



## Frequently Asked Questions

We hope this information will address your concerns about your stay in KAUST.

1. *Regarding the workweek, we heard it is different from most parts of the world?*

The work week in Saudi Arabia is Sunday through Thursday, weekends are Friday and Saturday. Administrative offices are open from 8.00 am to 5.00pm. Your faculty and research groups may have slightly different hours.

2. *Are there any other participants from my country or other countries?*

KAUST is a university and a community of over 7,000 residents from more than 100 nationalities. Our interns are also from any different countries. At KAUST, while English is the principal language for instruction and research, however, you will hear also many languages spoken by students, faculty and staff.

3. *How will I get my stipend?*

We will provide you with an AMEX card, and deposit monthly stipends at the beginning of each month. Once here, we will guide you on how to activate it. We recommend strongly that you buy a SIM card (local Saudi phone number) in the first few days of your arrival, as this will help you in activating your card yourself. You can use it for purchases at stores-physical and online, and to withdraw money from ATMs during your internship. After your departure from KAUST, the card stays valid for 60 days for you to pay at stores or make online purchases.

4. *How much are meal costs on campus?*

The exchange rate is a fixed USD\$1.00 to SAR 3.75. The Campus Diner serves breakfast, and both “à la carte” and “prix fixe” lunch and dinner- cafeteria style. These meals range from SR20 (~ 5 USD) for a basic four course meal to SR30 (~ 8 USD) for special entrees. There are no other major expenses except your shopping and personal recreation.

5. *Are there medical facilities on campus?*

You will receive medical insurance coverage from arrival to departure, at KAUST only. Our on-campus health clinic is an ultramodern facility offering outpatient primary care, emergency care, selected specialty care and a full-service pharmacy which dispenses prescription and over the counter (OTC) drugs. If you take regular prescription medication, please bring along



an adequate supply for beyond the maximum duration of your stay. If you have any special medical needs, please let us know. There is also another pharmacy dispensing over-the-counter medicine found in our campus. Please note, you will need to check your private insurance to ensure you are covered for your travel to KAUST and leaving from KAUST back to your home country.

6. *What if I have allergies or dietary restrictions?*

If you have any allergies or a food-related medical condition that we should be aware of, please inform our office staff on your arrival.

Our grocery store has foods from all over the world and options that support the gluten-free, vegan, and vegetarian lifestyles. You are welcome to bring items from home that are necessary for your diet. Please note: all pork products or alcohol are prohibited within Saudi Arabia.

7. *What do I wear on campus?*

Attire while on academic campus should reflect a professional or 'smart casual' appearance that respects the customs and values of the diverse groups among the KAUST community. Short, transparent, or revealing garments are not appropriate. For men, proper attire means pants and collared shirts. For women, proper attire means tops with sleeves, pants, and skirts of modest length. Non-Muslim women do not need to cover their hair with a headscarf at KAUST or traveling around the country- unless you are entering a place of worship. If you would like to use our recreational facilities, workout attire is worn for individual and group sessions.

8. *Is the Internet widely available on campus? What is the voltage here?*

Internet access is widely available across campus with wireless connection available. Skype, Facebook and WhatsApp are accessible through the KAUST network. The voltage on campus is 220V. Please also bring a travel adapter (phones and laptops) and or voltage converter (for use with curling iron, blow dryer, travel iron) for your electronic devices. You will be using a landline in your apartment, so please bring the relevant adaptor to use with an Ethernet port. We would also recommend bringing a modem for wifi



Outlets in housing apartments are as in above photo. However, some workstations and laboratories may require a three-pin adapter, so we would recommend you to bring a multi-pin adapter, if possible. Please see: <https://www.amazon.com/Skross-World-Travel-Adaptor-3/dp/B002UDA3IY>

*9. Will I be able to use my smart phone in Saudi Arabia?*

We advise that you check with your mobile phone provider about usage while you are in Saudi Arabia. If you have Eduroam, please activate the service, while on campus. Please do not buy an international SIM card at the airport as they will require additional documentation. You can buy a SIM card at our Mobily Telecommunications shop on campus as we have made special arrangements with them. You just need to go to the shop within one month of your arrival and bring your passport. After arriving on campus, you will be able to use 'KAUST-Guest' free wifi (open network) and also icampus (with your username and password).

*10. Will I be able to use my personal credit card at KAUST?*

On campus, major credit cards are accepted at our grocery store and restaurants, however please note overseas exchange rates may apply. We advise you to contact your bank or credit card company to update them of your travel. Please note, there is no foreign currency exchange on campus, so please consider this in your arrangements.

*11. What sort of recreational activities are available on campus?*

In addition to the KAUST Cinema and the Safaa Golf Club, the Al Marsa Yacht Club and the Water Sports Center at the beach offers maritime activities. We also have Harbour Sports Club and Island Recreation Centre, to which entry is free. You can also participate in the numerous activities listed on the KAUST Blog <https://thelens.kaust.edu.sa/> and our Community Page <https://communitylife.kaust.edu.sa/Pages/home.aspx> for updated information on all social and recreational activities.



*12. What sort of restaurants and shopping are available on campus?*

The Campus Diner (Building 13) is open for breakfast, lunch, and dinner during the week from 6am to 9.30 pm. [Restaurants in Discovery Square](#) include well-known fast-food chains such as Burger King and Subway. We cuisine from all over the world, including Italian, Chinese, Japanese, American and of course the Middle East. The [Tamimi Supermarket](#) which is found in the center of the community and offers international groceries, fresh fruits and vegetables, and household items. Tamimi Supermarket is Bus Stop No. 1 on all bus routes (check out Blue and Orange bus routes at the end of this document). We also have Starbucks Coffeehouse next to Tamimi Supermarket, which is open daily from 7am till 11 pm.

*13. What transportation options are there within the campus?*

Free on-demand shuttle bus service is provided and runs throughout the day. You can download the ReKab app and book the bus for your transportation on campus. For the most updated bus schedule and a map of the campus, please go to <https://communitylife.kaust.edu.sa/Services/Pages/Bus-Services.aspx>  
If you would like to buy a bike, please visit Banaweer Bike Shop at Harbour Walk.

*14. How can I reach Academic Campus from my housing unit?*

You can find KAUST in [www.maps.me](http://www.maps.me) Mobile application. You can install the application on your phone and explore the campus digitally, even before arriving. Once you are on campus and get your Internet credentials (username and password to connect to KAUST icampus network), you can also access [www.maps.kaust.edu.sa](http://www.maps.kaust.edu.sa) and find your way on campus. You can also book a bus through the ReKab app which can take you around campus. For more information, visit: <https://communitylife.kaust.edu.sa/Services/Pages/Bus-Services.aspx>

*15. What is the research and community environment in KAUST like?*

KAUST is both a community and a graduate university. All of us — your faculty mentor, research scientists, post-docs, and the staff look forward to helping you make the most of your journey at KAUST. If you would like to know more about the academic and community environment of KAUST, please see the following videos:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fMHUp0CgSKc>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OP322Eg0GBY>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pmBqiaROT1c>

<https://youtu.be/Q8wK8UX02mE>



You may also want to subscribe to some websites and social media before arriving: [KAUST news](#) [@KAUSTOfficial](#) (Facebook) or [@KAUST\\_News](#) (Twitter).

16. Where can I find information on campus amenities?

Please refer to [http://thelens.kaust.edu.sa/?page\\_id=56087](http://thelens.kaust.edu.sa/?page_id=56087)

or download the KAUST Central app, when you are on campus, as it has links to all webpages.