BEFORE YOU ARRIVE

STEP 1
☐ Apply and receive approval for a study permit:
   • Apply and receive approval for a study permit
   • 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)
   • If your spouse or common-law partner and/or any dependent children would like to accompany you to Canada, they can apply for a work permit, study permit, or visitor visa at the same time that you apply for your study permit

☐ 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, and Jan 1).

☐ Purchase medical insurance coverage for your family members, if applicable.

☐ 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

STEP 2
☐ 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 and leave a copy with your family or friends, keep one with you.

STEP 3
☐ Research housing options.

☐ 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.

☐ Research child care options and/or the public education system, if you are bringing family with you.

STEP 4
☐ Sign up and attend orientation and welcome events.

☐ Check out the Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies Virtual Orientation.
Review your immigration documents, such as your study permit, carefully upon receiving them at the airport or land border:

- If you notice any errors on your or your family’s immigration documents (e.g. name, personal information) request changes before you leave immigration
- Check the conditions placed on your study permit. Ensure the details under the client information section are correct on the study permit issued to you

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).

STEP 5

Open a bank account.

Check your financial aid options.

STEP 7

Apply for BC Medical Services Plan (MSP) for yourself and any accompanying dependants as soon as you arrive. Your coverage will begin two to three months after your arrival date in BC:

- If you have a TA or TM contract at SFU, see SFU Human Resources for MSP application information
- If you are already in BC and have valid MSP coverage, opt out of the Guard.Me@SFU plan online for a full refund before the deadline.

Opt out of the Guard.me@SFU plan when your BC MSP takes effect (after the waiting period). 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 medical insurance if necessary (i.e. opt out with equivalent coverage or add family members to the plan) during the opt-out period for Studentcare.

STEP 8

Learn and maintain SFU’s enrollment requirements for international students:

- This will affect your ability to work, study, and stay in Canada

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.

Learn about filing a Canadian Income Tax return.

STEP 9

The transition to life 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

Sign up for workshops, programs, and events offered by International Services for Students: www.sfu.ca/students/isap/events

Check ISS News and Updates regularly to get up-to-date information for international students: www.sfu.ca/students/isap/news

(If applicable) Check out the Bring your partner and family program offered by Graduate and Postdoctoral studies.