Working On and Off Campus

Can I work on and off campus while I study?

Eligible international students can work on and off campus without a work permit. There are different requirements for working on campus and off campus. International undergraduate and graduate students who would like to work on and/or off campus must meet certain eligibility criteria as outlined below.

On campus work

“On campus” is defined by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) as employment facilities within the boundaries of the campus. Your employer can be SFU (e.g. 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. This does not include Co-op placements or SFU-approved internships or practicums.

SFU students who meet the eligibility criteria to work on campus are permitted to work at any of the three SFU campuses (Burnaby, Vancouver or Surrey).

Students can work on campus without a work permit if they:

- Meet SFU’s definition of full-time status as per https://www.sfu.ca/students/isap/explore/enrollment/enrollment-requirements.html in the term they wish to work on campus
- Meet IRCC’s work eligibility criteria for on campus work as per https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/study-canada/work/work-on-campus.html
- Hold a valid Social Insurance Number (SIN). See our handout https://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/students/isap/Advising%20Handouts/Applying%20for%20a%20Social%20Insurance%20Number%20%28SIN%29.pdf for more information on how to apply.

Off campus work

Off-campus work includes employment outside the boundaries of the SFU campus. This does not include Co-op placements or SFU-approved internships or practicums.

Students can work off campus without a work permit if they:

- Meet SFU’s definition of full-time or regularly scheduled break as per https://www.sfu.ca/students/isap/explore/enrollment/enrollment-requirements.html in the term they wish to work off campus
- Meet IRCC’s work eligibility criteria for off campus work as per https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/study-canada/work/work-off-campus.html
- Hold a valid Social Insurance Number (SIN). See our handout https://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/students/isap/Advising%20Handouts/Applying%20for%20a%20Social%20Insurance%20Number%20%28SIN%29.pdf for more information on how to apply.

Can I work in a Co-op job or an internship while I study?

You may participate in a Co-op work term or SFU-approved internship or practicum if all of the following apply:

- 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;
- You apply for and obtain a valid Social Insurance Number (SIN). See our handout https://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/students/isap/Advising%20Handouts/Applying%20for%20a%20Social%20Insurance%20Number%20%28SIN%29.pdf for more information on how to apply.

For more information about how to apply for a Co-op work permit, please see our handout at: https://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/students/isap/Advising%20Handouts/Applying%20for%20a%20Co-op%20Work%20Permit%20or%20SFU-Approved%20Internship%20Work%20Permit.pdf. The Co-op work permit can only be used for a Co-op work term or a SFU-approved internship or practicum.

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 May 27, 2019.
Can I volunteer in Canada while I study?

Off-campus volunteer activities for which a person would not normally be paid, which are part time and incidental to the main reason you are in Canada (to study), generally does not require a work permit.

If the off-campus volunteer work is an activity for which a Canadian citizen of permanent resident might normally be hired, or if it is considered “competitive” within the Canadian labour market, it will generally be considered employment and you will require a work permit (or you will need to meet the eligibility requirements to work using your study permit).

For more information, please see https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/publications-manuals/operational-bulletins-manuals/temporary-residents/foreign-workers/what-is-work.html

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 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 https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/study-canada/work/work-off-campus.html 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.

   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 depending on the type of work you intend to do and where you have been living. Visit https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/application/medical-police/medical-exams/requirements-temporary-residents.html to determine whether this requirement will apply to you.

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 http://www.sfu.ca/students/career.html for more information.

Can I work in Canada after graduating?

If you wish to work in Canada after completing your program of study, 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 valid at the time you submit your PGWP application and you meet certain eligibility requirements set by IRCC, you may be eligible to begin working full time while you await processing of your PGWP application. See https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/study-canada/work/after-graduation/after-you-apply.html

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. Please keep this in mind if you want to begin working after submitting your PGWP application. Speak with an International Student Advisor, Immigration Specialist for more information.

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