Working On and Off Campus

NOTE: This information does not apply to SFU-approved internship, practicum or Co-op placements. Please see our Applying for a Co-op/Internship Work Permit handout for details.

What are my options for working while in Canada?

International undergraduate and graduate students

If you are an international undergraduate or graduate student pursuing an eligible program of at least 6 months in duration that leads to an SFU degree, diploma or certificate, you may work on or off campus if:

- You hold a valid study permit;
- You meet SFU’s definition of full-time status as per http://www.sfu.ca/students/isap/current/enrollment-requirements.html, as well as the work eligibility requirements prescribed by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) at http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/study/work.asp; AND
- You apply for and obtain a valid Social Insurance Number (see our Applying for a Social Insurance Number handout for details)

Note: Students who hold a valid off-campus work permit are subject to the regulations of the Off-Campus Work Permit Program in effect prior to June 1, 2014. If you hold an off-campus work permit and are unsure as to how to maintain your conditions, contact an International Student Advisor for details.

On campus: Defined as employment facilities within the boundaries of the campus. Your employer can be SFU (temporary assignments), a faculty member, the Student Society, yourself (e.g. private tutoring) or a private business or private contractor providing services to the institution on the campus.

Off campus: Employment outside the SFU campus, excluding Co-op placements or SFU-approved internships or practicums.

You may also participate in a Co-op work term or SFU-approved internship or practicum if:

- You have been accepted into the Co-op program OR you are expected to complete an internship/practicum as an essential part of your program of studies;
- You hold a valid Co-op work permit (see our Applying for a Co-op/Internship Work Permit handout for instructions on how to apply); AND
- You apply for and obtain a valid Social Insurance Number (see our Applying for a Social Insurance Number handout for details)

Inbound exchange students

If you are an exchange student studying at SFU for one or two terms, you may work on campus (see definition above) if:

- You hold a valid study permit;
- You are enrolled full-time; AND
- You apply for and obtain a valid Social Insurance Number (see our Applying for a Social Insurance Number handout for details)

Inbound exchange students are not eligible for off-campus work or co-op/internship/practicum placements.

What issues will I need to consider when deciding whether or not to work?

1. Eligibility

Before starting work, you must ensure that you are eligible based on current Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) regulations. Please refer to the information above as well as SFU’s website at http://www.sfu.ca/students/isap/current/enrollment-requirements.html and IRCC’s website at http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/study/work.asp to see if you are legally able to work.

It is your responsibility and your employer's responsibility to ensure that you are eligible to work on and/or off campus before you begin working. Working without meeting the eligibility requirements may result in enforcement action by IRCC (including possible removal from Canada).

2. Hours of work

If you are working off campus, you may work a maximum of 20 hours per week during regular academic sessions, and full time during regularly scheduled breaks. See http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/study/work-offcampus.asp for details.

There is currently no restriction imposed on the number of hours you may work on campus; however, it is strongly recommended that you limit your hours to part time. Even if you are working, your studies must continue to be the main reason you are in Canada as per IRCC policy.

The information in this document has been reviewed and endorsed by a Regulated Canadian Immigration Consultant (RCIC) pursuant to section 91 of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act. This is not a legal document and information may change without notice. Always refer to www.cic.gc.ca for the most updated information. This document was last reviewed on February 14, 2019.
For more information about what constitutes a regularly scheduled break, please see SFU’s website at https://www.sfu.ca/students/isap/current/enrollment-requirements/studying-working/scheduled-break.html

3. Medical exam
You may require a medical exam based on the type of work you intend to do and where you have been living. Visit http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/medical/medexams-temp.asp to determine whether this requirement will apply to you. Note: A medical examination must be completed prior to applying for a work permit (if applicable).

How can I find jobs on campus?

Employment opportunities on campus may be advertised through:
- myInvolvement (on-campus paid and volunteer opportunities available)
- myExperience (off-campus opportunities available)
- Work-Study Program (administered by SFU Financial Aid & Awards)
- SFU Human Resources
- the Student Temporary Pool
- the Workopolis website
- the TalentEgg website
- individual employers or departments

Students may apply for temporary jobs advertised through SFU Human Resources; priority is given to students with the necessary ability and qualifications.

Where can I get help with the job search process?

SFU Career and Volunteer Services offers a range of resources including workshops and advising on resumes and cover letters, interview tips, career exploration, networking and more. Visit www.sfu.ca/career for more information.

Can I work in Canada after graduating?

If you will graduate soon and wish to work after graduation, you must apply for a Post-Graduation Work Permit (PGWP) within 180 days of completing your program requirements (see our Post-Graduation Work Permit handout for details).

If your study permit is still valid at the time you submit your PGWP application and you meet certain eligibility requirements set by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), you may be eligible to begin working full time while you wait processing of your application. See https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugeescitizenship/services/study-canada/work/after-graduation/after-you-apply.html Keep in mind that your current study permit will automatically become invalid 90 days after you successfully complete your program, or on the expiry date printed on your study permit, whichever is earlier. Speak with an International Student Advisor for more information.