



Using Veteran's Benefits for Education Abroad

Topic Groups: [Education Abroad](#), [Regulatory Information](#)

Topics: [Student Advising](#)

With the increase in veterans entering the higher education system, more veterans are approaching education abroad offices to use the benefits of the GI Bill (as well as other military benefits) to enroll in programming. The information below is provided to assist education abroad professionals as they support and address the needs of this very specialized subset of students.

How to Build a Positive Relationship with your Home University VA Coordinator

Introduce yourself and get to know your VA officer *before* issues arise. Make sure your first encounter is not dealing with a problem. Give them an overview of study abroad process and programs - and be sure to ask them to educate you on VA benefits.

Think about how to collaborate and present information to students. For example, have your VA officer review any information about military benefits you are posting on the education abroad office website. Together, outline the process of working with study abroad participants who are using military benefits. Discuss how the respective offices will be notified that an eligible student has applied. What is your communication plan?

Consider offering combined information sessions for students on how to use military benefits.

Examples of Education Abroad Offices Clarifying Military Benefits

The institutions below represent examples of how education abroad offices may wish to relay military benefits information to students:

[Portland Community College](#) includes student veterans on the "Diversity & Identity" section of their education abroad website with links to resources

[Arizona State University](#)'s list of steps for using the GI Bill includes a testimonial from a veteran and a dependent

[The University of Connecticut](#) includes an infographic specific to UConn programs, and also offers a Veterans Scholarship to cover additional expenses

[The University of Kansas](#) provides a clear eligibility list and tracks veteran students within their online application database for easy follow-up

[Portland State University](#) includes a list of "things to consider" for student veterans, and student spotlight, in addition to a checklist for using aid

Factors to Consider When Applying VA Benefits

Institutions may differ on how they interpret the use of VA benefits for education abroad. These are some questions you may want to research or discuss with your VA officer:

Exchange vs. direct enroll programs - Will students pay home school tuition and fees to home institution or directly to the overseas institution?

Direct bill vs. student payment - If home school uses direct billing option (payment is still being made to the home institution), could they utilize a third-party provider?

Home vs. host certification of enrollment - Who must certify the enrollment and/or grades?

Host institutions must be certified. Must the specific *program* be certified as well?

Could funds be paid to a third party that *is* a degree-granting institution (e.g., SIT, Arcadia)?

Fees specific to study abroad - you may need to itemize program fees for VA officer's review.

Additional Resources

[Post 9/11 GI Bill](#)

[VA Benefits Fact Sheet](#)

[VA Weams Institution Search](#)

[Helping Military Veterans Study Abroad - NAFSA International Educator](#)

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