

# ParisTech

INSTITUT DES SCIENCES ET TECHNOLOGIES  
PARIS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY



# INTERNATIONAL STUDENT GUIDE





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# GENERAL INFORMATION

In France the top qualifications in Engineering or Business and Management are obtained in the *Grandes Écoles* of Engineering or Management. These schools offer courses leading to the *diplôme d'ingénieur* (MSc in Engineering), *diplôme de Grande École* (MSc in Management), master, advanced master and doctorate.

ParisTech is a consortium of 12 *Grandes Écoles* of Engineering and Management. The *Grandes Écoles* educate the engineers, researchers, managers and policy makers of the future. The ParisTech *Grandes Écoles* offer a wide range of programmes at the master level and unique opportunities for doctoral studies.



## STUDYING AT PARISTECH

Admission to carry on a master in Engineering or in Management is highly competitive and involves studying for two years in the elite *classes préparatoires* and taking national entrance examinations before embarking on 3 years of study. Because of the qualifications they have already obtained, most international students are admitted directly into the 2<sup>nd</sup> year.

Admission to a master of science, advanced master or to a doctoral programme is also highly selective.

The schools are found on several sites in and around Paris (some also have regional centres), and they all enjoy an international reputation in their particular fields of Science, Engineering, Business and Management. However, a distinctive feature of the leading *Grandes Écoles* is that they are not all narrowly specialized: MINES ParisTech, for example, is not only for mining engineers and the École des Ponts ParisTech is not only for civil engineers and bridge builders.





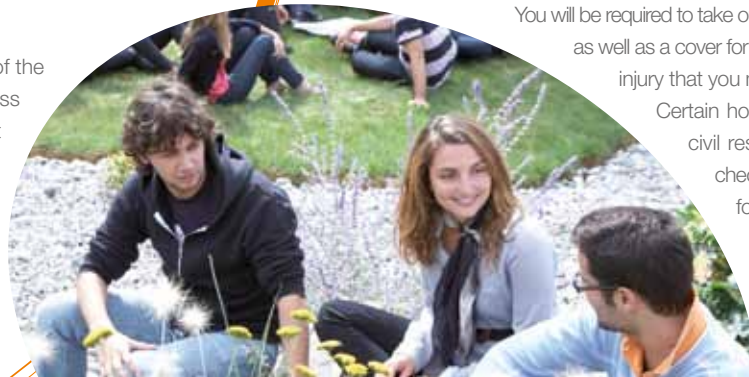
## ARRIVAL IN FRANCE AND TRANSPORT

Most of you will be arriving in France by plane. You may be met at the airport by a person from your new school or ParisTech; otherwise transport into Paris from the airports is relatively easy. Tickets can be bought at ticket offices and machines at all stations. Study the map of the Paris public transport before you arrive on [www.ratp.fr](http://www.ratp.fr).

The Paris area has an express suburban network (RER), an urban underground network (métro) and a comprehensive network of bus lines. You can buy an annual student season ticket (carte Imagine R, which requires a form to be stamped by your school), monthly tickets, books of 10 tickets (le carnet) and single tickets. If you are travelling on to another town to study, please contact your school for details of how to get there.

## STUDENT LIFE

Paris is one of the great cultural capitals of the world, with a huge selection of world class museums, art galleries, theatres, concert halls and major sporting events. It is also a centre of student life: cafés, restaurants, concerts and a vibrant night life.



## COST OF LIVING

We estimate the average cost of a year in France as up to 1.000 € per month in the Paris region. Outside the Paris region it is much less.

## FOOD

The schools and most university halls of residence provide student refectories where you can eat a hot meal at a reasonable price. Or you may have access to self-catering facilities.

## CURRENCY AND BANKING

France, like many (but not all) EU countries, uses the euro (€). You should open a bank account shortly after arriving. Some banks have temporary banking facilities or ATMs on the premises of ParisTech *Grandes Écoles*, and will be happy to open bank accounts for international students. Many *Grandes Écoles* also have special arrangements with a local bank. To open a bank account in France, you will need to produce your passport and proof of your residence. You will need to register your signature, so you must be present in person when you open an account.

## CIVIL RESPONSIBILITY, HOME AND ACCIDENT INSURANCE

You will be required to take out home and accident insurance as well as a cover for your civil responsibility (to cover injury that you may cause to another person). Certain home insurance policies include civil responsibility cover. Thoroughly check what sort of cover is suitable for your needs. Home insurance is compulsory if you are renting accommodation.

## ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE AND HEALTH INSURANCE

In France, two types of doctor can treat you in case of illness: general practitioners and specialists. The minimum cost of consultation is €23 for a GP (2011 prices). Specialists can be much more expensive. Payment is made directly to the doctor and then you apply for reimbursement from the Social security.

Before leaving your country, you should ensure that you have adequate insurance to cover your journey to France and the first few weeks of your stay until you arrive at your school, since French law prevents you from being covered by the student health scheme until you are officially enrolled at your school (September or October for most schools). This means, for example, that in the event of an accident you could find yourself having to pay extremely high private medical fees to doctors or hospitals.

EU students should obtain a form from their home country social security system that extends their national coverage to France. To have access to the French student social security, students must be under 28 years of age and enrolled in a programme of at least 4 months' duration.

The French student social security does not generally reimburse all the costs of health care (usually 70% maximum).

This is why you are strongly advised to contribute to a supplementary health insurance scheme (Mutuelle) which will cover the non-reimbursable part (approximately 30%). Other students must obtain medical insurance from a private insurance company.

## EMERGENCY NUMBERS

For all emergencies: **112**

An operator will answer your call and redirect it to the appropriate service (ambulance, police or fire service). The 112 is free from all public, fixed and mobile phones.

**Police: 17**

**Ambulance: 15**

**Fire: 18**

## PUBLIC AND SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

France has the following public holidays. Government offices and private companies are closed as well as most businesses. Police stations and hospitals remain open.

**January 1<sup>st</sup>**  
New Year's Day

### Easter Monday

The date varies from year to year

**May 1<sup>st</sup>**  
Labour Day

**May 8<sup>th</sup>**

WWII Armistice Day in 1945

**Ascension Day**

(in May or June):  
The date varies from year to year

**Whit Monday**

**July 14<sup>th</sup>**

Bastille Day  
National holiday

**August 15<sup>th</sup>**

Assumption day

**November 1<sup>st</sup>**

All Saints' day

**November 11<sup>th</sup>**

WWI Armistice Day in 1918


**December 25<sup>th</sup>**

Christmas Day

Actual school holidays vary from a school to another, but as an indication, you can expect to have one week's holiday in October/November; 2 weeks at the end of December/beginning of January; one week in February; and 2 weeks in March/April. The school year normally ends in the middle of June.

This means you will have plenty of opportunity to visit France and the rest of Europe, although you may have to do an internship during the summer period.





# DIPLÔME GRANDE ÉCOLE (MSC IN ENGINEERING AND MSC IN MANAGEMENT) AND PARISTECH MASTERS



## WHEN WILL YOU KNOW YOU HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED?

**MSc in Engineering:** Admissions procedures for the ParisTech MSc in Engineering recruitment programmes typically take place in October and the final admissions jury takes place in December, so you will know you have been accepted in late December. Please note that other dates apply to direct admissions to individual ParisTech *Grandes Écoles*.

**ParisTech Masters:** Applicants for the one- or two-year ParisTech Masters courses are expected to hold a good first degree at Bachelor level or equivalent. Admissions information can be obtained from individual schools or on: [www.masters.paristech.fr](http://www.masters.paristech.fr)

## OBTAINING YOUR VISA

To obtain a visa, the first step is to consult the French embassy website of your country for full details of the process. You can also contact Campus France. You will need to supply a letter of acceptance and an accommodation certificate from the ParisTech *Grande École* which has accepted you. You will also need a financial support certificate. These are normally sent to you by email and by post in January/February.



Once you have these, you should apply for a student visa at your local French Consulate. The student visa is valid for one year and will normally be automatically renewed on request. However, you will need to apply for a residence permit when you arrive. Your school will help you with the necessary administrative details.

**NB:** this is only necessary for non-EU students or students from countries with special arrangements with France.

## LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS

**MSc in Engineering:** For the ParisTech MSc in Engineering you should start learning or improving your French as soon as possible. Most of the staff and students at your new school will speak English, but classes will be mostly or entirely taught in French. You should contact your home university for details of approved French courses in the town/city where you are studying.

In addition to learning French in your home country, you should also attend intensive French classes in France during July and August. Eiffel scholarship holders will be contacted by the local branch of EGIDE about language tuition, other students will have courses organized by their school or should make their own arrangements.

**ParisTech Masters:** The ParisTech Masters courses are taught in English and/or in French. The immersion in French culture is a priority. Further information about our Masters programmes can be found on [www.masters.paristech.fr](http://www.masters.paristech.fr).



## ACCOMMODATION

Most ParisTech schools provide accommodation on campus or in student halls of residence near your school. However, there is a severe housing shortage for students in Paris and some international students will live in flats. Prices vary from one campus to another. Your school will help you with your future accommodation.

Accommodation costs can be greatly reduced by applying for the *Aide Personnalisée au Logement (APL)*, a state housing subsidy for students. Your school will help you with this.

## SCHOLARSHIPS

Some, but by no means all, of the ParisTech *Grandes Écoles* provide scholarships. Also, the schools will apply for the best students recruited to obtain the French government Eiffel scholarships. As there is considerable competition for these grants, you are strongly advised to apply for any scholarships that might be awarded by your home governments and the French embassy in your country.





## REGISTRATION AND FEES

On arrival, you will most probably follow intensive French classes until your school opens for courses. (Some schools also offer integration weeks for international students which are strongly recommended). You will be told when this is. Your school will also tell you when you must come for registration. It is at this time that you will have to pay any fees for tuition or social security. Some schools do not charge fees to scholarship holders.

## ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE, MEDICAL, HOME AND ACCIDENT INSURANCE

You will be required to take out medical, home and accident insurance.

For health/medical insurance, you should take out an annual policy (sécurité sociale étudiante) with either the LMDE or SMEREP mutual companies. There are two solutions, basic cover (compulsory) and complementary cover (highly recommended). Your school will offer advice on this. You should also take out insurance to cover loss or theft of personal items and any accidental damage or injury you may cause or be responsible for.

In some schools, French government scholarship holders do not pay for the social security. However, you must complete the social security registration process at the beginning of the year.



## WORKING DURING YOUR STUDIES

Under French law you are allowed to work up to 964 hours a year while you are studying. However, you are not allowed to work if you receive a grant.




## METHODS OF STUDY

A typical *Grande École* working day will mean you have courses from early in the morning until early evening, with only one or two afternoons free to do sport. Students, however, are not expected to do much individual work alone. For many foreign students this is a very different pace to the one they are accustomed to and requires some getting used to. You should realize that you must work regularly and that you cannot wait until just before the examinations to revise. There will not be time.

Teaching methods vary a little between subjects and schools, but are still fairly traditional in France: lectures and smaller group classes (called TD). The latter are generally considered to be the most important. Lectures will probably make use of PowerPoint and a board the lecturer writes on, but there may be no notes to help you follow and this can be quite difficult at the beginning.

Practice and theory are combined in ParisTech *Grandes Écoles* and all students will have to do internships in leading French or foreign companies.





# DOCTORAL STUDY AT PARISTECH

## DOCTORAL STUDY AT PARISTECH

The doctorate is one of the highlights of the research activities in the ParisTech *Grandes Écoles*. Academic excellence, international collaboration and technical innovation are at the heart of doctoral studies.

At ParisTech, doctoral candidates are assured of being educated to the highest standards, benefitting from funding support over three years and close relationships with the economic world.

Each ParisTech *Grande École* has its own doctoral programme and is responsible for selecting students. Doctoral degrees are awarded by ParisTech *Grandes Écoles* or by partner universities.

All doctoral programmes are linked through the ParisTech Doctoral Institute. We have 40% of international students and 90 different nationalities, and we are proud of our diverse community.



## APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Admission to doctoral studies is decided by each ParisTech *Grande École* according to its research activities and financial resources.

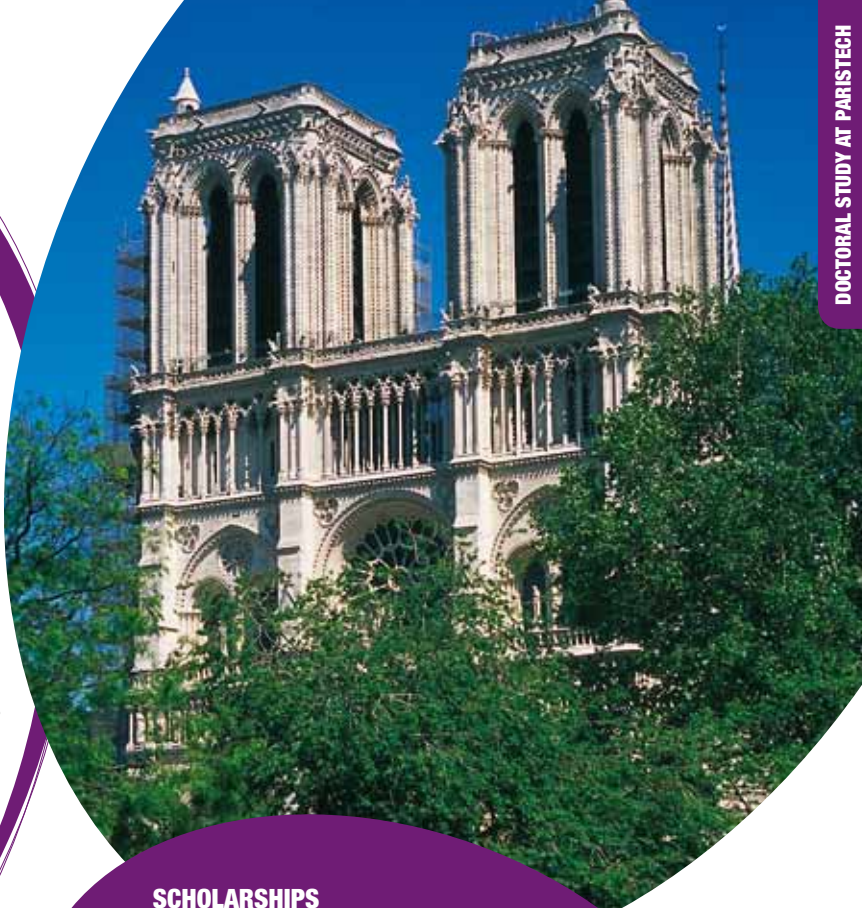
Applications of international students from partner universities are subject to deadlines. ParisTech Doctoral Institute international partnerships and application information are available online at the following address: [www.institut-doctoral.paristech.fr](http://www.institut-doctoral.paristech.fr)

Other international students are advised to contact a potential supervisor before making a formal application. An overview of the thesis subjects is available on the ParisTech Doctoral Institute website. We strongly encourage prospective students wishing to enroll on a doctoral programme to apply as soon as possible and no later than March.

## OBTAINING YOUR VISA

Non-EU students who are planning to carry on doctoral studies in France are strongly encouraged to apply for an extended-stay scientific VISA (two essential conditions needed: possession of a hosting agreement (convention d'accueil) and holding of a Master's degree or equivalent). You should ask your laboratory for the hosting agreement as soon as you obtain an agreement for funding support for your doctorate. Holders of the extended-stay scientific visa must apply within 2 months of entering France for a residence permit marked 'scientifique'. The permit is valid for 1 year and must be renewed.

Further information can be viewed at:  
[www.campusfrance.org/en](http://www.campusfrance.org/en)



## SCHOLARSHIPS

Funding covering a 3-year full-time PhD is compulsory for enrolment. Please see the website of each ParisTech *Grande École* to check for details about scholarships available, including the amount and duration.



## LANGUAGES

Doctoral programmes at ParisTech require a good level of English. There is no formal French language requirement. However, a good command of the French language is essential to interact with people on a day to day basis. Doctoral candidates can attend courses in French as a foreign language during their doctoral studies at ParisTech.

## HEALTH INSURANCE

EU students should obtain a form from their home country social security system that extends their national coverage to France. If you are not a European student, it is mandatory to take out an annual French student social security. To have access to the French student social security, students must be under 28 years of age and enrolled in a programme of at least 4 months' duration. If you are over 28 years old, you may benefit under certain conditions from the system of universal medical coverage (CMU, Couverture Médicale Universelle), for which you must pay a special annual premium. If you are salaried in France with the status of 'salaried worker', you will benefit automatically from affiliation to the French social security system, subject to a minimum number of hours of work and a minimum amount of paid contributions. The coverage can be extended to your family under certain conditions.

## ACCOMMODATION

Heads of doctoral programmes are aware that finding somewhere to live near the laboratories is not an easy task. Staff from graduate schools do their best to help doctoral candidates find the right accommodation. However, the general demand for housing is very high. It is therefore advisable to start looking for accommodation in advance. Prices vary from one campus to another. Useful information can be found at: [www.campusfrance.org/en](http://www.campusfrance.org/en)

## REGISTRATION FEES

Registration fees of approximately 400 euros per year are to be paid on arrival. There are no additional tuition fees.

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## CONTACTS

**General information:** [international@paristech.fr](mailto:international@paristech.fr)

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**WWW.PARISTECH.FR**