

Pre-Arrival Orientation for International Students in Canada – Winter/Spring 2026

Office of Global Services Canada

October 17th, 2025

This session is intended to welcome Winter/Spring 2026 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 October 17th, 2025.

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

1. Prepare for Your Study at Northeastern

Northeastern
University

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. If you have been issued a PAL and you don't apply for study permit before December 31, 2025, your PAL will become invalid, and you will not be able to use it anymore.
- If your study permit application is refused, your PAL becomes invalid, and you will not be able to reuse it.
- For PAL related questions, reach out to an Admissions Counselor or Enrollment Counselor [here](#).

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. Ensure you let us know the outcome of your study permit application by completing the [OGS Canada Study Permit Application Status eform](#).

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 Admissions team about your study permit application status through the [application portal](#)
- Upload your refusal documents to OGS Canada via the [OGS Canada Study Permit Application Status Update](#) form.
- OGS Canada can assist you to request GCMS notes about your refusal on your behalf, free of charge.
- Once your refusal is verified, your PAL deposit will be refunded within 2–3 weeks. Deposits aren't transferable. If you defer, you will be reassessed for PAL eligibility and if selected for another PAL you will pay a new deposit.

1.5 Late Arrival & Deferral

- Late Arrival policies will be updated closer to January. Monitor the [Late Arrival and Deferral Policies](#) page for updates.
- 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.

2. After Visa Approval

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 Forms

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

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

[Update OGS Canada about your study permit approval.](#)

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

2.3 Guidelines for International Students Traveling to Canada

- Review [New Students Traveling to Canada page](#) & 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 8-month policy (Jan 1 – Aug 31) - [GuardMe New Student Plan](#) - link to purchase will open on **December 1st**.
- For Winter/Spring students you can expect an upfront cost of \$500-\$600 CAD for the primary policy holder.
- **Step 2 (if applicable):** Buy [Early Arrival](#) coverage if you are arriving **before January 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 December 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](#).

3. After Arriving in Canada

3.1 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](#).

3.2 Submit your Study Permit and Health insurance proof for Mandatory Immigration Clearance Process

Complete the [Arrival Questionnaire](#) to submit your Study Permit **AND** GuardMe Health Insurance policy card to OGS Canada for approval before you come on campus.

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 by the OGS Canada team.

Incomplete Arrival Questionnaires will result in a denial of your husky card, restrict you from classes/campus and a hold on your student account/a possible withdrawal from your program.

3.3 Banking

Guide to [banking](#) in Canada.

3.4 Maintaining Student Status

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

3.5 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.

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 January.

3.7 Events & Workshops

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

Other Pre Arrival Orientation Webinars
November 4th, 2025
December 10th, 2025
[Register Here](#)

CONTACT NORTHEASTERN

Admissions/Enrolment

(eg. Checklist issues, transcripts, 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/or type your question in the space provided.

Academic Related

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

- [Khouri 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