FREQUENTLY CALLED NUMBERS

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY

EMERGENCIES 911
Police, Fire, Ambulance

Main number: 514-848-2424
Extensions

Birks Student Service Centre 2668
Centre for Continuing Education 3600
Concordia Health Services 3565 / 3575
CSU Off-Campus Housing and Job Bank 7935
(HOJO) Financial Aid and Awards Office 3507
Graduate Awards Office 3835/3816
International Students Office 3515
Office of the Registrar (Admissions) 2668
School of Graduate Studies 3800
Security 3717
Student Accounts Office 4900

IMMIGRATION

Immigration Quebec 514-864-9191
Citizenship and Immigration Canada 1-888-242-2100

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Operator and long-distance assistance 0
Directory (phone number) assistance 411

MAPS

Concordia University campus maps concordia.ca/maps
Metro map (with all subway stations) stm.info/en/info/networks/maps

RECOMMENDED APPS

Concordia App
Medavie Blue Cross Mobile
STM(Société de transport de Montréal)
BEFORE YOU LEAVE

☐ STEP 1  What documents will you need?  6

☐ STEP 2  Apply for CAQ, Study Permit, TRV, and eTA  8

☐ STEP 3  Organize your finances  12

☐ STEP 4  Prepare for travel and arrange temporary accommodation  13

☐ STEP 5  Prepare for your academic term  16

ONCE YOU ARRIVE

☐ STEP 6  Clear customs and obtain your Study Permit  18

☐ STEP 7  Get organized  21

☐ STEP 8  Consider your housing options  22

☐ STEP 9  Review your health insurance coverage  25

☐ STEP 10  Pay your fees before the deadline and inquire about part-time work  29

☐ STEP 11  Start your semester and make the most of campus life  31

English equivalents of French terms used in this guide are given below in italics

Ministère de l’Immigration, Francisation et Intégration (MIFI)
  Quebec Ministry of Immigration

Ministère de l’Éducation et de l’Enseignement supérieur (MEES)
  Quebec Ministry of Higher Education

Certificat d’acceptation du Québec (CAQ)
  Quebec Acceptance Certificate

Régie de l’assurance maladie du Québec (RAMQ)
  Quebec Health Insurance Board

Carte d’assurance maladie
  Quebec health insurance card

Société de transport de Montréal (STM)
  Montreal transit system

NOTE: Every effort has been made to provide current and accurate information, however, regulations/policies may change at any time without notice. All prices/costs are subject to change.
The ISO is your main resource centre for information, with a mission to help you make the most of your studies and university life at Concordia.

We are here to ease your transition to Concordia as an international student and to help ensure you have a successful academic and personal experience within a welcoming environment. Many international students call the ISO their “home away from home” and we hope you will feel the same way.

Please use this guide to familiarize yourself with the ISO and its services. Do not hesitate to contact us with any questions or concerns before you leave for Canada. Once you arrive we encourage you to make the ISO your very first stop on campus.

International Students Office (ISO)
Room GM 330, Guy-Maizonneuve Building 3rd Floor
Concordia University, Sir George Williams Campus
1550 De Maisonneuve Blvd. West
Montreal, Quebec Canada H3G 1M8

Office Hours:
Monday to Friday: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Telephone: 514-848-2424, ext. 3515
Fax: 514-848-3599
Email: iso@concordia.ca
Web: concordia.ca/iso

Join our Facebook group to connect with the ISO community and other international students.

facebook.com/ISO.Concordia
ISO Workshops & Information Sessions
The International Students Office offers a wide variety of essential, informative and useful information sessions and workshops for international students. Some of them are designed for newly admitted students while others are directed at current and graduating students:
- Health Insurance information session
- Working in Canada
- Post-graduation Work Permit Session
- Quebec Immigration
- and more...
  [concordia.ca/students/international/sessions-workshops](concordia.ca/students/international/sessions-workshops)

ISO Social Events
All international students are welcome to join our extended list of social activities. These include:
- Cooking classes
- Movie nights
- Summer city tours
- Language exchange meet-ups
In addition to attending your classes, it is good to take a break and attend a social event. Not only is it a welcome break from all that hard studying, but you can meet new friends from all over the world, discover Montreal and enrich your university experience.
  [concordia.ca/students/international/sessions-workshops/social](concordia.ca/students/international/sessions-workshops/social)
Get prepared!
Under Canadian and Quebec immigration laws, all international students in a program of study more than six months need a:

- CAQ (Quebec Acceptance Certificate) issued by Immigration Quebec
- Study Permit issued by IRCC (Immigration Refugee Citizenship Canada)

You will require some or all of the following documents before travelling to Canada:

1. Offer of Admission
You must have an official Offer of Admission from Concordia University before applying for immigration documents. The Offer of Admission is sent by email in PDF format.

Once you receive the PDF format of your Offer of Admission (even if it is a Conditional Offer), apply for your CAQ and Study Permit.

Note: Always keep your Offer of Admission in a safe place. You must travel with this document to Canada. When you arrive in Canada, a customs officer may ask to see it as proof that you will be studying at Concordia - include all pages of your offer of Admission when applying for your CAQ and Study Permit.

2. Valid Passport
All students need a valid passport. Your passport must be valid for at least six months or more. Always keep a copy of your passport identification page and any other important documents to facilitate replacement if they are lost or stolen.

3. Proof of Financial Capacity
You must demonstrate your ability to support yourself, and if applicable, your accompanying dependents. You must show the financial capacity to cover tuition fees and living expenses for at least one year. Financial capacity: canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/study-canada/study-permit/get-documents.html

4. CAQ (electronic version)
To study in Quebec for more than six months, you must obtain a CAQ (Quebec Acceptance Certificate) from Quebec’s Ministry of Immigration. Do not wait for the CAQ to be sent to you, use the CAQ Approval Letter from your Immigration Quebec portal page to apply for a Study Permit.


5. Letter of Introduction
To study in Canada for more than six months you need to apply for a Study Permit. You will need a Letter of Introduction from IRCC (Immigration Refugee Citizenship Canada) entitling you
to a Study Permit upon entry to Canada. The Letter of Introduction is not your Study Permit. Keep this letter and other support documents. You will need to show this letter to officials at the port of entry when you arrive in Canada then a Study Permit will be issued.

Study Permit: canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/study-canada/study-permit/apply.html

SERVICE CURRENTLY UNAVAILABLE PLEASE APPLY ONLINE.

Note: If you are a U.S. citizen/permanent resident, a resident of Greenland or St. Pierre and Miquelon, you can apply for your Study Permit at a Canadian Port of Entry, consequently, a Letter of Introduction is not required. Since you are applying for a Study Permit upon entry, bring all supporting documents with you and be prepared to pay a processing fee. Port of Entry: cic.gc.ca/english/resources/tools/temp/students/application.asp

Supporting Documents:
canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/study-canada/study-permit/prepare/get-documents.html

Exchange / Visiting Students
studying for six months or less:
You don’t need a CAQ or Study Permit if the duration of your program of studies is six months or less and will be completed within the period of your authorized stay in Canada. Despite this exception you may apply for a CAQ and a Study Permit before entering Canada. It may be advantageous to obtain a CAQ and Study Permit, should you plan to participate in work programs available to international students or intend to apply for another program of study. cic.gc.ca/english/resources/tools/temp/students/who.asp

6. Temporary Resident Visa
Citizens of certain countries require a Temporary Resident Visa (TRV or Entry Visa) to enter Canada. Check with the Canadian authorities in your country to find out the requirements. Visit the Citizenship and Immigration Canada website for more details: http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/applications/visa.asp

7. Electronic Travel Authorization (eTA)
Visa-exempt foreign nationals who fly to or transit through Canada will need an Electronic Travel Authorization (eTA). Exceptions include United States citizens and foreign nationals with a valid Temporary Resident Visa (TRV). canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/visit-canada/eta.html

8. Biometrics
Some foreign nationals will also need to provide biometrics in order when applying for their immigration documents. For more information, please visit cic.gc.ca/english/visit/biometrics.asp

EXEMPTIONS – CAQ – STUDY PERMIT
You might not need a CAQ and a Study Permit. For the full list of exemptions, see Immigration Quebec: immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca/en/immigrate-settle/students/obtaining-authorizations/requirements/list-exemptions.html and Immigration Refugee Citizenship Canada: cic.gc.ca/english/resources/tools/temp/students/who.asp
Apply for your documents as soon as you receive the PDF Offer of Admission sent to you via email. It can take months to obtain immigration documents; therefore beginning the application process as soon as possible is very important.

How to Apply for a CAQ
The CAQ is degree-level specific:
- Université 1ère cycle refers to undergraduate level (Bachelors)
- Université 2ème cycle refers to graduate level (Masters, Grad Diploma, Certificate)
- Université 3ème cycle refers to graduate level (PhD)

Once you have received your PDF Offer of Admission, follow these steps and apply online:
2. Complete the online CAQ application
3. Print:
   - declaration and commitment form (must be signed)
   - the personalized checklist
4. Review and ensure you have the appropriate supporting documents – remember to include ALL pages of your Offer of Admission.
5. We strongly recommend that you mail your application package with all supporting documents by express mail to the address indicated on the personalized checklist.

Do not give a Montreal address if you are still living abroad. You may think giving a friend or relative’s local address will speed up the process, but it does not. Immigration authorities will assume you already reside in Montreal. Avoid complications by indicating your address in the country where you currently reside.

Minor Students Applying for a CAQ
Minors under the age of 17 must have a guardian residing in the province of Quebec.

For more information on the required documents, please consult immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca/en/immigrate-settle/students/obtaining-authorizations/certificat-acceptation/minor-children.html

The guardian must be a Permanent Resident or Canadian citizen over the age of 18 and must reside in Quebec. If you do not have anyone to act as your legal guardian and you will be living in one of our university residences, please email iso@concordia.ca for more info.

For more information on living on campus, see the Residence Life at concordia.ca/students/housing.html.
How to Apply for a Study Permit

Once you have received the electronic version of your CAQ, immediately apply for your Study Permit. Apply through a Visa Application Centre (VAC) or online: canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/study-canada/study-permit/apply.html

SERVICE CURRENTLY UNAVAILABLE PLEASE APPLY ONLINE.

NOTE: If you are a U.S. citizen/permanent resident, a resident of Greenland or St. Pierre and Miquelon, you can apply for your Study Permit at a Canadian Port of Entry, consequently, a Letter of Introduction is not required. Since you are applying for a Study Permit upon entry, bring all supporting documents with you:

• CAQ
• Offer of Admission
• Valid Passport
• Proof of Financial capacity

You will be required to pay a processing fee.

Port of Entry: canada.gc.ca/english/resources/tools/temp/students/application.asp

Support Documents: canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/study-canada/study-permit/prepare/get-documents.html

If you reside in the United States but are not an American citizen you must apply for your Study Permit at a Canadian visa office or a Visa Application Centre (VAC) that offers immigration services in the United States.

Concordia University is a designated learning institution (DLI).

You will need to include Concordia’s DLI number on your application: DLI number O19359011007

How much money should be sufficient?

Annual tuition fees $________ + Living expenses for one year for one person $12,750 = “suggested amount”

Financial Capacity: canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/study-canada/study-permit/prepare/get-documents.html#doc3

Letter of Introduction

If your Study Permit application is approved, you will receive a Letter of Introduction from the Canadian visa office confirming that your application to study in Canada has been approved. The letter is not a Study Permit. You will need to present this letter and all other support documents upon your arrival to Canada.

DO NOT leave for Canada until you have your Letter of Introduction from a Canadian visa office.

Arriving in Canada

Keep your Letter of Introduction and all other supporting documents in your carry-on luggage when travelling to Canada.
At the Canadian Port of Entry (Canadian airport or land border crossing) you must show your Letter of Introduction to the immigration officer in order to get your official Study Permit. An immigration officer will also request to see your:

- Valid Passport
- All pages of your Offer of Admission from Concordia University
- CAQ Approval Letter (print-out of the electronic version)
- Proof of sufficient funds for your studies in Canada

Questions about your immigration documents? Register for one of our pre-arrival webinars: concordia.ca/students/international/new-international-students/pre-arrival-wheelonars.html

**Entering Canada**

You may need:

- Temporary Resident Visa (TRV)
  
cic.gc.ca/english/information/applications/visa.asp
  
OR
  
- Electronic Travel Authorization (eTA)
  
  canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/visit-canada/eta.html

**TRV**

If you are from a country whose citizens require a visa to enter Canada as a temporary resident you will need a TRV. If you have applied for a Study Permit the TRV is processed at the same time as your Study Permit application.

If you have not applied for a Study Permit, (for example you are an exchange or visiting student studying for six months or less), you will need to apply for a TRV.

For more information on entry requirements to Canada visit Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada website at:

cic.gc.ca/english/visit/visas.asp

**eTA**

If you are from an eTA-required country and plan on travelling to Canada by air you will need an eTA. If you have applied for a Study Permit this requirement is automatically processed and the eTA information will be found on your Letter of Introduction. If you have not applied for a Study Permit,
(for example you are an exchange or visiting student studying for six months or less), you will need to apply for an eTA. canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/visit-canada/eta.html

Transiting via another country on your way to Canada
If you will transit through another country on your way to Canada, verify whether a visa is required to enter that country.

Will your family accompany you or join you later in Canada?
If one or more members of your family will accompany or later join you in Canada, they too must apply for an eTA or a Temporary Resident Visa. Find out which requirements applies at: cic.gc.ca/english/visit/visas.asp

A medical examination may also be required for your family members. Children who will be attending a primary or secondary school in Quebec must apply for a CAQ and Study Permit before coming to Canada.

Deferral of Admission
If you can’t start your studies in the term stated on your Offer of Admission, you must request a deferral and an updated version of your Offer of Admission.

The start date in your new Offer of Admission must match the start date shown on your CAQ. That means that if you postpone your arrival at Concordia by deferring your admission to a later term, you may need apply for a new CAQ.

If this applies to you, please check with iso@concordia.ca to find out if you will need a new CAQ.
How to pay tuition and fees

Log into MyConcordia.ca. Click on “My Student Centre,” on the upper left-hand side of the screen, to access your self-service dashboard. Under the Finances section of the page, click on ‘Make a payment’. Once on the Electronic Payments/Purchases page, select the ‘Pay’ button next to Undergraduate/Graduate Tuition and Fees. Select payment method and click “Next”. Click “Continue to Make Payment”. Be sure your browser accepts pop-ups because the next step in the payment process will open in a new window. The page will be redirected to a third-party payment system. Enter your payment information and click “Process Transaction”.

For a complete list of payment methods, see: concordia.ca/methods-of-payment

Some Canadian visa offices require proof of tuition payment. If this applies to you, please contact the ISO by email iso@concordia.ca to find out what amount should be paid in advance.

Do you have a scholarship?

Before leaving for Canada, verify your scholarship terms, including:

• Dates and details of the scheduled payments
• Which fees are covered or excluded
• Whether funds will arrive in time to cover your initial expenses

Before your departure, ask for a written statement of the items covered. If your scholarship is insufficient to cover your tuition and living expenses, evidence of other financial resources will be required by immigration officials before your immigration documents can be issued.

U.S. Loans

If you are an American student applying for U.S. Federal Student Aid, please be sure to contact Concordia’s Financial Aid and Awards Office (FAAO) as soon as possible to start your file: fundingyoureducation@concordia.ca

Do not travel with large amounts of cash in any currency, as you will have little or no recourse if this money is lost or stolen. Open up a bank account as soon as possible after you arrive.
Once you receive your Letter of Introduction (upon approval of your Study Permit application), you are ready to plan your trip to Montreal.

It’s ideal to arrive a few weeks before your classes begin:
- By August 15 for the Fall Term
- By December 15 for the Winter Term
- By April 15 for the Summer Term

Be sure to have a print-out copy of your Offer of Admission and your CAQ Approval letter (electronic version). Early arrival is strongly advised so that you have sufficient time to register for your courses, open a bank account, find a place to live, etc. without undue stress. Arriving later could also limit your choice of available courses and housing options.

Please keep in mind that Concordia University and the ISO close for certain holidays, which might affect access to services and course registration. Consult the official Academic Calendar for upcoming closures and plan your trip accordingly: concordia.ca/hr/dept/payroll/university-holidays-closures.html

The Concordia Student Union’s Off-Campus Housing and Job Bank (HOJO) is a good place to start your apartment search. On HOJO’s site, you can find a variety of resources to help you with off-campus apartment hunting: hojo.csu.qc.ca. Also, check out this students’ reference on Montreal housing likehome.info

**Book your flight**

Pierre Elliott Trudeau International Airport is Montreal’s principal airport, commonly known as Montreal-Trudeau Airport with the airport code YUL. It is located in the suburb of Dorval, 19 kilometres from Concordia’s Sir George Williams Campus in downtown Montreal.

**Make a hotel reservation for your first few days in Montreal**

Don’t wait to find last-minute temporary accommodations upon your arrival. Make reservations before your departure.

Visit HOJO’s website for information on temporary accommodations upon arrival in Montreal:
classifieds.csu.qc.ca/categories/housing

Tourisme Montréal
mtl.org/enAccommodations
Tel: 1-514-873-2015

**Do not sign a lease for an apartment or commit to any long-term off-campus housing arrangements until you arrive in Montreal.**

It is important to visit potential apartments or homes in person before making a commitment. The HOJO office on campus will explain your rights as a tenant and provide guidance on how to make arrangements.
What to bring

Important documents and money
Do not pack documents or money in the luggage you plan to check-in at the airport. If possible, carry these items with you in a money/safety belt or in your carry-on luggage.

Pack your Vaccine Records: it is important for every university student to have this vital information easily accessible. Don’t leave home without it!

Appropriate seasonal clothing
If you arrive in August/early September, it will still be warm enough to give you time to buy winter clothing.

If you arrive in December/early January, you will need appropriate winter clothing upon your arrival as temperatures from November through March are often well below zero Celsius (32 degrees Fahrenheit). Your winter wardrobe should a: winter coat, scarf, mittens/gloves, pair of winter boots, etc.

Airline baggage restrictions
If travelling by air, check regulations about:

- The number of suitcases you’re permitted to check
- Allowable dimensions and maximum weight per suitcase
- The cost (per kilo) of exceeding the authorized weight

Make sure you look into any baggage restrictions for all segments of your trip.

Don’t overpack as you can buy most things in Montreal at reasonable prices, including a wide variety of products for cooking and small appliances. Airport fees for overweight luggage can be expensive.

Winter in Montreal
It may be colder than you’re used to, but winter in Montreal is perfect for skiing, skating or snowshoeing. You'll find lots of ways to enjoy the weather.
Arrange to ship your belongings, if needed
If you plan to ship your belongings to Montreal, compare the costs to what you would pay if you were to purchase them new in Montreal. Do cost comparisons for various stores online. Make sure that you can obtain a reasonable delivery date for your shipment to arrive in Montreal.

Need a forwarding address?
SERVICE CURRENTLY UNAVAILABLE
The ISO will be pleased to hold your mail or act as your temporary forwarding address for shipments until you have a permanent place to live.

Please note, the ISO is not responsible for delivery related fees.

Be sure to indicate the following:
YOUR NAME
(first name followed by family name)
STUDENT ID NUMBER
Care of:
International Students Office
Concordia University
Room GM 330
Sir George Williams Campus
1550 De Maisonneuve Blvd West,
Montreal, Quebec, Canada H3G 1M8
Telephone: 514-848-2424, ext. 3515

Visit the ISO as soon as you arrive on campus to pick up your mail/luggage. Please discontinue this forwarding service as soon as you have a permanent address.

For Customs purposes, include a description of contents and the purpose of the shipment. For example: DESCRIPTION OF CONTENTS: Personal belongings PURPOSE: Studying at Concordia University

Making long-distance phone calls
You can purchase international calling cards prior to departure or upon your arrival, but find out whether the costs are advantageous and make sure the card will work in Canada. Wi-Fi services are widely available, so using Skype, FaceTime or other digital services is an affordable way to stay in contact with friends and family back home.

About electrical appliances
Electric appliances in Canada run on 120 volts with a 60-cycle alternating current.

Travelling to Canada soon? We can help you with a few smart tips on everything from packing to going through the airport customs. Sign up for an online webinar: concordia.ca/students/international/new-international-students/pre-arrival-webinars.html
Where to start?
1. Read your Admission Letter
   For undergraduate students
   Guide to First Year: concordia.ca/students/success/new/first-year-guide.html
   For graduate students
   Graduate Handbooks: concordia.ca/graduate-handbooks

2. Get to Know MyConcordia Portal
   MyConcordia.ca is your personal access to all university services via online, where you can confidentially check your academic deadlines, upload your immigration documents, view your course schedule, credits and grades, pay your tuition, check amounts paid and owing in your student account, register for courses, as well as access other helpful information.

3. Register for Courses
   In order to register for your courses you will need to go through the Concordia Web Registration System. For a step-by-step guide to the Web Registration System, go to concordia.ca/course-registration
   Follow online instructions or refer to your Offer of Admission, which also includes information about registration.

   **Registering for undergraduate courses**
   Some newly admitted students are required to seek academic advising before registering for courses. Please refer to the Guide to First Year.

   **Registering for graduate courses**
   Get to know your advisor. The advisor is responsible for managing all aspects of your academic program, such as, academic advising, registration and any other academic matters. For more info, refer to: concordia.ca/offices/sgs/new-graduate-students.html
Graduate students must report to their academic departments where a program assistant will help with registration. The telephone number and address of your department is listed on your Offer of Admission. If not, look them up on the Concordia directory concordia.ca/directories

Tuition and fee payment deadlines
For complete information about tuition and fees, and the university’s regulations regarding billing, payment, and withdrawal deadlines, go to concordia.ca/admissions/tuition-fees.html

If you cannot register, go to your Faculty advising information page for more information.

Arts and Science: concordia.ca/artsci-advising

John Molson School of Business: concordia.ca/jmsb-advising

Engineering and Computer Science: concordia.ca/encs-advising

Fine Arts: concordia.ca/finearts-advising

Keep your contact information up to date on MyConcordia so we can reach you when necessary.
As soon as you arrive in Canada, go through customs where an officer will:

- Check your passport
- Verify your visa to enter Canada (if required)
- Refer to your Letter of Introduction
- Ask you a few questions about the purpose of your visit to Canada

Have all pages of your Offer of Admission and supporting documents ready to show the customs officer, especially if you are not required to obtain a CAQ or Study Permit. Get your passport stamped at the immigration office.

After clearing customs, go immediately to the Canadian immigration office near the customs area. An immigration officer will ask to see your:

- Passport
- Letter of Introduction issued by a Canadian visa office
- Print-out copy of the Offer of Admission from Concordia University (all pages)
- CAQ Approval Letter (print-out of electronic version)
- Proof of sufficient funds for your studies in Canada

After verifying these documents, the immigration officer will complete and issue your Study Permit. Be sure that the information on your Study Permit is accurate, i.e. your name, date of birth, etc.

**Welcome to Canada!**

Do not leave the airport or a Canadian border crossing without having your Study Permit issued.

If you are planning to work, make sure that your Study Permit indicates that the permit holder ‘may accept employment’ or ‘may work’ in Canada.

Take a moment to review your Study Permit and ensure that all the information is correct. If you think there is an error tell the agent right away so that changes can be made. Alternatively it may take several months to have your document amended.
How to get to the city from the airport – “Montreal Centre-ville”

747 Express bus
The 747 bus runs 24 hours a day between Montreal Trudeau Airport and the Berri-UQAM metro station near downtown Montreal. One-way cash fare is $10 payable in Canadian coins only – no bills. If you don’t have any Canadian coins to pay the fare on the bus directly, you can buy a fare card at the airport (International Arrival level). Visit the STM information counter at the airport to find out:
• When and where the next bus is leaving
• How to purchase a ticket in advance
• Which stop is closest to your destination
• Whether additional buses or subway rides will be necessary

Information is also available online at: stm.info/en/info/networks/bus/shuttle/747-aerop ort-p-e-trudeau-centre-ville-shuttle

Take a taxi
Taxi fares to downtown will be about $40. Drivers prefer cash although most will take a credit card.

Confirm your arrival in Canada
Call or register in person with your country’s consular representative in Canada. See a list of embassies and consulates international.gc.ca/protocol-protocole/reps.aspx

Accueil Plus
Get your Study Permit printed faster at the Montreal-Trudeau Airport with Accueil Plus. This service is only available for students arriving for the Fall term and certain eligibility requirements apply. It does not exempt you from having to apply for your Study Permit and obtain a Letter of Introduction prior to arriving in Canada. Register in advance at accueilplus.ca

Arriving at Montreal-Trudeau Airport
Once you’ve cleared customs and immigration, look for the Welcome New International Students booth located in the International Arrivals section of the airport. This booth is operational during the Fall term, hosted by several Montreal universities and staffed by students. They will give you a map of Montreal and advice on getting from the airport to the city. You will also be able to call home to let your family know you’ve arrived safely!

If the booth is not open, ask anyone in uniform behind a service counter for directions.

If you notice any typographical errors on your document, ask the officers to make the corrections before you leave the immigration office.
Arriving by bus or train

Buses arrive at the Voyageur Bus Terminus, Montreal’s central bus station near the Berri-UQAM Metro station – only a short cab ride or a few metro stops away from Concordia’s Sir George Williams Campus.

Trains arrive at the Gare Centrale (Central Station), about twelve city blocks away from Concordia’s Sir George Williams campus. Taxis are readily available outside the station.

Metro and buses go out to the area around Concordia’s Loyola Campus in the city’s west end. Refer to public transit maps for details. [stm.info/en](http://stm.info/en)

Making telephone calls

Local area codes in Montreal include 514, 450 and 438.

Mobile Plans

There are many cellphone service providers available in Montreal that offer plans with new devices at affordable prices. International students coming from the U.S. are able to extend their current plan, however, it may be more economical to open a new plan in Montreal.

The ISO does not endorse any cellphone company.
Visit the International Students Office
Every international student should visit the International Students Office upon arrival. We will process your documents, assist with your health insurance plan, and address any questions or concerns. As line-ups can get long at the beginning of the term, you can upload scanned copies of your immigration documents on MyConcordia.ca prior to your first visit to our office. Instructions are available at concordia.ca/students/your-sis/upload-documents.html.

You must upload the first page of your CAQ (French version) and your Study Permit (not the Letter of Introduction) if you are planning to study for over 6 months at Concordia. If you plan to study for 6 months or less, you must upload the biographical page of your passport.

Come to WISE! our Welcome International Students Event
You will receive helpful information about:
- Getting settled in Montreal
- Adjustment to Concordia and Cultural Adaptation
- Your Health Insurance Plan

Attend other orientations offered by the Student Success Centre and by your program or faculty
Attend as many sessions as possible to get to know the university community. concordia.ca/students/success/new/orientation.html

Get your Permanent Code
All students in Quebec need an identification number called a Permanent Code. Complete the Permanent Code form on MyConcordia and bring your Study Permit (if your stay is over 6 months) or a copy of your passport (if your stay is less than 6 months) to the ISO or upload them on MyConcordia.ca before the deadline:
- Summer Term – August 15
- Fall Term – December 15
- Winter Term – April 15

concordia.ca/permanent-code

Late arrivals
Undergraduate students
It is important to arrive before the registration deadline. If you need assistance, please contact the advisor/counselor mentioned in your Offer of Admission.

Graduate students
If you will arrive after classes have started, inform your graduate department or supervisor in advance that you will arrive late. Ask about the absolute deadline for registration.

IMPORTANT!
Present your valid CAQ and Study Permit to the ISO staff member before the “Did Not Enter” (DNE) deadline of your first term at Concordia and every time you renew your immigration documents. Failure to comply with this regulation of the Ministry of Higher Education could result in the CANCELLATION of your course registration. If you are studying for six months or less, you must present a valid passport.
Moving to a new city is an exciting experience. Whether you decide to live on or off campus, there are many factors to consider, and we encourage you to take some time to research your options to find out what will best suit your needs and lifestyle.

**Residence Life**

**SERVICE CURRENTLY UNAVAILABLE**

Living on campus in residence is a great way to meet new friends. All of Concordia’s residences are lively places filled with students from around the globe, and Residence Life Assistants are trained students living on site who know first-hand the excitement and challenges of being new at Concordia.

Do you qualify to live in residence? Check the Residence Life Admissions Criteria to see if you are eligible to live in residence at concordia.ca/students/housing/application.html

**HELPFUL TIP**

If you would like to live with a friend in residence, you must both indicate that you want to live together on your applications and the Residence Life team will do their best to place you together.

Applying to live in residence

The link to the Residence application will be available at the beginning of March on MyConcordia.ca to students who have been offered conditional or final admission. There is a $100 non-refundable application fee to be paid by either Visa or MasterCard before the application can be processed.

Applicants will be asked to provide personal information, and answer questions about lifestyle and habits, building and room selections, and roommate preferences (if applicable). Please take the time to consider your answers carefully so that the staff of the Residence Office can best accommodate your living and academic needs.

Learn more about Residence options and mandatory meal plans at concordia.ca/students/housing.html

**IMPORTANT!**

We do not recommend signing a lease or other longer-term contract for housing prior to your arrival in Montreal. It is important to visit potential housing options in person and seek guidance to avoid difficulties with landlords or unsanitary premises.
How to find affordable housing
Most students are successful in finding an apartment or roommates within one to two weeks of arriving in Montreal.

The Concordia Student Union (CSU) Off-Campus Housing and Job Bank (HOJO) can tell you about your tenant rights and provide information about different neighbourhoods. You can contact them at hojo@csu.qc.ca

Hojo also holds information sessions on housing. If you are unable to attend, please visit Hojo in H-224

Renting an apartment
Apartments in downtown Montreal are 30 per cent more expensive on average than neighbourhoods less centrally located. It is possible, however, to find reasonably-priced units along bus and Metro lines within a 20- to 30-minute commute from campus. Apartment sizes come in the following: a 1½ is a large room with kitchenette and bathroom; a 2½ is larger, or has a double room or is L-shaped; a 3½ has a separate bedroom, living room, kitchen and bathroom; a 4½ has two bedrooms, a living room, kitchen and bathroom, and so on.

How much can you expect to pay for rent?
Rents vary depending on the buildings age, condition and location. In general, apartments are not furnished, but many are equipped with a refrigerator and stove. You will need to pay separately for electricity and heat if they are not included in the rent.

Average monthly rents for downtown Montreal:
$750 to $1500 per month depending on the size

Questions to ask when apartment hunting
• Are there laundry facilities in the building?
• Is the building close to a bus stop or Metro station?
• Are a fridge and stove included?
• Are heating and hot water included in the rental fee?
Consider finding a roommate
Sharing an apartment with one or more roommates will lower your financial burden and give you more options for suitable housing. Go apartment-hunting with someone to see whether your personalities are compatible. Stop by HOJO for free information about how to choose a compatible roommate and your rights and responsibilities as a roommate.

About signing leases
Most property owners will require you to sign a lease, but we strongly recommend that you visit a few apartments before you choose a place and sign for it. Once a lease is signed, it is very difficult to cancel as it is a legally binding agreement. Before you sign a lease, check:

- Appliances (refrigerator and stove) to make sure they are in working order
- Taps for water pressure and hot water availability
- For signs of bugs or rodents
- For repairs needed (the landlord is responsible for fixing these issues)

You may have to give a deposit for the first month’s rent when you sign the lease. Make sure to get an official receipt for every financial transaction.

If you sign a lease application, sign only one at a time, as you are legally bound to the lease if the landlord accepts your application.

Landlords can request background information about you. You can show your Offer of Admission from Concordia.

Landlords CAN ask you for:
- First and last name
- Current and previous full addresses
- Name and contact information
- Date of birth
- References
- Credit checks

Landlords CANNOT ask you for:
- Credit card number
- Social Insurance Number
- Driver’s permit
- Passport
- Bank account information
- Student Visa/Study Permit
- Health Insurance

As you begin apartment hunting, keep in mind that the landlord cannot require an application fee prior to the signing of the lease. Fees of this nature may not be refundable.

Contact HOJO for assistance:
hojo@csu.qc.ca

Landlords can request proof of good payment habits, including references and/or a guarantor. This can be a challenge for those who have no credit history or immediate family in Canada.

If possible, arrange for a friend or family member to act as a guarantor in advance of your arrival.
ONCE YOU ARRIVE
REVIEW YOUR HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE

Health insurance coverage is mandatory
The Government of Quebec requires all international students to be covered by a health insurance plan that meets its standards while living in Quebec.

Concordia University has negotiated a health and accident insurance plan with the Blue Cross insurance company that is compulsory for all international students with very few exceptions. This plan is specifically for international students and meets Government of Quebec standards at a competitive rate.

For the detailed information regarding your Blue Cross Health Insurance plan:

1. Read your Blue Cross Health Insurance Plan Policy Booklet
2. Watch our online presentation: concordia.ca/iso-health
3. Attend a health insurance information session.

See a full schedule of the ISO’s events and workshops: concordia.ca/students/international/events.html

Health insurance fees are automatically charged to all international students when registering for courses or when graduate students are Continuing in Program (CIP). The insurance period for international students is from September 1 to August 31 of the following year. Students who arrive in January will pay a pro-rated premium for the eight-month period ending August 31.

If you withdraw from all your courses prior to the DNE (Did Not Enter) deadline, you must contact the ISO to request a refund of your health insurance fees, if applicable. The DNE deadline is usually within the first two weeks of the term for fall and winter courses and within the first week for summer courses. For exact dates, please refer to the academic term dates and deadlines concordia.ca/students/registration/term-dates-deadlines.html

Print your health insurance card
You must be registered for courses or, if you’re a graduate student, be listed as Continuing in Program. For instructions: concordia.ca/content/dam/concordia/offices/advocacy/iso/docs/T17-ISO-Blue-Cross-Handout-How-to-register.pdf

Coverage before the first day of class
Our Health Insurance Plan begins at the start of your term. You should buy temporary health insurance in your home country to cover you in Canada until your Blue Cross plan takes effect. Alternatively, additional coverage is available through our office, but it starts at the beginning of a calendar month.
Health insurance for your family
Under Quebec law, your spouse/partner and/or children must also have comprehensive health and accident insurance coverage if accompanying you to Canada.

If you decide to purchase visitor’s insurance for your family, you can refer to information, prepared by the insurance broker Vigilis about the coverage provided by various insurance companies: concordia.ca/students/international/health-insurance/insurance-for-dependents.html

Remember that even if you purchase another plan for your family, you as the student must be covered by the Blue Cross Plan for Concordia international students.

NOTE: Children born in Canada whose parents are not Canadian citizens or permanent residents are considered Canadian citizens from the time their birth is registered with the proper authorities. However, these children do not generally qualify for Quebec health insurance coverage (RAMQ) and will still require private insurance coverage.

Eligibility for exemption
Only certain students are permitted to opt out of the Blue Cross Health Insurance Plan negotiated by Concordia for International Students:

1. Students who have a valid Quebec Health Insurance card (RAMQ).

2. Citizens of countries that have reciprocity agreements with the Quebec Health Insurance Board

Full-time students (registered in a minimum 12 undergraduate course-credits) who are citizens of the countries listed below and who are covered under their government’s medical system before arriving in Quebec are eligible to apply for a Quebec Health Insurance card.

Belgium: Form Be/Que 128
Denmark: Denmark Health Card
Finland: Form SF/Q 4
France*: Form SE-401-Q-102 (student registered in a study program leading to a diploma), or form SE-401-Q-104 (student taking part in a mandatory, unpaid training period), or form SE-401-Q-106 (student taking part in an exchange)
Greece: Form GR/QUE 6
Luxembourg: Form LUX-QUE 4
Norway: Attestation issued by the HELFO (health administration) or by NAV (Norwegian national insurance scheme for abroad)
Portugal: Form POR/QUE 4
Romania: Form ROU/QUE 106
Sweden: Attestation issued by a competent institution certifying the student’s right to healthcare coverage
If this is your case, you must:
• Visit the ISO for information on applying for a Quebec Health Insurance card
• Have proof of your full-time status at Concordia University
• Obtain the required proof of your coverage under the insurance plan/agreement specified for your country
• Get a Health Insurance card and submit proof of coverage to the ISO

3. Students with certain scholarships
International students who have scholarships from a sponsoring organization or government (such as CIDA, ICCS, CBIE or WUSC) that include tuition fees and a group health insurance plan can also opt out of Concordia’s health insurance plan.

Make sure your scholarship letter specifically mentions the health insurance coverage as well as the duration of the policy and bring a copy of the letter to the ISO.

4. Refugee claimants and convention refugees
Refugee claimants and convention refugees can also opt out, if they can show proof of medical coverage by the governments of Canada or Quebec. Please bring your proof of medical coverage to the ISO.

Opting out of the Blue Cross Health Insurance Plan negotiated by Concordia
Only certain categories of students can opt out of the mandatory health insurance plan. See section on Eligibility for exemption in this Guide. To opt out, present your request along with proof of your approved alternative health insurance coverage in person at the ISO. If your approved alternative health insurance coverage expires during the academic year, you are responsible for getting an extension of health insurance coverage that meets the government’s requirements and providing proof of this coverage to the ISO before the expiration date.

Adjustments or cancellations will be based on the date the ISO receives a copy of the supporting documentation, mentioned in the Eligibility for exemption section of this Guide. Insurance plans are based on a monthly rate from the first day of the month to the last day of the month. As such, and in order for the student to obtain the fullest refund, the request for adjustments or cancellations should be made prior to the first day of the month. Retroactive adjustments will only be considered and provided where supporting documents can prove that health insurance coverage has been maintained continuously from the beginning of the required insurance period. Where the supporting documents do not indicate health insurance coverage, the monthly fee charged will not be refunded. If a student has filed an insurance claim, the student can only receive a retroactive refund for the period (months) following the claim. Refunds are provided in the form of credit to the student’s university account.

IMPORTANT
If you qualify for one of these exemptions, you must still go through the process to opt out of the Concordia Health Insurance plan on an annual basis.
Pay your fees on time
Visit concordia.ca/tuitionandfees for:
- A tuition fee calculator
- Answers to frequently asked questions
- Fee payment deadlines
- Information on how fees are billed

Exemption from differential fees
There are some fee exemptions that allow international students to pay a lower tuition rate than the international tuition rate. Some exemption categories are: diplomats and their dependents, refugees, French citizens, and international students whose spouse or parent holds certain categories of work permits concordia.ca/fee-exemptions

The deadline for requesting an exemption and submitting all supporting documents is the last day of classes in a term.

Based on Ministry of Higher Education directives, requests that are incomplete at the end of the term or submitted afterward may not be processed for that term.

Eligibility for Financial Aid
Financial assistance is available for international students at Concordia, but it is limited.

Students must have sufficient funding to complete their degrees. Concordia University cannot assume financial responsibility for students who do not have adequate funds.

Undergraduate students
For further information on scholarships, awards and bursaries, contact the Financial Aid and Awards Office (FAAO):
Tel: 514-848-2424, ext. 3507
fundingyoureducation@concordia.ca
concordia.ca/offices/faao.html

Graduate students
New graduate students are considered by each Faculty/Department for internal awards and doctoral international tuition fee remissions (exemption from international differential tuition fees) based on their complete admission application.

Refer to the database of awards maintained by the Graduate Awards Office concordia.ca/sgs/awards-funding.html

For more information on funding options, please contact the School of Graduate Studies

American students may apply for government funding through the U.S. Department of Education, where loans are available for students and parents who meet the criteria. Find out about the loan requirements at concordia.ca/usaid

Working in Canada
On campus: If you are a full-time international student with a valid Study Permit you can work on campus. You must have the following condition printed on your Study Permit:
May accept employment on the campus of the institution at which registered in full-time studies. concordia.ca/students/international/living-working/working-in-canada.html

If you are an international student studying for six months or less and do not have a Study Permit, you are not permitted to work on campus. Find out more at cic.gc.ca/english/study/work-oncampus.asp

Off Campus: To be eligible to work off-campus you must meet the eligibility criteria set out by Citizenship and Immigration Canada, as follows:
- have a valid Study Permit;
- be a full-time student;
- be enrolled at a designated learning institution (such as Concordia);
- be studying in an academic program.

Your Study Permit must state that you may accept employment on or off-campus if meeting eligibility criteria as per R186 (f), (v) or (w).

You can work up to 20 hours per week during the regular academic session and full-time during scheduled breaks. canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/study-canada/work/work-off-campus.html

Is your spouse/partner allowed to work?
Accompanying spouses/partners of international students who are not enrolled as students themselves may be eligible to apply for an Open Work permit. cic.gc.ca/english/study/work-spouse.asp

Meet your ISO team (from left to right): Paola Yannine, Kelly Collins, Brenda Brisson, Farooq Shaikh, Delfine Lambert, (bottom row) Nadeem Butt, Anna Nigoghosian and Sandra Palmieri.
There are many student services dedicated to your academic and personal success at Concordia. Take time to explore the many aspects of campus life that will contribute to your student experience with us:

- Birks Student Service Centre
- Career counselling
- Sports teams and fitness centres
- Student clubs and associations
- Mentoring and tutoring services
- Health Services
- Campus stores
- Wi-Fi service and computer labs
- and many more

Learn more online: concordia.ca/campus-life

The following optional services can make it easier for you to pursue your studies at Concordia and enjoy campus life.

Set up a Concordia email account
For step-by-step instructions, go to concordia.ca/it/services/office-365-education.html

Reserve a locker on campus
You can reserve one online at MyConcordia.ca, available on a first-come, first-served basis. Fees vary from building to building.

Keep in mind that a late fee will be charged if the locker is not emptied by the end of term.

Buy the textbooks and course packs you need
Find out what books and course packs you need, as well as the options for buying and selling used textbooks.
stores.concordia.ca

GradProSkills
Graduate students can sign up for professional skills development workshops.
concordia.ca/gradproskills

Concordia Library
Become familiar with Concordia’s library facilities by taking a tour and signing up for a workshop concordia.ca/library-workshops

What else do you have to know?
If you carefully read this Guide and use the enclosed Checklist, you are well on your way to a smooth transition to life as an international student at Concordia University.
Important Academic Dates

Check the Academic Calendars regularly for deadlines and important dates:

- Undergraduate students
- Graduate students

The Concordia International Student Association (CISA)
Reach out to connect with CISA – an association run by international students who are committed to helping you adjust to your new environment at Concordia and in Montreal. CISA organizes activities throughout the semester, such as trips, parties and inter-university games to make sure you enjoy your experience in Canada while meeting people from all over the world! facebook.com/cisacordia/

Get Involved!

Clubs and associations are a great way to make friends and create connections that will stay with you for life. Model United Nations, Ski, and Snowboard clubs exist along with over 35 cultural and ethnic associations such as the Canadian Asian Association and the Muslim Student Association, to name a few.

concordia.ca/offices/dean-students/studentgroups.html

Want to start your own club?
Check with the Dean of Students office, your primary source for information on all non-academic aspects of student life.
Concordia links

International Students Office concordia.ca/iso
New Students concordia.ca/new-students
Birks Student Service Centre (Office of the Registrar) concordia.ca/birks
School of Graduate Studies concordia.ca/offices/sgs
Tuition and fees: concordia.ca/tuitionandfees
Concordia International Students Association (CISA) facebook.com/cisaconcordia/
Language Institute (Continuing Education) cce.concordia.ca
Off-Campus Housing and Job Bank classifieds.csu.qc.ca/categories/housing
Residence concordia.ca/students/housing.html

External links

Canadian Bureau for International Education (CBIE) cbie.ca
Citizenship and Immigration Canada canada.ca
Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade international.gc.ca
Montréal International montrealinternational.com/en/
I Choose Montréal jechoisismontreal.com/en/
Montréal – Trudeau Airport admtl.com/en
Québec Ministry of Immigration immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca/en/
Ministère de l’Enseignement supérieur, de la Recherche et de la Science mesrs.gouv.qc.ca
(not available in English)
Québec Rental Board rdl.gouv.qc.ca/en
Régie de l’assurance maladie ramq.gouv.qc.ca/en

Published by the International Students Office
Concordia University
Room GM 330, Guy-Maisonneuve Building, 3rd floor,
Sir George Williams Campus
1550 de Maisonneuve Blvd. W.
Montreal, Quebec Canada H3G 1M8
Tel: 514-848-2424, ext. 3515
Fax: 514-848-3599
iso@concordia.ca
concordia.ca/iso

facebook.com/ISO.Concordia

December 2019