

# 2010

## Notes for International Students

The Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) is the voice of Canada's universities. AUCC represents 95 Canadian public and private not-for-profit universities and university-degree level colleges. This leaflet answers the commonly-asked questions regarding admission requirements, application procedures, tuition, other costs, financial assistance, degree recognition, housing and a variety of other topics. More detailed information is published each year in the *1 Directory of Canadian Universities*. For more information on this publication, please see the section entitled 'Where do I find information?'

Thousands of international students choose Canadian universities to give them the qualifications that will open doors for their future and benefit their career. Each year, Canadian universities attract more than 70,000 international students from around the world in full-time study to a wide variety of educational settings.

Canada's universities offer a tremendous range of choices – large and small, English, French or bilingual, in sophisticated cities, cozy towns or reaching out through the Internet. The choice is yours!

Large universities provide a full spectrum of undergraduate, graduate and professional degree programs. In Canada, you can study in an intimate setting with the personal attention of a small, undergraduate college, or in a bustling campus alongside thousands of fellow students. Smaller universities offer specialized education in fields such as business, engineering, art and design and agriculture.

While Canada has no formal system of institutional accreditation, membership in AUCC, coupled with a provincial charter, is deemed the equivalent.

### AM I QUALIFIED TO STUDY IN CANADA?

In Canada, there is no nationwide set of entrance exams. Each university has its own entrance requirements and will assess you on an individual basis. The university you apply to will determine the equivalency of your academic credentials. For more details about this or any other part of the application process, contact the registrar at the university you wish to attend.

Visit AUCC's  
website at  
[www.aucc.ca](http://www.aucc.ca)

For specific details on degree recognition, please consult with your country's educational authorities or the Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials (CICIC). CICIC assists individuals, employers, professional and organizations regarding foreign credential recognition and the assessment of diplomas and qualifications in Canada. Contact: **CICIC, 95 St. Clair W., Suite 1106, Toronto ON M4V 1N6 Canada, Tel: 416-962-9725, or visit [www.cicic.ca](http://www.cicic.ca).**

### HOW DO I APPLY?

In order to study in Canada for any program longer than six months, you will need to apply for a study permit from Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) well before you plan to arrive in Canada. To study in Quebec, you must also have a Certificate of Acceptance from the Province of Quebec. As part of your application for a study permit, you will need to show that you have been accepted by a Canadian educational institution and meet other requirements to enter Canada: you will need to show that you have enough funds to support yourself during the time you are studying in Canada, and

you may need to go through medical and security verifications as part of your application. For additional information, please refer to: [www.cic.gc.ca/english/study/institutions/intent.asp](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/study/institutions/intent.asp).

Deadlines vary, but generally, you should apply to a Canadian university at least eight months in advance. Ensure your application is complete and accurate. Typical entry points for international students are the September and January semesters. However, many universities have adopted a procedure of 'rolling admissions' which means that they consider international students' applications as they are received throughout the year. Particularly for graduate programs, though, it can take time to ensure you are matched with the right faculty advisor, so **apply early**.

Calendars with course descriptions, admission requirements and procedures, costs and scholarships can be obtained from the registrar at each university and are usually also accessible through the university's website.

Engineering, optometry, medicine, veterinary medicine, law, and dentistry are fields where the first professional degree is considered an undergraduate program. There is a great deal of academic competition for these spaces and most universities have limits or quotas on the number of qualified applicants accepted each year. A high level of academic achievement is required for admission. Often at least two years of undergraduate study in a related field are required before you can be admitted to the first professional degree program. Check the university calendar to identify tests such as LSAT (law) or DAT (dentistry) that may also be required. See the application process for undergraduate programs above.

Distance education programming at Canadian universities includes courses – and in some cases complete programs – taught over the Internet or through other methods such as correspondence, tele-conferencing, audio tapes, cable

television broadcasts and computer conferencing. One AUCC member – Athabasca University – offers all of its programs by distance education. Athabasca and 8 other members promote their offerings through the Canadian Virtual University ([www.cvu-uvc.ca](http://www.cvu-uvc.ca)). Some universities restrict the acceptance to students residing in Canada for distance education. Verify with the continuing education office or registrar about restrictions for students not residing in Canada.

## WHERE DO I FIND INFORMATION?

You may want to consult the *Directory of Canadian Universities* (DCU). Published by AUCC, the DCU is the official guide to Canada's universities. The *Directory* provides institutional profiles and includes information about enrolment, tuition fees, student facilities and services, housing and student financial assistance. The *Directory* features an index of more than 10,000 undergraduate and graduate programs. The print version of the DCU can be purchased from AUCC.

Visit  
the *Directory of  
Canadian Universities*  
online at  
[www.aucc.ca/dcu](http://www.aucc.ca/dcu)

The AUCC website offers a host of other information about Canadian universities, including links to member websites. You can access this information at [www.aucc.ca/can\\_uni/our\\_universities/index\\_e.html](http://www.aucc.ca/can_uni/our_universities/index_e.html). On university sites you will find valuable information such as the latest academic calendar, which provides detailed course descriptions, information regarding admission requirements and scholarships.

You can also write to the universities specifying your planned field of study. The registrar's office at each institution will be able to provide you with information about undergraduate degrees. If you anticipate pursuing postgraduate studies in Canada you may obtain more

information by contacting the dean of graduate studies at the universities that interest you.

There are more than 150,000 international students in Canada benefiting from the orientation programs, international student advisors, study skills programs, disability support, career counselling, student associations, social clubs, and other programs at their educational institutions.

These are the services and the support which will make you feel welcome and aid your integration as an international student.

## WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A UNIVERSITY AND A COLLEGE?

Universities are educational institutions attended after at least 12 years of school, or after secondary school, for studies leading to a certificate or degree (e.g. bachelor's, master's, doctorate). All AUCC member universities offer three- or four-year bachelor degree programs; most offer one- to three-year master's degree programs and a number also offer doctoral or PhD programs (three years or more). Some universities are called colleges, and a few are called institutes, university colleges, or schools.

Public colleges may also be known as institutes of technology, community colleges, polytechnics, colleges of applied arts and technology, and, in Quebec, collèges d'enseignement général et professionnel (cégeps). They offer a wide range of educational programs in a vast array of technical and professional fields, taking anywhere from a few months to four years to complete. The Quebec cégeps offer two streams of education: three-year vocational and two-year pre-university programs. In addition, some colleges in Canada provide programs that prepare students to transfer into universities with advanced standing, some offer joint diplomas and degrees with university partners, many others offer academic and applied degrees and an increasing number are now offering post-graduate diplomas. Contact: **Association of Canadian Community Colleges, 1223 Michael St. N., Suite 200, Ottawa ON K1J 7T2 Canada. Tel: 613-746-5656 (general inquiries) or visit [www.aucc.ca](http://www.aucc.ca).**

## IS FINANCIAL AID POSSIBLE?

Scholarships and financial aid are commonly based on academic merit. You could automatically be assessed for some scholarships during the consideration of your application, while you may have to complete a separate application to be considered for other scholarships. In conducting your research, you should check with the Department of Education in your country to determine if there are awards that you may be eligible for.

Learn more about  
scholarships  
administered by AUCC at  
[www.aucc.ca/  
scholarships](http://www.aucc.ca/scholarships)

You may also download the publication *Awards for Study in Canada* from [www.destineducation.ca/intstdnt/awards-1\\_e.htm](http://www.destineducation.ca/intstdnt/awards-1_e.htm) published by the **Canadian Bureau for International Education, 220 Laurier Ave. W., Suite 1550, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1P 5Z9, Tel: 613-237-4820 or visit [www.cbie.ca](http://www.cbie.ca).**

## WHAT ARE THE LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS?

You do not have to speak both English and French to study at a Canadian university – however, you will have to show proficiency in one language, depending on the university where you apply. Most English universities require a score of at least 550-600 on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) (or a range between 213-250 on the computer-based test and typically 80 or better on the internet-based test, with minimums in each section), a score of 60-70 on the Canadian Academic English Language (CAEL) assessment, or 6 to 6.5 on the International English Language Testing System (IELTS). Canadian French-language universities usually assess applicants on a case-by-case basis. To find out the language requirements of a specific university, check with its registrar's office.

## HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE TO EARN A DEGREE?

A bachelor's or undergraduate degree takes between three to four years to complete. With a three-year bachelor degree, students must complete an additional year to obtain an honours degree. All honours programs require a high level of achievement and concentration in the subject. An honours degree is generally a pre-requisite for admission into graduate studies.

A master's degree usually requires between one to three years of full-time study (after an honours degree) and includes a thesis, practicum or research paper. A doctoral degree, or PhD, requires a minimum of two to three years of full-time study beyond the master's level and the completion of a thesis. In most cases, a master's degree is required before admission into a doctoral program, but some universities will accept students who have completed an honours degree.

## WILL MY DEGREE BE RECOGNIZED?

High academic standards and rigorous quality controls mean that you can trust Canada to provide you with a high-quality education. Canadian educational institutions have a shared understanding of the value of each others' academic credentials. Canadian public education standards are maintained across all provinces and institutions through government legislation, professional accreditation, or peer and internal reviews. This way, you can be sure that your qualifications receive international and national recognition.

## WHAT HOUSING IS AVAILABLE?

Housing is often available on campus or assistance is provided in finding off-campus accommodations.

Most universities offer the option to live on campus either in residences designated for international students or in residences generally available to all students on campus. However, acceptance at a Canadian school does not automatically secure accommodation in a residence. Students need to apply separately for on-campus housing. Information on housing, both on and off campus, is available from the housing office or the international student advisor at most universities.

## WHAT ARE THE TUITION FEES?

While the quality of education and standard of living are among the highest in the world, the cost of living and tuition fees are generally lower than in other countries such as the United States and the United Kingdom, making Canada your affordable choice.

Compared to many other countries, the cost of living in Canada is very affordable. As a rough guide, you are likely to need between C\$15,000 and C\$30,000 to cover tuition and living expenses. This cost range is an average only and will vary according to the institution and program in which you are enrolled, your location, and your living choices.

The tuition fees table (below) shows the range of fees (in Canadian dollars) for general arts and humanities programs for each province. Please remember that you must also budget for books, instruments, student activities, food, housing, travel/transportation, health care, clothing, laundry and entertainment.

students at the post-secondary level can work on campus without a work permit, including graduate and research work.

**Off-campus work:** There is also an off-campus work program that allows eligible foreign students at public post-secondary institutions and selected private institutions in certain provinces to obtain a work permit to work off campus for up to 20 hours a week during the school year and full-time during school breaks. Further information is available at [www.cic.gc.ca/english/study/work-offcampus.asp](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/study/work-offcampus.asp).

Note that students who come to Canada under the Canadian Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan or under the Government of Canada Awards Program funded by Foreign Affairs Canada or by the Canadian International Development Agency are not eligible for off-campus work.

**Post-graduation work permits:** Many international students who complete postsecondary education in Canada wish to stay and obtain Canadian work experience.

### UNIVERSITY TUITION FEES FOR FULL-TIME INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

PROVINCE	UNDERGRADUATE *	GRADUATE
Newfoundland and Labrador	\$8,800	\$1,895 - \$3,550
Prince Edward Island	\$8,940	\$4,920 - \$7,375
Nova Scotia	\$12,125 - \$14,250	\$5,305 - \$10,615
New Brunswick	\$8,150 - \$13,440	\$3,765 - \$11,120
Quebec	\$11,065 - \$14,060	\$540 - \$12,595
Ontario	\$9,730 - \$26,760	\$2,250 - \$19,485
Manitoba	\$3,995 - \$11,000	\$4,095 - \$7,935
Saskatchewan	\$9,025 - \$11,480	\$2,000 - \$3,200
Alberta	\$8,090 - \$23,280	\$7,040 - \$12,000
British Columbia	\$9,750 - \$19,350	\$2,105 - \$17,250

\* 2008-2009 fees (rounded) in Canadian dollars for programs in arts and humanities.  
Source : Statistics Canada

## AM I QUALIFIED FOR WORK IN CANADA?

**On-campus work:** Canada offers a number of programs that allow international students to work during their term of studies and after graduation depending on the educational institution and the academic program. For example, most full-time international

students who complete their studies in an eligible program at an eligible Canadian postsecondary institution, international graduates can apply for a Post-Graduation Work Permit, which allows them to work in Canada.

In their efforts to retain international students, Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) has recently made changes

to the Post-Graduate Work Permit Program to making more flexible and responsive to the needs of international students.

Under the Post-Graduation Work Permit Program, international graduates can now obtain a three-year open work permit on which they can work for any Canadian employer in any industry. They are not required to have a Canadian job at the time of application. For more information, visit [www.cic.ca/english/study/offcampuswork.html](http://www.cic.ca/english/study/offcampuswork.html)

## WHAT ARE THE MEDICAL AND IMMIGRATION REQUIREMENTS?

You will have to arrange for medical coverage before you arrive in Canada. Medical coverage varies from province to province and sometimes from university to university within each province.

Please contact your closest Canadian diplomatic post for more detailed information about studying and working in Canada, and medical and immigration requirements ([www.cic.gc.ca](http://www.cic.gc.ca)).

The provinces of Alberta, British Columbia and Saskatchewan cover international students under their provincial health care plans, while Manitoba, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Prince Edward Island and Quebec do not cover international students.

International students planning to study in one of these provinces must arrange for private medical coverage through private insurance companies. Please note that Ontario universities now have a mandatory health care package for international students ([www.uhip.ca](http://www.uhip.ca)).

## HELPFUL RESOURCES

The AUCC website includes a database entitled Canadian University International Exchanges Agreements, which contains information on more than 4,000 agreements between universities in Canada and institutions in other countries to exchange students, faculty, staff or conduct joint research. AUCC's Canadian University Projects in International Development database ([www.aucc.ca/publications/database/index\\_e.html](http://www.aucc.ca/publications/database/index_e.html)) contains more than 2,600

records on international development projects. The majority of the projects are funded by CIDA, the IDRC, and the multilateral development banks.

The Canadian Association for University Continuing Education maintains an online directory in collaboration with the Ontario Council for University Lifelong Learning (OCULL) called the *Distance Education Directory* with information on its distance education programs and courses: [www.Distance-EdCanada.ca](http://www.Distance-EdCanada.ca).

The Canadian Virtual University (CVU) ([www.cvu-uvc.ca](http://www.cvu-uvc.ca)) is a consortium of Canadian universities that complete university degrees, diplomas, and certificates over the Internet or through distance education. CVU universities accept each other's courses for transfer credit.

The Association of Faculties of Medicine of Canada sells a booklet entitled *Admission Requirements of Canadian Faculties of Medicine* which includes a section on admission for foreign students. Information: **AFMC, 265 Carling Ave., Suite 800, Ottawa ON K1S 2E1 Canada, Tel: 613-730-0687 or visit [www.afmc.ca](http://www.afmc.ca).**

For information about quality accredited English and French language training in Canada, contact **Languages Canada, 5886 - 169A Street, Surrey, BC V3S 6Z8. Tel: 604-574-1532 or visit [www.languagescanada.ca](http://www.languagescanada.ca).**

AUCC Publications  
[www.aucc.ca/publications](http://www.aucc.ca/publications)

The Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) is an intergovernmental body founded in 1967 by ministers of education to serve as an instrument to represent the education interests of the provinces and territories internationally. Visit them at [www.cmec.ca](http://www.cmec.ca).

For more information on Canada and Canada's education system visit the following websites:

Government of Canada  
([www.international.gc.ca](http://www.international.gc.ca))

Citizenship and Immigration  
Canada (CIC)  
([www.cic.gc.ca](http://www.cic.gc.ca))

Canadian Information Centre  
for International Credentials  
(CICIC) ([www.cicic.ca](http://www.cicic.ca))

The Canadian Bureau of International Education (CBIE) is a national, bilingual, not-for-profit, membership organization dedicated to the promotion of Canada's international relations through international education: the free movement of ideas and learners across national boundaries. Visit [www.cbie.ca](http://www.cbie.ca) and [www.destineducation.ca](http://www.destineducation.ca).

The *Universities Telephone Directory* provides access to more than 7,500 key academics and senior administrators at all AUCC member universities. Updated and verified annually, each listing includes name and title, plus current telephone and e-mail information searchable by institution or the alphabetical index of names.

*University Affairs* is a magazine for and about Canada's university community, printed 10 times a year and updated regularly online. Published continuously since 1959, it offers news, commentary, in-depth articles on a wide range of topics, and career advice for academics. Its highly educated readership trusts *UA* for its integrity, credibility and editorial excellence. *University Affairs* is also the largest source of career ads for people seeking academic positions in Canada. Web edition: [www.universityaffairs.ca](http://www.universityaffairs.ca).