

What Statistics Show about Study Abroad Students

from the University of California, Merced

While available statistics on study abroad might still be limited, there are some notable studies on study abroad and careers, learning, academic performance, retention, and personality development. Here are some of the most remarkable findings:

Study Abroad and Careers, Salaries, and Job Skills

97% of study abroad students found employment within 12 months of graduation, whereas only 49% of college graduates found employment in the same period. (1) That means they were twice as likely to find a job. Among study abroad alumni, 90% landed a job within 6 months. (2) A UK study supports US findings that study abroad returnees are more likely to find employment within six months. (12)

25% higher starting salaries: that's how much more study abroad students earn than those college graduates who do not study abroad. (1) A British study found their study abroad graduates out-earned their peers by 17%. (12) This equates to approx. \$7,000 annually for US students and £3,120 for UK students. Maintaining this earning advantage translates to earning an extra \$567,500 over one's career in the US. (3)

90% of study abroad alumni who applied got into their 1st or 2nd choice grad school. (1)

84% of study abroad alumni felt their studies abroad helped them build valuable skills for the job market. (4) A second study confirms this at 85%. (10)

80% of study abroad students reported that study abroad allowed them to better adapt better to diverse work environments. (4)

70% of study abroad alumni claimed that because of study abroad they were more satisfied with their jobs. (4)

59% of employers said study abroad would be valuable in an individual's career later on with their organization. (11)

34% of study abroad alumni claimed that study abroad helped them choose their career field. (4)

19% lower unemployment rates were found among study abroad alumni according to a British study. (4)

+ A British study found the greatest increases salary earnings among study abroad alumni (compared to their peers) among seven majors: sociology, computer science, theology and religious studies, electronic and electrical engineering, and physical geographical sciences. (4)

Study Abroad and Graduation and Academic Performance

100% greater improvement in GPA post-study abroad. Student GPAs tend to rise as they approach the completion of their undergraduate degree. Students who studied abroad saw their GPAs rise twice as quickly as a result of going abroad compared to students who stayed in town according to a Georgia study. (8)

- 19% more likely to graduate: that describes how study abroad participants are more likely to graduate than non-participants by six years. Even at four years, study abroad participants are 15% more likely to graduate based on a UC San Diego study. (5) UT Austin and Georgia data show a similar trend. (6,7)
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Study Abroad and Personality

- + A German study compared personality development and found that students who studied abroad showed improvements in five core traits compared to their peers who did not study abroad: openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and emotional stability. (9)
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Resources

- 1 Career Benefits of Study Abroad (<http://www.iesabroad.org/study-abroad/why/career-benefits>)

 - 2 New Survey Shows College Graduates Who Study Abroad Land Career-Related Jobs Sooner, with Higher Starting Salaries (<http://www.prweb.com/releases/2012/5/prweb9541667.htm>)

 - 3 How Higher Education Affects Lifetime Salary (<http://www.usnews.com/education/best-colleges/articles/2011/08/05/how-higher-education-affects-lifetime-salary>)

 - 4 AIFS Study Abroad Outcomes (http://www.aifsabroad.com/advisors/pdf/AIFS_Study_Abroad_Outcomes.pdf)

 - 5 UC San Diego Study: 2011 EAP and OAP Retention, Graduation, & Time-to-Degree Combined (http://icenter.ucsd.edu/files/icenter/20019-10/1112EAP_OAPcombined.pdf)

 - 6 UT Austin Study: Go Abroad and Graduate on Time: Study Abroad Participation, Degree Completion, and Time-to-Degree (<http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1065&context=cehsedaddress>)

 - 7 Georgia Learning Outcomes of Students Studying Abroad Research Initiative: The Effect of Study Abroad on College Completion in a State University System (<http://glossari.uga.edu/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2012/01/GLOSSARI-Grad-Rate-Logistic-Regressions-040111.pdf>)

 - 8 Study Abroad May Lead to Better GPA, Graduation Rates (<http://glossari.uga.edu/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2012/01/GLOSSARI-Grad-Rate-Logistic-Regressions-040111.pdf>)

 - 9 Studying Abroad Boosts Students' Emotional Development (<http://psychcentral.com/news/2013/07/05/studying-abroad-boost-students-emotional-development/56846.html>)

 - 10 The Impact of Studying Abroad on Recent College Graduates' Careers (<http://www.iesabroad.org/system/files/recentgraduatessurvey.pdf>)

 - 11 Employers Value Candidates Who Study Abroad (<https://www.collegerecruiter.com/blog/2011/01/27/employers-value-candidates-who-study-abroad/>)
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12 (UK) Mobile students more likely to have a job – Report
(<http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=20150314015634495>)
