



Brighton College

Life In Canada

International
Student
Guide



Table of Contents

1	Welcome to Brighton College	01
2	Pre-Arrival Guide	02
3	Post-Arrival Guide	04
3.1	Essential Documents	04
3.2	Money & Banking	06
3.3	Transportation	07
3.4	Cellphone Plans	08
3.5	Housing	08
3.6	Cost of Living & Budgeting	10
3.7	Working in Canada	12
3.8	Taxes	14
3.9	Canadian Life & Culture	15
3.10	Places to Go	19

Welcome to Brighton College



About Us

Brighton College is a vocational training institution located in Burnaby, British Columbia, near Vancouver. Since 2000, we have been delivering career-focused education that prepares students with practical, in-demand skills for the workforce.

About This Guide

This guide is designed to help you navigate your studies at Brighton College and adjust to life in British Columbia. It includes important information on academic expectations, student services, and practical resources to support your success. You will also find guidance on housing, cost of living, employment, healthcare, and student responsibilities. We encourage you to refer to this guide throughout your journey at Brighton College.



College Information

DLI Number: O19257044542

📍 Locations: Metropointe Campus
(Main Campus): #101-4603 Kingsway
Burnaby, BC V5H 4M4

☎ Phone: +1 604 430 5608

🕒 Hours: Monday to Friday: 9:00 a.m.
to 5:30 p.m.

Before You Arrive

Preparing before traveling to Canada can help make your transition smoother and reduce stress upon arrival. This section outlines important steps international students should complete before coming to British Columbia and starting their studies at Brighton College.



1. Get Admitted

Before applying for a study permit, students must first receive and accept an official Letter of Acceptance from Brighton College. Make sure to carefully review your program details, tuition information, and start dates.



2. Apply for Study & Work Permit

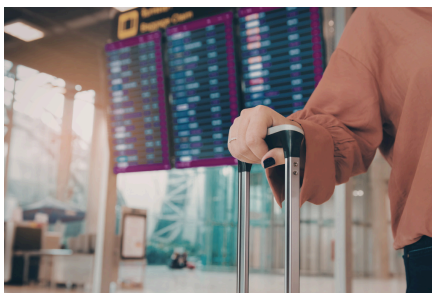
Most international students require a study permit to study in Canada, although some short-term programs may be exempt. Depending on your nationality, you may also require an Electronic Travel Authorization (eTA), Temporary Resident Visa (TRV), or Port of Entry (POE) Letter. Some programs may also require a valid co-op or practicum work permit to complete mandatory work placements. Always refer to IRCC for the most up-to-date immigration information.



3. Get Health Insurance

Health insurance is mandatory for international students in British Columbia. Students staying in BC for more than six months are generally required to enroll in the Medical Services Plan (MSP).

MSP coverage does not begin immediately and there is usually a waiting period of up to three months. During this time, private health insurance is mandatory.



4. Book Your Flight

When booking your flight, consider arrival dates, transportation from the airport, baggage policies, and weather conditions during your travel period. Vancouver International Airport (YVR) is the main international airport serving Metro Vancouver.

Before You Arrive



5. Arrange Accommodation

Students are encouraged to secure temporary or long-term accommodation before arriving in Canada. Housing options may include shared apartments, homestays, private rentals, or student housing. For more information, please refer to our “Housing” section below.



6. Prepare Your Documents

Before traveling, ensure all important documents are organized and easily accessible in your carry-on luggage.

Important documents may include:

- Passport
- Study permit approval letter
- Letter of Acceptance
- Proof of financial support
- Health insurance documents
- Accommodation information
- Emergency contact information

It is recommended to keep both printed and digital copies of all important documents.



7. Arriving in Canada (YVR Airport Guide)

When you arrive at Vancouver International Airport (YVR), you will go through immigration and customs. Be prepared to present your passport, Letter of Acceptance, and study permit documents.

After collecting your luggage, you may use taxis, rideshare services, or public transit to reach your accommodation.



8. Prepare for Your First Day at Brighton!

Before classes begin, students should review their schedule, confirm access to required platforms and resources, and familiarize themselves with campus policies and expectations. Students are encouraged to check their email regularly for important updates. If you have any questions before your program begins, please contact Brighton College for assistance.

Settling in Canada

After arriving in Canada, there are several important steps that will help you settle into your new environment and prepare for student life in British Columbia. This section provides practical information and resources to support your transition.

Essential Documents

There are some important documents and registrations that international students should complete as soon as possible.

Social Insurance Number (SIN)

A Social Insurance Number (SIN) is required to work in Canada. Students can apply for a SIN through Service Canada after arriving in Canada. Your study permit must include authorization to work in Canada.

To apply for a SIN, you will typically need:

- Passport
- Study permit
- Canadian address (if available)

Students can apply online through the Government of Canada website: [Apply for a SIN](#)

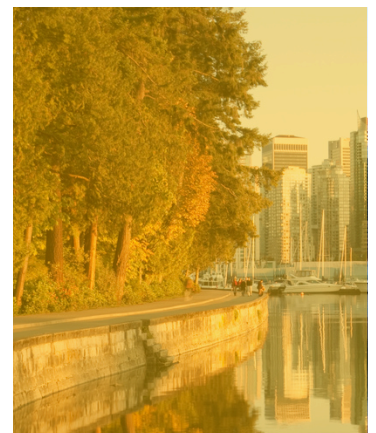
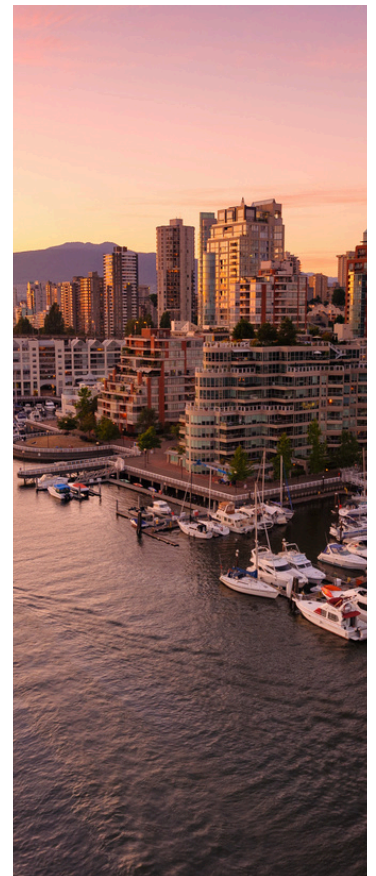
BC Identification Card (BCID)

A BCID is a government-issued photo identification card that can be useful for everyday identification purposes in British Columbia. It is recommended for students who do not wish to carry their passport regularly.

Students can apply for a BCID at an ICBC driver licensing office. You will generally need:

- Passport
- Study permit
- Proof of BC address

More information can be found here:
[Apply for a BCID](#)





Medical Services Plan (MSP)

The Medical Services Plan (MSP) is British Columbia's public healthcare coverage. International students staying in BC for more than six months are generally required to enroll in MSP. Students can apply online after arriving in Canada.

To apply, you will typically need:

- Passport
- Study permit
- BC address



Please note that MSP coverage does not begin immediately and there is usually a waiting period of up to three months. During this time, private health insurance is mandatory.

More information can be found here: [Apply for MSP](#)

What should I do if I need to see a doctor but don't have my CareCard yet?

If you have already submitted your application, you will be covered immediately after the waiting period. This works even if your Care Card hasn't arrived.

You might have to pay at the time you receive health care. Be sure to keep your receipt, and request reimbursement from MSP once your card arrives.

During the waiting period for MSP, when you visit the Urgent Care, Emergency Department in a hospital or have inpatient services (lab, radiology and other procedures), you may show a copy of your study permit to receive a reduced rate.



Money & Banking

Canadian Money

The money used in Canada is the Canadian dollar. 1 dollar (\$) has 100 cents (¢). Money is also called cash. Cash is coins and bills. Bills (paper money) are \$5, \$10, \$20, \$50, and \$100. Canada uses 5 kinds of coins.

Many prices still include cents in the price (for example, \$1.99). If you pay in cash, stores will “round up” or “round down” to the nearest 5 cents. This is because there is no 1 cent coin.



Opening a Bank Account

Opening a Canadian bank account can help you manage your finances more easily while studying in Canada. Most major banks offer student or newcomer accounts with benefits such as low or no monthly fees.

Some common banks in Canada include RBC, TD, Scotiabank, CIBC, and BMO. Students are encouraged to compare different account options and choose the one that best fits their needs.

To open a bank account, you will typically need:

- Passport
- Study permit
- Proof of enrollment
- Canadian address (if available)

It is also recommended to create a monthly budget for expenses such as housing, transportation, food, and personal costs.

The two most common types of bank accounts are:

- **Chequing Account:** Used for everyday transactions such as debit card purchases, paying bills, and receiving payments.
- **Savings Account:** Used to store money and earn interest over time.

Transportation

Translink

Metro Vancouver has an extensive public transportation system operated by TransLink, including buses, SkyTrain, and SeaBus services.

For Brighton College students attending the Burnaby campus, the Expo Line and Metrotown Station will likely be the most commonly used transit route and station. The campus is located a short distance from Metrotown Station and is easily accessible by public transit.

Students can purchase and reload a Compass Card to access transit services across Metro Vancouver. Compass Cards can be purchased at SkyTrain stations, select retailers, or online.

Students are encouraged to download helpful transit apps such as:

- Google Maps
- Transit App
- TransLink Trip Planner

These apps can help students plan routes, check schedules, and receive real-time transit updates. When choosing accommodation, students should also consider commuting distance and travel time to campus.

Taxi/Uber/Lyft

We also now have ride-sharing services such as Lyft available in Vancouver, as well as various taxi companies. Keep in mind, these tend to be the most expensive methods of transportation, and the costs may vary during different times of the day based on distance and demand. Brighton College campuses are located central to a variety of public transport options.



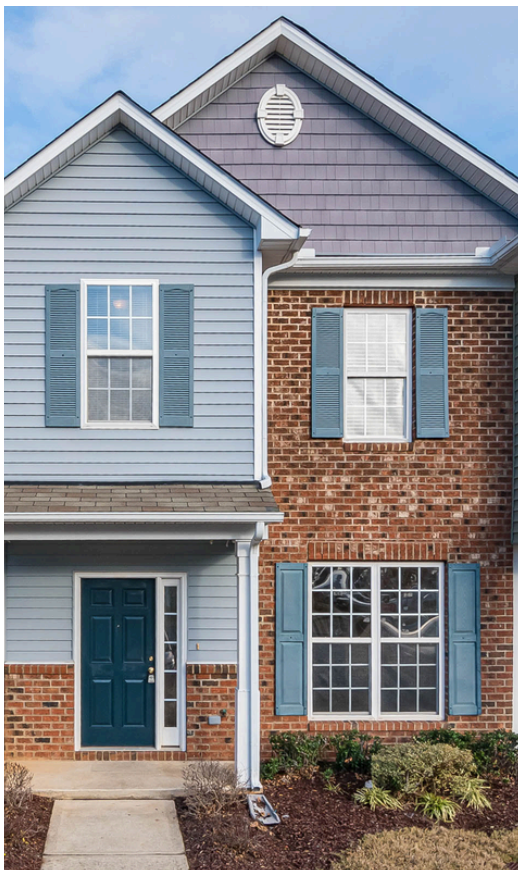
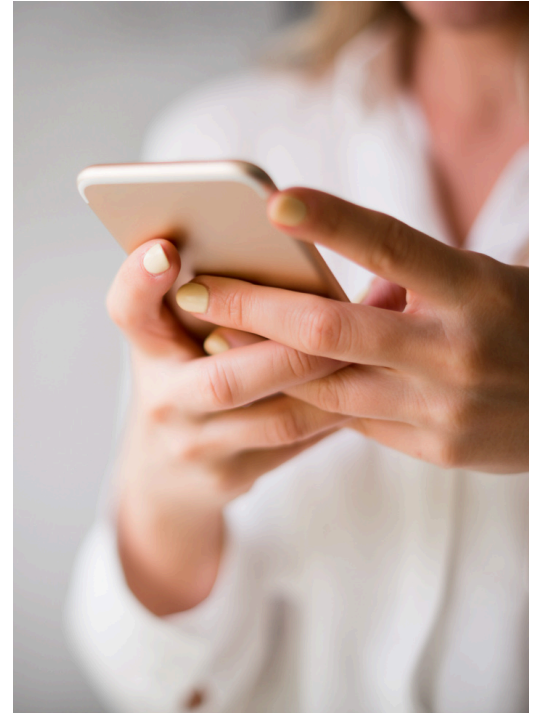
Cellphone Plans

Having a Canadian cellphone number will help you stay connected with your school, employers, classmates, and local services.

Some common mobile providers in British Columbia include Rogers, Fido, Telus, Koodo, Bell, Virgin Plus, Freedom Mobile, and Public Mobile. Students can choose between prepaid or monthly plans depending on their needs and budget.

SIM cards can be purchased at airports, shopping malls, convenience stores, or provider locations. Many providers also offer student or newcomer promotions throughout the year.

Before choosing a plan, compare prices, coverage, contract terms, and data limits to find the option that best fits your needs.



Housing

Finding accommodation is one of the most important steps when preparing to study in Canada. In the Greater Vancouver area, students may choose from different housing options such as apartments, shared housing, homestays, townhouses, or renting a private room within a larger home.

Accommodation near Vancouver, Burnaby, and Surrey city centres can fill up quickly, especially before school terms begin. Students are encouraged to begin their housing search early and consider factors such as commuting distance, transportation access, and monthly costs.

Some popular websites students use to search for housing include:

- Craigslist
- Kijiji
- Facebook Marketplace and housing groups
- Rentals.ca
- liv.rent

Housing

Rental Costs

Accommodation Type	Burnaby	Vancouver
Shared Room	\$700 – \$1,100 CAD	\$900 – \$1,300 CAD
Private Room	\$900 – \$1,500 CAD	\$1,200 – \$1,800 CAD
1-Bedroom Apartment	\$1,900 – \$2,500 CAD	\$2,300 – \$3,000 CAD
2-Bedroom Apartment	\$2,800 – \$3,500 CAD	\$3,200 – \$4,200 CAD

*Rental prices are approximate and subject to change depending on location, availability, and amenities.



Things to Consider Before Renting

Before choosing accommodation, students should consider:

- Distance and commuting time to campus
- Monthly rent and additional expenses
- Lease terms and move-in dates
- Neighborhood safety
- Access to public transportation and essential services

Using Google Maps and transit apps can help students estimate travel times to campus before signing a lease agreement.

Be careful with Scams

- Avoid sending money before viewing a property or signing a lease
- Be cautious of listings that seem too good to be true
- Use reputable rental websites and verified listings
- Always request a copy of the lease agreement
- Ensure both the landlord and tenant sign the lease together

Tenant Rights & Responsibilities

As a tenant in British Columbia, you are protected under the Residential Tenancy Act. It is important to understand your rights and responsibilities before signing a lease agreement.

Students are encouraged to carefully review all lease terms, including rent payments, security deposits, notice periods, and rules related to moving in or moving out. Always keep copies of signed agreements, receipts, and important communications with your landlord.

In British Columbia:

- Landlords cannot request a security deposit greater than half of one month's rent
- Rent is typically paid on the first day of each month
- Landlords must provide proper notice before entering a rental unit, except in emergencies
- Tenants are responsible for maintaining the property in reasonable condition and following lease terms

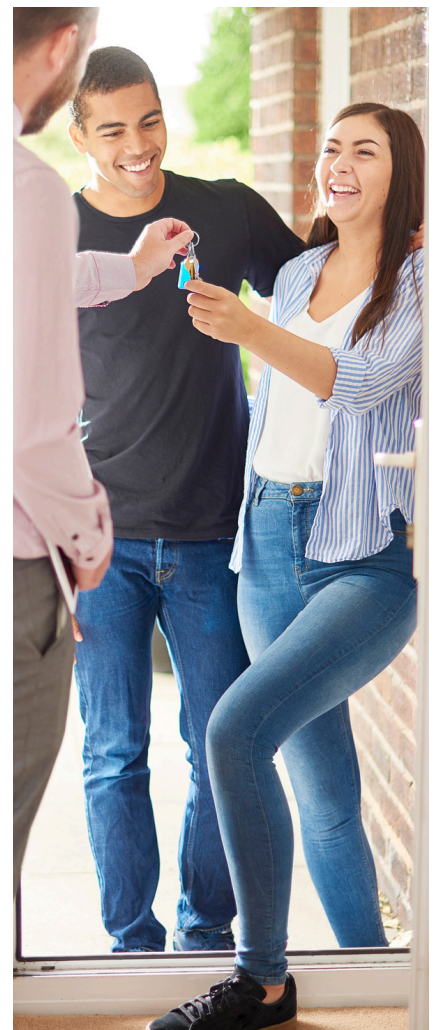
For more information and support, students may visit:

- [Tenant Resource & Advisory Centre \(TRAC\)](#)
- [BC Residential Tenancy Branch](#)

Cost of Living & Budgeting

The cost of living in Metro Vancouver can vary depending on lifestyle and accommodation choices. Students should plan for expenses such as housing, food, transportation, school supplies, cellphone plans, and personal expenses.

Creating a monthly budget can help students manage their finances responsibly while studying in Canada. It is recommended to keep track of spending and prepare for unexpected expenses when possible.





Cost of Living & Budgeting

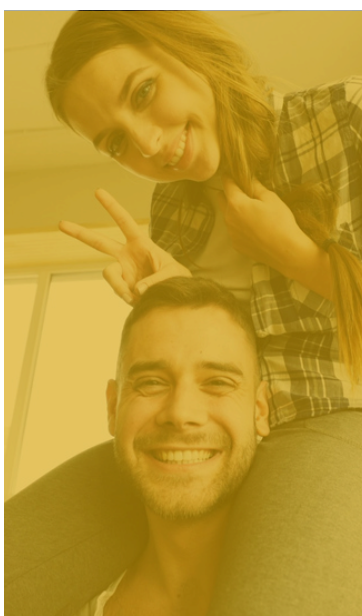
The cost of living in Metro Vancouver can vary depending on lifestyle and accommodation choices. Students should plan for expenses such as housing, food, transportation, school supplies, cellphone plans, and personal expenses.

Creating a monthly budget can help students manage their finances responsibly while studying in Canada. It is recommended to keep track of spending and prepare for unexpected expenses when possible.

Estimated Monthly Student Budget

Expense	Estimated Cost (CAD)
Rent & Housing	\$900 – \$1,800
Groceries	\$250 – \$450
Transportation	\$100 – \$150
Cellphone Plan	\$35 – \$80
School Supplies	\$50 – \$100
Internet	\$40 – \$80
Personal Expenses	\$150 – \$400
Estimated Total	\$1,525 – \$3,060

**Estimated costs may vary depending on lifestyle, housing choice, and personal spending habits.*



Working in Canada

International students may be eligible to work while studying in Canada if their study permit includes work authorization conditions. Students must follow all immigration and employment regulations, including work hour limits and enrollment requirements. Some programs may also include mandatory practicum or co-op placements as part of the curriculum.

Many students work part-time while studying to help cover living expenses and gain Canadian work experience. Common student jobs may include retail, customer service, hospitality, food service, administration, and warehouse positions.

Important: Students can only begin working after their program starts

Students can search for job opportunities through:

- Indeed
- LinkedIn
- WorkBC
- Company websites
- Networking and referrals

Before starting work, students should ensure they have:

- A valid study permit with work authorization
- A Social Insurance Number (SIN)
- A Canadian bank account

In British Columbia, employees are protected under provincial employment laws, including minimum wage, break periods, and workplace safety standards.

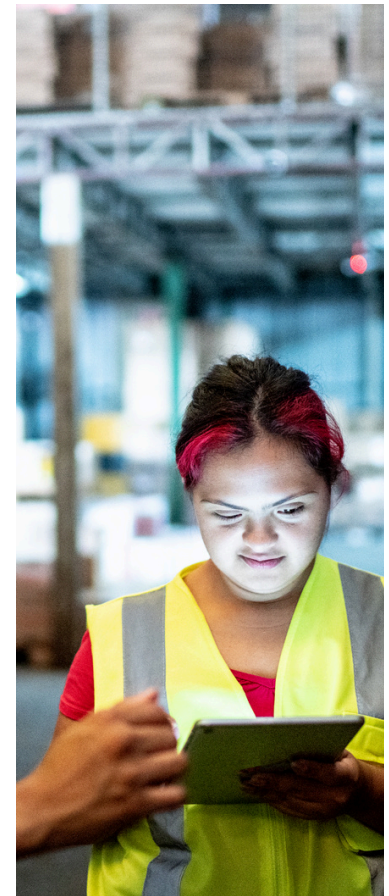
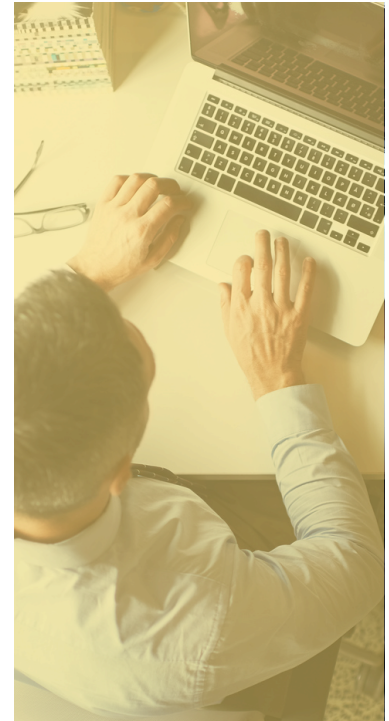
For more information about employment standards and worker rights in British Columbia, students can visit:

[Employment Standards in BC](#)

Career Services Support

If you need assistance with resumes, cover letters, interview preparation, or job search support, Brighton College offers Career Services resources to help students prepare for employment opportunities in Canada.

For more information, students may contact: careerservices@brightoncollege.com



Working in Canada

Employee Rights in British Columbia

Employees in British Columbia are protected under provincial employment laws. International students working in Canada have the same workplace rights and protections as other employees.

Some basic employee rights include:

- Receiving at least minimum wage. Effective June 1, 2026, the British Columbia general minimum wage will increase by 40 cents to **\$18.25 per hour**
- Being paid for hours worked
- Receiving meal and rest breaks
- Working in a safe environment
- Protection against discrimination and harassment
- Receiving vacation pay and statutory holiday pay (if eligible)

Employers cannot keep your passport, study permit, or personal documents, and employees should never feel pressured to work in unsafe conditions.

If students experience workplace issues or believe their rights are being violated, they may contact the Employment Standards Branch of British Columbia for information or to submit a complaint.

For more information or to file a complaint, visit:

[BC Employment Standards Branch](#)



Taxes



What is the CRA?

The Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) is the government department that:

- Collects taxes
- Provides benefits and payments (like tax refunds or student benefits)

Do International Students Need to File Taxes?

Yes, as an international student in Canada, you may need to file a tax return. To do this correctly, you must first figure out your residency status.

✓ Key Things to Know

- 01 Understand your tax residency status.**
- 02 Get a SIN (Social Insurance Number)** – This is required to work or file taxes.
- 03 Learn about Canadian tax brackets** – This estimates your tax based on income.
- 04 Report all income** – This includes jobs, scholarships, or money from outside Canada.
- 05 Ask for help if needed** – It's better to ask questions than risk filing incorrectly or late.

Filing Taxes: What Should You Do?

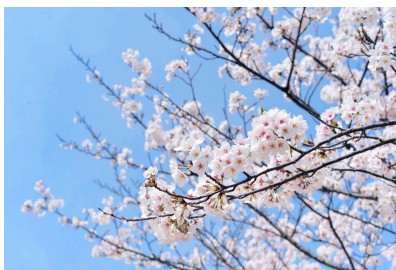
Employers will usually provide a T4 slip summarizing your earnings and taxes paid. Students should keep important documents such as T4 slips, tuition receipts (T2202), and banking information. Even students with little or no income may benefit from filing taxes, as they may qualify for refunds or tax credits.

For more information, visit the [Canada Revenue Agency \(CRA\)](https://www.cra.gc.ca) website.

Canadian Life & Culture

Vancouver Weather

Vancouver has the mildest fluctuation of temperature compared to the rest of Canada. Rain is common in Vancouver, especially during the fall months between September to December and spring from March to April.



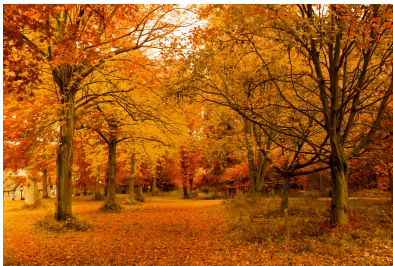
Spring (March – May)

Mild and rainy, with temperatures gradually becoming warmer. This is a beautiful time of year when cherry blossoms bloom across the city. A waterproof jacket and comfortable shoes are recommended.



Summer (June – August)

Summers are usually warm and sunny, with longer daylight hours and temperatures often ranging between 20°C and 30°C. Many outdoor events and activities take place during this season, so it is a great time to explore British Columbia.



Fall (September – November)

Fall temperatures begin to cool and rainfall becomes more frequent. Students should prepare for wetter weather and shorter days by carrying an umbrella or rain jacket regularly.



Winter (December – February)

Winters in Vancouver are generally milder than in other Canadian provinces, but temperatures can still feel cold and damp. Snow is less common in the city but may occur during colder periods. Warm clothing and waterproof footwear are recommended during the winter season.

Canadian Life & Culture

Etiquette & Social Norms

Adjusting to a new culture can take time. The following are some common social norms and expectations students may experience while living and studying in Canada.

Punctuality

In Canada, arriving on time is considered respectful in academic, professional, and social settings. Students are encouraged to arrive on time for classes, appointments, interviews, and work shifts whenever possible.

If you are running late or unable to attend, it is common courtesy to communicate in advance.

Greetings & Communication

Saying “hello,” “thank you,” “please,” and “sorry” is very common in Canadian culture and considered polite in daily interactions.

People may greet each other casually with phrases such as:

“Hi”

“How are you?”

“Have a good day”

In many situations, short and polite conversations are common, even with strangers in stores, cafés, or public places.

Tipping Culture

Tipping is common in Canada, especially in restaurants, cafés, taxis, salons, and delivery services. A tip of approximately 15% to 20% is generally expected for good service.

Personal Space & Public Etiquette

Canadians generally value personal space and respectful behavior in public areas. It is common to:

Wait in line patiently

Speak quietly on public transit

Respect shared spaces

Hold doors open for others

Students are encouraged to be mindful of noise levels and cleanliness in classrooms, public transportation, and residential areas.

Community & Social Life

Building connections and participating in community activities can help students feel more comfortable and supported while studying in Canada.

Metro Vancouver offers many organizations, recreational spaces, and community resources where students can meet new people, access support services, and explore different cultures.



Community Support & Resources

- MOSAIC

Provides immigrant and refugee support services including employment, language, and settlement programs.

- S.U.C.C.E.S.S.

Provides settlement services, employment support, language programs, and resources for newcomers to Canada.

Recreation & Activities

- Bonsor Recreation Complex

Offers fitness classes, sports activities, and recreational programs near the Burnaby campus.

- Central Park

Popular park for walking, jogging, picnics, and outdoor activities near Metrotown.

Libraries & Study Spaces

- Burnaby Public Library

Provides study spaces, internet access, English language support resources, and free community programs.

- Vancouver Public Library

Public library system with study areas, free Wi-Fi, workshops, and online resources.

Cultural Communities

- Latincouver

Connects Latin American communities through cultural events, networking opportunities, and support programs.

- Vancouver Asian Heritage Month Society

Promotes cultural events, education, and community engagement.

Spiritual & Faith Communities

Metro Vancouver is home to many diverse religious and spiritual communities representing a wide variety of cultures and beliefs. Students interested in faith-based communities can explore places of worship and community groups throughout Burnaby and Vancouver.

Examples may include Churches, Mosques, Sikh Gurdwaras, Buddhist Temples, Hindu Temples, etc.

Places to Go Near Burnaby Campus



Metrotown Shopping Centre

This is a large, multi-level mall with a wide variety of stores, a food court, and a movie theatre. It's easily accessible via SkyTrain and bus lines.



Grouse Mountain

A 20-minute drive to this spectacular mountain, you can find yourself skiing, snowboarding, and ziplining.



Burnaby Mountain

. The perfect place to study, hang out with friends, and even have a picnic!

Places to Go Near Burnaby Campus



Granville Island

Enjoy local shops, restaurants, and attractions like the Lookout. Don't miss Granville Island—a vibrant hub filled with artisan boutiques, waterfront dining, fresh markets, and lively street performers.



Stanley Park

Explore the natural beauty of Vancouver, escape the city and walk or bike Stanley Park with your friends.



Canada Place

The amazing waterfront of Vancouver downtown: enjoy the fresh air, spacious walkway, and mountain views.



Brighton College



Thank you!

Follow Us on Social Media



brightoncollege.com