

As An International Student, Here's Everything You Need To Know About Life In Canada

Meta: Studying abroad is thrilling because you can learn and prepare for the future while immersing yourself in a culture that is different from your own.

Highlight: The majority of study programs offered by Canadian Universities emphasize research. The faculty and students are engaged in projects and experiments that provide an enriching environment based on innovation. However, what's it like living in Canada?

Canada has become an ideal place for higher education studies, sought by many prospective international students. As a result, Canadian universities rank highly in global rankings, and the Canadian Ministry of Education recently announced a new educational strategy to increase the number of international students.

The largest foreign-student populations are in Vancouver, Ottawa, Toronto, Quebec, and Montreal, all of which offer a vibrant and lively atmosphere. A wide range of entertainment and leisure activities are available to students in Canada.

Canadian colleges and universities offer a variety of learning opportunities with a combination of lectures, practical lab practices, and workshops. Having a mix of learning opportunities is what university life is all about, allowing you to prepare for the future.

How do you get a Canadian study permit?

A study permit is a document issued by the Canadian immigration authorities that serves as permission for international students to study in Canada.

To apply for a study permit, you need a letter of acceptance from the college or university. In addition, the Canada study permit also requires the student to show proof that they have the funds to support themselves while in Canada. That amount is at least CAD 10,000 (Quebec college or university requires at least CAD 11,000) yearly per student in addition to the tuition fees.

The student needs to show proof of funds with a Canadian bank account in their name, a GIC (Guaranteed Investment Certificate), evidence of a student loan, bank statements, a letter from the sponsor, or proof of funding via a scholarship.

In addition, the students must submit valid passport Proof of Acceptance by the college or university, Immigration Medical Examination (IME), IELTS, Statement of Purpose, and other additional education documentation as per the college or university.

Are students eligible for Scholarships or Financial Support?

In terms of a bright future, studying abroad is one of the best investments one can make. One of the best ways to get financial help for studying abroad in Canada is through scholarships, which are non-repayable grants; therefore, you can study without worrying about repaying the amount you have invested in paying college or university tuition fees.

Academic achievement is what usually qualifies students for scholarships, although some scholarships also reward volunteer and work experience. However, the scholarship for international students is limited and highly competitive. It is generally available at the postgraduate level.

Colleges and universities generally announce scholarships on their official websites. However, the best way to learn about the scholarship grant is to contact overseas education consultants.

Here are the certain things that as an international student should know about Canada?

1. The melting points of different cultures

As Canada is one of the most welcoming nations in the world, you won't feel like an outsider in the country or on campus. Along with your academic programs, it will always engage the students in various fests, events, and other extracurricular activities on the campus.

Canada is considered the melting point of various cultures; thus, it will help the international students to have a great social circle and keep them from homesickness.

2. Different learning styles in the college/university

Studies in Canada are an excellent option for international students for various reasons. Canadian colleges and universities provide quality education and training. Furthermore, degrees from Canadian universities are recognized worldwide. Research faculties also offer multiple opportunities for students to practice education and ample research exposure.

3. Cost of living

Despite the high cost of living in Canada compared to other countries, it's still considered a country with reasonable prices as Canada offers high quality of education, the best in technology, plentiful employment opportunities, diverse culture with the highest safety measures and progressive ideals.

Canada is one of the countries with the highest standard of living due to its tremendous economic strength and the excellent services available to citizens and tourists, and international students.

4. Student Accommodation

On average, international students should expect to spend roughly CAD 675 to CAD 875 per month on accommodation. The cost of living in a student dormitory generally ranges from CAD 550 to CAD 600 more in the big cities like Toronto, Quebec, Ottawa, Calgary, and many others. In addition, it is crucial to keep in mind that international students working in Canada must follow specific accommodation rules and regulations.

Across Canada, international students can choose from an array of housing options, including campus housing, shared apartments, studios, and homestays.

First-year students are mostly provided residence at most Canadian universities and colleges. Therefore, the paperwork to arrange your lease from abroad can be easily handled when the student lives on campus.

Although some colleges and universities may offer student lodging past the first year, many students choose to live off-campus to experience the neighborhood. However, certain colleges and universities require students to choose accommodation off the campus past one year due to the limited number of dormitories.

In addition, homestay arrangements can also be arranged with local host families for international students in Canada. The homestay allows the students to immerse themselves in the culture of Canada and the language.

5. Scholarships

Studying in Canada provides equal opportunity and is considered one of the most desirable study destinations. Canadian universities will encourage students of all backgrounds to enroll by offering scholarships. Scholarships are offered based on merit in Canada as well colleges and universities also consider the application of the students in need.

6. Healthcare System

Public healthcare in Canada is funded through taxes, known as Medicare. It does not generally cover prescriptions or vision check ups but all medically essential care, including hospital, stays. Those who are Canadian residents, Canadian work permits, permanent residents, and some refugees are eligible for this program. Therefore, health insurance is mandatory for international students in Canada.

However, there are different healthcare systems in each province and territory of Canada. Thus, the medical insurance coverage for international students varies from province to province.

At the time of admission to the college or university, they generally mention the healthcare insurance policy for the international students. However, it is recommended that the students purchase private health insurance before traveling to Canada to study abroad to have adequate cover in the case of an emergency.

7. Financial Institution

Throughout the world, the Canadian banking system is regarded as one of the strongest and most reliable. As an international student studying in Canada, it is essential to have a local bank account for various reasons, including withdrawing local currency without forex markup.

A little research can go a long way in helping to make the right decision. In addition to national banks, Canada has regional banks, credit unions, and international banks with offices and branches across the country. In addition, major Canadian banks offer online banking and automated banking machines.

The student can transact domestically and internationally by opening an account with a Canadian bank. In addition, a bank's insurance policy protects your savings and deposits.

Here are the top five banks in Canada recommended for international students:

1. Scotiabank
2. Bank of Montreal (BMO)
3. Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce (CIBC)
4. Royal Bank of Canada (RBC)
5. National Bank of Canada

8. Work while studying

Studying in Canada is an incredible opportunity for international students to get part-time jobs. It is basically an outstanding opportunity to add additional skills while studying and help them pay off their student loans and manage their monthly expenses. In addition, having a job gives you a chance to immerse yourself in the world of work and earn money.

Obtaining a job related to your field of study or chosen career path is ideal and serves as the perfect platform for networking. In addition, your professional resume can be augmented by a couple of months or years of work experience you gain during your studies.

For international students on a study permit, the maximum number of hours they can work is 20 hours during the week, and during major holidays and breaks, they can work unlimited hours.

9. Endless Leisure Activities

The Canadian population is active year-round indoor and outdoor activities. In addition to soccer, hockey, baseball, basketball, volleyball, swimming, rock climbing, dancing, hiking, camping, cycling, skiing, and snowboarding, residents also enjoy activities like soccer, hockey, baseball, and baseball.

Water sports like fishing, water skiing, boating, canoeing, kayaking, and sailing are also top-rated due to rivers, lakes, and oceans in many parts of the country. The Canadian Rockies are also home to world-class mountain resorts globally - name a few: Whistler Blackcomb in British Columbia, Big White Ski Resort, Sunshine Village Ski and Snowboard Resort, Lake Louise Ski Resort, and many others.

In addition, Canada boasts impressive architecture, vibrant art forms, music, food fest, engaging theater shows, sports shows, world-renowned festivals, clubs, and casinos.

Canada will never let you down whether you're a night owl or enjoy live theater. There are endless options for people who want to relieve stress after a long day at work.

In addition to the above, here are some points to keep in mind as an international student staying in Canada:

1. Download Arrive CAN App

To curb the spread of COVID-19 and prevent importation, the Canadian government developed ArriveCAN to comply with the government's mandatory travel prerequisites before and after the traveler's entry into Canada. The app is similar to India's Arogya Setu app.

The ArriveCAN app is available on iOS, Android, and the web. In addition, one can get the application for free, available in three languages — English, Spanish, and French.

2. International driving license

Being a student in a foreign land, it is a good idea to have an international driving license as it is certified as the candidate to legally ride or drive on international roads. An international driving license is accepted as valid documentation in 186 countries.

3. Carry medicines

While studying abroad, carrying certain emergency medicines like flu, upset stomach, paracetamol, and it is always a fair idea. Due to climate change, it does take time for the human body to adapt to the changes. Though you will be getting the meds at the pharmacy in the host country, it is no harm in carrying some emergency meds.

In addition, it is also essential to know which medicines are allowed in the host country and which are banned. For instance, some types of inhalers, certain allergies, and sinus meds are illegal in Japan. On the other hand, the meds that help prevent blood clots - Clopidogrel by Dr. Reddy's are banned in Germany.

4. Get to know the neighbors

It is essential to know your neighbors and the neighborhood. It is beneficial to know people around you and get access to information and resources. It also helps to expand your social circles. In addition to laying the foundation for better health, safety, and overall community pride, neighbors are the people who can most positively affect the most critical aspects of our lives.

5. Get to know online payment apps

While you may think it is easier to pay cash everywhere, surprisingly, many foreign countries' merchants have switched to cashless payment methods with technological advancements. From hiring local taxis to filling up gas in the station, grocery shopping, parking tickets, toll tickets, and many others, it accepts the only digital payment method. Therefore, it is vital to get to know the online payment apps of your host country.

6. Always keep the passport and visa photocopy

Usually, when people think of passport safety, they think of preventing it from being stolen. Still, in reality, the water damage due to humidity or a drink spill can damage the passport. Therefore it is highly advisable to travel with a waterproof passport cover.

A passport is required for airport security and immigration. But while you are staying abroad, you might need to present your identification. So instead of showing the original passport, you need to show them the passport and visa photocopies.

7. Know the emergency numbers

There may be times when a situation arises that causes panic and confusion. Thus, to avoid chaos and confusion during such times, it's critical to have emergency phone numbers handy. In addition, wherever you are traveling, it is a good idea to know where the nearest embassy, fire station, hospital, and police station are.

Final Thoughts:

There is always a learning curve when moving to a new country, especially for studying abroad. In addition, you may miss your friends, family, and festivals, as the culture is likely to differ from where you belong. So don't be hurried about settling in; give yourself plenty of time.

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