



# Pre-Arrival Orientation for International Students in Canada – Fall 2025

Office of Global Services Canada  
June 19th, 2025

This session is intended to welcome Fall 2025 new students and provide important information and updates to enable a successful start of your program.

**DISCLAIMER**

Information we share today is current as of June 18, 2025.

Please note that links and information may change at any time; always check reliable resources for updates to information.

# Prepare for Your Study at Northeastern

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## 1.1 Proof of Acceptance (POA)/ Provincial Attestation Letter (PAL)

Learn more about POA, PAL, and Deposit: [POA & Deposit Process – OGS Canada](#)

- The POA (Proof of Acceptance) is an enhanced offer letter required for international students' study permit applications to IRCC. A Provincial Attestation Letter (PAL) is also required for most applicants starting January 22, 2025.
- PALs issued in 2025 are valid until December 31, 2025. After that, they cannot be used.
- If your study permit is refused, the PAL becomes invalid and cannot be reused.
- If you withdraw your application before processing or if IRCC returns it unprocessed, you may reuse the same PAL.

## 1.2 Study Permit Application & Tracking

1. Follow our guide: [Applying for a Study Permit – OGS Canada](#)
2. Submit online; keep email and phone number current with IRCC.
3. Study Permits are not issued outside Canada – once approved for a study permit, you will receive the required travel document (Visa or eTA) to allow you to come to Canada to receive the study permit on entry. [Difference between a study permit and a Visa?](#)
4. Immigration Officers or Canada Border Services Agents can request to see your proof of funds, your acceptance letter and other supporting documents on your arrival to Canada.
5. Track study permit application status in your IRCC account and update [NU's Study Permit Status Update Form](#) located in your application portal. The portal remains open for updates until you indicate approval or refusal.

## 1.3 Impersonation Scams

Learn more: [Scams and Safety – Canada](#)

- Official Northeastern emails always end in @northeastern.edu.
- IRCC emails commonly end in @cic.gc.ca.

## 1.4 Study Permit Refusal and Deposit Refund

If you used a PAL issued by Northeastern University to apply for your study permit and the study permit is refused:

- Update the [application portal](#)
- Send us your study permit refusal letter via the [OGS inquiry form](#).
- Once your refusal is verified, your PAL deposit will be refunded in 5-10 business days.
- OGS Canada can assist you to request GCMS notes about your refusal on your behalf, free of charge.
- Connect with Admissions team and explore your options.

## 1.5 Late Arrival & Deferral

- Check the [Late Arrival and Deferral](#) policies for your College.
- You should not come to Canada later than your College's Program Start Date or Late Arrival Date, if applicable. If you cannot arrive on time to start your program then you need to defer to the next available intake.
- Once your study permit is issued, you must study. You cannot remain in Canada without studying as this will impact your study permit validity and your PGWP eligibility.
- Do not travel to Canada unless you are ready and able to study.

## RESOURCES

Our OGS Canada website has various resources and information that will be helpful to you as a student at Northeastern:

- [OGS Canada Website](#)
- [New Students Travelling to Canada](#)
- [Late Arrival and Deferral Policies](#)
- [Living in Canada](#)
- [Housing in Canada](#)
- [Driving in Canada](#)

## CONTACT INFORMATION

[OGS Canada Inquiry Form](#)

For study permit application questions, studying/working in Canada, status in Canada, PGWP.

[Student Financial Services](#)

(Student Accounts Canada) [Inquiry Form](#) – For questions about loan certifications, deposits, invoice and receipts, payment links, tuition fees, refund.

## 1.6 Co-op Work Permit Application

1. Learn more about Co-op Work Permit: [Co-Op Work Permit](#)
2. If you plan to apply for a co-op work permit with your initial study permit, you may use your POA and upload it as the "School Letter" on the IRCC portal.
3. When you arrive at a Port of entry, make sure to collect your Co-Op Work Permit along with your Study Permit and check for any errors or mistakes on the documents.
4. If you did not apply for a co-op work permit along with your study permit, or if you were approved but you forgot to have it printed by CBSA when you enter Canada, you will still have a chance to apply for one AFTER you arrive in Canada and start your program.

# After Visa Approval

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## 2.1 Arrival & Deferral Policies

- Do not enter Canada more than 2 months before program start.
- If your plans change after Study Permit approval, consult OGS & Admissions before travelling.
- [Contact OGS Canada](#)
- [Contact Admission and Enrollment Team](#)

## 2.2 Study Permit Status Update Form

Complete/update the form once your Student Permit is approved, refused, or you've reapplied.

[Study Permit Status Update Form](#) is located in your application portal.

The portal remains open for updates until you indicate approval or refusal.

## 2.3 Guidelines for International Students Traveling to Canada

- Review [NU Traveling to Canada guide](#) & the [Canadian Border Service Agency's information for international students pamphlet](#).
- Do not work until Day 1 of classes.

## 2.4 Required Documents to Carry

- ☐ Valid Study Permit or a letter of introduction, identifying you as a person who has been approved for a Study Permit.
- ☐ Travel document, e.g. A valid passport.
- ☐ A Temporary Resident Visa (TRV) or electronic travel authorization (e-TA) for non-US citizens.
- ☐ A copy of the admissions letter/decision letter/deferral confirmation letter or email if applicable from Northeastern University.
- ☐ A copy of the Proof of Acceptance (POA) letter that you submitted for your study permit application.
- ☐ Valid and unexpired medical exam records. Medical results are normally valid for 12 months from the moment of administration. This information is also available on the Study Permit approval letter.
- ☐ Proof of financial support.
- ☐ [Any other document that you are advised to provide by IRCC.](#)

## 2.5 Health Insurance

Only purchase your health insurance when you have received a study permit approval and you have a scheduled flight to Canada.

Health insurance is a separate cost not included in your tuition fees.

**GuardMe is the mandatory health insurance plan** for international students studying at a Canadian NU Campus.

Learn more: [Health Insurance in Canada](#)

### Toronto Campus:

- **Step 1:** All international students must purchase the mandatory 1-year policy - [GuardMe New Student Plan](#) (1 Sep–31 Aug 2026). Purchasing link opens in August.
- For Fall (September) students you can expect an upfront cost of \$700-\$750 CAD for the primary policy holder.
- **Step 2 (if applicable):** Buy [Early Arrival](#) coverage if you are arriving **before September 1st**. You should purchase Early Arrival insurance so that you are covered from the day you arrive in Canada.
- This Early Arrival insurance will cover you until August 31st, 2025 only. You still need to purchase the New Students health insurance plan in Step 1.
- If you are bringing family members, you can [add dependents](#) to your GuardMe policy. You first need to purchase the insurance yourself, and once you have your policy number you can add your dependents after. Costs will vary.

### Vancouver Campus:

- International students in BC are in most cases eligible for the provincial health coverage – Medical Services Plan (MSP).
- However, you will need to apply for GuardMe Health Insurance for your first 90 days in Canada, starting from the day you arrive.
- [Buy GuardMe](#) for your first 90 days in BC.
- You should plan for a cost of about \$170 – \$190 CAD for 90 days.
- [Apply for MSP](#) immediately upon arrival.
- Detailed information can be found [here](#).

## 2.6 Port of Entry Arrival

[Click here](#) to read more about what to expect when you arrive in Canada.

For a detailed list of documents that you should bring with you, please see our [Travel to Canada Guide](#).



# After Arriving in Canada

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## 3.1 Health Insurance

### Toronto Campus:

- Purchase the mandatory [GuardMe New Student plan](#) (1 Sep–31 Aug 2026) if you haven't already.
- If you purchased the early arrival insurance, ensure that you have also purchased the New Students insurance, which is mandatory.

### Vancouver Campus:

- Apply for [MSP online](#) as soon as you secure a BC address; processing ≈ 6 weeks. GuardMe covers you while you wait.
- When you get MSP, we would also advise you to consider the [top-up plans from GuardMe](#). The GuardMe Plus top-up plan that NU has selected for its students provides benefits that have been designed with the unique needs of international students in mind.

## 3.2 Social Insurance Number (SIN)

A Social Insurance Number (SIN) is fundamental to working in Canada and accessing Government of Canada programs and services.

A Social Insurance Number (SIN) is a 9-digit number that you need to work and be paid in Canada and access government programs and benefits. It is also used to file taxes.

Apply online or at [Service Canada Centre](#); bring passport + study permit. Required for any employment and tax filing.

Attend our [SIN Workshop](#) on August 22nd for more information.

## 3.3 Banking

Guide to [banking](#) in Canada.

## 3.4 Maintaining Student Status

Learn more: [Maintaining Status in Canada](#)

## 3.5 Submit your Study Permit and Health insurance proof to the myOGS Portal

Look out for an email from OGS Canada at the end of August/early September to submit your Study Permit and Health Insurance documents to the myOGS Portal.

Do not submit your documents until you have arrived in Canada and received your Study Permit at the Port of Entry.

To ensure both institutional and individual compliance as an international student, these documents will be reviewed and approved.

Missing the submission deadlines will lead to withdrawal from your program.

## 3.6 OGS Canada International Student Orientation Canvas Course

- The OGS Canada Orientation Course – A Comprehensive Guide for International Students in Canada is a non-credit orientation course in Canvas that gives important information for international students in Canada.
- This course will be **MANDATORY** for all new students enrolled in and attending classes at a Northeastern Canadian campus.
- Failure to complete the course on time will result in your student account being placed on hold.
- An invite to the canvas course will be sent in September.

## 3.7 Events & Workshops

Social Insurance Number Workshop  
August 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2025 @ 12:30PM EST  
[Register Here](#)

Study Permit Application Information Session  
Various Dates  
[Register Here](#)

Pre-Arrival Orientation Webinar #2  
July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025 @ 11AM EST  
[Register Here](#)

Pre Arrival Orientation Webinar #3  
August 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025 @ 11AM EST  
[Register Here](#)

## CONTACT NORTHEASTERN

### Admissions/Enrolment

(eg. Checklist issues. Transcripts. POAs/PALs, admissions documents, changes to personal information, deferrals, withdrawals etc)  
[Login to your application portal.](#)

Go to **Manage Your Application** > Click **Make a Request** > **Submit a Request** > Choose the best option from the dropdown and type your question in the space provided.

### Academic Related

(eg. Course registration, withdrawals, course add/drop)

- [Khoury College of Computer Science Advising Team](#)
- [College of Professional Studies \(CPS\)](#)
- [College of Engineering \(COE\)](#)
- [College of Arts, Media and Design \(CAMD\) - CAMD Graduate Advising](#)
- [College of Science \(COS\) - COSGradStudents@northeastern.edu](#)