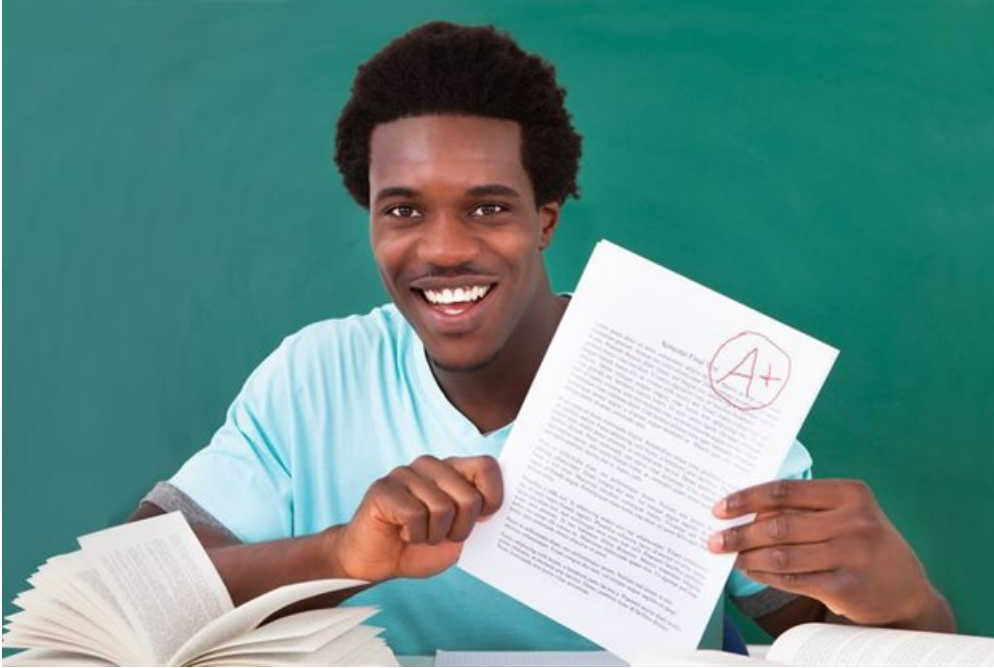


# Looking to study abroad? Why top matric results matter

A successful application to university is the culmination of many years of hard work. As thousands of matriculants wait to hear whether they have been accepted into their chosen universities locally, some have set their sights even higher, and are applying to top-ranked institutions abroad.



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“Students applying to top-ranked universities in the United States and the United Kingdom will face stiff competition. In the 2018/2019 admission round, Harvard and Yale saw between 35,000 and 40,000 applications each and accepted less than 4.5% and 6%, respectively,” says Rebecca Pretorius, country manager for Crimson Education.

Learners who are admitted into the Ivy League, Oxford and Cambridge have earned excellent grades, demonstrated meaningful involvement and depth in extracurricular and leadership activities, and crafted outstanding applications and essays.

South African students have a disadvantage when preparing to study abroad; “For learners in the US and the UK, they have been covering the requirements for applications to top universities for years, whereas locally, students only start thinking about tertiary studies from Grade 11 or even Grade 12,” says Pretorius.

In order to become more competitive and be better prepared come application time, learners are encouraged to take additional self-study programmes and MOOCs - Massive Open Online Courses, outside the classroom. Students should also consider participating in national and international tests and competitions. "In addition, students shouldn't ignore the importance of preparing well in advance in order to do well in the standardised tests, which also carry weight in their applications," says Pretorius.

Some institutions offer scholarships and financial aid to international students. Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and Princeton, among others, use a need-blind admission system. They send out acceptance letters without knowing the financial resources of the applicant; "It takes infallible academic and innovative leadership qualities to get there, but accepted candidates are seen as deserving of a spot, and the institution undertakes to help fund them," says Pretorius.

As part of a high achieving student body within an international network of contacts coming from institutions like MIT and Princeton, students are more likely to receive opportunities to work on cutting-edge research projects, intern at global companies and achieve ambitious career goals.

Through a team mentorship model, Crimson Education students are connected with admission strategists and advisors, who help to find their best fit, become more competitive, and navigate the complex applications process.

Pretorius and her South African team regularly host information evenings for parents and learners interested in studying overseas. For more information, visit [www.crimsoneducation.org](http://www.crimsoneducation.org) or join the [Crimson Education Facebook](#) community.

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