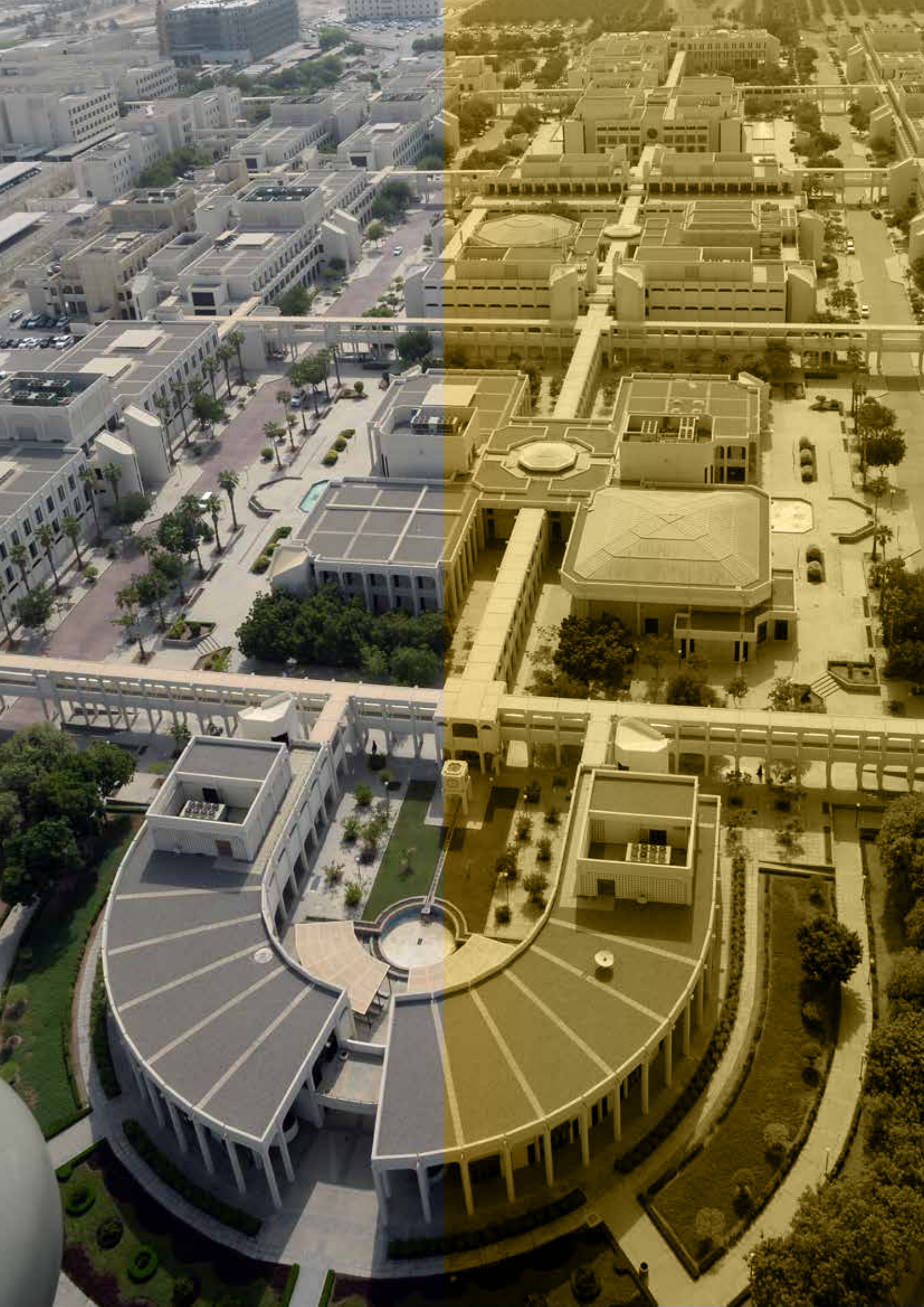




جامعة السلطان قابوس  
Sultan Qaboos University

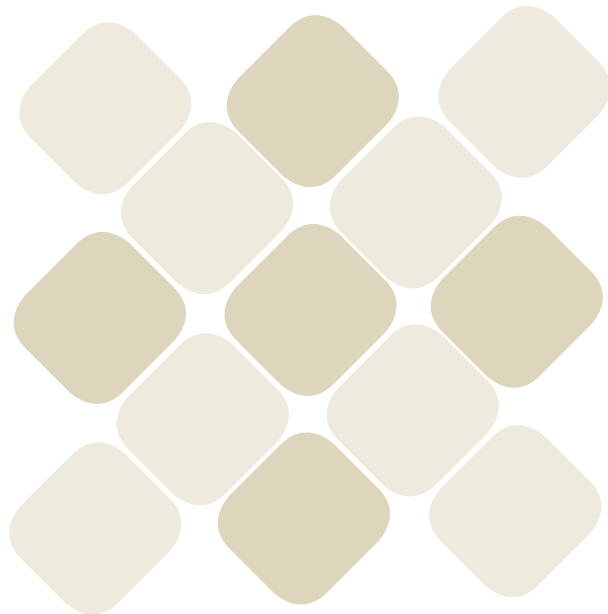


# International Students **GUIDE BOOK**



# *Our Vision*

*To be internationally recognised for our high quality graduates, research and community service and to enhance our status as Oman's house of expertise.*



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**Dr. Rahma Ibrahim Al-Mahrooqi**

Deputy Vice Chancellor for  
Postgraduate Studies & Research

### **Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Postgraduate Studies & Research:**

I am very happy to welcome you to Sultan Qaboos University and, if this is your first time in the country, to the Sultanate of Oman. As an international student, choosing the most suitable institution and program of study is one of the most important decisions you will make. I believe you have made the right choice.

SQU is the leading provider of postgraduate studies in Oman and one of the top universities in the entire region. It has the dedicated faculty and staff, infrastructure, and academic and social environment that are so important to ensuring your time here is productive and engaging. It is also the national university of a country known for its tranquillity, natural beauty, and traditional hospitality. It is this combination that will, I believe, help make your postgraduate studies personally, academically, and socially rewarding.

At SQU, you will interact with faculty, staff and students from around Oman and from almost every corner of the globe. We are proud of the diversity the university has, and hope that this is one of the many aspects of your time in Oman that will broaden your horizons and enrich your perspectives.

I wish you all the best during your time here. Please be assured that the university will do everything it can to support you every step of the way in both your studies and your adjustment to the sultanate. Your success as an international student is of great importance to us, and we wish you all the best.

**Dr. Rahma Ibrahim Al-Mahrooqi**

Deputy Vice Chancellor for  
Postgraduate Studies & Research

**Prof. Abdullah Ambusaidi**  
Dean of Postgraduate Studies



## Dean's Welcome Speech:

It gives me immense pleasure and happiness to welcome you to Oman in general and Sultan Qaboos University (SQU) in particular, the University you have chosen to be an incubator for your postgraduate studies.

You have made the right decision by choosing to pursue your postgraduate studies at SQU, the University that offers suitable services and facilities to support postgraduate students in their studies so that they can fulfil them comfortably and at timely pace. The staff of the Deanship of Postgraduate Studies offer many kinds of support and help which a postgraduate student may need.

The experience you will live at SQU is undoubtedly fun. It will add much to your other experiences especially that you are going to meet with Omani students who come from various governorates in the Sultanate. This will definitely familiarize you with the Omani society's culture, traditions and customs.

Once again, I welcome you wishing you a pleasant stay at your second home (Oman), the country of love, peace and harmony. I ask you not to hesitate to contact us regarding any matter of urgency which may help you finish your intended studies on time and comfortably. May God bestow His blessings on you and may He lavish you with useful knowledge.

**Prof. Abdullah Ambusaidi**  
Dean of Postgraduate Studies



## **1 .** About Sultan Qaboos University

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1.1 Postgraduate Programs

1.2 Financial Support



# 1. About Sultan Qaboos University

Sultan Qaboos University (SQU) is the realization of the promise made by His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Bin Said during the 10th anniversary of Oman's National Day in 1980. Construction started in 1982 and the first batch of students was enrolled to Sultan Qaboos University in 1986. In accordance with the Royal Decree of His Majesty, the University commenced with five colleges namely: Medicine, Engineering, Agriculture, Education and Science. Later, the College of Arts was established in 1987, followed by the College of Commerce and Economics, which received its first batch of students in 1993. The College of Law joined the University in 2006 and finally the College of Nursing was established in 2008.

Currently Sultan Qaboos University consists of nine colleges, namely the College of Agricultural & Marine Sciences, College of Arts & Social Sciences, College of Economics & Political Science, College of Education, College of Engineering, College of Law, College of Medicine & Health Sciences, College of Nursing and College of Science.

The University, represented by the Deanship of Postgraduate Studies, offers a range of postgraduate programs at the diploma, masters and doctoral levels through advanced course work and research in various combinations.

One of the key developments at SQU is the creation of doctoral programs in four science-based colleges and the Colleges of Education and Arts and Social Sciences. A total of 35 doctoral programs are currently offered in six colleges. These programs rest on a strong research base, which emphasizes academic excellence and addresses issues of national strategic importance.

A master's degree may be obtained by course work, thesis, a combination of coursework and thesis, or a combination of coursework and comprehensive examination. We currently have over 1600 students enrolled in 63 postgraduate programs covering scientific and humanities programs. Postgraduate diplomas are awarded to students who satisfy certain coursework requirements. For more information about postgraduate programs kindly visit: [www.squ.edu.om/ps](http://www.squ.edu.om/ps)

# 1.1 Postgraduate Programs

## A. College of Agricultural and Marine Sciences

### PhD Programs:

1. Crop Sciences
2. Food Science and Nutrition
3. Soil and Water Management
4. Marine Sciences and Fisheries
5. Natural Resource Economics

### Master's Programs:

1. Natural Resource Economics
2. Agricultural Engineering
3. Animal Science
4. Crop Production
5. Crop Protection
6. Food Science and Nutrition
7. Marine Science and Fisheries
8. Soil and Water Management

## B. College of Arts and Social Sciences

### PhD Programs:

1. Arabic Language and Literature
2. History
3. Information Studies

### Postgraduate Diploma Programs:

1. Translation

### Master's Programs:

1. Arabic Language
2. History
3. Geography
4. Mass Communication
5. Library and Information Science
6. Sociology
7. Social Work
8. Archaeology

## C. College of Economics and Political Sciences

### Master's Programs:

1. Business Administration (MBA)
2. Information Systems
3. International Relations and Security Studies

## D. College of Education

### PhD Programs:

1. Curriculum and Instruction in Arabic Language
2. Curriculum and Instruction in Mathematics
3. Curriculum and Instruction in Sciences
4. Curriculum and Instruction in Islamic Education
5. Curriculum and Instruction in Social Studies
6. Educational Administration

### Master's Programs:

1. Curriculum and Methods of Teaching Arabic Language
2. Curriculum and Methods of Teaching English Language
3. Curriculum and Methods of Teaching Islamic Education
4. Curriculum and Methods of Teaching Science Education
5. Curriculum and Methods of Teaching Mathematics Education
6. Curriculum and Methods of Teaching Social Studies (History and Geography only)
7. Educational Administration
8. Psychology
9. Islamic Studies:
10. Sport Sciences
11. Instructional and Learning Technologies

## E. College of Engineering

### PhD Programs:

1. Civil Engineering
2. Electrical and Computer Engineering
3. Mechanical Engineering
4. Industrial Engineering
5. Petroleum Engineering
6. Chemical and Process Engineering

### Master's Programs:

1. Civil Engineering
2. Civil Engineering (Water Resources)
3. Civil Engineering (Environmental Engineering)
4. Electrical and Computer Engineering
5. Mechanical Engineering
6. Industrial Engineering
7. Petroleum and Natural Gas Engineering
8. Geomatics Engineering
9. Chemical and Process Engineering

## F. College of Law

### Master's Programs:

1. Public Law
2. Private Law
3. Commercial Law
4. Criminal Law

## G. College of Medicine and Health Sciences

### PhD Programs:

1. Biochemistry
2. Microbiology and Immunology
3. Epidemiology and Public Health
4. Clinical Pharmacy
5. Physiology
6. Human and Clinical Anatomy
7. Radiology and Molecular Imaging
8. Genetics

### Master's Programs:

1. Biochemistry and Molecular Biology
2. Medical Microbiology
3. Epidemiology and Medical Statistics
4. Clinical Pharmacy
5. Physiology
6. Human and Clinical Anatomy
7. Medical Physics
8. Clinical Bio-Chemistry

## H. College of Nursing

### Master's Programs:

1. Nursing - Adult Acute Care.

## I. College of Science

### PhD Programs:

1. Biology
2. Earth Sciences
3. Mathematics
4. Physics
5. Statistics
6. Chemistry
7. Computer Sciences

### Master's Programs:

1. Biology
2. Computer Sciences
3. Chemistry
4. Applied Mathematics
5. Pure Mathematics
6. Physics
7. Statistics
8. Environmental Science
9. Petroleum Geosciences

## 1.2 Financial Support

### 1.2.1 Scholarships

The university offers the following types of scholarships annually:

1. Exemption from tuition fees scholarships
2. Full scholarships
3. Monthly stipend scholarships.

### Benefits for Recipients of Scholarships

1. Exemption from tuition fees. This exemption, however, does not apply to housing, transportation, food, academic references, or any other fees required by the University.
2. Receiving a monthly allowance for students who are on full scholarship and for those on monthly allowance scholarship.
3. Non-Omani recipients of scholarships shall receive one economy class ticket per year to the nearest international airport in their permanent residence.

### 1.2.2 Financial Support

This is a type of financial support provided for PhD students to cover the costs of consumables needed in their research. However, financial support does not cover expenses for conference attendance, major equipment purchases and personal salaries.

### 1.2.3 Conference Attendance Support

Conference attendance support is a financial support provided only for PhD students to cover the costs of a conference presentation.







## **2. Facilities, Services and Activities**

of Sultan Qaboos University

### **2.1 Facilities**

**2.1.1** Libraries

**2.1.2** Post Office

**2.1.3** Bank

**2.1.4** Student Services Center

**2.1.5** Male and Female Sports Complex

**2.1.6** Mosque



## 2.1.1 Libraries

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### 2.1.1.1 Main Library

The Main Library is located in the cultural center behind the clock tower. It has twenty single study rooms, and four discussion study rooms available for SQU postgraduate students and faculty. The SQU internet network is available to faculty, students, and staff with a valid SQU ID and password. There are seven computers in the male reading area and thirteen computers in the female reading area that enable students to access the internet and search the library catalog and electronic resources. All students have an electronic service which allows the student to log-in to various library systems to track borrowed items and due dates, renew borrowed items, pay library fines and track requests. An interlibrary loan service is also provided for SQU staff, faculty and students. It allows the Main Library users to borrow physical material from other libraries and universities as well as obtain copies of articles or book chapters, conference papers, symposia, books and theses that are not held by SQU libraries. There are eleven printing, copying and scanning machines at the Main Library distributed on each floor. Orientation programs are also offered at the main library whereby students are familiarized with the library layout, the collection and available services. In these programs students are also shown how to search, retrieve and cite from different sources. The Main Library also conducts different courses and workshops on information skills for students, employees, faculty and SQU and people from outside the university. These workshops include search skills for electronic resources and Google scholar. Such workshops are effective and packed with information which benefit researchers and those interested in scientific research.

**Table 1:** Collections and Categories

Category	Number	Total
Books (2016)	Printed – 211,255	561,240
	Electronic – 349,985	
Periodicals (2016)	Printed – 295	40,715
	Electronic – 40,420	
Theses (2016)	Printed – 4,277	1,454,723
	Electronic – 3,450,446	
Databases (2016)	Arabic - 7	43
	English - 36	
AV media (2016)	8,488	8,488

**Table 2:** Types of Collections and their Locations

Types of Collection	Location
Reference Books	Ground Floor
Book shelves (A – J)	Mezzanine Floor
Book shelves (K – QA76.76)	First Floor
Book shelves (QA76.76 – Z)	Second Floor
Current and bound periodicals (English & Arabic)	Third Floor
Special Collections	Roof Floor

**Table 3:** Opening Hours

Fall & Spring Semesters	
Sunday to Thursday	7:30 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.
Saturday	7:30 a.m.– 2:30 p.m.
Summer Break	
Sunday to Thursday	7:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m
Winter Break	
Sunday to Thursday	7:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m
Month of Ramadhan	
Sunday to Thursday	8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m
During final examinations	
Sunday to Saturday	<b>24 hours</b>



### 2.1.1.2 Medical Library

The library is located on the ground floor adjacent to the College of Medicine, the Hospital, Faculty Club and the Administration Block of the University. It holds a substantial collection of current and retrospective medical literature in various media to support the academic programs of the College of Medicine, University Hospital and the health care community in the Sultanate. It has the capacity of accommodating 350 seats, 194 study carrels and 16 cubicles for individual study.

**Table 4: Medical Libraries Collections**

Types of Collection	Total Number
Books	Printed – 14,596
Periodicals	Printed – 65
Theses	Printed – 102
AV media	1,366

**Table 5: Opening Hours**

Fall & Spring Semesters	
Sunday to Thursday	7:30 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.
Summer Break	
Sunday to Thursday	7:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.
Month of Ramadhan	
Sunday to Thursday	8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

### 2.1.1.3 CEPS Library

The library is located at the College of Economics and Political Sciences (CEPS). It is an educational and research based establishment specializing in the fields of accounting, business administration, economics and insurance. This library is equipped with several reading halls (separate for males and females), a references and special collection hall, a group discussion hall and newspaper browsing rooms. In addition, there is also a teaching hall for programs given by the library and a hall for postgraduate students. Students, faculty and staff are updated with the new arrival of books through periodic emails and other notifications. The library also provides wireless networks (WiFi) for its users. Among the services provided are training services for users and students. This is done to demonstrate to the students how to use the technologies properly in indexing and searching the electronic resources of the library. An orientation tour is also offered by the CEPS library to new staff and students at the university; it involves showing them the library and its various sections, services and available materials.

**Table 6: CEPS Libraries Collections**

Types of Collection	Total Number
Book Collections	19,061
English Language Materials	14,718
Arabic Language Materials	4,343
Total Periodical Collections	36,093
English Titles (Issues)	5,983
Arabic Titles (Issues)	4,047
Electronic Resources	26,063
Databases	8
CD - Rom	541
Government Publications	5,557

**Opening hours:** Sunday to Thursday (7:30 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.)

#### 2.1.1.4 Omani Studies Center Library

The Omani Studies Center Library is located on the first floor of the Cultural Center Building. The library offers various titles in different fields and more than 2,500 Omani theses, many publications from Oman's governmental and private institutions, and various other publications from the Gulf region. The library collects all publications related to Oman and then makes them available for students and researchers.

The library consists of several halls: the Oman books hall, the thesis and dissertations hall, the government publications hall and the manuscripts hall. The books hall has two levels, the first of which is the reception and the library staff offices, the second level contains round tables, and there are single rooms in order to offer a quiet place for users. It is equipped with computers for searching purposes, two photocopying machines and scanners to facilitate the work of researchers and students. There is a computer lab with sixteen computers and the wireless network is available in all library premises, which allows users to access using their personal laptops. In addition, there are eight private rooms for researchers. The library offers tours for students and visitors from outside the university to introduce them to the library, its services, halls, book collections, and library's catalog searching. Students with queries regarding the information held, data available, or those with requests to access electronic resources or to reserve a private room may ask the reference service section.

**Table 7: Opening Hours**

Fall & Spring Semesters	
Sunday to Thursday	7:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.
Summer and Winter Semester Break	
Sunday to Thursday	7:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.
Month of Ramadhan	
Sunday to Thursday	8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.



### 2.1.1.5 College of Arts & Social Sciences Library

The library at the College of Arts and Social Sciences is considered a specialized library in arts. It's role is supplementary to the Main Library in striving to serve students, faculty members and staff of the college. It includes 11,000 books referenced using the American congress library style. The library is located on the ground floor and is connected with other libraries on campus through the library system, which aims to update and inform about the library's resources and to make these easily accessible. The library provides the following services to meet the needs of users: Borrowing, References Service, Continuous Informing Service, Guiding and Training Service, and Periodicals Services.

**Table 8: Opening Hours**

Fall & Spring Semesters	
Sunday to Thursday	8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Summer and Winter Semester Break	
Sunday to Thursday	8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Month of Ramadhan	
Sunday to Thursday	8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

### 2.1.1.6 College of Education Library

The library aspires to excel and provide the best services to the College's community. It provides the latest prints and electronic resources that cover education sciences disciplines and curriculum. Students can also access the electronic resources from outside campus. the Loan Service which is located at the main entrance of the library, is one of the services that the library offers. Students can borrow printed materials with the exception of reference and scientific journals and theses. References and Information services help the students to locate available books and information resources such as the use of automated index and guidance on how to use the references. The library provides a photocopy service for its collection of printed materials of books, periodicals and theses. There are computers available inside the library in addition to the wireless internet service.

**Table 9: Opening Hours**

Schedule	
Sunday & Thursday	8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

### 2.1.1.7 Mosque Library

The Mosque Library is located in the northern-east side of the university. It is one of the specialized libraries under the supervision of the Religious Guidance and Direction Department of the Deanship of Student Affairs at Sultan Qaboos University. The library contains cabinets and treasures that are equal to approximately thirteen thousand books; these are specialized religious science texts covering topics such as: Quranic sciences, interpretation and intonation, hadeeth and other books, history and biography of Prophet Mohammed "peace be upon Him", books of faith and philosophy, jurisprudence and assets, translators and references, and a special section for religious books relating to women. It also contains a section for manuscripts, another for culture and intellectuality, and some specialized periodicals. The audios include more than 800 items which focus on different aspects such as faith, intellectuality, national melodies and religious poems. There are also audio lectures by his Eminence Sheikh Ahmed Al Khalili, Grand Mufti of the Sultanate, and other lectures from various Arab and Islamic countries. There are two rooms (one for storing books and the other for reading), an information section, and the librarian's office. Guidance and direction services are offered in order for visitors to make good use of the library collections. The online index service is another service that allows visitors to use the computers to search online for various materials. In addition, the library offers an internal access service through the provision of prepared places and allows the visitors to access sources, manuscripts, reference books and periodicals. However, it is not permitted to borrow from the Mosque Library. Other services like photocopying and loan services are also available.

#### Opening hours

The library opens its doors to the visitors throughout the weekdays, from Sunday to Thursday, from 8:00 in the morning to 2:00 in the afternoon according to the following timetable:

**Table 10: Opening Schedule**

Days	Male/Female
Sunday	Female
Monday	Male
Tuesday	Female
Wednesday	Male
Thursday	Male

## 2.1.2 Post Office

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The post office is located on campus where one can buy stamps and send letters, cards, and parcels. It is located on the ground floor of the Students Commercial Center, and near the Faculty Club if courier delivery is preferred (DHL or Aramex). They are open Sunday to Thursday from 7:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

## 2.1.3 Bank

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Banking services are provided on SQU campus through the SQU branch of Bank Muscat. The bank is located near the Students Commercial Center, adjacent to the College of Science. It is open from 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Sunday to Thursday.

## 2.1.4 Student Services Center

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This center consists of two dining floors. The top floor is allocated for banquet, restaurant and cafeterias. The ground floor contains a cafeteria that sells snacks to students and visitors. It also includes a public waiting area used by students to rest after or between classes and to study. There are two television rooms which are sometimes used for the screening of selected films in order to provide students with a chance to relax while learning about the wider world. One of the television rooms accommodates 46 students while the other accommodates 88 students. The ground floor also contains a hall for games which include three snooker tables, three billiard tables, two table tennis tables, and a twelve-lane bowling alley with the latest electronic design features.

## 2.1.5 Male and Female Sports Complex

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There are two sports complexes separately allocated for male and female students. The female sports complex is located at the Female Complex 1 near the College of Education. It is open from Sunday to Thursday. The male complex is located near the Agricultural Experimental Station (AES). Each complex includes football fields for athletics, outdoor stadiums and volleyball playgrounds, outdoor volleyball fields, indoor sport halls which include handball and volleyball playing areas, two halls for weight lifting, a swimming pool and squash courts.

## 2.1.6 Mosque

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It is considered a precious gem on the necklace of SQU. Besides the praying hall there is a large courtyard. For female students, there is an oratory that accommodates 400 prayers. The SQU mosque includes facilities in which the comfort of the students, employees, and visitors was taken into consideration through providing them with a design that inspires tranquility and peace of mind.



## **2. Facilities, Services and Activities** of Sultan Qaboos University

### **2.2 Services**

2.2.1 Health Care Services

2.2.2 Internet Access

2.2.3 On-Campus Transportation

2.2.4 Catering Services

2.2.5 Services for International

Students only





## 2.2.1 Health Care Services

Sultan Qaboos University offers free health care to all students at the Students Clinic and Sultan Qaboos University Hospital. International students are responsible for any treatment costs incurred by seeking outside health care services. Personal accident insurance is also granted annually for all SQU students to cover any accident while the students are under the supervision of the University, or are taking part in the University activities or are travelling to or from such activities.

## 2.2.2 Internet Access

The University provides intranet and internet servers support for email and websites hosting. Postgraduate students can get their internet access from the CIS (Center for Information System). SQU web resources can be accessed on and off campus. In addition, Wi-Fi service is available to all students where they can get the accessibility through the registration of their devices in the SQU-Portal.

## 2.2.3 On-Campus Transportation \*

Transportation inside the university campus is available for free. There are buses for male students and buses for female students, each with designated bus stops (please refer to the map for the routes). Mini buses with SQU logos are also freely available every 15 minutes for people who are going from the SQU Hospital to the FAMCO clinic. The waiting area is in the hospital lobby.

## 2.2.4 Catering Services

Sultan Qaboos University provides a payable student catering service for all postgraduate students including international students during the weekdays (excluding Fridays and Saturdays). Students who would like to use this service should visit the food company office for the purchase of food vouchers according to the following details below:

**Table 11**

Male Students			
Meal	Timings	Price (OR)	Location
Breakfast	6:45 - 8:30 am	0.400	Restaurant at Student Services Center
Lunch	12:00 - 2:30 pm	2.600	
Dinner	7:00 - 9:30 pm	1.700	

\* Transportation Map is attached.

Female Students			
Meal	Timings	Price (OR)	Location
Breakfast	6:45 - 8:30 am	0.400	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complex (1) unit (4)</li> <li>• Complex (2)</li> <li>• Complex (3)</li> <li>• Complex (4) unit (10)</li> <li>• Complex (5) unit (8)</li> </ul>
Lunch	12:00 - 2:30 pm	2.600	
Dinner	7:00 - 9:30 pm	1.700	

## 2.2.5 Services for International Students only

### 2.2.5.1 Visa Processing

#### ▶ Student Visa Requirements

Sultan Qaboos University assists international students who are unconditionally admitted into the postgraduate programs in obtaining their visas. Admitted students who want to get a student visa must fill in the form and submit the following documents to the International Students Section:

1. Medical Exam Certificate (Depends on the country you came from)
2. Copy of Passport
3. 2 personal photos (4x6 cm)
4. Letter of admission to the program (Unconditional admission)
5. Sponsorship Acceptance Letter/ Contract (if any)

#### ▶ Visa Renewal Requirements

Students must fill in the required form and submit the following:

1. Copy of passport
2. Copy of visa
3. Copy of residency card
4. 2 personal photos (4x6 cm)
5. Copy of sponsorship contract (if any)
6. Student's enrolment letter
7. Filled Visa Application Form found at: [www.rop.gov.om](http://www.rop.gov.om)

#### ▶ Official Visa (Temporary):

Students who are conditionally admitted can be given an official visa for a short duration until they succeed in meeting all the admission requirements. These students must fill in the required form and submit the following:

1. Copy of passport
2. 2 personal photos (4x6 cm)
3. Letter of admission to the program
4. Sponsorship Acceptance Letter/ Contract (if any)
5. Travel Insurance

► **Family visa:**

International students can bring along their immediate family members (spouse and/or children) provided that the student provides comprehensive health insurance for his/her family members and pays the visa fees and accommodation. The required form must be filled and the following documents must be submitted:

1. Copy of family members passport(s)
2. 2 personal photos (4x6 cm)
3. Student's copy of passport
4. Health insurance for all family members

**Note:**

All visa processes are done in accordance with the immigration rules of Royal Oman Police.

**2.2.5.2 Accommodation**

The International Students Section provides assistance to all international postgraduate students who wish to find suitable accommodation close to the University. The accommodation allocated for postgraduate students is situated outside the university premises but is only a 5 minute drive to SQU.

**Table 12:** Rental options for students

Students' accommodation	No. of Rooms	Monthly rent	Furniture/Electronics included		Electricity/ Water bill
			Furniture	Electronics	
3 Persons in 1 flat	3 bedrooms + attached bathrooms + 1 small dining room	300 OR (100 OR per person)	Bed, Cupboard, study table	Refrigerator, cooker, and washing machine only.	Electricity bill is 10 OR each person in every month. Water is free.





## **2. Facilities, Services and Activities** of Sultan Qaboos University

### **2.3 Activities**

- 2.3.1 Students Activities at SQU
- 2.3.2 Student Advisory Council
- 2.3.3 The Postgraduate Studies Advisory Committee
- 2.3.4 Activities for International Students only

## 2.3.1 Students Activities at SQU

SQU organizes many non-academic activities throughout the academic year in which all students are welcome to participate. These activities cater for a wide range of interests and abilities and include cultural, sports, scientific and social events. It is hoped that participation will lead to more creativity among students and perhaps develop their talents as well. Unfortunately, international students may only take part in local events.

The Department of Cultural and Sports Activities, which is located at the Deanship of Students Affairs, is the body responsible for the non-academic activities at the University; these include both those arranged by student groups, which fall under the Deanship itself, and the ones arranged by student groups at the University colleges or centers

- **Student groups which fall under the Department of Cultural & Sports Activities, Deanship of Student Affairs:**

- **Cultural Groups** which are supervised by the Student Groups Section:  
(Al Khalil bin Ahmed for Literature, Voice of Development, Society Friends, History and Archeology, and English Language and Translation).
- **Artistic Groups** which are supervised by the Artistic and Cultural Lectures and Seminars Section:  
(Photography, Fine Arts, Music and Traditional Arts and Theatre).
- **Logistics Groups** which are supervised by the Media Planning and Activity Section:  
(Information Technology Society and Media Group).

- **Student groups which fall under the Department of Religious Guidance and Direction, Deanship of Student Affairs:**

- **Islamic Culture Group.**

- **Student groups which fall under the Colleges:**

- **College of Science:**  
(Biology Group, Physics Group, Computer Science Group, Mathematics and Statistics Group, Chemistry Group and Earth Science Group).
- **College of Nursing:**  
Nursing Group.
- **College of Medicine and Health Sciences:**  
(Public Health Group, Medical Education Group, Research Exchange Group, Professional Exchange Group, Humanity Affairs Group, Sports and Health Group and Biomedical Science Group).

- **College of Engineering:**

(Architecture and Civil Engineering Group, Computer and Electrical Engineering Group, Mechatronics Engineering Group, Mechanical Engineering Group, Industrial Engineering Group, Petroleum Engineering Group and Chemical Engineering Group).

- **College of Agricultural and Marine Sciences:**

(Natural Resource and Agricultural Economics Group, Plant Science Group, Marine Science, Agricultural Engineering and Soil and Water Management Group, Animal Science and Veterinary Medicine Group, and Nutrition and Food Science Group).

- **College of Arts and Social Sciences:**

(Environment and Geography Group, Information Technology and Libraries Group, Social Vision Group, Historical Majan Group, Arabic Tongue Group, Insight Creativity Group, Social Service Group, Media Creativity Group and Tourism).

- **College of Education:**

(Sports and Society Group, Psychology Group, Technology of Learning and Education Group and Educational Creativity Group).

- **College of Economics and Political Sciences:**

(Marketing Club, Operation Management and Commercial Statistics Group, Finance and Economics Group, Investment Club, Information Centre Group, Omani Management Group and Accounting Group).

- **College of Law:**

(Legal Awareness Group).

#### 4. Student groups which fall under the Deanships and Centers:

- **Deanship of Postgraduate Studies**

(Postgraduate Student Society).

- **Deanship of Research:**

(Innovation and Entrepreneurship Group).

- **Center of Information Systems:**

(Free and Open Source Software).



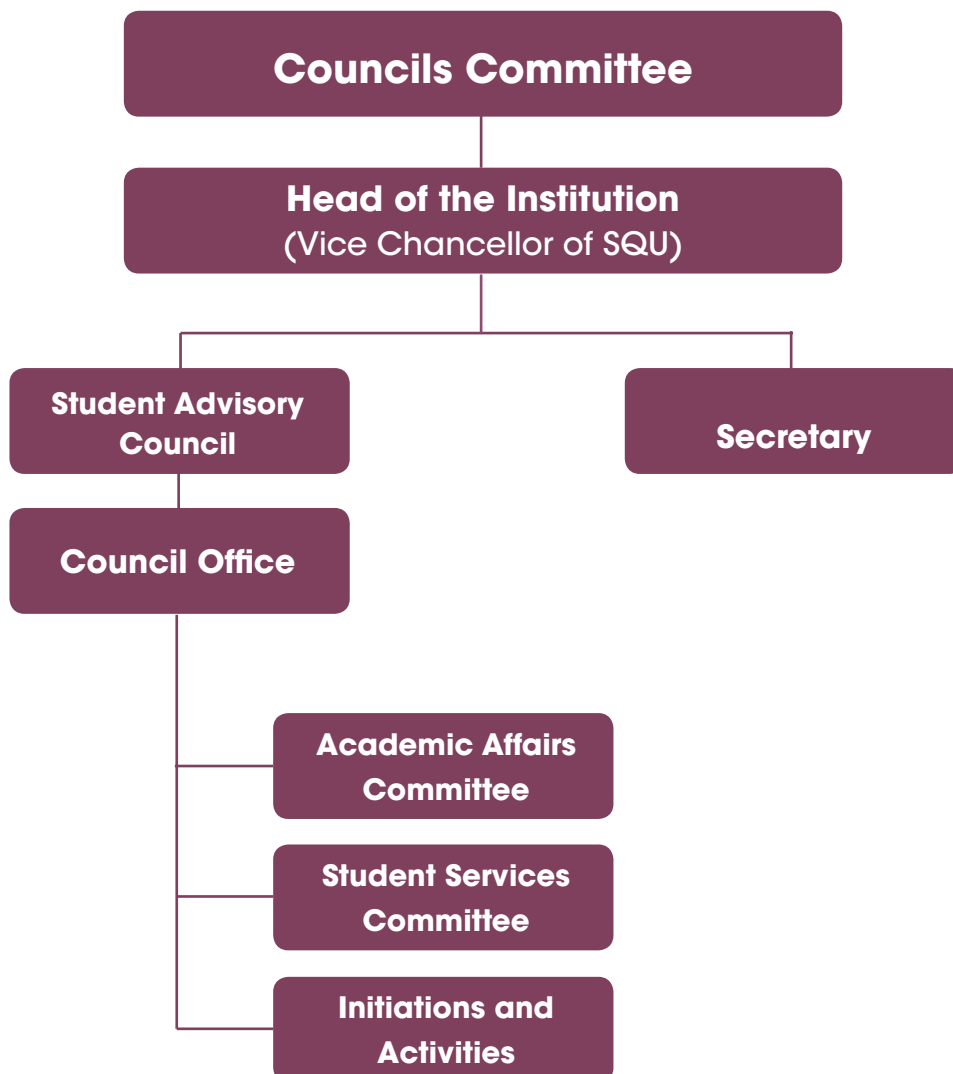
## 2.3.2 Student Advisory Council

The Student Advisory Council is a student body at Sultan Qaboos University (SQU) consisting of 17 members who are elected annually by SQU students. It contributes to the development of the student community and has an influence on many aspects of our students' university life such as: orientation, academic performance, service and extra-curricular activities.

### The Council Office:

The council office consists of the council president as well as the five following members:

1. Council Vice President
2. President of the Academic Committee
3. President of the Student Services Committee
4. President of Initiations and Activities Committee
5. Secretary



**Figure1: The Organizational Chart of the Student Advisory Council**

### Nomination Criteria

1. A student must pass at least one academic semester successfully with the minimum allowed course load (9 credit hours).
2. Cumulative Grade Points Average must not fall under (2.00) for bachelor students and (3.00) for MSc & PhD students.
3. The student must not exceed the official academic program duration for the course they are enrolled in.
4. The student must be registered for at least the minimum allowed course load during the membership duration (Fall & Spring semesters) with the exception of those who are having their graduation or Summer semesters.
5. The student must not commit any kind of disciplinary violation or be convicted of a criminal act unless they are given due consideration before the start of the nomination deadline.

### Nomination Criteria for the President and Vice President Positions:

1. The student must be Omani.
2. Students studying a Bachelor's degree must pass at least (60) credit hours successfully from their degree plan or (15) credit hours for postgraduate students.
3. The president and vice president of the Council are allowed to hold their position for one term only.
4. They must not have any other administrative positions in any of the student groups at SQU.

## 2.3.3 The Postgraduate Studies Advisory Committee

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Based on His Excellency Qarar no. 2017/194, the Postgraduate Studies Advisory Committee was formed. The committee consists of the following members:

- The Dean of Postgraduate Studies **Chairman**
- The President of Student Advisory Council **Member**
- A postgraduate student representing each college **Member**
- A staff member representing the Deanship of Postgraduate Studies **Rapporteur**



**The main tasks of the committee are as follow:**

1. To foster the principals of transparency, trust, positive criticism and opinion exchange between the Deanship and postgraduate students.
2. To encourage the exchange of thoughts and ideas in the areas that need to be improved.
3. To receive and consider suggestions given by the postgraduate students.
4. To improve the administrative procedures practiced by the departments in the Deanship by using the mentioned suggestions.

### **2.3.4 Activities for International Students only**

The International Students Section organizes annual recreational and cultural tours inside and out of Muscat for International Students (every Fall and Spring semester). These tours help students to unwind from their academic curricular, develop friendships with other international students, and to explore the beauty of Oman.



# 3. Living in Oman

- 3.1 Shopping, Dining & Leisure
- 3.2 Occasions and Festivals in Oman
- 3.3 Annual Exhibitions
- 3.4 National Public Holidays in Oman
- 3.5 Living Expenses
- 3.6 Cultural Tips





Welcome to Oman

### 3. Living in Oman

Oman enjoys one of the most diverse environments in the region with various tourist attractions. It is mainly known for cultural tourism attractions, such as the Royal Opera House in Al Qurum, various museums in Muscat and forts across the country.

There are many examples of popular tourist attractions such as: wadies, deserts, beaches, and mountains. These make Oman unique to its neighboring countries. Jebel Shams is considered to be the tallest mountain, highest point, and is a popular destination for camping in Oman. Other popular tourist activities include sea diving, sand skiing in the desert, mountain-climbing, camel racing, and camping which can be found in many different locations across Oman. Most of the shopping malls and centers are located in Muscat, the capital.

For more detailed information about the tourism attractions in Oman, you may visit the Ministry of Tourism web page:

<http://www.omantourism.gov.om/>

## 3.1 Shopping, Dining & Leisure

### 3.1.1 Shopping Malls

Muscat has come a long way from the old simple souqs (Arab Markets) and now boasts ultra-modern shopping malls throughout the city. The larger shopping malls have a wide variety of shops for everyday clothing from high-end designer shops to shops selling locally produced products. On the other hand, Muttrah Souq is one of Oman's oldest traditional markets, situated in Muttrah near the corniche. It is here you will encounter aromatic smells of frankincense and Arabian perfumes; it is also known for its handicrafts including silverware, daggers, traditional Omani sweets (Halwa) and spices. The table below displays a list of shopping malls for your guide:

**Table 13: Shopping Centers in Muscat**

Shopping Malls	Location	Opening Hours
Muscat City Center	Seeb, Muscat	<b>Weekdays</b> 10:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.
Qurum City Center	Qurum, Muscat	<b>Weekends</b> 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Markaz Al Bahja	Al Mawaleh, Muscat	10:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.
Muscat Grand Mall	Al Ghubra, Muscat	10:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.
Oman Avenues Mall	Al Ghubra, Muscat	10:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.
Panorama Mall	Al Ghubra, Muscat	10:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.
Al Araimi Complex	Qurum, Muscat	10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. 5:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.
Qurum Complex	Qurum, Muscat	<b>Saturday- Thursday</b> 8:30 a.m. 1:00- p.m. 4:00 p.m.- 10:00 p.m. <b>Friday</b> 4:00 p.m. 10:00- p.m.
Sabco Commercial Centre	Qurum, Muscat	<b>Saturday- Thursday</b> 10:00 a.m. 10:00- p.m. <b>Friday</b> 4:00 p.m. 10:00- p.m.
Al Khamis Plaza	Qurum, Muscat	<b>Saturday- Thursday</b> 10:00 a.m. 10:00- p.m. <b>Friday</b> 4:00 p.m. 10:00- p.m.
Al Masa Mall	Shatti Al Qurum, Muscat	<b>Saturday- Thursday</b> 10:00 a.m. 10:00- p.m. <b>Friday</b> 1:30 p.m. 10:00- p.m.

Bareeq Al Shatti	Shatti Al Qurum, Muscat	10:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.
Zakher Mall	Al Khuwair, Muscat	<b>Saturday - Thursday</b> 9:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. 4:30 a.m. - 9:30 p.m. <b>Friday</b> 4:30 a.m. - 9:30 p.m.

### 3.1.2 Dining out in Muscat

There is a wide variety of restaurants in Muscat offering popular cuisines including Omani, Arabic, Indian, Oriental and Western dishes. There are many places to eat, and big shopping malls are often considered as great places to dine-in as you can find a wide range of cuisines. Western fast food chains like Subway, McDonalds and Pizza Hut are also available in large shopping malls. Additionally, there are also several major hotels that offer fine dining restaurants.

The table below gives some details for well-known restaurants you could be interested in:



**Table 14: Casual Dining in Muscat**

Restaurant	Location	Opening Hours	Telephone No.
Chili's	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>City Center (Seeb &amp; Qurum)</li> <li>Muscat Grand Mall</li> </ul>	<b>Saturday - Tuesday</b> 11:00 a.m - 11:00 p.m <b>Wednesday - Thursday</b> 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 a.m. <b>Fridays</b> 1:00 p.m. - 12:00 a.m.	+96824558815
Nando's	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Muscat City Center, And Qurum (Commercial Area),</li> <li>Oman Avenues Mall</li> <li>Al Mouj (the Wave)</li> </ul>	<b>Sunday - Thursday</b> 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 a.m. <b>Friday - Saturday</b> 10:00 am. - 11:00 p.m.	+96824558600 +96824561818 +96822008383
Shang Thai	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Muscat Grand Mall</li> <li>The Wave</li> </ul>	<b>Sunday - Saturday</b> 11:30 a.m. - 11:00 p.m.	+96822006644 +96824554774
Zahr Al Limon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Wave, Muscat</li> </ul>	1:00 p.m. - 11:00 p.m. <b>Saturday</b> 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 p.m.	+96824543311

Shakespeare & Co.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Qurum</li> <li>• The Wave, Muscat</li> </ul>	7:00 a.m. – 12:00 a.m.	+96824181363
Casper & Gambini	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Avenues Mall</li> </ul>	<b>Sunday – Saturday</b> 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 p.m.	+96822060085
Bab Idress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Avenues Mall, 4th Floor</li> </ul>	<b>Sunday – Saturday</b> 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 p.m.	
Italiano Restaurant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mawaleh</li> <li>• Qurum</li> </ul>	12:00 p.m. – 12:00 a.m.	+96824180515
Volare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Qurum, Muscat</li> </ul>	<b>Sunday – Saturday</b> 12:00 p.m. – midnight	+96822326664
Melenzane	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shatti Qurum</li> </ul>	12pm11-pm	+96891263340
Slider Station	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shatti Qurum</li> </ul>	1pm11-pm	+96824698990
B+F Roadside Diner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shatti Qurum</li> <li>• AL Mouj</li> </ul>	12pm11-pm	+96824698836
Shake Shack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Muscat City Center, Seeb</li> </ul>	<b>Saturday – Wednesday</b> 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 a.m.	+96822300182
Kargeen Café	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Madinat Sultan Qaboos</li> </ul>	<b>Saturday – Thursday</b> 7:00 a.m. – 1:00 a.m. Friday 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 a.m.	+96899253351
Pizza Hut	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City CenterSeeb &amp; Qurum</li> <li>• Oman Avenues Mall</li> <li>• Muscat Grand Mall</li> <li>• Al Khoud</li> </ul>	<b>Everyday</b> 9:00 a.m. – 00 :11 p.m. <b>(food court)</b>	+96824822500
Papa John's	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Al Khuwair</li> <li>• Markaz Al Bahja</li> <li>• Shatti, Al Qurum</li> <li>• Al Khoud</li> </ul>	<b>Sunday – Saturday</b> 11:00 a.m. – 11:45 p.m.	+96824483750 +96824553784 +96822007555 +96824546516
Domino's Pizza	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Al Ghubra</li> <li>• Al Seeb</li> </ul>	10:00 a.m. – 12:00 a.m.	+96895595222 +96824543048
Crepe Café	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Wave</li> <li>• Muscat</li> <li>• Shatti, Al Qurum</li> </ul>	8:30 a.m. – 12:00 a.m.	+96824522469
More Café	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Wave</li> <li>• Shatti, Al Qurum</li> </ul>	8:00 a.m. – 11:00 p.m. 8:00 a.m. – 11:00 p.m.	+96824547446 +96822022555
Passion Café	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Al Khoud</li> </ul>	<b>Saturday – Thursday</b> 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 a.m. <b>Friday</b> 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 a.m.	+96894600633

**Table 15: Fast Food Chains and Coffee Shops in Muscat**

Restaurant	Location	Opening Hours	Telephone No.
McDonalds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City Center, Seeb &amp; Qurum</li> <li>• Oman Avenues Mall</li> <li>• Muscat Grand Mall</li> <li>• Mawaleh</li> <li>• Al Khuwair</li> <li>• Al Khoud</li> <li>• Al Sarooj</li> </ul>	<p><b>Everyday</b> 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 p.m. (food court)</p> <p><b>24 hours</b></p>	<p>+96824558773 +96824060105 +96822009459 +96824421119 +96824691033</p>
KFC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City Center, Seeb &amp; Qurum</li> <li>• Oman Avenues Mall</li> <li>• Muscat Grand Mall</li> <li>• Al Khoud</li> <li>• Mawaleh</li> </ul>	<p><b>Everyday</b> 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 p.m. (food court)</p>	+96824477777
Subway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City Center Seeb &amp; Qurum</li> <li>• Oman Avenues Mall</li> <li>• Muscat Grand Mall</li> <li>• The Wave</li> <li>• Al Khoud</li> <li>• Shatti Qurum</li> </ul>	<p><b>Everyday</b> 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 p.m. (food court)</p>	+96824604664
Hardees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City Center Seeb &amp; Qurum</li> <li>• Oman Avenues Mall</li> <li>• Muscat Grand Mall</li> <li>• Al Khoud</li> </ul>	<p><b>Everyday</b> 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 p.m. (food court)</p>	+96824477774
Burger King	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Qurum</li> <li>• Mawaleh</li> <li>• Madinat Qaboos</li> <li>• Al Khoud Shatti</li> <li>• Madinat Al Ilam</li> <li>• Darsait</li> <li>• The Avenues Mall</li> </ul>	10:00 p.m. – 11:30 p.m.	<p>+96824562461 +96824536044 +96822005700</p>
Starbucks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shatti Al Qurum</li> <li>• Jawharat, Al Qurum Area</li> <li>• Muscat City Center, Seeb</li> <li>• City Center, Qurum</li> <li>• The Wave</li> </ul>	9:00 a.m. – 12:00 a.m.	<p>+96822300169 +96822300171 +96822300163 +96822300161 +96822300173</p>
Costa Café	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Muscat International Airport</li> <li>• City Center, Seeb City Center, Qurum</li> <li>• The Wave</li> <li>• The Avenues Mall</li> <li>• Muscat</li> <li>• Grand Mall</li> <li>• Shatti, Al Qurum</li> </ul>	<p><b>24 hours</b></p> <p>8:00 a.m. – 11:00 p.m. 8:00 a.m. – 11:00 p.m. 7:00 a.m. – 11:00 p.m. 8:00 a.m. – 11:00 p.m. 8:00 a.m. – 11:00 p.m. 7:00 a.m. – 12:00 a.m.</p>	<p>+96824519738 +96824558078 +96824470609 +96824554645 +96824503908 +96822006633 +96824697734</p>
Second Cup Café	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Al Qurum Complex Shatti</li> <li>• Al Qurum</li> <li>• Bareeq Al Shatti</li> </ul>	8:00 a.m. – 12:00 a.m.	<p>+96824566616 +96824699951 +96824697776</p>
Tim Hortons Café	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Muscat City Center, Seeb</li> <li>• Muscat Grand Mall</li> <li>• Shatti Al Qurum</li> </ul>	<p>9:00 a.m. – 11:00 p.m. 7:00 a.m. – 12:00 a.m.</p>	<p>+96824558888 +96824701438</p>

### 3.1.3 Leisure and Entertainment

There are many places to go for relaxation and endless activities to enjoy, especially around Muscat. These places vary from resorts and spas to hotels where the activities include practicing different types of sports, adventure activities, and various other forms of entertainment. The list below includes some of the leisure attractions and entertainment options nearby:

**Table 16: Leisure and Activities in Muscat**

Leisure/Activity	Description	Location	Contact numbers
Al Nahdha	Spa & Resort	• Al Musanaa, Al Batinah Region	+968 26883710
Millennium	Resort & Mini Golf	• Al Musanaa, Al Batinah Region	+968 26871518 <b>(Resort)</b> +968 26871555 <b>(Mini Golf)</b>
Shangri-La	Spa & Resort	• Barr Al Jessa, Muscat	+96824779888
Al Mouj Golf club	Golf	• Azaiba	+968 22005990
Uniboats	Water sports	• The Wave Marina, Muscat	+968 92611222
Lua Lua	Diving & Adventure	• Beach One building • Surooj-The Wave Muscat	+968 96917330
Oman Bowling	Bowling Activity	• Al Khuwair, Muscat	+968 24480747
Al Masa Bowling	Bowling Activity	• Al Khuwair, Muscat	+968 24693991
Fun Zone	Bowling, Ice Skating, Billiard Hall, Laser Games and Video Games	• Al Qurum, Muscat	<b>Adventure Zone:</b> +968 93393755 <b>Star Bowling Centre:</b> +968 24662988 <b>Ice Skating Centre:</b> +968 24662928 <b>Laser Blast:</b> +968 95677480 <b>Game Zone:</b> +968 91111731
The Arena	Indoor Entertainment Venue	• The Avenues Mall, Bowsher - Muscat	+968 22005400 +968 22005420





Shangri-la



Al Mouj

## 3.2 Occasions and Festivals in Oman

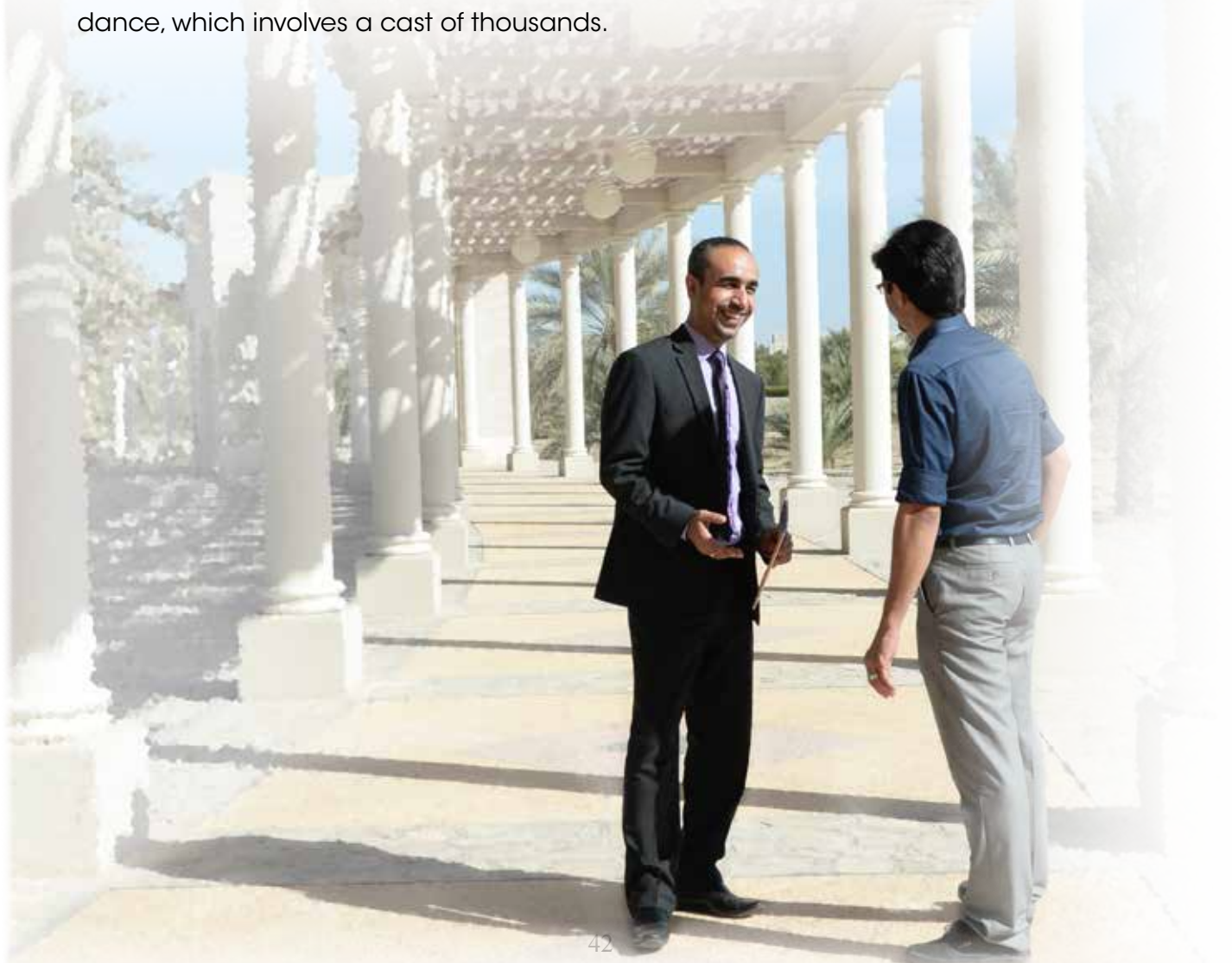
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**National Day (a Public Holiday in November):** Oman's National Day is on the 18th of November. There are parades, fireworks, camel races and bullfights throughout the country. Many Omanis return to their home villages to celebrate, so the roads may be busier than usual.

**Renaissance Day:** Falls on 23 July. This day commemorates the accession of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos to the throne.

**Muscat Festival:** Since its inception in 1998, the Muscat Festival has proved to be more than just a celebratory, cultural and artistic event, or merely an entertaining forum in which people of different cultures come together (Jan-Feb). It is also marked by an almost magical feeling of the past combining with the present. It is a festival of all colors which, thanks to its gaiety and warmth of the time and place, attracts various people of different nationalities to the various performances and events.

**Khareef Festival (Salalah):** This festival is held in Salalah each year (July and August), from 15 July to the end of August, to celebrate the monsoon season. There are music and dance performances from different regions of Oman, exhibitions and opportunities to buy Omani handicrafts, and sports events. It is a chance to witness rare performances such as the Zanooj dance, which involves a cast of thousands.



## 3.3 Annual Exhibitions

### January

1. Horses and Camels Exhibition
2. The international exhibition of medical tourism, medical equipment and technology medicine

### February

1. The Art exhibition
2. Interior design & furniture exhibition (IDF)
3. Social Media Exhibition and forum
4. Muscat International book fair

### March

1. Consumer fair
2. Medical treatment Expo
3. Modern life accessories exhibition
4. Oil & Gas West Asia (OGWA)

### April

1. Medical Tourism Exhibition
2. Comex
3. Building and decoration exhibition
4. Global higher education
5. Omanisation career fair

### May

1. Thai trade fair
2. Weddex Muscat Exhibition
3. Windorex (International exhibition for windows, doors, glass and aluminums)
4. Oman water & energy

### July

1. Higher Education Exhibition

### September

1. Oman fire safety & security exhibition
2. Middle East transport & logistics exhibition
3. Food & Hospitality Oman
4. Oman health exhibition

### October

1. Muscat international jewellery exhibition (MIJEX)

### December

1. Intex Oman

## 3.4 National Public Holidays in Oman

Public Occasion	Date on Gregorian calendar	No. of days
Renaissance Day	23 of July	One day
National Day	18 of November	Two days

Islamic Occasion	Date on Hijri calendar	No. of days
Israa & Miaraj Night	27th of Rajab	One day
Eid Al Fitr	1st of Shawwal	Three days
Eid Al Adha	10th of Dhul Hijja	Three days
Hijri New Year	1st of Muharram	One day
Birthday of Prophet Muhammad	12th Rabialawal	One day

- The date of Islamic occasions vary on the Gregorian Calendar according to the Hijri Calendar which depends on Lunar cycle.

### Public Occasion:

1. **Renaissance Day:** first day of the reign of Sultan Qaboos bin Said Al Said
2. **National Day:** the birthday of Sultan Qaboos bin Said

### Islamic Occasions:

All Islamic Occasions vary due to the lunar cycle. There are often variations on the exact date around the world. According to the Sultanate of Oman, the exact date for celebrating events set out by the Islamic Calendar (Hijri) is announced one day before on Oman media. There are five main Islamic Occasions which are celebrated in Oman:

1. **Eid Al Fitr:** The first day of breaking the fast after the Holy Month of Ramadan. The Sultanate of Oman gives holidays for three days. The date of Eid Al Fitr is announced one night before on Oman TV news.
2. **Eid Al Adha:** The greatest Eid in the Islamic Calendar. It falls on the 10th day of Dhu al-Hijjah, the twelfth and final month in the Islamic calendar. It concludes the Pilgrimage to Mecca. Eid al-Adha lasts for three days. The Sultanate of Oman gives three days holiday.
3. **Isra and Mi'raj Night:** According to the Islamic belief, Isra and Mi'raj marks the Prophet Muhammad's (peace be upon him) journey from Mecca to Jerusalem and ascension into Heaven, sometime around the year 621. The Sultanate of Oman gives one day off on the same day of Isra and Mi'raj night.
4. **Hijri New Year:** The first day of the new Islamic year.
5. **The Birthday of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH):** Muslims celebrate this occasion during the month of Rabi' Alawal, the third month of the Hijri calendar. The day varies among Muslims around the world. In Oman, it is on the 12 of Rabiulawal.



Aqsa Mosque - Jerusalem



Pilgrimage to Mecca

## 3.5 Living Expenses

### How much does living in Oman cost?

The overall cost of living in Oman depends on an individual's lifestyle; rent is quite expensive in Oman, and especially in Muscat, and can take up most of one's budget. Obviously buying imported goods and internationally branded foods are more expensive than the ones produced locally. Clothing can also be expensive if you wear branded clothes. Electronic goods such as televisions, DVD players, laptops, mobile phones and cameras are generally less expensive. The given table is a rough estimate of the average monthly expenses for a single person who is sharing accommodation.

**Table 17: Accommodation Expenses**

Expenses	Monthly Rental
Housing rent (sharing)	100 OR
Monthly food consumption	50 OR
Utilities	25 OR
Transportation	20 OR
Total	195 OR

### 1. Housing

The general cost of a house depends mainly on the lifestyle a person seeks. It also depends on whether you want to live on your own or share accommodation with others. But the trend is that people share in Muscat. There is a wide range of apartments and villas available. Unfortunately, expatriates in Oman are not allowed to own property and are therefore limited to renting homes.

Al Khoudh is an area where many of the employees and students of Sultan Qaboos University opt to live as it is the nearest to SQU. Although finding an ideal place to live is a challenge for every individual, there are plenty of villas, apartments and rooms for rent in this area. Rental costs vary, and accommodations near the commercial centers are more expensive than those which are further away. In addition, the majority of rented accommodation is unfurnished and/or semi-furnished (kitchen equipment or air conditioning utilities included). There are some rented houses in Al Khoudh that are fully furnished but they are generally expensive and hard to find. The table below shows a rough estimation of average monthly rents for good-quality, unfurnished accommodation.

**Table 18: Accommodation Expenses**

Types of Accommodation	Monthly Rental
1 bedroom apartment	200 OR
2 bedroom apartment	250 OR
3 bedroom apartment	350 OR
2 - 4 bedroom villa	500 OR

As discussed, it is common for expatriates to share rented accommodation to save money.

On the other hand, students can request that the university find them accommodation as discussed in the facilities and services at SQU section. Mostly, students who do not have family accompanying them and/or are first timers in Oman stay at the university accommodation; however, this option is not guaranteed as the availability will depend on demand. The procedure accommodation reservation is discussed in the general procedures for international students section (pages 29 - 31).

## 2. Utilities

Oman Investment and Finance Company (OIFC) is in charge of facilitating the payment of utility bills. Electricity bills differ by season, at the height of the summer season, electricity usage usually escalates mainly because of the use of air-conditioners that are not needed as much in the winter season. Some use electricity in cooking or heating foods while others opt to use gas. There are not many gas mains in Muscat, and so canisters are usually sold through distributors; gas canisters are carried by yellow-orange colored trucks usually found roaming around the streets. You may want to get a truck driver's contact number so the next time you are out of gas it is easy to contact them. OIFC bills can be paid in a number of ways:

1. Students living in the Al Khoudh area can pay the bills in the nearest office in Mawaleh at Mawaleh Souq near Pizza Hut.
2. On SQU campus to the right of the Faculty Club close to the elevator, there is OIFC machine that allows you to pay by cash or use an ATM card.
3. The Bank Muscat SQU branch also allows you to pay electricity and water bills in person or online with the bank's MBanking application.

OIFC offices are open from Sunday to Thursday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:45 p.m.

### 3. Telecommunications and Internet

Omantel and Ooredoo are the most widely used telecommunication companies that serve the country. Oman telecommunication company (Omantel) has a monopoly on landline telephone and internet access. Ooredoo is a rebranded telecommunication company from Qatar which originally entered Oman operating under the name Nawras. Both major companies offer a wide range of internet and call packages to choose from (e.g. prepaid or postpaid). The offices/branches of these telecom providers can easily be found in shopping malls such as Oman Avenues Mall and Muscat City Center and even conveniently at the airport. There are also branches of both telecommunication companies inside the university located at the Students Commercial Center.

The table below is a list of denominations of calling cards available from each provider:

**Table 19: Pre-paid Credit Recharge Cards of Telecommunication Providers**

(Hayyak) Omantel	Ooredoo
1 OR	1 OR
3 OR	2 OR
5 OR	5 OR
10 OR	10 OR

National and International call rates of both providers are the same but they have different peak and off-peak hours.

**Table 20: Call Rates during Peak and Off-Peak Hours**

Call Type	Peak Hours	Off-peak hours
National Call	55 bz. per minute	39 bz. per minute
International Call	Varies per country and pulse rate is 60 seconds.	

- Omantel off-peak hours: 6:00 p.m. – 6:00 a.m. and 24 hours on Fridays  
(<http://www.omantel.om>)

- Ooredoo off-peak hours: 6:00 p.m. – 6:00 a.m. and 24 hours on Fridays  
(<http://www.ooredoo.om>)



**Table 21: Opening Hours of both providers at SQU branch**

Omantel	Sunday to Thursday	9:00 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.
Ooredoo	Sunday to Wednesday	9:00 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.
	Thursday	9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

## 4. Public Transportation

### 1. Bus

The city public transport services connect the most common areas in Muscat, with the Ruwi Bus Station serving as the main transport hub. From here, different routes run to Wadi Aday, Wadi Kabir, Mabelah, Muttrah and Al Amerat. These routes connect the main points of arrival and departure in Muscat such as Muscat International Airport, Port Sultan Qaboos and Burj Sahawa; and a great number of commercial and business areas and the main residential areas of Muscat such as Al Khuwair, Ghubra, Al Azaiba, Mawalih and Seeb ([www.mwasalat.om](http://www.mwasalat.om)). Buses leave every 15 minutes on Ruwi – Mabela route. The first bus leaves Ruwi at 6:00 a.m. and the last bus leaves from Ruwi at 9:15 p.m.

The fare for traveling in a single zone is 200 baiza, two zones is 300 baiza and three zones is 500 baiza.

Below is a list of allocated places in each zone for your reference:

**Table 22: Mwasalat Zones**

<b>Zone A</b>	Mutrah, Al Wattayah, Ruwi, Wadi Aday, Al Hamriyah, Al Wadi Al Kabir
<b>Zone B</b>	Al Azaiba, Al Ghubra North & South, Al Khuwair, Hay Al Wazarat, Al Sarooj, Madinat As Sultan Qaboos, Madinat Al Ilam, Al Qurum
<b>Zone C</b>	Al Mabelah, Seeb, Al Khoud, Al Hail North & South, Al Mawalih North & South, Sultan Qaboos University, Muscat International Airport, Knowledge Oasis Muscat, Al Rusayl
<a href="http://mwasalat.om/images/teksimplenews/files/brochuresA.pdf">http://mwasalat.om/images/teksimplenews/files/brochuresA.pdf</a>	

## 2. Taxi

Taxis are painted white and orange. They are the fastest way of getting around and are sometimes available in front of SQU Hospital. It is important to note that taxis are not metered, and a fare should be negotiated before departure. Taxis can be found everywhere, especially in malls, and they congregate in allocated hubs throughout the city. The table shown below is a rough estimation of fare from different location.

**Table 23: Estimated Monthly range of Taxi Expenditure**

Al Khoud to SQU	0.500 baizas
Al Khoud to Muscat City Center (Seeb)	2.000 – 3.000 Omani Riyals
Zone C	2.000 – 3.000 Omani Riyals

<http://mwasalat.om/images/teksimplenews/files/brochuresA.pdf>



## 3.6 Cultural Tips

### 1. Dress

- Outside home, most Arab women dress according to religious customs, which means that they must cover the body, including their hair. The traditional black overgarment (abaya) is ankle length with long sleeves and a high neckline. Foreign women may wear western clothes but should always dress conservatively.
- Arab men wear a dishdasha, a loose and ankle-length robe. A dishdasha can be worn on all occasions, either social or business. An outer cloak, the bisht, is worn on formal occasions and can be very costly, the material itself is of the finest quality, and sometimes the border embroidery is completed using a gold thread.

### 2. Greetings

The most common greeting in the Gulf is salam alaykum ('Peace be upon you'), to which the correct reply is wa alaykum as-salam ('And upon you be peace'). Other common greetings and the accepted replies are:

**Table 24**

Greeting	Meaning	Reply
Ahlan wa sahlam	Hello	Ahlan bik
Sabah al-khayr	Good morning	Sabah an-nur
Masa al-khayr	Good afternoon /evening	Masa an-nur

Men should always shake hands when greeting and parting from men. In the case of Arab women, you should be guided by the woman's behaviour: many Arab women don't shake hands with men. This is normal - even with close friends whom you meet frequently. However, women should wait to see how a local greets them, as devout Muslims would never touch a woman who is not family. The alternative in this case is to place your hand over your heart.

### 3. Other do's and don'ts

- Don't walk on a prayer mat or in front of any person at prayer and try not to stare at people who are praying.
- During the holy month of Ramadan, don't eat, drink or smoke in places where you can be seen by Muslims during the hours of daylight.

## 4. International Students' Impressions

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"My first experience at SQU was way back in 2012 when I did my internship while I was doing my Bachelor in Iran. Those two months were enough for me to decide to do my masters here as I felt the hospitality of Omani people during that period. What really attracts me here is the behavior of people and staff which make me feel at home, In addition I can mention all the facilities I had during my studies and research including laboratories as well as other kind of scientific resources. It has been my honor to be a student at the number one University in the Sultanate of Oman. I am sure SQU is doing its best to improve its services and facilities year by year to make international students benefit and have the best experience in Oman, especially the staff in International Students Office as well as the faculty members. At the end, I want to pray for His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said who is the most peaceful and kind man over the world and wish him and his people the best.

Ali Khodaei, MSc  
College of Engineering,  
Iran

"The most important aspect is the general atmosphere at SQU. There is this perfect mix between a very relaxing and yet motivating atmosphere. The people in my department are some of the most friendly persons I have ever met. Yet, at the same time they encourage me to push myself harder and broaden my horizon, in order to deliver the perfect dissertation at the end of my study. SQU also holds plenty of facilities for the student on campus".

Samatar Botan, MSc  
College of Arts & Social  
Sciences, The Netherlands

"The study environment is good in general, well-equipped, advanced laboratories and has a very organized library. The people are hospitable and cooperative and willing to help where needed."

Junaid Ahmed Khan, MSc  
College of Science,  
Pakistan

"At Sultan Qaboos University, I found a serene environment where I could focus on my research activities with everyone being helpful and nice to me."

Umar Omar Ahmed, PhD  
College of Engineering,  
Nigeria

“SQU is one of the most prestigious academic institutions with international reputation having both high quality teaching and research facilities. I am very impressed by how kind, respectful, easy-going and intelligent the students and staff at Sultan Qaboos University are. I am really very grateful for having such an opportunity to pursue my postgraduate studies in this reputable University and in a country with the most marvelous traditions and history the person may come across.”

Fathi Mansoor Abdelmageed,  
PhD College of Medicine,  
Sudan

“International students always face some sort of difficulties living outside their countries. My stay in Oman and studying as a PhD student at Sultan Qaboos University was a new experience and I also faced a few problems at the beginning, but with the help of faculty and the Deanship of Postgraduate Studies, all troubles were solved easily. I appreciate the way Sultan Qaboos University manages all the academic programs while maintaining the Islamic culture.”

Maaz Akhtar, PhD  
College of Engineering,  
Pakistan

“When I joined SQU, I found well equipped laboratories with modern technologies and equipment focused mainly on research that is based on the country’s strategic needs. The University is trying to support every student by providing e-journals, e-books, other academic resources as well as non-academic activities.”

Um E Ammara, PhD  
College of Agricultural &  
Marine Sciences, Pakistan

“Studying at SQU is one of the rare opportunities one could get, whoever gets it should make the best out of it. In addition, the hospitality of the people around is exceptional.”

Zaharaddeen Sani Gano,  
PhD, College of Engineering,  
Nigeria

# 5. Essential Phone Numbers



## 5.1 Inside Sultan Qaboos University

Table 25: Deanship of Postgraduate Studies

Deanship of Postgraduate Studies	
Dean's Office	+96824145901
Admission Department	
Director's Office	+96824145903
Admission Section	+96824145993 / +96824145915
Statistics & Academic Information Section	+96824145924
Marketing Postgraduate Programs	+96824145907
Academic Affairs Department	
Director's Office	+96824145923
Registration Section	+96824145914 / +96824145921
Graduation	+96824145906 / +96824145846
Student's Records	+96824145919 / +96824145845
Skills Development	+96824145910
Scholarships & Tuition Fees Department	
Director's Office	+96824145904
Scholarship & Financial Support Section	+96824145913
Tuition Fees Section	+96824145912
International Students Section	+96824145905

**Table 27: Colleges' Assistant Deans for Postgraduate Studies & Research**

Assistant Deans for Postgraduate Studies & Research	
College of Agricultural & Marine Sciences	+96824141234 / +96824141257
College of Arts & Social Sciences	+96824141610 / +96824143840
College of Economics & Political Sciences	+96824141840 / +96824142925
College of Education	+96824141633 / +96824143996
College Engineering	+96824141333 / +96824142581
College of Law	+96824145305 / +96824145307
College of Medicine & Health Sciences	+96824143431 / +96824143550
College of Nursing	+96824145407 / +96824145409
College of Science	+96824141470 / +96824142268

**Table 28: SQU Services**

Public Relations Office (Visa Renewal Section)	
Head of Section	+96824145550
Clerk	+96824145553
Clerk	+96824145556
Housing Department	
Director	+96824141286
Clerk	+96824141287
Libraries	
Main Library	+96824145601 / +96824145609
Medical Library	+96824141189 / +96824141165
CEPS Library	+96824141818
Omani Studies Center Library	+96824145868
CASS Library	+96824148390 / +96824143829
College of Education Library	+96824143955
Mosque Library	+96824141587
Student Counseling Center	+96824141981 / +96824143289 / +96824143250



Language Center	+96824141640
Center for Educational Technology	+96824141546 / +96824141547
Community Service & Continuing Education	+96824141914 / +96824141941 / +96824141061
Bank Muscat	+96824413171 / +96824411171
SQU Post Office	+96824141004
<b>Telecommunications (Students Commercial Center)</b>	
Omantel	+96824141318
Ooredoo	+96895022514
<b>Fast Food Chains inside SQU</b>	
Freej (Students Commercial Center)	+96897111793
Best Choice	+96824413131 / +96893891311
Karak & Roti (behind Language Center)	+96895720302
Coloured Lights Coffee Shop (Back Side of FAMCO)	+96894109013

**Table 29: Emergency**

<b>Extension numbers in case of emergency inside SQU</b>	
Hospital Operator	+96824144605 / +96824142414 / +96824147777
Hospital Emergency	+96824144777 / +96824144601 / +96824144615
Student Clinic	+96824141144
SQU Security	+96824145999 / +96824143999 / +96824143330
Fire Emergency	+96824144444
Elevator Emergency	+96824143333
Hospital Elevator Emergency	+96824144999
<b>Directorate of the University Security</b>	+96824143357

## 5.2 Outside Sultan Qaboos University

**Table 30 Outside Sultan Qaboos University**

Police/ Fire/ Accident	9999
Police Headquarters (Muscat)	+96824560021
Al.khoudh Police Station	+96824421573
<b>Embassies</b>	
Algeria	+96824605593 / +96824604945
Bahrain	+96824605074
Bangladesh	+96824698660
Egypt	+96824600982 / +96824600411
India	+96824684500
Indonesia	+96824691050
Iran	+96824696944
Iraq	+96824603642 / +96824695559
Jordan	+96824692760
Kuwait	+96824699626
Malaysia	+96824698329
Nepal	+96824696177
Netherlands	+96824603706 / +96824603719
Pakistan	+96824603439 / +96824696511
Palestine	+96824601312 / +96824697320
Russia	+96824602894
Sudan	+96824697875
Syria	+96824697904 / +96824694390
United States of America	+96824643400
<b>Hospitals in Muscat</b>	
Royal Hospital	+96824599000
Al Nahdha Hospital	+96824837800
Khoula Hospital	+96824563579
Badr Al Sama (Al Khoud)	+96824546099
Muscat Private Hospital	+96824583600
Star Care Hospital	+96824557200


Hotels (Nearby Sultan Qaboos University)	
<b>Gulf Crown Hotel Apartment</b> (8.7 km/ 8 minutes to SQU) Way 5117, Al Khoudh Street, Seeb, Muscat, Oman	+96824536365
<b>Husin Al Khaleej Hotel Apartment</b> (8.5 km/ 13 minutes to SQU) Al Khoudh Street	+96892040125
<b>Remas Hotel</b> (10.2 km/ 14 minutes to SQU) As Salaam Street, Seeb, Muscat 111, Oman	+96824260000
<b>Holiday Inn</b> (13.5 km/ 16 minutes to SQU via Mazoun Street) Al Mawaleh South, Muscat 130, Oman	+96822080555
<b>Golden Tulip Hotel</b> (20.3 km/ 24 minutes to SQU) Seeb, Muscat	+96824510300
Car Rentals	
Sixt Rent A Car (Airport)	+96824510224
Europcar (Airport)	+96824521369
Thrifty Car Rental (Airport)	+96824521189
Discovery Car Rental	+96895760339 / +96824834450
Arabia Cars (Al Khoud)	+96824547068
Al Qassabi Rent A Car (Al Khoud)	+96824533454
Mwasalat Bus	
Azaiba (Head Office)	+96824121555
Ruwi	+96824708522 / +96824701294
Banks	
Bank Muscat	+9682479 5555
Oman Arab Bank	+9682475 4308
Bank Dhofar	+9682479 1111
National Bank of Oman	+96824770000
Shipping Companies	
DHL	+9682469 8086
Fedex	+9682483 3311
Aramex	+9682447 3000

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