INTERNATIONAL UNDERGRADUATE CHECKLIST

This checklist is for the general procedures and resources. For latest updates and specific information on COVID-19 including impacts on immigration applications [e.g. study permit, visa], travel restrictions, arriving in Canada, work eligibility, medical insurance, and additional resources for international students, click here.

BEFORE YOU ARRIVE

STEP 1
☐ Apply and receive approval for a study permit:
  • Apply early - you must wait for your application to be approved before travelling to Canada
  • If you are a citizen or permanent resident of the USA, you have the option of submitting your application upon your arrival at a Canadian Port of Entry (e.g. your airport of arrival or land crossing into Canada)

☐ Before travelling to Canada, ensure you have the following:
  • a valid passport or travel document,
  • a valid Temporary Resident Visa/TRV or Electronic Travel Authorization/eTA [if required],
  • your SFU letter of acceptance,
  • proof of funds, and
  • your IRCC letter of introduction

☐ Purchase early arrival medical insurance coverage, if you will arrive in Canada before the first day of the term (e.g. May 1, Sept 1, or Jan 1). Please contact an International Student Advisor to learn more about your options for early arrival coverage.

STEP 2
Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, upon arriving in Canada, most travelers are required to isolate for a period of 14 days. The Government of BC also requires that travelers complete a self isolation plan which includes arranging necessary supports (e.g. medication, food, etc.). Please be mindful of this when you are preparing to travel to Canada. To learn more click here.

☐ Check out the Vancouver International Airport website to get a detailed overview of the airport arrival process.

☐ Plan your route and transportation from the airport to your destination.

☐ Make electronic copies of important original documents. Leave a copy with family or friends as well.

STEP 3
☐ Research housing options and decide where to live (on-campus or off-campus).
  ▶ Consider making an advance appointment and discuss with International Student Advisors before making a decision on off-campus housing to avoid housing scams.

☐ If applicable! Apply for on-campus housing as soon as possible, spaces are limited.

STEP 4
☐ Complete SFU 101. You will be automatically enrolled in SFU 101 on April 29, 2020 and you will receive Co-Curricular Record accreditation for completing this course. This course includes a module for international students.

☐ Sign up and attend Welcome Day:Live! where you will:
  ▶ meet your professors, classmates and the SFU staff who will help launch your time at SFU
  ▶ find out more about your program of study

☐ Sign up for the Global Connections Program.
  ▶ When you join the Global Connections Program, you can request to be matched with a Community Leader to support you and answer your questions one-on-one about all aspects of life at SFU. You will also be meeting other SFU students through various events, activities, and trips over the course of one term. See photos of our past events on our Facebook and Instagram.

UPON YOUR ARRIVAL

STEP 5
Open a bank account.
Check your financial aid options.
Apply for the BC Medical Services Plan (MSP) as soon as you arrive. Your coverage will begin two to three months after your arrival date in BC. If you will be residing in BC for six months or longer, it is mandatory for you to enroll yourself and any accompanying family members in BC MSP.
Opt out of the Guard.me@SFU plan when your BC MSP takes effect (after the waiting period), or if you are outside of Canada during the Fall 2020 term. You may be eligible for a partial refund of the guard.me@SFU fee if there is more than one month remaining in the term, and you have not used the plan.
Make changes to your secondary insurance if necessary (i.e. opt down to the basic plan, opt out with equivalent coverage, add family members) during the opt-out period for Studentcare.

If you are a citizen or permanent resident of the USA, you have the option of submitting your study permit application upon your arrival at a Canadian Port of Entry (e.g. your airport of arrival or land crossing into Canada).

AFTER YOUR ARRIVAL

STEP 6
Open a bank account.
Check your financial aid options.

STEP 7
As a new international student at SFU, you will be automatically enrolled in a 4-month primary medical insurance plan with guard.me@SFU for your first term of studies. This is to ensure you have valid coverage during the waiting period for public health insurance under the BC Medical Services Plan (BC MSP).
Apply for the BC Medical Services Plan (MSP) as soon as you arrive. Your coverage will begin two to three months after your arrival date in BC. If you will be residing in BC for six months or longer, it is mandatory for you to enroll yourself and any accompanying family members in BC MSP.
Opt out of the Guard.me@SFU plan when your BC MSP takes effect (after the waiting period), or if you are outside of Canada during the Fall 2020 term. You may be eligible for a partial refund of the guard.me@SFU fee if there is more than one month remaining in the term, and you have not used the plan.
Make changes to your secondary insurance if necessary (i.e. opt down to the basic plan, opt out with equivalent coverage, add family members) during the opt-out period for Studentcare.

STEP 8
Learn and maintain SFU’s enrollment requirements for international students:
- Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) requires you to actively pursue your studies while at SFU. SFU is required to report on the enrollment status of international students twice a year.
- This will affect your ability to work, study, and stay in Canada. To help you comply with the conditions of your study permit, review the information in this section carefully and contact an International Student Advisor, Immigration Specialist if you have any questions.
Determine your eligibility to work on campus or off campus.
Apply for a Social Insurance Number (SIN) if you are eligible and planning to work in Canada:
- You must provide your SIN to your employer within three days of starting work
- At the beginning of the Fall and Spring terms, Service Canada offers on-campus SIN clinics to help you apply for a SIN on campus. See upcoming sessions here.

STEP 9
Follow ISS on Facebook and Instagram for the upcoming events, opportunities, and important reminders.
During the Summer 2020 term, we will be offering a number of virtual events and where you can connect with other SFU students. Stay informed about ISS plans by watching our Events and Programs webpage.
Read ISS Newsletter sent to your SFU Mail account to stay up-to-date on advising, immigration, medical, opportunities, and important reminders.
Get involved early in your SFU community!

STEP 10
The transition to life as an international student in a new country can be exciting, but isn’t always easy. SFU has a number of supports available to you if you are struggling. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you are having a difficult time at any stage of your SFU degree -- we’re here to help. Contact us at intl_advising@sfu.ca
Adjusting to a new academic and social culture can be challenging. Read more about this topic.