five or more applications online: scholarmena.com/tools/application-tracker/ (the Word version of this file also has a printable grid for five applications).

Free on ScholarMENA

- 12-month planner: scholarmena.com/resources/templates/application-planner/
- Reference request emails: scholarmena.com/resources/templates/reference-request-email/

Sources

Our editors read these official pages on 10 Nov 2026. If anything differs, the official page is the reference.

1. IELTS results: computer 1 to 2 days, paper up to 13 days; results over 2 years old usually not accepted
   https://saudiarabia.britishcouncil.org/en/exam/ielts/results
2. TOEFL iBT scores 3 days after the test; valid 2 years
   https://www.ets.org/toefl/test-takers/ibt/scores/get-scores.html