



# Pre-Departure Information

For International Graduate Students Preparing to Study in Canada at the University of Lethbridge

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Hello!

Congratulations on your acceptance to the University of Lethbridge (U of L)! The International Centre team is happy to provide support and assistance to all international students at the University of Lethbridge. This guide will provide information regarding coming to Canada and your application for a Canadian Study Permit. Please read this guide thoroughly!

Below you will find a list of some of our services and programs:

- **International Student Advising:** study permits, post-graduation work permits, temporary resident visas, social insurance numbers (SIN), academic and cultural transition, financial issues, conflict issues, non-academic questions or concerns, referrals to other services and resources (all appointments are confidential)
- **International Student Orientation**
- **Letters:** invitations for convocation, visiting family members, financial transfers
- **Cultural Skills for the Canadian Context:** available for students who are new to Canada and Canadian culture
- **International Christmas Dinner**
- **International Newsletter**
- **Workshops and Information Sessions**
- **Social/Recreational Activities**
- **Volunteer Opportunities**
- **English Language Tutoring**

Questions/concerns? Email us at [international.advice@uleth.ca](mailto:international.advice@uleth.ca). We will be happy to answer your emails and inquiries. Please let me know if I can assist you before your departure.

The International Centre is located on the lower level of the Students' Union Building, room SU040. It is a convenient place for you to meet other students from around the world, seek advice, obtain information on campus activities, and learn about workshops and events organized for you. Please feel free to stop by and introduce yourself. I look forward to meeting you!

Sincerely,

**Claire Massé**

International Student Advisor

University of Lethbridge

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## I've been admitted to the University of Lethbridge! What do I need to do after I receive my offer of admission?

Apply immediately for a study permit. Application processing times vary, but it is recommended to apply for your study permit as soon as possible upon receiving a Letter of Acceptance to the university.

Your "Letter of Acceptance – Use for applying for Canadian Study Permit" is the only document you need from the university to apply for your study permit.

You can find detailed instructions on how to begin your application process on the following website: [cic.gc.ca/english/information/applications/student.asp](http://cic.gc.ca/english/information/applications/student.asp).

If you require a Temporary Resident Visa (TRV) or Electronic Travel Authorization (eTA) to enter Canada, you do not have to submit a separate application or pay additional fees. It will be issued by the officer at the same time as your study permit authorization.

## What do I do after I receive approval of my study permit?

Once you have received your approval of your study permit, you should immediately notify the appropriate office:

- If you are an Arts & Science student, notify the School of Graduate Studies at [sgsinquiries@uleth.ca](mailto:sgsinquiries@uleth.ca)
- If you are a Master of Science in Management student, notify the Faculty of Management at [msc.management@uleth.ca](mailto:msc.management@uleth.ca)

When you arrive at the University of Lethbridge, please stop by the International Centre with your study permit (and TRV, if applicable). This will ensure that you do not have trouble registering in your classes for your next term.

## How do I look for housing off-campus?

To help you in your search for permanent off-campus accommodation, here is a list of available options: [ulethbridge.ca/offcampushousing](http://ulethbridge.ca/offcampushousing). Housing on the "west" side of Lethbridge will be relatively close to the university. More information about off-campus accommodation is available here: [ulethbridge.ca/international/content/accommodation](http://ulethbridge.ca/international/content/accommodation).

We encourage you to learn about your rights and responsibilities as a renter in Canada before arriving. You can find some helpful information here: [landlordandtenant.org](http://landlordandtenant.org).

## Can I live on-campus in the dormitory?

Living on-campus is a great way to adjust to life in Canada, and it provides quick access to campus. However, on-campus accommodation is NOT guaranteed and is in high demand. If you are interested in on-campus housing, you must apply directly to Housing Services along with a deposit. Visit [ulethbridge.ca/housing](http://ulethbridge.ca/housing).

You will only be considered for housing on campus after you have accepted your offer of admission. **Please inform us by email as soon as you submit an application for on-campus housing.**

## If I don't have time to find housing before I arrive, where will I live?

If you have not arranged for somewhere to live or if your accommodations are not yet available, you will need to find a hotel or short-term accommodation for a few days while you look for off-campus housing or until your accommodation is available. You can check out some options here:

[ulethbridge.ca/international/content/accommodation](http://ulethbridge.ca/international/content/accommodation).

During the summer months (May to August), hotel-like accommodations are offered at the University through Conference Services at the Lux Hotel: [ulethbridge.ca/conference/hotel](http://ulethbridge.ca/conference/hotel).

You can also find affordable short-term accommodation through [homestay.com](http://homestay.com).

## What do I need to bring with me to Lethbridge?

Lethbridge has a varied climate. The summers are warm and dry with temperatures reaching highs of over 30°C and the winters reaching temperatures well below 0°C (sometimes as low as -30°C). Our wide range of temperatures and weather conditions can make packing a challenge. Be sure to bring warm clothing or be prepared to purchase some for the months of November through April. You will need a warm winter jacket, boots, gloves, a hat, sweaters, and other warm clothing. A light jacket with a hood is recommended for fall (September to November) and spring months (April to June). In general, people dress casually in Lethbridge. Jeans, khakis, t-shirts, sweaters, sweatshirts, and a good pair of walking shoes tend to be the clothing items of choice for most U of L students. In addition, you may wish to bring some formal clothing for special occasions. If you have traditional clothing or accessories you would like to wear on special events for international students, bringing it would be great.

If you are bringing any electrical equipment, it should be compatible with Canadian voltage which is 110 volts, 60Hz. It is also possible to purchase adapters for electrical outlets.

Airlines will restrict the weight of the baggage that may accompany you on your flight and charge you heavily for excess. Please check with your airline for baggage allowance. You may want to ship some of your belongings to Canada rather than bring them all with you on the airplane.

Finally, be sure that you carry all of your necessary documents (Letter of Introduction for your Study Permit, valid passport with TRV if applicable, documents/papers used to obtain study permit, Letter of Acceptance from the University of Lethbridge) with you on the plane in a safe, secure place. **Do not pack your documents in your suitcase, as officials will ask to see them when you arrive in Canada.**

## How do I bring money with me to Canada?

We recommend that you do not carry a lot of cash with you when you travel. Most stores, restaurants, and hotels accept major credit cards (VISA and MasterCard). You should bring enough money to cover your expenses during your first month of study: temporary accommodation, restaurant meals, textbooks, supplies, rental deposits, and utility hook-up fees.

Alternatively, you may bring a bank draft with you, and then deposit it in the bank of your choice when you arrive in Canada. Note that it may take from ten to thirty days for your bank draft to be processed.

Students are encouraged to send money to their university student account using Western Union once they have received approval of their study permit. You can find more information at this link: [ulethbridge.ca/financial-services/international-student-payments](http://ulethbridge.ca/financial-services/international-student-payments).

## When should I arrive in Lethbridge?

For the Summer term (May to August), we recommend that you arrive in Lethbridge approximately one week before May 8, 2017.

For the Fall term (September to December), we recommend that you arrive in Lethbridge approximately one week before September 6, 2017. All University offices and services, including the International Centre, will be **closed on September 4, 2017** for the Labour Day Holiday. The University will reopen for business at 9:00 a.m. on September 5, 2017.

For the Spring term (January to April), we recommend that you arrive in Lethbridge after January 2, but before January 8, 2018. All University offices and services, including the International Centre, will be **closed between December 23, 2017 and January 1, 2018 inclusive**. The University will reopen for business at 9:00 a.m. on January 2, 2018.

## How do I get to Canada and then to Lethbridge?

The Calgary International Airport ([calgaryairport.com](http://calgaryairport.com)) is the closest international airport to Lethbridge. Arrange for an international flight from your home country to the Calgary International Airport (YYC) in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. Calgary is located 220 kilometres north of Lethbridge, so you may book a 45-minute domestic flight from the Calgary International Airport to the Lethbridge Airport (YQL) ([lethbridgeairport.ca](http://lethbridgeairport.ca)).

If you prefer to take a bus to Lethbridge from the Calgary International Airport, you can find information about different options available here: [ulethbridge.ca/international/content/transportation-lethbridge](http://ulethbridge.ca/international/content/transportation-lethbridge).

## How do I get to the University of Lethbridge from the local airport or bus terminal?

The Lethbridge Airport is located 16 kilometers from the University. Once you arrive in Lethbridge, you will need to take a taxi to the University or to your accommodation. At the airport, you will see a phone that has a direct line to a taxi service. There may also be a taxi available just outside the airport.

If you take a bus from the Calgary International Airport, some buses may stop downtown Lethbridge, or at the University of Lethbridge.

For a list of taxi service companies visit our website here: [ulethbridge.ca/international/content/transportation-lethbridge](http://ulethbridge.ca/international/content/transportation-lethbridge). You must call and order a taxi in Canada. It is difficult to hail a taxi in Lethbridge. If you plan on taking a bus from Calgary to Lethbridge and will need a taxi, we recommend that you either call before leaving Calgary (there will be free Wi-Fi at the airport) and order a cab or that you carry the phone numbers for the cab companies with you.

## How much will living expenses be?

It is important to be realistic about how much your cost of living will be each month. If you are single and plan to share your accommodations, you need to plan to spend a minimum of \$1,000 a month on living costs. If you choose to live alone or are bringing your family, your costs will be higher. It is important to ensure you have adequate funds to cover your academic and living costs for the year without depending on work from outside sources.

If you are depending upon meeting some of your financial requirements through money you will receive in Canada, you need to find out if the money will be available upon your arrival in Lethbridge.

Keep in mind that your first month's expenses can be high given the costs associated with setting up a new residence, such as paying an extra month's rent as a security deposit, buying furniture and household items, purchasing warm clothing, etc.

Typically, graduate students choose to live off campus. The cost of living off campus varies depending on the type of accommodations you choose (e.g. living with roommates, living alone), and other lifestyle choices. The figures below provide an estimate of the range in cost of living off campus (lower range for single students in shared accommodation; higher range for families and those preferring not to share accommodation). These estimates represent minimum living expenses only and do not include your tuition costs.

<b>Expense</b>	<b>Estimated cost (per month)</b>
Rent and utilities	\$550 to \$1,200
Food/Groceries	\$300 to \$500
Personal Expenses and clothing	\$300 to \$500
Local Transportation (City Bus Pass)	Included in student fees
Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan <sup>1</sup>	\$0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,150 to \$2,200</b>

<sup>1</sup>Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan is provided at no extra cost

### Bringing family—should you?

Your decision to bring your family with you when you come to Canada will depend on your financial situation and the ease of obtaining immigration documents for your family members.

You should budget a minimum of \$4,000 a year in additional expenses for your first dependent (spouse or child), and an extra \$3,000 per additional dependent. Cost of living for a family of four for one year would be upwards of \$20,000. This does not include childcare expenses, which average between \$650 and \$900 per child, per month. Please note that government subsidies are not available for childcare. Given this, you may wish to arrange for your family to come at a later date, after you have familiarized yourself with life in Canada and are satisfied that enough money is available to support them.

Some students with sufficient financial resources may prefer to apply for immigration documents for their family members at the same time as they apply for their Study Permit. If your family members are denied visas, this may affect your decision to study in Canada.

### How much will health insurance cost?

All University students **must** have basic health insurance. When you get to the University, drop by the Health Centre (next door to the International Centre) and they will explain how to register for basic health insurance which will cover the cost of any doctor's bills, hospital bills, surgery and medical tests. There is **no cost** for this basic health insurance, which is called Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan.

In addition, you will be automatically enrolled in an extended health insurance plan called the Student Union Health and Dental Plan, which is included in your tuition and fees. This plan pays for medical costs which are **not covered** by Alberta Health Care, such as ambulance, medication, dental work, etc.

### Will there be an orientation?

Yes, an orientation is planned. Details will be provided at a later date.

## Checklist and important information: Arriving in Canada

When you are traveling to Canada be sure to carry all of the following information with you. Do not pack it in your suitcase.

- Valid Passport
- Letter of Introduction* approving Study Permit application (issued by Canadian visa office)
- Temporary Resident Visa (if required; not to be confused with your Study Permit)
- Original Letter of Acceptance from the University of Lethbridge
- Proof of funds available (e.g., bank draft, transfer, tuition receipt, letter of credit)
- Carry at least \$500.00 (CDN or USD) in cash

Also, be sure to carry a change of clothes, any medication, toothbrush and toothpaste, soap, deodorant, shampoo or other important items in your carry-on bag, in case your luggage is lost or delayed. This is common in international travel!

When you arrive in Canada, you will be required to show the Canada Border Services Officer your *Letter of Introduction*. When the Officer issues your study permit, please be sure to check that your name is spelled correctly and that the biographical details (e.g., birth date, country of citizenship) are accurate.

If you plan to work on or off-campus, tell the Border Services Officer. You must ensure that one of the following remarks is listed on your study permit **before** leaving the immigration area of the airport:

- May work 20 hrs off-campus or full-time during regular breaks if meeting criteria outlined in section 186(v) of IRPR*
- May accept employment on or off campus if meeting eligibility criteria as per R186(f), (v) or (w). Must cease working if no longer meeting these criteria*

The remarks **must** be present on your study permit to apply for a Social Insurance Number, which is required to be able to work in Canada. If these details are difficult to remember, carry this pre-departure guide with your other important documents and show the necessary remarks to the officer.

## Checklist: Recommended packing list

- Clothes
- Towels
- Bed sheets and pillow covers
- Alarm clock
- Winter jacket
- Winter boots
- Winter gloves and hat
- Sweaters and other warm clothing
- Light jacket
- Backpack
- Camera/Cellphone/Tablet/Laptop and adapter
- Music/MP3
- Medicine and prescriptions
- Dictionary
- Contact list
- Traditional clothing or accessories from your country
- Traditional music or instrument that you play
- Your country flag