

SHAHEEN PAKISTAN

Module: Further Study in Canada



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GLOSSARY

Term	Definition
Francophone	Someone who speaks French or a location that has French speaking inhabitants
Anglophone	Someone who speaks English or a location that has English speaking inhabitant

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

GENERAL INFORMATION

Note that the statistics mentioned in this section are based on information extracted in 2019.

Canada has approximately 90 universities, of which 17 are private (2019). Additionally, it also has 150 colleges (a.k.a. Community Colleges, Technical Colleges, Regional Colleges and, in Quebec, CÉGEPs)(2019). Such colleges offer short courses or diplomas (more information on diplomas can be viewed in the 'Non-Degree Program' segment within the 'Postgraduate' section). Canada also has specialized career colleges, which aim to train students for particular careers.

Canadian degrees are globally recognized, just as the degrees obtained from the United States or the United Kingdom are. The Canadian education system is considered to follow high academic standards, alongside strict quality checks and controls. The number of international students applying to Canada has increased significantly, particularly compared to US (statistics and examples can be viewed [here](#))(2017).

Useful links:

- [This tool](#) is a good way of assessing what it takes to study in Canada.

Importance of knowing the French Language

The two official languages of Canada are English and French. Universities in Canada have various English-taught programs and French-taught programs. There are specific French-speaking regions (Montreal and Quebec particularly), where knowledge of French is an asset. If you know French, you may be eligible to apply to French schools there. If you are not proficient in French, then you should apply for the English taught programs. Zainab Hashmi (Head Counsellor at Froebel's International School) commented that not knowing French should not really put you at a disadvantage in terms of gaining admission (to English-taught programs). In terms of job prospects, speaking French would be helpful (especially if you want to work in French speaking areas). The table below provides information about English-taught and French-taught programs in some of the provinces in Canada:

Province/Territory	Official Language	English Taught Programs	French Taught programs
Ontario	English	English-Taught Programs - as of 2019, there were 5628 such programs (including non-degree programs etc.). Click on the link to browse through these programs - choose relevant filters depending on field, level of study etc.	French-Taught Programs - as of 2019, there were 281 such programs (including non-degree programs etc.). Click on the link to browse through these programs - choose relevant filters depending on field, level of study etc.
British Columbia	English	Most universities in British Columbia are English-medium.	

Quebec	French	This link shows the French-medium and English-medium universities in Quebec.
Alberta	English	Alberta mostly has English-medium universities, however, some universities may have French-medium courses.
Nova Scotia	English	Nova Scotia mainly has English-medium universities, which can be viewed here .
Manitoba	English	Most universities in Manitoba are English-medium. These can be viewed here .

Job Prospects

Note that this section focuses on prospects/chances of work in Canada - for information about eligibility requirements, check the relevant subsections within the 'Applying for a Visa' section of the profile.

Job prospects for international students in Canada tend to be limited (as of 2018). According to [Target Jobs, UK](#), Canadian employers are encouraged to offer jobs to Canadian residents more so than foreign applicants. If you do manage to find work in Canada, your prospective employer will have to get a [Labour Market Impact Assessment](#) (LMIA) to employ you. The purpose of the LMIA documents is to show that by hiring you (a foreign worker), the Canadian economy will not face any negative consequences. An easier process is applying to become a '[Federal Skilled Worker](#)', however this is mostly applicable to students who have received a diploma from a postsecondary institution, particularly PhD graduates.

Employment hurdles are similar to the US. However, according to [World Education Services](#), the demand for PhD applicants within the job sector is higher in the US than in Canada. They claim that the number of doctoral candidates in Canada exceed the number of job vacancies available for them. The US on the other hand has higher demand for such applicants, especially in the business sector (alongside academic and research sectors).

Useful resources:

- [Working in Canada](#): This includes information on popular work industries, work culture, general application process and more.

Working while studying

When applying to live in Canada, prospective students must show that they can support themselves in terms of tuition fees, living costs etc. However, work permit programs exist, which allow you to work as international students in Canada. In this way, you can gain experience, network, and earn some extra money on the side to ease the financial burden of studying and living abroad. Alongside this, working in

Canada will help in your application for immigration after graduation, if you wish to stay there after studies. Generally, part-time work opportunities on campus are available for students.

Working after graduating

While we would hope that Pakistanis return to Pakistan to play a part in building the country, we do want to share that - for those interested in staying abroad - after graduating, students have the option to work in Canada. This not only adds to your work experience but also improves the chances of permanent immigration to Canada. Overall, highly skilled workers have higher chances of securing a job here.

OVERVIEW OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

In Canada, [provinces and territories](#) are responsible for their own education systems. This means that each province/territory regulates their educational standards themselves, with no federal accreditation. Additionally, if any issues regarding the educational system arise, each province handles them independently. However, the federal government oversees the education system in each province, so the quality of education is expected to stay good. [This link](#) gives more information on the education systems in each province/territory.

Types of Institutions

There are a mix of public and private institutions, though public tends to be more common. Public institutions are required to follow province-wide admission requirements/rules, but private institutions are not required to follow any provincial/territorial rules in terms of their admission requirements. Each type of institution can offer one or more than one type of degree program (elaborated below in the subsection labelled 'Degree Structure').

- **Public Institutions:** These institutions receive a majority of their funding from the government or public sector, and so these tend to be less expensive as compared to private institutions. This also tends to lead to such institutions having larger departments and facilities.
- **Private Institutions:** These institutions receive either all or most of their funding from donors, faculty research grants and tuition fees, and so tend to be more expensive. However, their facilities for students also tend to be of good quality.

Degree Structure

In Canada, after secondary school (known as 'High School'), students move on to either universities, colleges or higher professional education:

University education progresses as follows:

1. Bachelor's degree (3-4 years)
2. Master's degree (1-2 years)
3. Doctorate (PhD) (3-5 years)

College education involves non-degree programs such as:

1. **Certificates (1 year)**
2. **Diplomas (2 years)**

Higher professional education involves gaining an Associate degree (2 years), which usually either leads to the student entering the job market related to the degree (field of study), or to pursue Bachelor's level education.

The following sites are useful resources for information on the education system of Canada:

- [Prepare to Study in Canada](#)
- [University Programs Database](#)
- [An Overview of Education in Canada](#)
- [School life in Canada](#)

UNDERGRADUATE STUDY

TYPES OF DEGREES

Types of Undergraduate Degrees	Duration (Full time programs)
Bachelor of Arts	3-4 years
Bachelor of Science	3-4 years
Difference between BA and BSc:	
Bachelor of Education	3-4 years
Bachelor of Engineering	4 years
Bachelor of Laws	3 years
Bachelor of Medicine/Surgery	5 years

Note: Generally, Honours (Hons) bachelor's degrees tend to involve a greater level of specialization within the subject and a higher standard of academic achievement. These degrees tend to be longer too, lasting for 4 years (vs Bachelor's degrees which last for 3 years usually).

Also note: if you are confused between a Bachelors degree or a Bachelor (Hons) degree, choose the Hons degree because it is easier to convert this to a normal Bachelor's degree (if you decide to opt for that). Going for Bachelor's to Bachelor (Hons) can be more difficult.

HOW TO PREPARE FOR AN UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE

Canadian universities generally accept most of the education systems/qualifications offered in Pakistan. It is recommended that you call the university's admission office when applying if you are unsure about how to equate your past education with the university requirements. Universities often give admission requirements for students from different countries (GPA requirements etc.), Pakistan included. If this option exists, you should check that out so to get a better idea about your relevant academic background.

EDUCATION SELECTION IN PAKISTAN

British Curriculum (O Levels/IGCSEs/A Levels)

When applying to Canadian universities, such applicants are expected to have at least 2 A Levels (more may be required depending on program) and/or at least 4 AS Levels. More competitive programs, such as Sciences or Business, may have other additional minimum requirements too. Either way, it is important to check each university's admission page to find out the exact requirements. Good Canadian universities, as compared to the US, are very aware of the British curriculum and so the application process is much easier - according to Zainab Hashmi, the university sites are very user friendly and you usually do not need to get any transcript evaluations done.

Check out '[Destination Canada: Using your Cambridge qualifications to study in Canada](#)' to find out more about British curriculum and applying to Canada.

International Baccalaureate

Many schools in Canada offer IB diplomas, either as an alternative to government diplomas or in addition to it. If you have an IB degree, you could receive certain benefits such as scholarships, tuition fee assistance or may even be able to reduce your undergraduate degree by a year (join as a second-year student and complete the undergraduate degree in 3 years).

According to [University Admissions in Canada](#):

“Most Canadian universities will have similar requirements, namely at least three HL passes out of six passed subjects; a minimum number of diploma points (typically 28); faculty-specific prerequisites; and proof of language proficiency in the main language of the university (English or French).”

When applying to universities, check out the IB admission requirements for international students to find out the exact requirements.

Another important thing to note when it comes to IB are high achievement scores. If you have high achievements on your IB diploma, this can be converted into university credits thus reducing the number of required university credits for graduation. For this, university websites will have to be consulted, to find out transfer policies for high scores in HL courses.

If you have an IB educational background, you should check out '[Guide for IB Students applying to Canadian Institutions](#)'.

Pakistani Curriculum (Matriculation/HSSC)

To find out whether your scores are acceptable for the programs you are interested in, it is important to call your short-listed universities.

APPLYING

OVERVIEW

The first step in applying is [choosing a program](#) to apply to, based on your previous academic, professional and personal experiences. Browse through institutions and programs; check out the resources mentioned below to aid this. Try to find out as much as you can about the institutions you are interested in and then check each program's individual admission requirements. It is always better to apply to more than one program, in case you don't get admitted into your first choice.

Choosing Amongst Programs/Universities

At the undergraduate level, you will need to select a 'Program Major' when applying to universities. This is a concentration of courses making your degree specialized in a particular field/subject. Your major will cover one-third to three-quarters of your study program (depending on the university rules), so you should choose this wisely. Note however that, if you apply for a particular program, that doesn't mean you are stuck with it. Canadian universities allow students to take up electives so that they can get exposure to different fields/subjects -- then if you prefer a different area, you can switch to that and major in it instead.

Some notes to keep in mind when choosing a program:

- You should talk to faculty/friends etc. and find out about careers and majors through them - this is a good way to get exposure about different pathways.
- Research as much as you can and find out what areas interest you.
- When looking at programs, keep your skills and background in mind. Decide whether you have the skill-set or academic background required for a program.
- If you are looking for a program that will help you get into a specific career, then you should look for professional degrees, such as Engineering, Social Work, Education etc. (where the title of the degree/program is directly related to the career path).
 - Other degrees such as Sociology, prepare you for a wide range of career options.
- If you know you are generally interested in Humanities or Sciences, then take up a relevant program within these, and use the first year to explore the field. Take up as many electives as you can and see which areas interest you.

The following sites are useful to look at when applying:

- [Post Secondary Programs according to Future Occupation](#)
- [Explore Universities](#)

Application Components

The completion of secondary school education and a good academic standing are general minimum requirements. Otherwise, certain documents must be submitted as part of your undergraduate application, which usually include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Application form
- Transcripts (these could be from secondary or post-secondary school)
 - These may need to be assessed and translated into English **or** French. This can be done by either consulting Pakistan's education authorities or through the [Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials](#).
- Proficiency in English or French is also a general requirement, depending on the program you are applying to (i.e. if you are applying to an English-taught program, you must prove proficiency in English, and if you are applying to a French-taught program, you are required to prove proficiency in French). Minimum standards should be checked through the university admission requirements.
 - *English Proficiency test:*
 - Standardized tests such as IELTS or TOEFL are usually used to determine this.
 - If you lack proficiency in English, various universities, colleges and private institutions offer programs to help you in this. These can be viewed [here](#).
 - *French Proficiency test:*
 - There are no standardized French Language tests. Universities usually have their own methods and requirements to prove your proficiency in the French language. It is best to view the program requirements or to contact the relevant universities to find out what these are.
- Letters of recommendation
- Personal statement

Zainab Hashmi commented that Personal Statements and Letters of Recommendation aren't a usual requirement for undergraduate applications. Transcripts and resumes are mostly enough; you may additionally be required to answer 1-2 questions in your application. Also note that your documents do not need to be translated to French if they are in English. English-based documents/translations are enough.

Application Cycle

Since the provinces and territories are in charge of their respective education systems, the application process tends to vary by province/territory. Some provinces have a central application service, while others don't and so you must apply directly through the university. It is recommended to apply at least 8-12 months in advance. Semesters usually begin in January and September; some universities have different deadlines for international students and so it is best to check admission requirements for international students before planning your application. Additionally, many universities offer 'rolling admissions', where they check international student's applications throughout the year.

Note: Application portals:

- Ontario: [OUAC](#)
- British Columbia: [Education Planner BC](#)

Application deadlines in Canada tend to be later than in the US. The application process usually begins in August/September and ends usually in January/February (scholarship deadlines are usually in December). Results are usually available in March.

If your application documents have to be mailed, it is important to send the documents well before the application deadline so to ensure that they reach the university before the application deadline. Zainab Hashmi advises that students should try to collect all their application materials by December and try to submit it by December too.

Once you have been accepted into a Canadian University, you must apply for a study permit straight away! Review the section on Visa applications for more information on this.

GENERAL ADMISSION TIPS

PERSONAL STATEMENT

- https://www.law.utoronto.ca/documents/JD/UofT_Law_Personal_Statements_Examples.pdf
- <https://www.york.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/applying/how-to-apply/personal-statement/>
- <https://dal.ca/libguides.com/c.php?g=257176&p=1718026>
- <https://www.recruitqueph.ca/cecs/tips-writing-your-personal-statement>
- <http://careers.yorku.ca/students-and-new-grads/post-graduate/10-tips-for-writing-a-strong-personal-statement/>
- <https://nationalpost.com/news/canada/admissions-101>
- <https://cloudfront.ualberta.ca/-/media/careercentre/documents/publications/personal-statement-guidebook.pdf>

LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

- <https://www.mcgill.ca/caps/students/gradschool/references>
- <https://uwaterloo.ca/discover-graduate-studies/admission-requirements/references/tips-referrees-write-effective-reference-letters>
- <https://sites.ualberta.ca/~caps/ReferenceLetters.pdf>
- <https://www.universityaffairs.ca/career-advice/career-advice-article/how-to-ask-for-a-reference-letter/>
- https://www.grad.ubc.ca/sites/default/files/doc/page/faculty_writing_strong_letters_of_recommendation.pdf
- <https://www.ualberta.ca/computing-science/graduate-studies/financial-support-and-awards/tips-for-applications-and-reference-letters>

FEES, FUNDING AND SCHOLARSHIP

Note that the figures in this section were last updated in November 2018.

FEES

Tuition fees, especially for international students, vary according to program and province. For example, Engineering and Medicine undergraduate degrees tend to cost more than the average costs of Arts and Humanities programs, amounting to an average of CAD\$28,625 (US\$21554) per year. Business and Management courses tend to be below the national average costs, approximately at CAD\$24,683 (US\$18586) per year.

Note that fees are just a portion of costs associated with studying abroad; many other factors contribute to total costs and are considered in the budget section.

The following list of links are useful when estimating fee costs:

- [Click here](#) for a list of tuition fees, according to various universities (2016-17).
- [Here](#) are averages of fees, according to different program fields (note that this table includes graduate level fees too, and is just an average measure; costs will vary according to location and program)
- [Canadian International Tuition Fees](#) shows the average tuition fees for different degree levels (including postgraduate), while also showing how these vary according to province/territory.

BUDGETING

There are many aspects of studying in a foreign country that you must consider before applying. These include the following:

- Tuition fees (mentioned above)
- Transportation
 - If you live close to the university, shopping/leisure facilities etc., then your transportation costs will be lower, since you can walk or bike to your desired location. However, if you live further away from locations, then you will incur transportation costs. In order to reduce such costs, students often opt for public transport (buses, subways, etc.). Such costs are likely to come to \$80-110 per month.
- Health insurance
 - You are required to have health insurance. The government of Canada does not cover health or medical costs for foreign students, however, health insurance policies are offered by universities and so it is recommended to contact the school you are applying to for details on this. It is also important to note that medical coverage tends to vary according to provinces and territories; Alberta, British Columbia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, and Saskatchewan offer international students medical

care plans, though this depends on how long you will be staying in Canada. If you plan to study in the remaining provinces/territories (Manitoba, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Prince Edward Island and Quebec), you will have to arrange for private medical coverage.

- Health insurance can be a monthly expenditure or a yearly one. Costs vary according to university and province.
- Accommodation (elaborated in a later section)

As part of your Canadian Student Visa requirements, you must have at least \$10,000 (or \$11,000 if you are studying in Quebec), in addition to tuition fees. However, it is important to note that your budget will be need to be greater than this to cover living costs. For a more detailed breakdown of costs, [click here](#) (2017). Additionally, [this tool](#) can be used to estimate your costs.

SCHOLARSHIPS AND GRANTS

Scholarships are offered by multiple sources for many different categories of students; some students get accepted for scholarships due to academics while other get accepted due to extra-curriculars.

Tips for when applying for scholarships in Canada:

Note that applications for scholarships are separate to applications to programs.

- Make sure to apply **everywhere!** It may sound like a lot of work, to apply to lots of places for scholarships/awards but most applications have similar components and so many parts will be re-used for each application.
- It is important to read application requirements and eligibility very closely. Make sure all your components follow the guidelines and make sure you are eligible to apply in the first place.
- Application deadlines vary, with some starting a year before the program begins and others opening a few months before. So make sure to check all deadlines. It is better to start looking and researching into such funding opportunities as early as possible, so you have plenty of time to develop a strong application. Since many applications require an essay, having more time to write it will benefit you a lot. It is also good to save time for proofreading and double checking all application components.

Undergraduate scholarships tend to be university specific and so you should check out your short-listed university sites to see what kind of funding opportunities are available. Zainab Hashmi commented that Canada is second to the US in terms of scholarship opportunities.

Other funding Options

- Student Loans: If you can't manage to get scholarships, then you can opt for a traditional student loan, which has similar interest rates and repayment schedules for both international and Canadian students. Provincial aid programs tend to only be applicable to Canadian students though, so you will need to apply to private organizations or a bank.

GRADUATE STUDY

DIFFERENT KINDS OF INSTITUTIONS (TIERS)

Types of Graduate Degrees

Level of Education	Types of Degrees	Duration and Structure (Full time programs)
Master's	Course based (MSc, MA, MBA, LLM, MDS)	1-2 years
	Thesis based (MRes MPhil)	2 years (however it can be longer depending on the thesis requirements)
	A Course-based program involves completing the required courses, practicum., exams, projects etc., whereas the Thesis based programs are a combination of courses and thesis completion (done under supervision of the supervisor). Thesis based programs are usually followed by students who wish to research in the future or in their careers.	
Doctoral	Doctorates (PhD)	3-4 years

Types of Graduate Programs

Types of Programs	Notes
Professional Programs	These equip you with a specialized skill and qualification for a particular profession. (e.g. MBA programs)
Terminal Programs	You can only apply for a Doctoral program after completing the Master's program.
Non-Terminal Programs	The Master's program is linked to the Doctoral program. After completing Master's, you must do the Doctoral degree

HOW TO PREPARE FOR A POSTGRADUATE DEGREE

(Taken from [Graduate Studies: A Practical Guide by Canadian Association for Graduate Studies, 2012](#))

Before going for a postgraduate degree, it is recommended to **research**. Students often begin their research - about the field, career opportunities etc. - before their undergraduate degree is completed, so to get an idea of what to expect. Readings, conversations and research all help in guiding you towards your ideal degree and eventual postgraduate program.

EDUCATION SELECTION IN PAKISTAN FOR MASTER'S

For a Master's program, most universities require students to have completed at least 16 years of education, or a 3-4 year Bachelor's degree before applying. Some universities may expect students to have a specialized background in the field of study they are pursuing, but this varies across programs.

Science and Engineering programs are more likely to require some academic background from applicants.

It is best to check the university admission requirements to be certain about the academic background required.

EDUCATION SELECTION IN PAKISTAN FOR PHDs

For most PhD programs, a Master's degree is usually a requirement.

It is best to check the university admission requirements to be certain about the academic background required.

NON-DEGREE PROGRAMS (CERTIFICATIONS AND DIPLOMAS)

<u>Career Colleges and Technical Colleges</u>	These offer specialized vocational training, aiming to provide students with specialized and practical training for a particular career. Such programs offer certificate and diploma programs and usually last between 6 months - 2 years. Students in Canada usually pursue these after high school.
Associate Degrees	This is for students who are unsure about their future career path. This degree is at an undergraduate level and aims to equip students with basic knowledge/skills for a particular career path or further study in a particular field. It usually lasts for 1-2 years, and can be extended if students wish to transfer to a Bachelor's program. In this way it will be expanded to 3-4 years. Note that not all universities allow such transfers so you will need to check out university policies. These are less common in Canada.

APPLYING

OVERVIEW

It is important to research into the university and program you are applying to; explore the university websites, contact them my email if you have any queries, visit the campus if you can travel etc.

Application Components

The requirements for postgraduate degrees vary according to program, but the following are general factors that influence admission:

1. Most schools prefer a **B+ GPA** in the last two years of undergraduate learning. Despite this, maintaining a consistently good GPA is better to improve chances of admission.
2. You need to make sure you are a **good fit for the program**; this will be shown through your various application components. Show how you can contribute to the program and to faculty research or general research in the field.
3. Relevant **skills and experience** are important. This can be research, professional, extracurricular volunteer or other experiences related to the field. Examples include part-time jobs, summer jobs, thesis work in your undergraduate studies, internships, volunteer work with faculty or a Teaching Assistant job.
4. **Letters of Recommendation** are also important; 2-3 references are usually required. The admissions committee will look at the type of recommender writing the letter and the content of the letter.
5. **Standardized test scores** are another common component. These include GRE, GMAT etc..

Specifically for PhD applicants:

1. High scores on standardized tests (GMAT, GRE)
2. Language certification (English or French)
3. Statement of Purpose
4. Research Proposal
5. Letters of Recommendation
6. Writing Sample

Requirements and guidelines for each will vary according to program and so it is important to check the program admission requirements. The purpose of the list above was just to give an idea on the kind of application components to expect; some programs may require fewer things, some may require additional things.

Also, in order to get into most PhD programs, a Master's degree is often a requirement. This is different to US admission requirements, where a Bachelor's degree is often sufficient because PhD programs are usually longer (they tend to include Master's curriculum to compensate for any lacking background). In Canada, the only degree that allows such a shift to PhD is a Master's of Science degree program, where a shift to PhD program is possible after the first year of study. Another distinction in terms of applying,

between the two countries, is the significance of the research proposal for PhD programs. In Canada, the research proposal is a very important component of the application. This is because PhD students usually start their research and thesis work as soon as the program begins. On the contrary, US PhD programs usually begin the research and thesis work in the 2nd or 3rd year of the program. In this way, the research proposal is important in the US, but not as significant as it is in Canada.

Additionally, Canadian PhD programs generally involve:

(this information was taken from [World Education Services](#))

- Small group seminars
- Required reading of at least 20 hours per week
- Researching on thesis in the first year
- Publishing peer-reviewed articles
- Applying for fellowships and scholarships, or other funding opportunities for your future research
- Teaching Assistantships (TAs) or Research Assistantships (RAs), which can take up to 20 hours per week. Note that the generally students are expected to spend 40 hours per week on their PhD studies (varies according to program), but in some cases work can exceed that limit.

Note: PhD programs are structured so that they finish in 4 years but given research and thesis work, it is likely that you will complete your doctorate in 5 years or even more. If you have applied for funding for your studies or research, it is likely that it will last till the 4 years and you will be expected to fund the remaining years yourself. So it is important to prepare for such funding issues. Also, in such cases you may need to apply for an [extension in your study permit](#).

Application Cycle

Applications usually happen for September and January semesters. However, many universities also have 'rolling admissions', through which they accept applicants throughout the year.

Application Process and Timeline

The application process varies -- in some provinces you can apply through a central portal (listed below) while for others you will need to apply directly to your chosen universities. Applications deadlines vary but generally you should try to apply at least 8-12 months in advance (prior to the start of the semester).

Application portals:

- Ontario: [OUAC](#)
- British Columbia: [Education Planner BC](#)

GENERAL ADMISSION TIPS

PERSONAL STATEMENT

- <https://www.careereducation.columbia.edu/resources/how-write-personal-statement-phd-program-application>
- <https://www.grad.ubc.ca/prospective-students/application-admission/statement-interest>
- <https://www.topuniversities.com/where-to-study/north-america/canada/graduate-study-canada-guide-international-students>

FEES, FUNDING AND SCHOLARSHIP

FEES

Note that this information was extracted in 2018 and the statistics may change in future years.

Information was extracted from Statistics Canada (1) and (2)

*Also note that these are **annual tuition fees**.*

The most expensive degrees in Canada include the Executive MBA (average fee of CAD\$56,282) and the regular MBA (average fee of CAD\$37,697). These figures are averages, the actual MBA (regular) fees vary significantly across provinces, ranging from CAD\$2,378 (Newfoundland) to CAD\$41,924 (Ontario). Other than this, Business, Management and Public Administration tuition fees, averaging at CAD\$22,442, and Dentistry tuition fees, averaging at CAD\$21,635, are also among the most expensive degrees.

The following list of links are useful when estimating fee costs:

- [Here](#) are averages of fees, according to different program fields (note that this table includes undergraduate level fees too, and is just an average measure; costs will vary according to location and program)
- [International Graduate Tuition fees](#) shows the average annual tuition fees for various programs, alongside fee trends from 2014 till 2019.
- [Canadian International Tuition Fees](#) shows the average tuition fees for different degree levels (including undergraduate), while also showing how these vary according to province/territory.

BUDGETING

There are many aspects of studying in a foreign country that you must consider before applying. These include the following:

- Tuition fees (mentioned above)
- Transportation
 - If you live close to the university, shopping/leisure facilities etc., then your transportation costs will be lower, since you can walk or bike to your desired location. However, if you live further away from locations, then you will incur transportation costs. In order to reduce such costs, students often opt for public transport (buses, subways, etc.). Such costs are likely to come to \$80-110 per month.
- Health insurance
 - You are required to have health insurance. The government of Canada does not cover health or medical costs for foreign students, however, health insurance policies are offered by universities and so it is recommended to contact the school you are applying to for details on this. It is also important to note that medical coverage tends to vary according to provinces and territories; Alberta, British Columbia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, and Saskatchewan offer international students medical

care plans, though this depends on how long you will be staying in Canada. If you plan to study in the remaining provinces/territories (Manitoba, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Prince Edward Island and Quebec), you will have to arrange for private medical coverage.

- Accomodation (elaborated in a later section)

As part of your Canadian Student Visa requirements, you must have at least \$10,000 (or \$11,000 if you are studying in Quebec), surplus to tuition fees. However, considering living costs otherwise, your budget is likely to be greater than that anyways. For a more detailed breakdown of costs, [click here](#) (2017). Additionally, [this tool](#) can be used to estimate your costs.

SCHOLARSHIPS AND GRANTS

There are a lot of ways in which you can fund your graduate studies. Useful sites to check out:

- [The Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials](#)
- [Universities Canada](#)
- [Scholarships Canada](#)

Specific scholarships/grants:

(Click on the links to view details on eligibility etc.)

Scholarship/Grant	Who is eligible
Canada Graduate Scholarships-Master's Program (CGS M)	This is a research fund, applicable after postgraduate study and is only applicable to participating Canadian institutions. Note that permanent residence in Canada is a requirement for this scholarship.
Ontario Graduate Scholarship	Full-time enrollment in a master's or doctoral program at a participating Ontario university. This is available for all programs.
Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarship	For doctoral candidates, financing their education. Nomination is done by participating universities, based on academics, research potential and leadership qualities.
Ontario Trillium Scholarship (OTS)	This is for PhD applicants, who have a valid study permit. Candidates for this scholarship must show proficiency and potential in research, and must be registered and present at an eligible PhD program. For details on this, you should check university specific pages.

Otherwise, many universities offer scholarship opportunities to international applicants, which involve their own criterion (usually academic and merit based). For such scholarships you should consult the university website.

Other Funding Options

- **Student Loans:** If you can't manage to get scholarships, then you can opt for a traditional student loan, which has similar interest rates and repayment schedules for both international and Canadian students. Provincial aid programs tend to only be applicable to Canadian students though, so you will need to apply to private organizations or a bank.
- **Assistantships:** Another way to help fund your stay in Canada would be to secure an assistantship at the university you are studying at. Though the earnings will not be enough to finance your tuition and other major expenses, they can help add to your funds. Note that these assistantships are largely based on academic standing of students.

GENERAL INFORMATION

(Applicable to all Applicants)

TRANSLATABILITY KEY

How applications to Canada are different to those to the US and the UK?

The purpose of this key is to show how the application processes for Canada compare to applications in the UK or the US (in terms of timelines, component requirements, degree types etc.) This information should allow you to: i) look at the field-specific tips given for USA or UK; then ii) adapt these tips for an application to another country (using the 'translatability key' in that country's profile). Please refer to the table below:

TRANSLATABILITY KEY	Are they required? Compare importance to UK/USA	Anything that needs to be added/removed (as compared to US/UK) in these components
STATEMENT OF PURPOSE	Required	
LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION	Required	
STANDARDIZED TESTS	Undergraduate: Not usually required. Graduate: GRE/GMAT usually required	
TRANSCRIPTS (which qualifications are accepted; if they are not, then what happens?)	Required	For PHD: Master's degrees are a requirement for Canadian PhD programs. This is the case for the UK but not for US (where you can apply without a Master's degree)
INTERVIEWS	Sometimes required	
LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY TESTS	Required. English Proficiency tests are required for english-medium programs, while French-proficiency tests are required for French-medium programs.	Since the US and UK don't have any French-medium programs, there is no requirement for this mentioned in the tip-sheets. If you are applying for such a program in Canada, you will need to add the French proficiency test component

APPLYING FOR A VISA

The following are some visa and permits you should be aware of:

1. [Electronic Travel Authorization \(eTA\)](#): This is for visa-exempt foreign nationals, who are traveling to Canada. It is an electronic entry requirement, which is linked to your passport.
2. Study Permit (explained below)
3. Work Permit (explained in the 'Job Prospects' section before)

The Study permit is NOT a visa. However, when you apply for a study permit, if you require an eTA or a Visitor Visa, it will be issued alongside the study permit. You don't need to apply separately for it.

THE STUDY PERMIT

You must apply to and get accepted into a [Designated Learning Institute](#), otherwise you will not be eligible for a study permit. Once you have been accepted, the next step is to apply for a Study Permit to study in Canada. In order to apply for this, students need to:

1. Gain acceptance into a school, college, university or any other educational institute in Canada
2. Prove that they have sufficient funds for tuition, living costs, transport and other costs. These include bank statements, proof of scholarship if applicable, your parent's bank statement etc.
3. Prove that you have no criminal record; this involves a police check from Pakistan
4. Show that you have good health, by providing medical records

It is important to always consult the [Immigration and Citizenship website](#) to keep up-to-date about the laws and requirements of the study permit. Also, check out the [Eligibility Requirements](#) of the Study Permit, to find out more about the kind of background you need to be eligible for the permit, responsibilities for those who have the permit and people who do not need to get the permit. Other useful information can be found [here](#).

WHEN SHOULD YOU APPLY

Apply as early as possible, because entry to Canada relies on you holding this permit! It is important to apply **before** travelling to Canada.

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST

The following are the costs of various permits/visas you may need to get.

Note that all may not be applicable to you.

(Information was taken from [Government of Canada](#))

Study Permit	\$150
Visitor Visa - Single entry or multiple entry	\$100

Visitor Visa - Maximum fee for a family	\$500
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Note that these costs include extension costs.

More information on visa/permit costs can be viewed [here](#).

HOW LONG CAN YOU STAY IN CANADA

The permit is valid for the duration of your studies, with an additional 90 days after the completion of the program.

HOW TO APPLY

This section was last updated in November 2018.

The following links explain the step-by-step process of applying and getting the permit:

1. [How to apply for the Study Permit](#)
2. [What happens after you apply](#)
3. [How to prepare for your arrival to Canada](#)

COMMON PROBLEMS

[This link](#) highlights some reasons why a visa may be rejected.

How can these be avoided?

When preparing documents for visa applications, it is important to be very vigilant/attentive. The main reason why a visa gets rejected is incomplete or incorrect documentation. So make sure to keep checking the list of requirements and to follow guidelines provided closely.

VISAS FOR FAMILY MEMBERS/DEPENDENTS

Spouse/Common-law partners and/or dependents can come with you (for short-term stay and permanent stay), if they fit the eligibility requirements mentioned [here](#). Otherwise, family members can apply for a [Visitor Visa](#) if they wish to stay with you; this visa allows them to stay for up to 6 months. Rules for [Minors](#) (below the age of 18) are similar in that they need a visitor visa, but certain clauses are different.

OTHER INFORMATION

Zainab Hashmi imparted some important information on visa, as follows:

- Getting a Canadian visa is difficult; in many cases applicant's can be rejected twice. She talked to the University of Alberta about this and they told her that 60% of Pakistani visas were rejected, the majority of which were applications for boys. In response to this, Alberta visited the Canadian consulate, and now chances of acceptance have improved. Nonetheless, it is still very difficult to get a Canadian student visa.

- In this way, it is very contradictory; though Canada is emphasizing its desire to attract more international students and boost immigration, many visa applications end up getting rejected!
- Her advice to prospective students is to consult the representatives of the universities and ask for guidance on the application process.

WORKING WITH THE VISA

The following are ways in which you can work while studying:

(The information was taken from [Universitystudy.ca](#) and [Canada.ca](#))

Note that the information below the headings is an overview; details about eligibility, application etc. must be viewed through the links in the headings of each point.

- **Off-campus Work Permit Program: [Working Off Campus](#)**

This program allows students to work 20 hours per week when university sessions/classes are taking place (i.e during the academic year), and full time during the holidays or breaks.

- *For students attending post-secondary academic, vocational or professional training program, or a vocational training program at the secondary level offered in Quebec. Check out more details on such eligibility requirements by clicking on the link above.*
- *However, according to Zainab Hashmi, off-campus work opportunities are limited for undergraduates.*

- **The Co-op/Internship Work Permit Program: [Co-op/Internships](#)**

If your studies/academic curriculum involves work or employment, this program allows you to fulfill these requirements. The University you are studying at has to certify this. Many universities offer Co-op programs. The University of Alberta, University of Toronto, University of Waterloo, McGill University, University of British Columbia, which have very strong co-op programs. However, it is important to note that such co-op programs are longer and more expensive, with an undergraduate degree lasting for 5 years (including 18-20 months of working). Regardless of this, there are benefits of such programs including the opportunity to secure a job, which can later help you secure a Permanent Residence card (and then possible citizenship after 3-4 years).

- **[Work on Campus:](#)**

If you are studying full-time at an [eligible Canadian academic institution](#) (University or college), you may be allowed to work on campus - as long as you have a valid study permit. In this case, students do not need a work permit.

Additionally, there are work permits for your spouse/common-law partner, allowing them to work while you study. Details on such work permits can be viewed [here](#).

Working in Canada after graduation

The following are different paths towards work after graduation in Canada:

(The information was taken from [Universitystudy.ca](#) and [Canada.ca](#))

Note that the information below the headings is an overview; details about eligibility, application etc. must be viewed through the links in the headings of each point.

- **[Temporary Worker](#)**
- **[Post-Graduate Work Program](#)**

This program allows international students from eligible postsecondary Canadian Institution to work for up to 3 years through an open work permit. They are allowed to work with any Canadian employer in an industry and do not need to have a job when applying for this permit. More information on this program can be viewed [here](#).
- **[Canadian Experience Class](#)**:

Through this program, you can apply to stay permanently in Canada. It is applicable to students graduating from a participating post-secondary institution in Canada. Certain requirements exist including familiarity with Canadian society, ability to speak English or French, having work experience and ability to add economic value to the Canadian society.
- **[Provincial Nominee Program](#)**:

This is when provinces or territories in Canada nominate international students to become a permanent resident of Canada. Students must have graduated from participating post-secondary Canadian institutions, as was the case previously. To be eligible for this, candidates must have the skills, education and work experience, alongside the ability to add economic values to the nominating province or territory.

Useful links:

- If you want to study and/or work in Canada, it is useful to check out where you stand within the [National Occupational Classification](#). Immigration authorities usually examine this when looking over your application, so it is a good idea to look closely at the various job classifications, especially when applying to work in Canada.

ACCOMMODATION

GENERAL OPTIONS

If you wish to study in Canada, various accommodation facilities are available. The type of residence you opt for will depend on various factors, including length of stay. For example, if you are visiting Canada for a short period of time (visiting the city for the first time, attending an interview, checking out the campus etc.), the type of accommodation you choose will be different to long-term stay (when you are studying or later working in Canada). The following are the main types of accommodation facilities available for such stays.

Note: Costs are likely to vary across locations.

Short-term Stay	
Hotels	Hotels provide private rooms, buffet options and cleaning services. Make sure to reserve a hotel room before you fly out, especially during the August-May time period (costs are usually higher during these months and availability might be limited). The costs, services and quality of hotels varies according to location (hotel costs will be higher in major and central cities). Considering budget constraints etc., this accommodation option is usually applicable to visiting family or to students visiting the country before the term starts etc.
Bed and Breakfast	Private homes or locally-run establishments offer such facilities. The buildings may have cultural heritage and are a good way to interact with the local community. Average costs are usually within the range of C\$35-105 per night.
Youth Hostels	If you have a lower budget, youth hostels are a good option for temporary stay. Private room are rare (multiple beds per room), and cleaning services are provided. Toilets. Baths and kitchens are shared amongst members, with sanitary conditions monitored by the Canadian Hostelling Association.
Long-term Stay	
School Provided Accommodation	
On-campus Accommodation	Many universities offer on-campus accommodation, particularly for international students, however there is no guarantee of such facilities. You have to apply separately for on-campus accommodation and costs usually vary according to university. Costs also vary according to the type

	of on-campus residence you want, for example private rooms (availability is more limited compared to other shared rooms) or meal plans. All dormitories are separated by gender.
Homestays	This involves staying with a Canadian families, who are contacted by the Universities. Such families offer to host international students, providing a home-like environment for students. There are many benefits of such accommodation facilities, including the fact that such an environment tends to improve your English or French, if you feel that you lack proficiency in these languages. They are usually small-family houses, providing a fully furnished room for you. Also, they usually provide family meal times, alongside other recreational opportunities with the family.
Private Accommodation	
Private Apartment	Some students opt for renting or purchasing a private apartment. According to Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), the cost of renting a 2 bedroom apartment ranges between \$600-\$1600 per month; the cost depends on the location and type of apartment. Additional costs include monthly utility costs (electricity, water, phone service, internet and more), personal expenses and renter's insurance. In order to reduce costs, many students share apartments and other accommodation facilities.

Cities ranked according to cost of living cost

Vancouver and Toronto are considered the most expensive cities to live in, especially when considering rental costs. Quebec, on the other hand, is considered to be one of the cheapest. Zainab Hashmi comments that Waterloo and London tend to be cheaper. For a list of the most expensive cities in Canada, [click here](#).

Other

Here are some additional links to help you find places of residence on your own:

- [Accommodation Options for International Students in Canada](#): This site provides tips and general information on accommodations.

CONTRIBUTORS

This information was compiled with the valuable help of SHAHEEN volunteers. The contributors to this tip-sheet include the following people:

- Zainab Hashmi - Head Counsellor at Froebel's International School

We thank our volunteers for their contribution, and hope their tips and advice will help you in your application.

In addition to that, the following sources were consulted in developing this country profile. We encourage you to consult these sources for additional information and guidance.

- [Graduate Studies: A Practical Guide](#) -- Note that the content of the guide is for students applying to Canadian universities in general, not specifically international applicants, and so some information may not be applicable to you (for example financial aid through a government loan etc.).

Furthermore, the following sources were also consulted in developing this profile:

[Graduate study in Canada](#), [Work on campus](#), [Help your spouse or common-law partner work in Canada](#), [Work after graduation](#), [Language opportunities](#), [International students in Canada - Policies and practices for social inclusion](#), [3 things to know about earning a Bachelor's degree in Canada](#), [Find programs and costs for international students](#), [How to apply to Canadian Universities](#), [Destination Canada](#), [Student Guide](#), [How to get into a university](#), [The difference between PhD studies in the US and Canada](#), [How to choose your program](#), [Accommodation options for international students in Canada](#), [Canada rental costs](#), [Cheapest and most expensive places student rent in the world](#), [What is graduate education](#), [What is a study permit](#), [Study permit](#), [Perception of IB at Canadian universities](#), [Canadian student permits and student work permits for international students](#), [Study permit](#), [How do I apply for a study permit](#), [After you apply](#), [Temporary study visa](#), [Designated learning institutions list](#), [government of Canada immigration fee schedule](#), [What are the fees for visa applications](#), [What does it cost to study in Canada](#), [Tuition fees by Canadian university](#), [Cost of studying at a university in Canada](#), [Scholarship tips](#), [Government Statistics \(1\) \(2\) \(3\)](#), [Financial aid for international students at a Canadian university](#), [USA vs Canada, cheapest country](#), [Study permit application refusals](#), [Undergraduate courses](#), [Education cost](#), [International students tuition](#), and [Government of Canada immigration fee schedule](#).