

HOW TO STUDY BUSINESS IN FRANCE





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Introduction

When it comes to France, what's the first thing that springs to mind? Gourmet food and wine? Its grandeur and rich cultural traditions? How about the lavish yet sophisticated lifestyle?

Whatever you think of, it's safe to say France is the most visited country in the world for a reason! It's every traveller's dream – from its picture-perfect landscapes and majestic city skylines, to its buttery croissants and sparkling champagne, France is full of delights. Studying here means you'll have endless opportunities to explore everything France has to offer, immerse yourself in the culture and satisfy your wanderlust.

If you're looking to become a business student, France might bring some more things to mind: some of the best

business schools in the world, in one of the key economies in Europe. Studying in France can be an incredible stepping-stone into achieving your career goals at world-beating institutions, often at a much lower cost than their US counterparts.

If you're looking to study business in France, particularly as an international student, you'll probably have some questions about the logistics of studying in France, what programs are on offer, and what the best schools are. We hope to answer all these (and more) in the following pages.

Bonne chance!

**France
has over
3,500 public
& private
education
institutions**





Studying in France

France has over 3,500 public and private education institutions.

These are generally divided into:



Universities

Making up around 75 percent of the country's higher education offering, allowing students to study a range of subjects.



Special institutions

Including business and management schools, as well as art, architecture, and engineering schools (plus many more).



Grandes Écoles

Prestigious, highly selective, smaller institutions, which usually require students to complete a two-year prep course and pass an entrance exam to get in.

Postgraduate and master's degrees in France are usually divided into four semesters across two academic years, making them less intensive than some of their US and UK counterparts.

At public universities in France, the annual tuition fees for EU nationals, EEA members and those from Andorra and Switzerland are:

€170 for bachelor's degrees

€243 for master's degrees

€380 for PhDs

Fees and Funding

You will also have to pay registration fees for your course. This is usually around €2,770 for bachelor's degrees, and €3,770 for master's programs.

The French state agrees to pay two-thirds of costs for non-EU students applying to study for their first bachelor's or master's degree. However, many specialist institutions and Grandes Écoles set their own fees, which can be significantly more expensive, particularly for business degrees. For example, an MSc in Management Studies at EDHEC Business School will cost you €21,300, whilst their MBA costs €44,000.

The French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs (MEAE) offers grants to international students through its embassies. The Ministry of Higher Education, Research, and Innovation (MESRI) provides needs-based finance for students who will have lived in France for a minimum of five years by the end of their course.

The Eiffel Excellence Scholarship Program encourages international students to study at master's or PhD level in priority fields, including economics and management. Selected candidates will receive a monthly stipend of €1,181 for master's studies and €1,400 for PhD.

It is also worth checking out scholarships on offer for your specific university course, as well as scholarships offered by your own country for students studying abroad. If you are interested in studying at EDHEC Business School, take a look at the [**QS EDHEC Scholarship**](#) – you can find out more about this in our interview with a former winner on page 25.



Visas and Health Insurance

The French healthcare system is considered one of the best in the world

Moving to a new city, let alone a new country, can be quite stressful at times. Fortunately, when it comes to organizing the necessary paperwork, sorting out a visa is probably one of the easier things to do as France's visa system for EU and EEA students is extremely straightforward.

There is no need for a visa if you're from the EU, you'll just need to provide a valid passport or travel document, formal proof of acceptance onto your course, health insurance and evidence of your ability to support yourself financially (such as a recent bank statement).

Non-EU students will need to apply for a visa to enter France – you'll need the VLS-TS visa, which lasts for the duration of your course. You can also get short-term visas for the purpose of attending interviews or sitting entrance exams.

When it comes to healthcare, or 'sécurité sociale', the French healthcare system is considered one of the best in the world and it became free of charge in September 2018, covering up to 70 percent of medical expenses. Non-EU students who plan on studying in France must enrol in the French healthcare system, while EU and EEA students should make sure they have their own EHIC card.



Applying to Study in France

Much like French nationals, international students will apply directly to the institution that they wish to study at. Most universities have a deadline of the end of January of the year you wish to start your course, but many business schools operate on a rolling admissions basis.

Most business masters and MBA degrees in France are taught in English. Therefore, if English is not your first language, you will need to provide proof of your proficiency in the language either through bachelor's study conducted in English, or by taking an English proficiency test like the TOEFL or IELTS.

All applications will require proof of all previous academic study, including transcripts (with transcripts from non-English or French institutions translated and verified).

Many applications will also require you to complete an essay or entrance exam, and almost all business schools will have an interview process, often with multiple stages.

You will also need to provide a copy of your birth certificate, plus a certified translation showing the birthplace of your parents (this is something required of all international students regardless of their nation of origin).

Non-EU applicants will also need to provide proof that they have enough money to cover their university expenses (this is also needed for a visa).

One of the most important choices you make will be about housing

Accommodation

When you're a student in France, one of the most important choices you make will be about housing. Will you choose to live in private accommodation, or residence halls provided by your university? How will you afford rent?

Fortunately, your university can help a lot with these matters, so have a look on your institution's webpages to see any assistance they can offer. The French government also offer housing benefits for students, through an agency called the CAF.

The CAF offers students help to make rents more affordable. The only requirements (when you start the process) are to have a French bank account, and a long-stay visa valid as a residence permit. You can apply online, and often your university's international student's office will help with the process if your French isn't quite fluent enough.

In terms of choosing between private and student accommodation, it really depends on what you're looking for in your study abroad experience – private accommodation can be cheaper and lead you to explore different sides of the city you're living in, but there is often less of a safety net if things go wrong. Student accommodation is a great way to meet new people and is usually closer to university but may be more expensive.

The average price for a private room in a flat in private accommodation in France is around €400-580 per month, a one-bed flat is about €670-880 per month and a two-bed is about €950-1,200. A room in a student hall at EDHEC costs between €460-695 per month, with some utilities included in the price.





Student Life in France

France is a fantastic place to be a student - after all, there's Paris, with its urbane sophistication; the glittering beaches of the French Riviera; the idyllic vineyards of Aquitaine, Burgundy, and Champagne; the verdant scenery of the Ardennes; the glacial immensity of Mont Blanc and the French Alps; the medieval history of Brittany.

If that's not enough, think of a dynamic, multicultural society, a laidback way of life, an intellectual heritage that has shaped Western culture, and a history whose artefacts can be seen on every street - not to mention a legendary culinary tradition.

Amidst all these attractions, there are some of the world's top universities, which means as a business student studying abroad in France you will be spoilt for choice.

Your university can be a great starting point for settling into your life in France - EDHEC's International Students Office (ISO) helps new international students ease their transition into living in France, organising orientation events and seminars to welcome international students in their Nice and Lille campuses.

The ISO also helps with administrative duties needed to move to France, such as visas and health insurance. They can also help with housing, with accommodation curated by the ISO, and assistance with housing contracts. They're also there if you need someone with fluency in French to deal administration procedures.

With that in mind, here are some of the best places in France to explore during your time as a student in this fantastic country...



Hit the beaches of France's most glamorous coastline, the Côte d'Azur

The Côte d'Azur, on the south-eastern coast of France, is world-renowned for its sunny beaches (with around 300 days of sunshine a year on average), glorious blue sea, and glamorous seaside towns and cities.

If you're lucky enough to be studying in the city of Nice, it's the perfect home base to explore all this fantastic region has to offer. Nice itself is famous for the beautiful Promenade des Anglais, which runs almost five miles around the bay, with myriad bars and restaurants with views of the Mediterranean Sea.

The city is just a 30-minute drive from Sophia Antipolis, Europe's Silicon Valley. This technology park is an epicentre for innovation, technology, and business ventures, with over 2,200 companies and 36,000 employees – and ideal environment for international students to imagine their future career. Nice is also characterised by a unique mix of French and Italian culture, architecture, and cuisine.

Take day trips to Cannes (home of the famous film festival) for celebrity sightings, the historic Antibes, or even to the principality of Monaco, the second-smallest sovereign state in the world, to marvel at the superyachts (and super cars) in the harbour.

Lille, the crossroads of Europe



Located in the north of France, Lille is an easy train ride from other major European cities such as Amsterdam, Brussels, London, and Paris. But it's not just its fantastic location that makes Lille a great city for students.

Lille has retained many religious and civil buildings from its ten centuries of history, including the Citadelle (a fortress dating back to 1668), the Grand Place, and the old Stock Exchange. The Old City (Vieux Lille) is a popular destination to explore, with charming cobblestoned streets and pink bricks. Lille is also home to the country's second-largest Museum of Fine Arts (Palais des Beaux-Arts).

In part due to its huge student population of around 150,000 students, Lille's nightlife is not to be missed, with many bars and restaurants, notably in the Old City and Old Halles districts.

Students can also enjoy a cultural event unique to Lille, la Braderie – the largest flea market in Europe, which happens once a year on the first weekend of September, with vendors selling everything from food to antiques.



Visit Paris, the most romantic city in the world

Throughout history, novelists and poets have tried to do justice to the beauty and romance of Paris – from natives such as Baudelaire, Rimbaud, and Proust to expats such as Henry Miller, Ernest Hemmingway, and Henry James. All concurred in one respect – words can scarcely convey the architectural, culinary, social, artistic and cultural splendour of France’s ‘City of Lights’.

As an undergraduate student visiting or studying abroad in this sprawling cultural mecca, where do you start? With the iconic sights of course: The Champs Élysées, the Eiffel Tower, Notre Dame, the Pantheon, and Bastille. Top up your cultural sensibilities at the Louvre, arguably the world’s most important and architecturally breath-taking art gallery. Sample Parisian cafe culture made famous by Jean-Paul Sartre. And if you’re tired of sightseeing, head to one of Paris’ hundreds of bars, gig venues, clubs, or restaurants.

Other great places to visit in France include:

- Lyon, the gastronomical capital of Europe
- The French Alps for skiing, snowboarding, and hiking
- The great wine regions, such as Champagne, Bordeaux, Burgundy, and the Loire Valley
- The Occitaine region, which was established in 2016 combining the regions of Languedoc and Midi Pyrenees, and is home to the historic city of Toulouse
- Biarritz, renowned for world-class surfing



Types of Business Degree

French business schools offer a myriad of business study options, from undergraduate courses all the way up to doctoral studies. They are, however, probably best known for their postgraduate business degrees, including business master's programs and MBAs.



Master's in Management programs

A master's in management is ideal for those who want a generalized higher-level business qualification but who don't quite have the level of work experience required to undertake an MBA. Most business schools in France offer master's in management programs, which usually take around two years to complete. Typical modules include strategic management, corporate social responsibility, operations management, and corporate finance.



Master's in Marketing programs

Slightly more specialized, and more creative, than a master's in management program but still with a firm grounding in business, is the master's in marketing. Somewhat less common but nonetheless offered by many top business schools, students tend to be younger with less work experience. Typical modules include digital marketing, marketing and sustainability, marketing strategy and product design management.



Master's in Finance programs

Second in popularity to master's in management programs is the master's in finance, which focuses on the monetary side of business. A master's in finance is great for those who studied quantitative subjects, such as math or economics, at undergraduate level. Typical modules include financial statement analysis, asset management, and empirical methods in finance.

The MBA is seen as the pinnacle of the business study



Master's in Business Analytics programs

Another program for the number-orientated student, master's in business analytics programs have been consistently growing in popularity with the rise in Big Data. Many schools now also focus on artificial intelligence as part of their business analytics offerings. Typical modules include customer analytics, R programming, big data & ethics, and supply chain analytics.



MBA programs

The MBA is often seen as the pinnacle of business study and is generally undertaken by students with at least five years of work experience under their belt. The MBA is intensive, covering all areas of business, with many courses offering specializations to tailor your studies to your career goals. MBA programs offer unrivalled networking opportunities, and MBA graduates can expect significant pay rises once they complete their studies.



Business Schools in France

The quality of higher education in France is among the best in the world, with many of its business schools occupying the top spots in global university rankings.



EDHEC Business School Campus, Nice

HEC Paris is recognized as one of the world's best business schools, and is currently ranked highest in France, and the world, for its master's in management and master's in marketing programs, as well as being the only French school in the global top 10 for MBA study.

EDHEC Business School is also a world-beating institution. Specializing in business, entrepreneurship, management, and innovation, three of its five campuses

are in Paris, Nice and Lille, meaning links to professional opportunities, networking contacts and a global community are right on your doorstep.

So much so that the school's corporate sponsors are some of the world's leading global firms – such as PwC, Bloomberg, Ubisoft and Société Générale – which means students are given exceptional insights and analysis to help them progress in the professional world

of business, management, and finance.

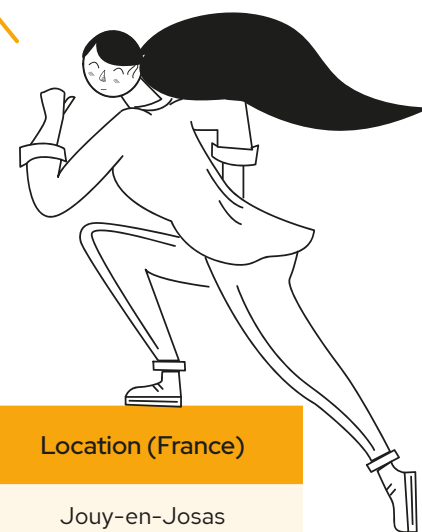
Notable EDHEC alumni include Delphine Arnault, director and executive vice president of Louis Vuitton, Sophie Bellon, chairman of board of directors at Sodexo, Michael Burke, chairman and CEO of Louis Vuitton, Philippe Fortunato, CEO Fashion & Accessories at Richemont, Amélie Vidal-Simi, CEO of Mondèlez France, Muriel Koch, CEO of Nuxe Group, and Laurent Freixe, CEO Zone Americas de Nestlé.



**The quality
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Below are the top schools in France for master's programs in management, marketing, finance, and business analytics as well as the top MBA programs in the country, according to the most recent QS Business Masters and Global MBA Rankings.



Master's in Management:

23 French schools in ranking, 15 in global top 100.

France rank	Global rank	Institution	Location (France)
1	1	HEC Paris	Jouy-en-Josas
2	3	ESSEC Business School	Paris
3	10=	EMLyon Business School	Lyon
4	14	EDHEC Business School	Lille, Nice
5	23	SKEMA Business School	Paris

Master's in Marketing:

12 French schools in ranking, 8 in global top 50.

France rank	Global rank	Institution	Location (France)
1	1	HEC Paris	Jouy-en-Josas
2	7	EDHEC Business School	Nice
3	8	EMLyon Business School	Paris, Lyon
4	11	SKEMA Business School	Paris
5	18	Grenoble Ecole de Management	Grenoble

Master's in Finance:

13 French schools in ranking, 10 in global top 100.

France rank	Global rank	Institution	Location (France)
1	4	HEC Paris	Jouy-en-Josas
2	7=	ESSEC Business School	Paris
3	16	EMLyon Business School	Lyon
4	22	EDHEC Business School	Nice, Lille
5	27	SKEMA Business School	Paris

Master's in Business Analytics:

7 French schools in ranking, 4 in global top 50.

France rank	Global rank	Institution	Location (France)
1	3	ESSEC/Centrale Supelec	Paris
2	26	EMLyon Business School	Lyon
3	29	EDHEC Business School	Nice, Lille
4	34	SKEMA Business School	Paris

MBA:

9 French schools in ranking, 5 in global top 100.

France rank	Global rank	Institution	Location (France)
1	5	HEC Paris	Jouy-en-Josas
2	40	EDHEC Business School	Nice, Lille
3	47	ESCP Business School	Paris
4	62=	EMLyon Business School	Lyon
5	84=	Grenoble Ecole de Management	Grenoble



Business Careers in France

If, after studying a business-related degree, you decide you'd like to stay on and work in France, there are plenty of business careers open to you.

Technology, manufacturing, tourism, energy, and food are some of the largest industries in France and hire a high number of graduates each year. In addition, several areas have a shortage of skilled workers, such as the IT, healthcare, and engineering sectors. Many companies in these industries look to recruit graduates from France's top business schools.

If you're looking to work for a large international firm with an excellent reputation, you're in luck. There are several large international companies based in France, including Louis Vuitton, Orange, Michelin, L'Oréal, Danone, Airbus, Renault, and AXA.

It's standard to have a 35-hour working week in France as there is a strong focus on maintaining a good work-life balance. You'll also be entitled to 30 days' paid leave per year and 11 public holidays. However, this may vary depending on your employer.



Working in France: Getting a French visa

If you're from the EU/EEA or Switzerland, you won't need any sort of work permit to work in France. However, if you come from outside the EU/EEA or Switzerland, you'll be able to apply for a post-study work visa, which will allow you to stay in France for one year after your studies to look for work.

Once you've found a job, you can then apply for a work permit. You will most likely need authorization to gain a work visa. If you find a job in France, your prospective employer will organize this for you.

Those with a master's degree or equivalent, a degree categorized as level 1 by the Conference of Grandes Écoles, or a professional license, will be able to apply for temporary residence permit. This will be non-renewable and last for one year. This will enable you to work part time, for up to 60 percent of a normal working week (around 21 hours), to support yourself while looking for full-time work.

A Talent Passport visa may be available for recent graduates. This is a four-year residence permit for specialized graduates.





What jobs can you do in France?

As a business graduate, you'll be suited to a huge range of careers in a huge range of industries. You might already have a career in mind when you begin your degree, or you might use your university's careers service as a way of deciding what you want to do when you graduate. Below is a (by no means exhaustive) selection of great jobs you can pursue in France, along with the average base salary in each role.

Data Business Analyst

Average base salary: €43,479

Ideal if you have a keen interest in blending both business and technology data analysis, in this role you'll have the technological know-how when it comes to generating crucial information about the company. Your main responsibilities include collecting and analysing data to then devise and implement solutions to any problems which may arise.

If gaining a better understanding of how industries and organizations manage and utilize big data analytics to devise new and improved business strategies is something which sounds right up your street, then the Master of Science in Data Analytics and Artificial Intelligence at EDHEC Business School, may be for you.

Project manager

Average base salary: €46,900

Project managers are responsible for delivering projects on time and within budget by organising people, resources, and tasks. Also known as project coordinators and project officers, you could work in almost any sector and organisation, from healthcare to construction or advertising.

Your role will involve finding out the client's goals, checking the feasibility of the project by analysing budgets, teams, and resources, negotiating with contractors and suppliers, monitoring progress, and implementing changes where needed, reporting back to senior managers and the client, and evaluating the success of the project against its expectations, in order to learn from any mistakes.

As a project manager, you'll need strong organizational skills as well as interpersonal and communication skills, and the ability to make decisions under pressure.

Strategy Consultant

Average base salary: €65,093

If you like the idea of leading a team, you'll also need to be a self-starter who's highly motivated and ready to take on any challenge. An excellent blend of business intelligence, communication skills and desire to succeed will make you stand out as well.

As a business development manager, your job is to devise and manage the future business plans of a company by building and maintaining positive professional relationships with partners, including clients and suppliers. It's your responsibility to understand how the company works and see the 'bigger picture' to seek and implement both new and amended strategies to meet the aims and objectives of the business.

Entrepreneur

Average base salary: variable

Do you have a million-euro business idea? Are you adaptable, forthright, and up for a challenge? If so, entrepreneurship could be the path for you. As an entrepreneur, you'll be running your own business, building it from the ground up and securing funding.

France is fast-becoming Europe's start-up hub, with Paris co-working facility Station F noted as the largest start-up campus in the world. It's therefore the perfect place to help grow your business. You can even make a start on this when you're still studying – EDHEC has a dedicated studio on the Studio F campus for MSc Entrepreneurship and Innovation students.

Business Development Manager

Average base salary: €56,839

If you like the idea of leading a team, you'll also need to be a self-starter who's highly motivated and ready to take on any challenge. An excellent blend of business intelligence, communication skills and desire to succeed will make you stand out as well.

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A Graduate's Viewpoint

Q&A with EDHEC Business School Alumnus, Ludovico Galantiu.



Ludovico Galanti was the 2018 winner of the **EDHEC Business School scholarship**, offered in partnership between QS and EDHEC.

The exclusive scholarship is on offer to attendees of the QS World Grad School Tour, with a value of 50 percent of tuition fees to two outstanding candidates.

To be eligible to apply for this scholarship, applicants must have attended the QS World Grad School Tour, have completed the QS Applicant Survey, and successfully completed the admissions process at EDHEC.

Scholarship applicants must be able to demonstrate strong levels of academic excellence and willingness to study at EDHEC Business School. The scholarship EDHEC is offering is open to MIM and MSc programmes only.

Moving from Italy, Ludovico studied a year-long MSc in Financial Markets at EDHEC and has since been working at Bloomberg as a Fixed Income Derivatives Analyst. Before this, he studied business administration for his bachelor's degree.

We caught up with Ludovico to find out more about his time at EDHEC and how studying in France prepared him for his career.



“You can build long lasting relationships at EDHEC”



Ludovico Galanti

Why did you choose to study an MSc in Financial Markets at EDHEC?

EDHEC’s MSc in Financial Markets is one of the top programs in Europe. I was immediately drawn by their quant-heavy approach to finance and their focus on teaching diversity.

I had professors who help shaped my understanding of the economy with years of research and others coming directly from the industry. This provided an invaluable insight into my future career.

Additionally, EDHEC provides scholarship for academic merit to students which allows people from different socio-economic backgrounds to attend the school.

What was your experience like at EDHEC?

It was amazing. The school itself is small enough that you do not ever feel lost or feel like you are just a number. But it is also big enough to give you the chance to meet people from all over the world and give you a different perspective on life.

You can build long lasting relationships at EDHEC which will help you develop individually and professionally.

How did you find your course? Was it what you expected?

The course content was pretty much what I expected. It was tough – especially coming from a non-finance degree – and it involved some sleepless nights, but it was definitely worth it.

Exams tend to be quite clustered, so this teaches students to prepare months in advance and be ready to deliver under pressure.

How important do you think understanding international culture is to business and do you think EDHEC prepared you for this?

I think it’s incredibly important. I work in London and the culture, both related to business and everyday life, couldn’t be more different than Italy.

Having already been immersed in a diverse environment made the transition from studying in Italy and France to working in the UK seamless.

Many universities are starting to offer classes or courses on cultural diversity, but I think EDHEC’s holistic approach is difficult to replicate.

What was your favourite thing about studying in France?

France is an interesting country. You can see they have a great sense of pride toward their country and culture but at the same time they try to make you feel welcome and embraced.

There are many things that I liked about my experience in France but my favourite one is probably the most down-to-earth thing of all: the food.

How do you think studying in France prepared you for your career?

I believe studying in a different country is always useful. It gives you an insight on how to approach programs from a different angle. French institutions are highly structured and follow a strict schedule, which prepares you for dealing with strict deadlines.

What advice would you give students who are looking to study a business degree in France?

Learn French. There are a lot of job opportunities in France but most of them require a certain level of French proficiency to be considered.

Paris could become a European cluster of banks following Brexit and knowing the language is essential to take advantage of this trend.

“I believe studying in a different country is always useful. It gives you an insight on how to approach programs from a different angle.”



Ludovico Galanti