

W E L C O M E

STUDENT HANDBOOK 2026/2027



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WELCOME TO



Alexander College

We are excited to welcome you to Alexander College and support you on your educational journey. Whether you are beginning your studies, transferring to another institution, or working towards a specific career goal, we are here to help you every step of the way. Our college is committed to providing a high-quality education in a supportive and inclusive environment, where students feel motivated and empowered to succeed.

At Alexander College

You will become part of a diverse and welcoming student community, with classmates from all over the world. Our positive learning atmosphere, friendly environment, and dedicated instructors and staff make it easy to feel at home and stay focused on your goals. With small class sizes, personalized support services, and a wide range of academic resources, we ensure that every student receives guidance.

This guide is designed to help you navigate your studies at Alexander College and adjust to life as a student in British Columbia. Inside, you will find important information about academic expectations, student services, campus life, and available resources to support your success. Additionally, this guide provides details on living and housing costs, the availability of suitable accommodations, program requirements for attendance and progression, institutional policies, employment rights and conditions, and tenancy rights in British Columbia. Whether you need help with coursework, academic planning, or adjusting to college life, this guide will serve as a valuable tool to help you make the most of your experience.



MISSION



Alexander College strives for excellence in higher education for students from many cultural backgrounds and language abilities by providing internationally recognized university transfer courses and degree programs, individual support services, and campus activities to foster local and global community engagement.

ACADEMIC RESOURCES

This guide aims to address some of the most frequently asked questions. Please note that policies may be updated, and students are encouraged to refer to the Academic Calendar, Important Dates, and Semester Schedule for the most up-to-date information.



Academic Calendar

<https://alexandercollege.ca/admissions/academic-calendar/>



Important Dates

<https://alexandercollege.ca/registration/important-dates/>



Semester Schedule

<https://alexandercollege.ca/registration/semester-schedule/>



STUDENT ACCOUNTS

myAC Student Portal

myAC is the Student Information System where you can view your current course schedule, find your assigned registration date, access course registration, view grades, order official documents, update your contact information, book placement tests, and connect to your Zoom classes.

myAC Login Credentials

Username: "Your 8-digit Student ID Number" (ex. 1012XXXX)

Password: "Emailed to you by Alexander College with your Welcome Package"

If you need help, email myAC Support at myacsupport@alexandercollege.ca

Canvas

Canvas is a digital platform that connects students and instructors. On Canvas, you can view course material and assignments, submit assignments, complete quizzes and online exams, post on discussion forums, contact your instructor, and view important course announcements. You can also access the Student Support Hub to connect with student services by clicking on the Help icon.

Canvas Login Credentials

To log in to Canvas, log in to MyAC and look for the "Canvas" button on the left side of the page.

If you need help, email the IT Help Desk at ithelpdesk@alexandercollege.ca

STUDENT ID CARDS

Students must have a physical student ID issued by Alexander College to be eligible to take exams. Physical ID cards are required for in-person exams and borrowing physical library materials. To get an AC Student ID card, students will need to bring a government-issued photo ID (e.g. passport, BC ID, Canadian driver's license, or permanent residency card) to the library.

A member of the library team will take a photo of each student for the ID card, which will also be added to the student myAC account. Please note that the library team cannot accept student supplied photos for ID cards.

If you have questions about the ID card process, please email library@alexandercollege.ca

STUDENT SUPPORT RESOURCES

At Alexander College, we want you to succeed inside and outside the classroom. Whether you need academic support, career advice, or wellbeing resources, our student support staff will help you to grow academically, professionally, and personally.

To make it easy for you to access these services, we have created the student support wheel where you can explore all available resources. On the [website](#), you can view an interactive version and click on different sections to learn more about how each unit can assist you. Take advantage of these services to enhance your college experience and set yourself up for success!



AC's Comprehensive & Student-Centered Support Services

For additional information, please visit the [Student Support](#) page on AC's website.

OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR

The Office of the Registrar provides a wide range of student support services, helping students to navigate their program of study from the point of admissions all the way through to graduation. The Office of the Registrar comprises of the following units:



Admissions, Placement Testing, and Financial Aid:

- Processing applications for new students
- Managing admissions requirements and document evaluations
- Issuing letters of acceptance

Student Financial Aid:

Canadian citizens and permanent residents are eligible to apply for educational funding from the province of British Columbia through Student Aid BC. Funding from Student Aid BC is available for students enrolled in Associate Degree programs only.

Student Records, Transfer Credits, and Graduation:

- Maintaining official student records and transcripts
- Processing name changes, program changes, and personal information updates
- Administering academic standing and appeals

Academic Advising:

- Program planning
- GPA calculations
- University transfer pathways

Course Registration and Scheduling:

- Managing course enrollment and waitlists
- Overseeing add/drop periods and withdrawal requests
- Publishing the semester schedule

Math and English Placement Testing:

Assessment in the subject areas of English and Mathematics are available to students who are unable to meet admission and or course requirements based on their previous educational history.

Test sessions are normally held Monday through Friday at the Burnaby campus. Appointments can be booked from the myAC student portal.

Graduation and Credentials:

- Evaluating graduation eligibility
- Issuing official diplomas and certificates
- Coordinating the convocation ceremony

RISIA Services- Immigration Related Questions:

- **Hours of Operation**
 - Monday – Friday from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm
- **Contact Information**
risia@alexandercollege.ca

**Please indicate your inquiry concisely in the email subject title and be sure to include the following in one email:*

- Student ID number
- Full name
- A copy of your study permit
- The detail of your request
- Any other file attachments

HOW TO CONTACT

Drop in At the Vancouver campus Monday – Friday from 9:00 am until 4:00 pm, excluding statutory holidays.

By Mail You can send all mail and related documents to Vancouver Campus.
The address is: **#100 - 570 Dunsmuir St., Vancouver, BC, V6B 1Y1 Canada**

By Phone You can call the main line on **(604) 438-5815**

By Email Admissions: admissions@alexandercollege.ca
Placement Testing Services: placementtesting@alexandercollege.ca
Registration: registration@alexandercollege.ca
Student Records: studentrecords@alexandercollege.ca
Graduation: graduation@alexandercollege.ca
Transfer Credit: transfercredit@alexandercollege.ca
General Mailbox: registrar@alexandercollege.ca
Academic Advising: academicadvising@alexandercollege.ca



MARKETING AND ENROLMENT

The Enrolment Division serves as the first point of contact for new students at Alexander College. Our staff members welcome prospective students and guide them in selecting the programs that best suit their goals. We offer expert advice on admission and registration processes while carefully reviewing and verifying applications and supporting documents to ensure a smooth enrolment experience.

Hours of Operation

Monday - Friday from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm

Contact Information

- **By email:** general email is info@alexandercollege.ca
- Each student is assigned to a specific Enrolment Officer. You can check their contact information on your myAC profile page.



LIBRARY

Alexander College library offers physical and digital resources for borrowing. Physical resources include books as well as technology such as laptops and headsets. Digital resources include access to databases such as APA PSYCInfo, where students can find peer-reviewed academic sources for their studies. The physical space at ACV provides students with a comfortable atmosphere for socializing and studying. Rooms can be booked in advance for individual or group study sessions.

Students can book in-person research appointments via AC Connect. Library staff help students find the perfect resources for their assignments by focusing on search strategies such as using keywords and Boolean operators. Students can also use AskAway to chat with librarians in real time across BC. Other services include printing, InterLibrary Loans, exam viewing, and more!

Hours of Operation

Monday – Thursday: 8:00 am - 9:00 pm

Friday: 8:00 am - 6:00 pm

Saturday: Closed

Sunday: Closed

Contact Information

- **By email:** general email is library@alexandercollege.ca
- **By Phone:** 604-558-6921 (Vancouver)



Alexander College's Library in Vancouver Campus

STUDENT RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

The Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities upholds and enforces various policies and processes. We assist students experiencing barriers with their studies, through our academic appeals, attendance appeals, accommodations, exam deferrals, bereavements, behavioural misconduct, and complaints. Our services are designed to support students to achieve academic success while maintaining academic integrity and ensuring they have access to the resources they need.

Hours of Operation

Monday - Friday from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm

Contact Information

- **By email:** general email is srr@alexandercollege.ca

Book an appointment by registering for an account and logging into AC Connect: <https://alexander.mywconline.com/>



STUDENT LIFE

The Student Life Unit works in conjunction with the Alexander College Student Association (ACSA) to provide students with the opportunity to experience both Canadian culture and the diverse cultures of other students. Student Life is dedicated to enhancing and engaging students with each other to gain a sense of belonging through activities, clubs and events in the community.

Every semester, Student Life and ACSA host a variety of events including, but not limited to movie viewings, hikes, cultural celebrations, and more! To view the current events and clubs follow the [link](#). It's a fantastic opportunity to learn more about what Canada has to offer as well as the customs and traditions of other cultures.



Hours of Operation

Monday - Friday from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm

Contact Information

By email: general email is studentlife@alexandercollege.ca

STUDENT FINANCIAL SERVICES & BOOKSTORE

The SFS and Bookstore process tuition payments and refunds. You can also purchase textbooks and swag/college merchandise.

Hours of Operation

Monday - Friday from 9:00 am to 4:30 pm

Contact Information

- **In-person:** 5th floor, inside the ACV library
- **By email:** general email is bookstore@alexandercollege.ca
- **By phone:** 604-435-5815 (press 2 for SFS/Bookstore)



WRITING & LEARNING CENTRE

The WLC provides in-person and online tutoring, group workshops, and academic resources. We help students improve their assignments, writing, and study skills.

We can also help with citations, computer literacy, AI literacy, academic integrity, avoiding plagiarism, and more.

Hours of Operation

Monday – Friday from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm

Contact Information

- **In-person:** 5th floor (room 507)
- **By email:** wlc@alexandercollege.ca
- **By phone:** 604-435-5815 (ask to transfer to WLC)

Book an appointment by registering for an account and logging into AC Connect: <https://alexander.mywconline.com/>

CAREER ADVISING

Career Services is here to help you succeed at work during your time at Alexander College. We offer in-person support and provide online resources to help you navigate your career.

Help with resume and cover letter writing, networking, career exploration, work search strategies, interview tips and mock (practice) interviews, and LinkedIn etc.

Hours of Operation

Monday - Friday from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm

Contact Information

By email: general email is careeradvising@alexandercollege.ca

Students may book through <https://alexander.mywconline.com>

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Alexander College students are eligible for **up to 10 free Health and Wellness Counseling sessions each calendar year**. These sessions are designed to provide students with a safe, supportive, and confidential space in which to discuss issues that may be causing distress and personal struggle, and supportive ways to manage stress. Alexander College's Registered Clinical Counselors provides Health and Wellness Counseling services with the option of meeting in-office, or virtually. Students can choose the appointment type they prefer at the time of booking the appointment.

Hours of Operation

Monday - Friday from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm

Contact Information

- **By email:** healthandwellness@alexandercollege.ca
- **Online Booking:** [Health and Wellness booking](#)

STUDENT HOUSING SERVICES

The Housing Services Department is specifically designed to cater to the unique needs of international students. Our team is here to guide you in understanding essential local housing information. We provide homestay options for a warm local experience and shared room assistance to build a sense of community. Experience a smooth transition with personalized support, immersing all international students in the rich local culture.

Hours of Operation

Monday – Friday from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm

Contact Information

- By email: housing@alexandercollege.ca

IT HELPDESK

The IT Help Desk assists students with Canvas, Microsoft, password resets, and general computer questions.

Hours of Operation

Monday – Friday from 8:00am-4:30pm

Contact Information

- By email: ithelpdesk@alexandercollege.ca



FRONT DESK

The information desk acts as the first point of contact, providing support to students by directing them to the correct department. The team is also trained in first aid and can assist and provide immediate care to someone who is injured or ill.

For example: bandaging wounds, performing CPR, and using an AED. If you are unsure of which department you need to get in touch with or have any other questions or concerns, stop by at the information desk for information! We are always happy to help.

Hours of Operation

(may change every term):

- 8:00am-9:00pm Monday-Thursday
- 8:00am-5:30pm Friday

Contact Information

- By email: general email is frontdesk@alexandercollege.ca
- By phone: 604-435-5815

IMPORTANT POLICIES

We encourage you to take the time to familiarize yourself with our important policies, as they serve as a foundation for a positive and productive educational experience. These guidelines address key areas such as health insurance, enrolment status, attendance expectations, and the code of conduct. By understanding and adhering to these policies, you will not only enhance your own academic journey but also contribute to a supportive and respectful environment for your peers.



Health Insurance

All residents of British Columbia must have valid medical insurance in case of an accident or illness. The province's healthcare provider is the BC Medical Services Plan (MSP). Enrolment in MSP is mandatory for all eligible residents.

Students at Alexander College need to provide proof of medical insurance to register for courses.

If you are a domestic or international student enrolled with BC MSP, send a copy of your BC Services card to your Enrolment Advisor (EA) or the Registrar's Office.

You can find your Enrolment Advisor contact information on the Application Status page of your MyAC student portal.

If you are not enrolled in BC MSP, or if you need to replace a lost card or renew your coverage, contact the Registrar's Office (Registration unit). They will help you to apply online. You can reach them by phone at 604-435-5815, available Mon-Fri, 9:00 am - 4 pm PST, or by email at registration@alexandercollege.ca.

Newcomers to BC must wait 90 days before MSP coverage starts. Therefore, you need to get temporary private medical insurance in case of an emergency during this waiting period. Alexander College is not responsible for any medical, dental, or health-related expenses that students incur.

IMPORTANT POLICIES

Full-Time Enrolment Status

To be considered a full-time student, you need to meet one of these requirements:

1. Take 3 or more university transfer-level courses during the Fall, Winter, or Spring terms
2. Complete UPRE 099
3. Take ENGL 099 along with one university transfer-level course.

During the Summer Intensive, you must complete 2 or more university transfer-level courses. Please note that UPRE and EAP are not available during the Summer Intensive because the term is shorter.

Summer Intensive is treated as a regular break.

For more information about study authorization and scheduled breaks, please visit the Alexander College website under [Study Authorization and Scheduled Breaks](#).

Attendance

In undergraduate classes, teachers can require students to attend **at least 70%** of the time.

If you miss too many classes when minimum attendance is required, you won't be able to take the final exam for the course. Each teacher will explain their rules about attendance in the course syllabus.

Attendance for International Students

International students with study permits must attend classes regularly. The school needs to keep track of attendance and report it to the government, so teachers will take attendance even if it doesn't count toward grades.

Alexander College expects students to be on time for class. Each teacher will have their own rules about being late, which will be in the syllabus.

If you cannot make it to class, let your teacher know as soon as you can. Follow the instructions in the syllabus about how to notify them, usually through the Canvas LMS.

If you think you need an exception to the attendance rules, you can file an appeal. Fill out the Attendance Policy Request form, attach any evidence, and email it to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities at srr@alexandercollege.ca.



IMPORTANT POLICIES

Code of Conduct

Students must follow the college's behavior standards. If they do not, the college will file a misconduct report, which can lead to various consequences. There are two types of misconduct:

1. **Academic Misconduct**
2. **Non-Academic Misconduct**



Academic Misconduct

This includes serious actions such as:

- **Plagiarism:** Copying someone else's work and claiming it as your own.
- **Cheating:** Using unauthorized materials during tests or assignments.
- **Contract Cheating:** Having a third party significantly contribute to a student's work.
- **Submitting the Same Work:** Handing in the same or very similar essay, presentation, or assignment for different classes without permission.
- **Impersonation:** Pretending to be someone else during exams or assessments.
- **Submitting False Information:** Providing inaccurate information or false documents related to academic work.
- **Helping Others Cheat:** Assisting another student in committing any form of Academic Misconduct.
- **Using AI:** Using Artificial Intelligence tools to complete or change assignments without permission from the instructor.

Non-Academic Misconduct

This includes behaviors that disrupt the college environment. Such as:

- **Disrupting Classes:** Interrupting teachers or students during lectures or online classes.
- **Damaging Property:** Intentionally harming or misusing college or personal property.
- **Inappropriate Communication:** Using disrespectful language in person or online with staff and students, such as arguing about grades or ignoring requests to stop contacting someone.
- **Harassment:** Hurting or intimidating someone based on their race, nationality, religion, gender, age, disability, or sexual orientation.
- **Assault:** Causing physical or emotional harm to someone, either in person or online.
- **Substance Violations:** Using alcohol or drugs on campus or encouraging others to do so.
- **Breaking Laws:** Committing actions that violate the laws of British Columbia or Canada.

Knowing these rules can help students contribute to a respectful and safe college environment.

IMPORTANT POLICIES

Academic Standing, Academic Warning, Academic Probation, and Academic Suspension

Academic standing is updated four times each academic year after final grades are released at the end of the fall, winter, spring, and summer terms.



- **Good Academic Standing:** You are in good academic standing if your term GPA is 1.50 or higher and you are not under Academic Alert, Probation, or Suspension.
- **Notice to Students at Risk:** Starting in Fall 2024, students with a term GPA of at least 1.50 but below the required minimum cumulative GPA of 2.00 will receive an email from the Registrar's Office. This email will remind you of the program requirements and the academic support available.
- **Academic Warning:** You will receive an Academic Warning if you have attempted fewer than 15 credits and your term GPA is below 1.50.
- **Academic Probation:** You will be placed on Academic Probation if you have attempted at least 15 credits and your cumulative GPA is below 1.50. You can be on probation for two consecutive terms. If you raise your cumulative GPA to 1.50 or higher within these two terms, you will return to good academic standing. While on probation, you may not attempt more than 10 credits in one term.
- **Academic Suspension:** If you do not raise your GPA to 1.50 or higher after two terms of probation, you will be placed on Academic Suspension. This means you cannot enroll in university-level courses until your academic performance improves.

You can be reinstated in good standing in two ways:

- Complete UPRE 099 – University Preparation successfully. If you pass UPRE 099, you will be readmitted in good standing.
- Successfully complete 9 or more transferable credits at another BCCAT member institution in a single term with a term GPA of 1.50 or higher, after your last term at Alexander College. If you present this record, you will be reinstated in good standing.

You can be on Academic Suspension for a maximum of two consecutive terms. If you are not reinstated in good standing within this time, you will no longer be registered at Alexander College.

- **Reinstatement after Academic Probation or Suspension:** If you are reinstated after probation or suspension and your term GPA falls below 1.50 again, you will be placed on academic probation once more. The same probation rules will apply.
- **Course Repeats:** If you repeat a course, we will use the higher grade to calculate your term and cumulative GPA.

IMPORTANT POLICIES

Academic Appeal

If you believe an Academic Alert was issued to you by error, you have the right to dispute it by submitting an Academic Appeal with supporting evidence. To learn more about the appeal process, including deadlines and required steps, please visit the [Academic Appeal webpage](#).

- **Deadline to submit:** 10 calendar days of the notification of Academic Alert or until the first day of the next term, whichever comes first.

 [Academic Appeal Form](#)

Exam Deferral

Students who are unable to attend a scheduled midterm or final exam due to extreme and unforeseen circumstances may request an exam deferral. Deferrals must be formally requested in writing and supported by valid documentation. Deferrals will not be granted for poor planning, travel, work, or non-emergency conflicts. For more information and to access the required forms, view the [Exam Deferrals webpage](#).

 [Midterm Exam Deferral Request Form](#)

 [Final Exam Deferral Form](#)



Grade Appeal

Students have the right to appeal a grade received for a course or assignment if they believe it was assigned unfairly or in error. Before submitting a formal appeal, students must first attempt to resolve the issue directly with their instructor. If the issue remains unresolved, students may file a Grade Appeal.

Grade appeals are only accepted for specific academic reasons. For full eligibility criteria, required documents, and to access the Grade Appeal Form, visit the [Grade Appeal webpage](#).

 [Grade Appeal Form](#)

Accommodation

Alexander College is committed to supporting students with medical, physical, psychological, or cognitive barriers to learning. If you require accommodations to help you meet the expectations of your courses, the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities can assist you in accessing the support you need — confidentially and respectfully.

Examples of accommodation may include extra time on exams or tests, exemption from attendance requirements, access to a private exam room.

To request accommodation, students must submit documentation (e.g., medical report or other supporting evidence) and complete the Accommodation Request Form within the first 3 weeks of the term. For more information and to access the required forms, visit the [Accommodation webpage](#).

 [Accommodations Request Form](#)

IMPORTANT POLICIES

Bereavement

Alexander College offers Bereavement Leave to support students coping with the loss of a close family member or relative. Eligible students may request up to 9 consecutive days of leave (3–5 days plus travel time, if needed) without it affecting attendance or academic standing. To request leave, submit the Bereavement Leave Request Form along with supporting documents (e.g., death certificate, hospital note, flight ticket) to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities within one week of the loss.

For more information and to access the required forms, visit the [Bereavement webpage](#).



[Student Bereavement / Compassionate Leave Request Form](#)

Bullying and Harassment

Alexander College does not tolerate conduct that may constitute bullying or harassment by any student. Bullying and harassment include any inappropriate conduct or comment that a student knows or reasonably ought to know would cause another person to be humiliated or intimidated. Examples of conduct or comments that might constitute bullying and harassment include verbal aggression or insults, calling someone derogatory names, vandalizing personal belongings, and spreading malicious rumors.

Any student found to have engaged in bullying or harassment will be treated as having engaged in non-academic misconduct under the Student Misconduct Policy and will be subject to disciplinary measures under that policy.

Dispute Resolution

The college is committed to fairness in handling complaints, ensuring students receive proper notice, the opportunity to be heard, and unbiased treatment. Students involved in complaints will not face retaliation. To submit a formal complaint, complete the Complaints Report Form and email it, along with any supporting documents, to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities. For more information and to access the required forms, visit the [Complaints webpage](#).



[Complaint Report Form](#)

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Anti-Racism among Students

The Alexander College community is diverse. All members of the college community, including students, are expected to treat others fairly, with dignity and respect, and to do their part to make sure all members of the community feel included. Students at the college are required to do their part to contribute to a welcoming and inclusive college environment for everyone.

Students must avoid stereotyping, micro-aggressions, and discriminating against other members of the college community based on their personal characteristics, including but not limited to race, gender, sexuality, or religion. It is the college's hope that its students will not just refrain from discriminating against others but will be anti-racist by taking steps to gain awareness of any biases they may have, and by reporting and speaking out against any racism that they encounter or witness, where safe and appropriate to do so.

Certain forms of conduct that violate the expectations described here may be subject to disciplinary measures under the [Student Misconduct policy](#).

CAMPUS SAFETY AND SECURITY SERVICES



Alexander College is committed to providing a safe campus environment for all students, faculty, and staff.

Campus security: Security guards are stationed in the main lobby from 8:00 am until campus closing. Please note that closing times vary each term, please check the website for the current closing times.

Reporting incidents: For non-emergency safety or security concerns, you may speak with your advisor or visit the front desk. Certain incidents, such as theft, can also be reported directly to the police.

First Aid services: The front desk staff are trained to provide first aid assistance.

Each campus has a designated First Aid room equipped with supplies such as bandages, foldable cots, pillows, blankets, hot/cold packs, chairs, thermometers, gloves, masks, etc.

- **ACV Campus:** First aid room is 124 and First Aid kits are Located at the Front Desk, Room 124, the library, and in the CHEM labs (Rooms 603 and 604) as well as the BIOL lab (Room 605)

Lost and Found: If you have lost or found an item, please visit the Front Desk at either campus or speak with the receptionist.

SafeWalk Program (Vancouver Campus): A SafeWalk officer is available to accompany students, faculty, or staff who need assistance walking from the college to nearby locations such as the bus station, SkyTrain, or parkade.

CAMPUS FACILITIES

Campus Operations is responsible for proactively maintaining and managing the campus facilities, front desk, health and safety, health and wellness, security, and IT infrastructure.



Student Den: The Student Den is a cozy and comfortable space where students can take a break, relax, or enjoy a meal between classes. It is equipped with a microwave and a sink, making it easy to heat meals or prepare snacks. The seating is designed for comfort, making it perfect for unwinding or studying quietly. Whether you need to recharge or catch up on coursework, the Student Den is available for all students. You can find the Student Den located in the basement of the ACV campus.

Study Rooms: The library has a study room with priority booking for students. Students must book the room online to use the space.

Study Room Policy: Only 4 students are allowed in the room at one time. Rooms can be booked for 1 hour at a time and only 2 hours per day. Study rooms are not for personal use. No sleeping/napping in the study room. Food is not allowed. Covered drinks are allowed. The door must be unlocked at all times. No extra chairs or tables can be brought into the room, and chairs and tables cannot be taken out of the room. If you are 15 minutes late the room may be given to a different group. If there is no one in the room for longer than 15 minutes, we will assume you are finished with the room.

Failure to comply with these rules will result in one formal warning and any subsequent warnings will be followed by suspension for room booking privileges for the remainder of the semester.

 **ACV Study Room**
[Book Room 512](#)

Multi-Faith Room: The Library is pleased to provide a Multi-Faith Room. Everyone is welcome in the multi-faith room, whether you are a follower of a religion, spiritual belief, faith, or not. People of all backgrounds are free to use the room, which is stocked with holy books, prayer accessories, and more.

Multi-Faith Room Policy: The aim of the Multi-Faith Room is to provide a space for reflection, prayer, and inter-religious understanding. No sleeping/napping in the multi-Faith room. Food is not allowed. Covered drinks are allowed. The door must be unlocked at all times. No extra chairs or tables can be brought into the room, and chairs and tables cannot be taken out of the room. If there is no one in the room for longer than 15 minutes, we will assume you are finished with the room.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Medical Emergency: **Call 911.** Ask for an ambulance. (When you dial 911, you will be asked if you need police, fire, or ambulance. You will be asked to describe the type of emergency and the location. Stay on the phone for instructions.). Arrange for someone to meet the first responders outside the building or at the front desk and escort them to the scene. Alert the Front Desk and a trained staff member may administer CPR or first aid.

Fire: Pull the nearest fire alarm. Only use an extinguisher if the fire is small. Do not attempt to fight large fires. Proceed to the nearest emergency exit using the stairs. **Call 911.** Meet at the designated Campus Assembly Area at Cathedral Square, across the Catholic Cathedral, at Dunsmuir and Richards St. intersection. Re-enter area only when authorized by emergency personnel.

Building Flood: **DO NOT** walk-through flood water—it could be electrically charged or contaminated. Call the campus Front Desk line at 604-558-6201. If possible, shut off power to the affected area. Move all hazardous chemicals and vulnerable equipment to countertops.

Earthquake: **DROP, COVER, and HOLD ON** under a desk, table, interior wall, or corner. Wait until the shaking stops. **DO NOT** pull the fire alarm unless there is a fire. If shaking lasts for more than 30 seconds or there is visible damage to the building, evacuate **AFTER** the shaking stops to the Campus Assembly Area at Cathedral Square. **DO NOT** use elevators. Prepare for aftershocks.

Power Outage: **DO NOT** pull the fire alarm. Turn off computers and other voltage sensitive equipment. College staff will advise everyone to stay or leave. If leaving, move cautiously to an emergency exit and evacuate the building if safety is a concern. Use stairs carefully. **DO NOT** re-enter the building until directed by emergency personnel.

Suspicious Person/Object: **DO NOT** confront the person. **DO NOT** block the person's access to an exit. Inform Campus Security. If the situation evolves into a threat of violence, **call 911** and provide as much information as possible, including description and direction of travel. A suspicious object could be a package/luggage that is unaccounted for and unusual to see in that location. **DO NOT** disturb the object. Inform Campus Security. If needed, call 911 and describe the object.

Threat of Violence: **Call 911.** Ask for an ambulance. (When you dial 911, you will be asked if you need police, fire, or ambulance. You will be asked to describe the type of emergency and the location. Stay on the phone for instructions.). Arrange for someone to meet the first responders outside the building or at the front desk and escort them to the scene. Alert the Front Desk and a trained staff member may administer CPR or first aid.



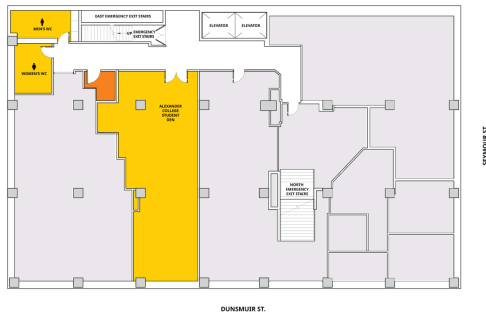
CAMPUS MAP

VANCOUVER CAMPUS (ACV)



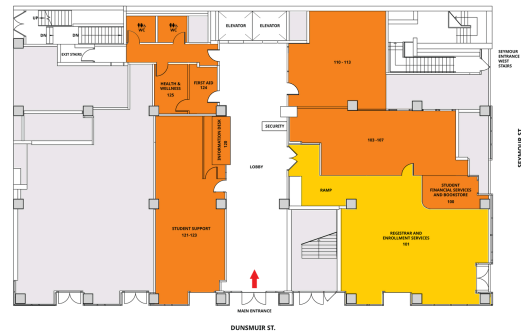
ACV Vancouver Campus Map

Basement



ACV Vancouver Campus Map

Main Floor



ACV Vancouver Campus Map

5th Floor



ACV Vancouver Campus Map

6th Floor



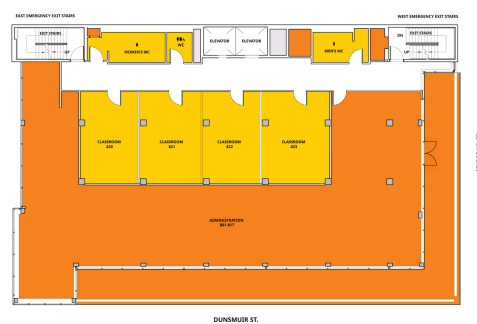
ACV Vancouver Campus Map

7th Floor



ACV Vancouver Campus Map

8th Floor



 [View the Full Campus Map](#)

You can find more information on AC's
[Campus Facilities Page](#).

GLOSSARY OF COLLEGE TERMS

A

Academic Advisor – A staff member who helps students with course selection, program planning, and graduation requirements.

Academic Alert – A notice given to students who violate academic integrity rules, such as plagiarism or cheating. Affected assignments or exams receive a grade of zero.

Accommodation – Support services for students with medical, physical, or cognitive disabilities to ensure equal access to education.

AC Connect – The website used for booking appointments with student support services.

ACSA (Alexander College Student Association) – The student-led governing body representing and supporting the student community.

Add/Drop/Change Period – The timeframe when students can modify their course registration without it appearing on their transcript, subject to the refund policy.

Appeal – A formal request for exemption from a policy or consideration for exceptional circumstances, such as grade appeals or registration requests.

AskAway – A free online chat service connecting students with library staff for research and citation assistance.

Associate Degree – A two-year undergraduate degree program.

C

Campus – The physical location of Alexander College.

Canvas – Alexander College's digital learning platform where students can access coursework, interact with instructors, and collaborate with peers.

Career Advisor – A professional who assists students with resume writing, job searches, and interview preparation.

Convocation – The official graduation ceremony celebrating students who have completed their programs.

Counseling – A free service through the Health and Wellness Centre that provides students with up to 10 free counseling sessions per year.

Credits – The value assigned to each course, which determines academic progress and degree completion.

D

Department – Academic divisions based on subjects, such as Sociology or English.

Designated Learning Institution (DLI) – A school authorized to admit international students in Canada.

E

Electives – Courses that are not required for a specific program but fulfill general education requirements.

English as a Second Language (EASL) – A preparatory program designed to improve core English language skills in an academic setting.

F

Final Exam – A test taken at the end of a course covering material from the entire term.

Focus Group – A meeting held once per year where students share feedback and suggestions to improve Alexander College.

Full-Time Enrolment Status – Enrollment status based on the number of credits or study hours completed each week. International students with a study permit must maintain full-time status to be eligible for the Post-Graduation Work Permit (PGWP).

G

Grade Point Average (GPA) – A numerical representation of a student's academic performance, calculated based on grades earned in coursework.

H

Here2Talk – A free 24/7 mental health and wellness support service available to all Alexander College students.

J

Jane – The website used for booking appointments with Health and Wellness.

M

Medical Insurance – Mandatory health coverage required for all students in case of illness or accidents. Proof of valid private or public medical insurance (such as BC's MSP) is necessary for course registration.

Midterm – An exam taken halfway through a course, covering all material learned up to that point.

MyAC – Alexander College's student information system used for course registration, document requests, grade viewing, virtual classes, and more.

GLOSSARY OF COLLEGE TERMS

O

Online Course: A course that is specifically designed to be delivered online. There is typically no face-to-face component or lecture in an online course

Orientation: Days before the beginning of the semester that introduces students to staff, peers, and school resources

P

Part-Time Study Status: Part-time is based on the number of credits or study hours completed each week during the academic year. Studying part-time will mean it will take longer to complete degree requirements. For immigration purposes, part-time students are still considered to be actively pursuing studies. However, it can impact your ability to work on or off campus or PGWP eligibility. For more information, connect with an Immigration Advisor

Peer Mentor: A program run by Student Life to offer peer-to-peer support for new students

Placement Test: An internal test of a student's English or Math skills used to fulfill course and program eligibility requirements

Plagiarism: Taking credit for someone else's work as your own

Post-Secondary: Any education pursued after high school

Prerequisite: Courses required to take in advance before registering for a particular course

S

Scheduled Break: At Alexander College, there are three regularly scheduled breaks during the academic year, Winter break, Spring break, and Summer Intensive. Summer intensive is not considered a regular term for the purposes of study permit or work permit eligibility provided that the student is enrolled, full-time, in both the term prior and following the break

Scholarship: An award given by the college or outside institution to assist with college tuition or expenses. Criteria for Scholarships vary

Student Life: Student Life is dedicated to enhancing and engaging students with each other to gain a sense of belonging through activities, clubs and events

Syllabus: Provides information about each course and outlines expectations and responsibilities while offering grade breakdowns and important due dates

T

Terms: Also known as semesters. The academic year is divided into four terms known as Fall, Winter, Spring and Summer term

Term GPA: The total GPA achieved during a single term of study. To maintain satisfactory academic standing, students must maintain a minimum term GPA of 1.50

Transcript: The permanent record of a student's academic achievement, grades and credentials obtained

Transfer Credit: Alexander College credit awarded for undergraduate-level coursework taken at another institution

Tuition: The cost of your classes

U

University Preparation Course (UPRE): A full-time course which teaches students the tools they need to be successful in post-secondary education. To be eligible for UPRE a student must be on Academic or Misconduct suspension

University Transfer: Students beginning their studies at AC in first- or second-year university-level courses to transfer to a College or University program

V

Virtual Course: A virtual class is similar to an in-person experience, where the class meets at a fixed time with an instructor each week. A virtual course at AC is delivered through Zoom

W

Waiting List: If a course becomes full during registration, students can show interest in placing themselves on a waitlist to register if a spot becomes available

Withdrawal: Discontinuing a course after the course add/drop/change deadline. You will receive a grade of 'W' on your transcript

WriteAway: A 24/7 free service offered by the Writing and Learning Centre which allows students to submit written work for feedback

Writing & Learning Centre (WLC): A free resource which offers one-on-one tutoring to AC students

Z

Zoom: A video conferencing app used to host virtual classes or appointments

ADJUSTING TO CANADA



Welcome to Canada & Alexander College

Canada is a land of opportunity, diversity, and inclusion. As you begin this exciting journey, you'll find yourself in a country known for its welcoming nature, stunning landscapes, and strong sense of community.

At the heart of Canada's identity is multiculturalism—people from all over the world come here to study, work, and build a future. No matter where you are from, you are now part of a society that values respect, equality and kindness. Canadians take pride in embracing different cultures, traditions, and perspectives, making this a place where everyone has the chance to thrive.

At Alexander College, we celebrate this diversity and are committed to creating a supportive and inclusive learning environment. Whether you are adjusting to a new education system, making friends, or exploring your surroundings, you will find a community that is here to support you every step of the way.

Welcome to Canada, welcome to Alexander College, and welcome to a new chapter in your life!

BEFORE YOU ARRIVE

As a future international student in Vancouver, congratulations! Choosing to study in another country is no small decision, and we are excited to welcome you to Vancouver! If you're an international student awaiting your flight to Vancouver, there are several things you should keep in mind.

Double Check Your Admission Requirements: Before you arrive, you should always double-check the admission requirements needed to be a student at Alexander College.

Here is a quick list of things you will need to do:

- Prior to arriving in Vancouver, you need to ensure you have made the necessary living arrangements, whether that be living with a homestay or other accommodations.
- Submit original academic documents such as transcripts and English test scores
- Submit a copy of your study permit
- Book placement tests if needed
- Make sure to check [the Academic Calendar](#)
- Make sure to check [the Important Dates](#)
- Make sure to check [the Semester Schedule](#)

It is also a good idea to check out [student tuition costs](#) to make sure you have enough funds for the duration of your studies here.

WHAT TO EXPECT | ON THE FIRST DAY AT ALEXANDER COLLEGE

- **New Student Orientation:** Check your email for the orientation invitation and enroll. You'll learn about important departments, student services, and settlement information to help you settle in.
- **Get Your Student ID:** Bring your valid ID (e.g., passport) to get your Student ID, which will give you access to campus services. You can get it at the library.
- **Meet Your Instructors:** After classes begin, instructors will explain course requirements, assignments, and expectations.
- **First Week Activities:** Participate in fun activities to meet new people and make connections during the first week of classes.
- **Registrar Office:** For any questions or problems regarding registration or courses, visit the Registrar Office for assistance.
- **Clubs and Events:** Catch up with our latest clubs and events hosted by the Student Life Department! It's a great opportunity to connect with peers, explore new interests, and get involved in the vibrant campus community.

CANADIAN CULTURE

Canada is known for its friendly and welcoming culture, where respect, kindness, and inclusivity are highly valued. The country embraces diversity, with people from various cultural backgrounds living harmoniously together. Canadian society emphasizes politeness and consideration for others, whether in social interactions, public behavior, or daily activities. Understanding and following social etiquette, respecting personal space, and adhering to laws and customs are important aspects of Canadian life.

- **Respect & Social Etiquette:** Canadians value politeness—saying “please” and “thank you” is expected. A handshake is a common greeting when meeting someone new. Respect personal space and avoid overly personal questions about wealth, weight, or age. Allow others to finish speaking before responding and maintain eye contact in conversations. If there is a line, always queue and wait your turn.
- **Punctuality & Time Management:** Being on time is important for school, work, and social events. If someone asks you to arrive at a certain time, they usually expect you to be there on time. Unexplained lateness of more than 15 minutes is considered disrespectful—if delayed, send a quick message to let the person know. Arriving too early (more than 15 minutes) can also be inconvenient for a host who is not yet ready.
- **Public Behavior & Laws:** Loud conversations, name-calling, and violence are unacceptable. Threatening or harming others, including family members, is against the law. It is strictly prohibited to drive under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- **Smoking, Alcohol & Drugs:** Smoking is banned in most public spaces, including restaurants, parks, and workplaces. The legal drinking age is 19+. Illicit drugs are illegal, but hospitals and police can provide help without penalty if needed.
- **Environmental Awareness:** Canadians take environmental responsibility seriously. Littering is unacceptable and can result in fines. Recycling and waste reduction are strongly encouraged.
- **Tipping Culture:** Tipping is expected for services such as restaurants, taxis, and hair salons. The standard tip is 15-20% of the total bill.
- **Language & Cultural Diversity:** Canada has two official languages: English and French. While English is spoken in most provinces, French is more common in Quebec. Canada is known for its inclusivity, fairness, and respect for different cultures, backgrounds, and religions.

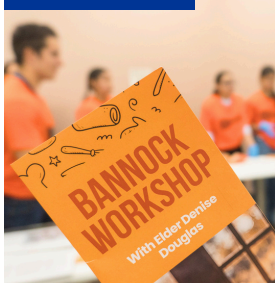
CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE

As you begin your academic journey at our college, we want to ensure that you feel supported and prepared to succeed. Your time here will be an exciting opportunity to grow both academically and personally.

To help you navigate your classroom experience, here are some important etiquette tips. Remember, you can always seek help from our Student Support Services, as well as free tutoring through the Writing & Learning Center (WLC), where you can get assistance with both writing and other subjects.

- **Use English in Class:** English Only to help you improve your language skills and make the classroom experience better for everyone. Use English during lessons, group activities, and discussions. Don't worry if you make mistakes—learning is part of the process! Ask for help. If you don't understand a word or phrase, feel free to ask for clarification. You and classmates will support you in learning and communicating effectively.
- **Be On Time:** Arriving to class on time shows respect for your instructor and classmates. If you're late, try to enter quietly and avoid disrupting the class.
- **Be Prepared:** Bring all the materials you'll need for class textbooks, notebooks, and any assignments or notes. Being prepared helps you stay organized and shows that you take your studies seriously.
- **Listen Actively:** Pay attention when the instructor or your classmates are speaking. Show that you're engaged by nodding, making eye contact, and asking questions when appropriate. Active listening will help you understand the material better.
- **Respect Class Discussions:** Everyone's opinion is valuable, and international students bring diverse perspectives that can enrich classroom discussions. Speak up when you feel comfortable but be respectful of others' views. Wait for your turn to speak and avoid interrupting.
- **Ask Questions When Needed:** Don't hesitate to ask your instructor or classmates if something is unclear. It's better to ask for clarification than to miss out on important information. Remember, asking questions is part of learning.
- **Use Office Hours:** Instructors have office hours where you can ask for extra help. If you don't fully understand a concept, visit them during office hours or arrange for an appointment.
- **Stay Focused During Lectures:** Avoid distractions like using your phone or chatting with classmates during lectures. Stay focused on the lesson to get the most out of your time in class.
- **Be Respectful of Different Cultures:** You will meet students from many different backgrounds. Be respectful of cultural differences and avoid making assumptions or judgments. Embrace diversity as an opportunity to learn and grow.
- **Work Collaboratively:** Many courses involve group work. Be a proactive and cooperative team member. Be clear and patient when communicating with classmates, especially when language barriers exist.
- **Turn Off Mobile Devices:** Keep your phone on silent or turn it off during class. Constant texting or checking your phone can disrupt the learning environment.
- **Respect the Classroom Environment:** Keep the classroom tidy by cleaning up after yourself. Be mindful of others' space and always follow the college's rules and regulations.
- **Stay Engaged During Online Classes:** If you're attending classes remotely, make sure you're in a quiet space with minimal distractions. Turn on your camera when asked and actively participate in class discussions.
- **Give Yourself Time to Adjust:** Remember, adjusting to a new country and educational system takes time. Be patient with yourself, and don't be afraid to seek help if you're feeling overwhelmed.

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN CANADA



Canada's Indigenous Peoples include First Nations, Inuit, and Métis. Vancouver is on the unceded territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations, meaning the land was never legally surrendered through treaties. Unlike many parts of Canada, where treaties were signed between the government and Indigenous groups, most of British Columbia remains unceded Indigenous land.

Indigenous cultures are incredibly diverse, with over 50 languages spoken across Canada. Their traditions are deeply rooted in connection with the land, spiritual beliefs, and communal ways of living. However, Indigenous people have faced historical injustices, including the Indian Act, which still governs many aspects of their lives, and residential schools, which attempted to erase their cultures.

TREATIES AND INDIGENOUS RIGHTS

In many parts of Canada, treaties—legal agreements between Indigenous Nations and the Canadian government—were signed to define land rights and relationships. These treaties were meant to establish peaceful coexistence and recognize Indigenous land ownership. However, in practice, the Canadian government often failed to honor these agreements, leading to land dispossession, broken promises, and legal battles that continue today.

Unlike the rest of Canada, British Columbia has very few treaties. This means most of the land remains unceded, and many Indigenous communities are still fighting for recognition of their land rights and self-governance. Today, modern treaty negotiations and legal rulings continue to shape Indigenous land rights, self-determination, and reconciliation efforts.



WHY IS IT IMPORTANT FOR NEWCOMERS TO LEARN ABOUT INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES?

As newcomers to Canada, it's important to understand the history and experiences of Indigenous Peoples, who have lived on this land for thousands of years. Many immigrants arrive in Canada knowing little about Indigenous communities because mainstream education and media often overlook or misrepresent their histories.

Learning about Indigenous rights, treaties, and reconciliation helps newcomers

- Understand Canadian history more fully – Canada is built on Indigenous lands and recognizing this is key to understanding the country's past and present.
- Challenge stereotypes and misinformation – Many immigrants are only exposed to negative or misleading portrayals of Indigenous people. Learning directly from Indigenous perspectives fosters respect and empathy.
- Build meaningful relationships – Just as immigrants have their own histories, struggles, and traditions, Indigenous communities have rich cultures and ongoing movements for justice. Connecting with these communities creates solidarity.
- Engage in reconciliation – The Canadian Government, and society, are working toward repairing relationships with Indigenous Peoples. Newcomers can take part by acknowledging the past, supporting Indigenous initiatives, and learning about Indigenous cultures.

RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS & TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

From the late **1800s to 1996**, the Canadian government and churches ran residential schools, where Indigenous children were forcibly taken from their families, forbidden from speaking their languages, and often subjected to neglect and abuse. The effects of these schools are still felt today, leading to intergenerational trauma, loss of cultural knowledge, and socio-economic challenges in Indigenous communities.

In response, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (**TRC**) was established to investigate the impact of residential schools and promote healing. The TRC issued 94 Calls to Action to help repair relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians. **Orange Shirt Day** (September 30), now recognized as the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, honors residential school survivors and raises awareness of the ongoing impact of colonization. **People wear orange shirts to acknowledge the harm done and to show solidarity with Indigenous communities.**

INDIGENOUS CULTURES & LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Vancouver offers many opportunities to learn about Indigenous cultures. You can visit:

- Totem poles in Stanley Park
- The Museum of Anthropology, which features Indigenous art and artifacts
- The Bill Reid Gallery of Northwest Coast Art, showcasing contemporary Indigenous artists
- Public art by Indigenous artists, including works created for the 2010 Olympics

Additionally, the Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre (1607 E Hastings St) provides cultural programs, community events, sports, and youth activities for Indigenous people and welcomes others to learn and participate.

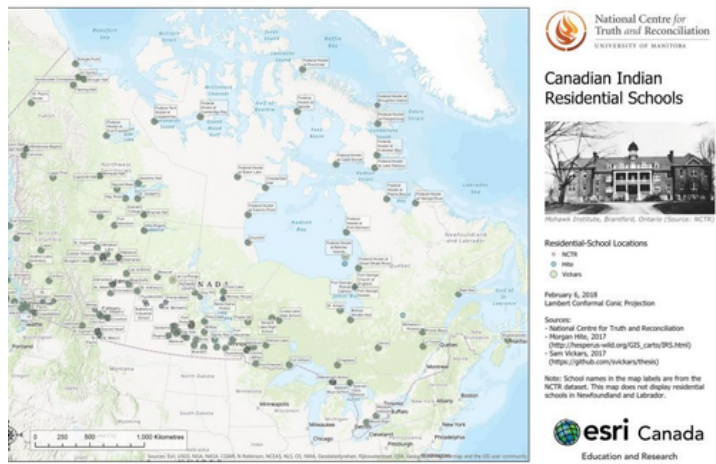
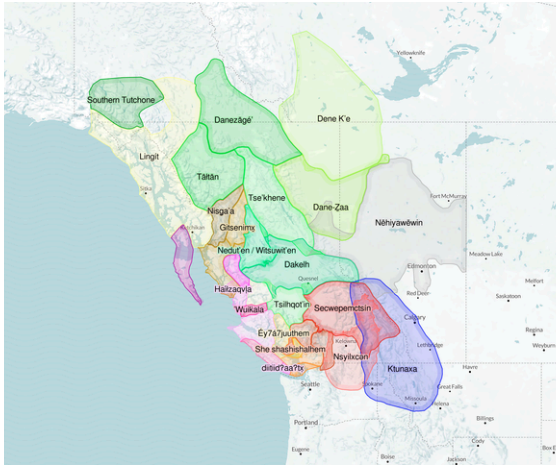


DISPELLING MYTHS ABOUT INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

- Myth: Indigenous people do not pay taxes.
Fact: They pay taxes like all Canadians, with limited exceptions for purchases or income on reserves.
- Myth: Indigenous cultures were primitive.
Fact: They had complex systems of governance, trade, and agriculture.
- Myth: Residential schools are in the past.
Fact: Their lasting impact is still seen today in the form of trauma, poverty, and systemic barriers.
- Myth: All Indigenous people receive free university education.
Fact: Only some receive funding, and many do not get financial support.

MOVING FORWARD

In recent years, Canada has taken steps toward reconciliation, including the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Indigenous and immigrant communities are finding new ways to connect, share stories, and build understanding. Learning about Indigenous history and culture, participating in events like Orange Shirt Day, and supporting Indigenous initiatives are important steps toward respect and inclusion.



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.



Vancouver is one of Canada's most rainy cities!
This has earned the city the nickname **'Raincouver'**.

You will find that summer in Vancouver is particularly lovely. We are lucky to receive a ton of sunshine, and warm weather that, at times, goes up to 28 degrees Celsius. You can bet that our beaches are packed!

If you love water sports, summertime calls for plenty of days basking in the sunshine on our multitude of beaches around the city.

If staying dry is your preference, there are over 30 hiking trails and bike routes throughout Metro Vancouver and the surrounding area.

In the winter months, with temperatures sometimes dropping to -7 degrees Celsius, winter sports such as skiing and snowboarding are popular activities that you can partake in. There are also several indoor and outdoor skating rinks where you can rent a pair of skates and enjoy ice skating.

YVR & HOW TO NAVIGATE THE AIRPORT

How early should I arrive at the airport for my flight?

Arrive at the airport early—ideally at least two hours before domestic flights and at least three hours before international flights. Planning and utilizing available travel tech can help streamline your journey. Visit the YVR [Travel Planning](#) page for more information.

Where can I find flight departure and arrival times?

You can find departure and arrival times for flights on the YVR website. Simply navigate to the "[Departures](#)" or "[Arrivals](#)" pages to view real-time updates for flights departing from or arriving at YVR. Additionally, the [Operational Snapshot](#) provide access to the latest data and operational performance at YVR through a live dashboard.

How do I travel to and from YVR?

YVR offers a variety of convenient transportation options, including shuttles, taxis, rideshare services, and the Canada Line. Visit the [transportation page](#) for more details and to plan your journey.

How can I make it to my gate more quickly?

- **Passenger Journey Tool** - The Passenger Journey tool outlines step-by-step guides to navigate the airport. You can access it by finding your departing flight information on YVR's departures page and clicking "View Your Journey."
- **Mobile Passport Control** - MPC is a new app from US CBP that allows travelers to submit information digitally prior to moving through the border process, helping speed up the departures experience from YVR for those travelling to the U.S. For information on how it works, please visit this link. The MPC app can be downloaded for free from the [Apple App Store](#) and [Google Play](#).
- **ArriveCAN** - For those arriving from an international destination, you can use the ArriveCAN app to submit an advance declaration to save time as you clear Customs & Immigration. More information about ArriveCAN can be found [here](#).

My luggage is lost. Who do I contact?

For lost or delayed checked luggage, as well as items left onboard your aircraft, you must contact your airline directly. Airline contact information is available on the [Airlines and Destinations](#) page.

What if I need mobility assistance or have a service animal?

For information about accessibility services and facilities at YVR, please visit the [accessibility page](#).

I lost an item at YVR. Where can I find the lost and found?

YVR's Lost and Found is in the U.S. Departures Terminal on Level 3 across from check-in counter number 280. It is open from 09:00 to 17:00 daily. Please complete the form on the [Lost and Found page](#) for any lost and found items from within the airport terminals and they will be in touch with you if they locate your item.

What's open at the airport?

For the latest information on the hours of operation for service providers, including shops, dining options, and other services, please visit [Shop, Dine, and Services page](#).

I have more questions, who can I ask?

For further assistance, please contact YVR customer service team at 604-207-7077 or email at customercallcentre@yvr.ca.

WHO DO I TALK TO ABOUT MY STUDY PERMIT?

At Alexander College, we provide free [Regulated International Students Immigrations Advisor \(RISIA\)](#) services to all current and future students. Our certified RISIAs can help answer any questions related to **study permits and more**.

IDENTIFICATION BCID

The BCID (British Columbia Identification Card) is an official photo ID issued by the government of British Columbia. If you're an international student in BC and you don't have a driver's license, the BCID is a great option to have an official form of identification.

This card is provided by the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia (ICBC) and is available to all residents of the province, including international students, who need a government-issued ID.

The BCID can be used for a variety of purposes, such as:

- Proving your identity when opening a bank account.
- Verifying your age for activities or going to age-restricted events.
- Accessing various services where an ID is required.

You can apply for a BCID if you're 12 years or older, and it will feature your photo, name, and date of birth. It's a convenient alternative if you don't have a driver's license but need an official ID for day-to-day activities. To get your BCID, you'll need to apply in person at an ICBC driver licensing office and provide proof of your identity and residence in British Columbia. To book an appointment follow the [link](#).

SOCIAL INSURANCE NUMBER

The Social Insurance Number (SIN) is a unique 9-digit number issued by the Government of Canada. As an international student in Canada, you may need a SIN for a variety of reasons, such as:

- Working in Canada: If you plan to work part-time while studying or want to apply for a co-op placement or internship, you will need a SIN.
- Filing taxes: If you earn income in Canada, you will need a SIN to file taxes.
- Accessing government services: Your SIN is required for various services, including opening a bank account, applying for certain benefits, and accessing other government programs.

How to Apply for a SIN

You can apply for a SIN online, by mail, or in person at a [Service Canada Centre](#). To apply, you'll need to provide:

- Your study permit or work permit (if applicable).
- Your passport or travel document.
- Proof of your legal status in Canada (e.g., your permit).
- Your arrival/departure form or other documents, if required.

Safety Tips for Your SIN

Your SIN is a sensitive piece of personal information, and it's important to keep it safe to avoid identity theft and fraud. Here are some safety tips:

- Keep your SIN confidential: Only share your SIN when necessary, such as with your employer, for tax purposes, or to access government services. Do not carry it with you unless you need it for a specific purpose.
- Store your SIN securely: Avoid keeping your SIN card in your wallet or purse. Instead, store it in a safe place at home, like a locked drawer or a secure file.
- Be cautious when using your SIN online: Only enter your SIN on secure, trusted websites. **Be wary of phishing emails or phone calls asking for your SIN and never give out your SIN via email or text messages.**
- Report lost or stolen SIN: If your SIN card is lost or stolen, report it immediately to Service Canada. You can also monitor your credit reports to ensure no one is using your SIN for fraudulent activities.
- Do not share your SIN on social media: Never post or share your SIN on social media platforms. It's a crucial part of your personal identity and sharing it can lead to misuse.

MONEY AND 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

You can open an account at a bank, credit union, or trust company. Get information about different bank accounts and different companies before you choose.

Find out about the kinds of accounts and what the fees are. Sometimes, you can be charged when you put in (deposit), move (transfer), or take out (withdraw) your money. Some accounts pay interest on the money in your accounts. Ask questions about banking fees and interest rates.

Types of accounts

- **Chequing accounts:** A chequing account lets you use a special piece of paper (cheque) to pay someone. Most Canadians do not write cheques anymore. Most Canadians use online banking and debit cards for everyday transactions and purchases. Some chequing accounts charge monthly service fees. Some charge for different transactions. Most chequing accounts do not pay interest.
- **Savings accounts:** All savings accounts pay interest. Different banks give different interest rates. Most savings accounts do not allow you to write cheques.
- **Chequing-savings accounts:** These accounts pay interest. You can also write cheques. Different banks have different fees and interest rates.

Before making a decision, be sure to research the different accounts available. Some banks offer special promotions for international students, so it's a good idea to gather all the necessary information.

TRANSPORTATION

The Vancouver transit system, known as [TransLink](#), is a great way for you to quickly familiarize yourself with getting around the city. You can use the SkyTrain and various bus lines to get to where you need to go.

A great app to download that would help navigate the system is the [Translink Phone App](#). The app allows you to check schedules and plan your route. Alternatively, you can also use [Google Maps](#) or [Apple Maps](#) to look up where you need to go.



TRANSLINK

The SkyTrain consists of three main lines: the Expo Line, the Millenium Line, and the Canada Line. The Expo Line, the oldest and longest line of the three SkyTrain lines, connects Surrey to Burnaby and downtown Vancouver. As an Alexander College student, the [Expo Line](#) should be the most familiar to you as campus is conveniently located near Granville station.

The next line to be added to the SkyTrain system is the [Millenium Line](#) in 2002. With the addition of the Evergreen Extension in 2006, this line connects Coquitlam and North Burnaby to Vancouver.

Lastly, the [Canada Line](#) was added in 2009, which provides direct access to the [Vancouver International Airport \(YVR\)](#) and parts of Richmond from downtown Vancouver. For those just arriving in Vancouver, the Canada Line may be the first experience they have when taking public transportation.

SkyTrain Map and Fares

One important thing to note about the [TransLink fare system](#) is that you pay by the number of zones travelled. Metro Vancouver is split into 3 fare zones and the fare you pay depends on how many zones you cross during your trip.



If you travel over the weekends and holidays or weekdays after 6:30pm, your entire trip is considered as 1-zone. These are very useful things to keep in mind if you want to save money!

TransLink offers a [fare estimator](#) on their website so you can double check how much your trip will cost before you go. You can pay for your trip using any of the ticket vending machines located at any SkyTrain, SeaBus, and West Coast Express station or on buses. You can also use your Compass Card or certain forms of contactless card payment. Keep in mind that you cannot purchase a day pass on buses.

COMPASS CARDS

Introduced to Metro Vancouver in 2013 and fully implemented in 2015, the [Compass Card](#) is a transit card that lets people quickly tap into fare gates located in SkyTrain and SeaBus stations or Compass Card readers on buses.

You can check your balance and add value to your Compass Card through the Compass Card website or a ticket vending machine. You can set up your card to automatically reload value when the stored value on the card drops below a certain threshold on the website.

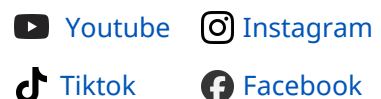
For those who frequently use public transportation to travel, monthly passes are also available for purchase. Looking for a day trip option? Day passes can also be purchased and loaded onto your Compass Card from the website or at a ticket machine.

Additionally, using a Compass Card to travel around Vancouver is cheaper than using cash or other forms of contactless payment, so maximize your savings by getting your own Compass Card from Compass Card vending machines located in SkyTrain, SeaBus and West Coast Express stations, or your local London Drugs.

For more information watch the video & Explore our social channels!



Vancouver Skytrain
How To's and Riding Tips, Compass Card, History)



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.

The Alexander College campus is located central to a variety of public transport options.

HOUSING

Finding a comfortable and safe place to live is an important part of your experience at Alexander College. Vancouver offers a variety of housing options to suit different budgets and lifestyles. Below are key housing choices and important tips to help you navigate the rental market.

On-Campus Housing: GEC Living

For students looking for fully furnished, move-in-ready accommodations, GEC Living offers convenient housing with:

- Private and shared apartments with furniture included
- Utilities (water, electricity, Wi-Fi) included in rent
- In-suite laundry, kitchen appliances, and study space
- 24/7 security, secure entry, and common areas for students

Off-Campus Housing: Renting in Vancouver

Vancouver has a competitive rental market, so start your housing search early. Common rental platforms include:

- Liv.rent
- Facebook Marketplace
- Zumper
- Craigslist
- Rentals.ca

Homestay: Live with a Local Family

Homestays provide international students with a home away from home. Living with a Canadian family allows you to experience local culture while having a supportive environment. [Vanmate Consulting and Travel](#) and [Learn Interchange](#) offer homestay options with:

- A private, furnished room
- Optional meal plans (2–3 meals per day)
- A welcoming and safe living environment
- Airport pickup services for Alexander College students

Average Rental Costs in Metro Vancouver (October 2024)

Location	1-Bedroom Apartment	2-Bedroom Apartment
Burnaby	\$2,281 – \$2,398	\$3,050 – \$3,143
Vancouver	\$2,600 – \$2,850	\$3,430 – \$3,600

IMPORTANT TIPS FOR RENTING



1. **Start your search early** – Housing fills up quickly.
2. **Be cautious of rental scams** – **Never send money before viewing a unit in person.**
3. **Understand your lease** – Read rental agreements carefully before signing.
4. **Check transportation access** – Ensure your home is close to transit.
5. **Budget wisely** – Consider rent, utilities, and other expenses.

Tenant Rights and Support

As a tenant in British Columbia, you are protected under the Residential Tenancy Act. Know your rights, including:

- Your landlord must provide a safe and livable home.
- Your security deposit must be returned unless there's damage.
- Rent increases must follow legal guidelines.
- Your landlord cannot evict you without proper notice.

For more information, visit the [Government of BC's Tenancy Rights Page](#).

For additional housing support, contact housing@alexandercollege.ca or visit our [Student Housing Services Page](#).



AVOIDING SCAMS



As an international student, it's important to be aware of common scams and how to protect yourself from fraud. Scammers often target students because they may be new to the country and less familiar with local laws and services.

Here are some examples of common scams and how to avoid falling for them:

Phishing Emails and Calls

Phishing scams involve fraudsters pretending to be legitimate organizations, like your bank, the government, or your school, to steal your personal information.

Example: You receive an email from someone claiming to be from Service Canada, saying your Social Insurance Number (SIN) is about to expire and asking you to click on a link to "update" your SIN information. The link takes you to a fake website that asks for your SIN, passport details, and bank account information.

Safety Tip: Never respond to unsolicited emails, phone calls, or text messages asking for personal information. Always verify the legitimacy of the request **by contacting the organization directly** through official contact details from their website or documents.

Fake Job Offers

Scammers sometimes offer fake job opportunities that seem too good to be true, asking for upfront payments for training or equipment.

Example: You get an email about a high-paying part-time job in a marketing company that requires a \$200 fee for a "background check" or "training materials." Once you pay, the company disappears, and you never hear back.

Safety Tip: Never pay money upfront for a job or training. Legitimate employers will not ask you to pay for a job. Research the employer online and check for reviews or information about them. **Be wary of job offers that ask for your personal details but don't provide verifiable company information.**

Fake Rental Listings

Some scammers post fake rental ads, asking for deposits upfront without showing you the property in person. These listings might even feature photos of properties that aren't for rent.

Example: You find an apartment listing online that looks great, and the "landlord" asks you to wire them a deposit to secure the apartment. However, when you arrive, the apartment doesn't exist, and the landlord is unreachable.

Safety Tip: Visit the property before making any payments. If the landlord asks for money via wire transfer or gift cards, it's likely a scam. Always insist on using official payment methods.



Immigration or Study Permit Scams

Some scammers claim they can help you fast-track your study permit application or immigration process for a fee. They might promise guaranteed success or faster processing times.

Example: A company claims they can “guarantee” your study permit approval for a fee and asks for your passport and payment details upfront. There’s no way to guarantee a visa approval.

Safety Tip: Only use official government websites for immigration or study permit information. Never pay anyone to guarantee your study permit approval.

Fake Scholarship or Financial Aid Offers:

Scammers may try to trick you into paying for access to scholarships or financial aid that don't exist. They may say you've won a scholarship but require you to pay a “processing fee” first.

Example: You receive an email telling you that you've been selected for a large scholarship but need to pay a processing fee of \$500 to claim it. After paying, you never hear from them again.

Safety Tip: Scholarships are never paid for by the student. Be cautious of emails or messages offering financial aid in exchange for payment. If you receive a scholarship offer, research the scholarship and check with your school to see if it's legitimate.

Fake Bank or Credit Card Scams

Some scams involve fraudsters pretending to be from your bank or credit card company, asking for account details, PIN numbers, or credit card information.

Example: You get a phone call from someone claiming to be from your bank, saying they need to verify your account details for security purposes and asking for your credit card number or banking login.

Safety Tip: Never give out your bank or credit card information by phone, email, or text message. If you get a suspicious call, hang up and call your bank directly using the number on their official website to verify the request.

General Tips for Protecting Yourself from Scams

- **Trust your instincts:** If something feels off, it's okay to say no or take some time to think it over.
- **Secure your personal information:** Avoid sharing sensitive details like your SIN, bank account, or passport number, unless you're sure the request is legitimate.
- **Use secure websites:** When shopping online or entering personal details, ensure the website is secure (look for “https” in the URL).

Report any scam attempts: If you've been targeted by a scam, report it to [Consumer Protection BC](#) or [Service Canada](#).

By staying vigilant and following these tips, you can protect yourself from scams and enjoy your time in Canada without falling victim to fraud.

COST OF LIVING PER MONTH

The following budget is an **average estimate** for a **single international student** living in Vancouver.

Your actual monthly costs may vary depending on factors such as your accommodation choice (shared or private), lifestyle habits, and personal preferences.

For example, whether you're living alone or with roommates, eating out frequently, or using public transportation versus a bike, all influence how much you spend.



Average Cost for International Student in Vancouver

Category	Estimated Monthly Cost (CAD)	Notes
Housing (Rent)	\$800 - \$1,500	Shared accommodation (room rental in a house or apartment) or a small studio.
Utilities	\$50 - \$100	Typically included in shared accommodation but may be extra in some cases.
Groceries	\$250 - \$500	Budget-friendly shopping (discount stores, bulk buying).
Transportation	\$100 - \$120	Public transit (Compass Card), or bike if you're close to school.
Phone/Internet	\$50 - \$80	Basic mobile and internet plans.
Health Insurance	\$75 - \$100	Mandatory for international students (through your institution or private insurance).
Dining Out & Entertainment	\$100 - \$150	Occasional meals at restaurants, socializing, and free or low-cost events.
Miscellaneous	\$50 - \$100	Toiletries, laundry, personal items, and unexpected expenses.
Total (Average)	\$1,775 - \$2,900 CAD	

WORKING

As an international student in Canada, working while studying can be a valuable way to support yourself financially, gain experience, and build connections. However, it's essential to understand the specific regulations that apply to you as a student, including the conditions on your study permit and visa.

Before you start working, always confirm the rules related to working based on your visa and study permit to ensure that you are following Canadian immigration laws. Different permits may have different restrictions, such as the number of hours you can work, whether you're eligible for on-campus or off-campus work, and if you need additional work permits for co-op or internships.

For any immigration or visa-related questions, you can consult with **RISIA Services** at risia@alexandercollege.ca.

They can provide guidance and help you navigate the specific conditions of your visa, ensuring that you're fully informed about your work rights. Once you're clear on your eligibility to work, you'll find that Canada offers many opportunities to gain valuable work experience while studying.

JOB SEARCH

Finding the right job in Canada can be challenging, but you don't have to do it alone!

Career Advisors

Career Advisors are available to guide you through the entire process, from finding job opportunities to perfecting your resume and cover letter. Career advisors can help you identify opportunities that match your skills and career goals. They are also familiar with job markets in Canada and can guide you toward positions that align with your studies. You can contact your Career Advisors via email at careeradvising@alexandercollege.ca for personalized assistance. They are happy to support you throughout your job search and career development journey!

Time Management

Juggling work and studies can be challenging, so it's important to manage your time effectively. Set clear priorities and balance your work hours with your academic responsibilities to ensure your studies don't suffer.

Know Your Rights

As a worker in Canada, you are protected by labor laws, which include the right to a safe work environment, proper wages, and equal treatment. If you ever feel that your rights are being violated, you can contact [WorkSafeBC](#) and [Employment Standards BC](#) or seek legal advice.

Cultural Expectations

The Canadian workplace can be different from what you might be used to in your home country. Canadian workplaces emphasize punctuality, teamwork, and respectful communication. Take time to understand workplace culture and etiquette to succeed in your job.

EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS AND CONDITIONS



While living and working in B.C. as a temporary resident, you have many of the same rights as British Columbians. If your employer violates the terms of your employment agreement or misuses programs like the Temporary Foreign Worker Program, you can contact Employment and Social Development Canada or the WorkBC Contact Centre for guidance.

Minimum wage is \$18.25 per hour.

Not every work issue or type of work is related to B.C. employment standards.

[See if the standards apply to you.](#)

Taking time off: There are different reasons employees are allowed to take time away from work.

Quit, fired or laid off: Employment is terminated when an employee quits or is fired.

Hiring employees: Employers decide how to advertise a job and hire employees.

Getting paid for work: Employees are paid at least twice a month. They must be paid at least minimum wage.

Hours of work and overtime: Standard work hours are eight hours a day and 40 hours per week.

Statutory holidays: Employees get paid for statutory holidays if they qualify.

Temporary foreign workers: Foreign workers in B.C. are protected from unfair practices.

Licensing: Farm labor contractors, employment and talent agencies must be licensed

Specific industries: Some industries or types of workers are subject to specific requirements.

Forms and resources: Find the forms you need or get more details about specific standards.

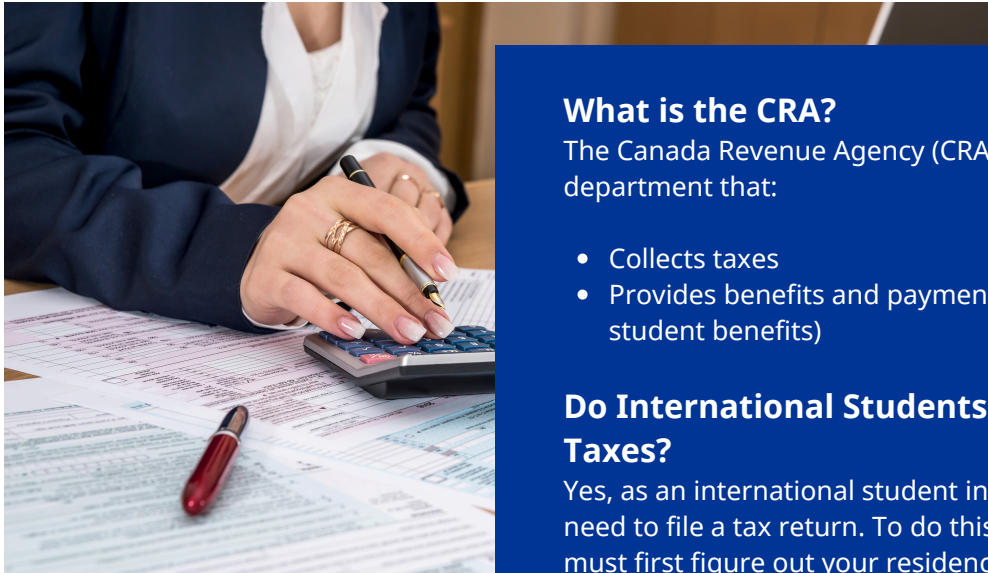
Make a complaint: Try to resolve disputes informally. If this isn't possible, use the formal complaint process.

Investigations: Find out more about the complaint investigation process and resolving disputes.

Published registries and violations: Search published registries and information related to violations.

Contact Employment Standards: Ask a question or get confidential support about your work situation.

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.

Understanding Tax Residency

Your **residency status** affects how you are taxed in Canada. You may be classified as one of the following: **resident, non-resident, deemed resident, deemed non-resident.**

What Makes You a Resident?

You're likely a resident if you have strong personal ties to Canada. These are called residential ties.

Major ties include

- A home in Canada
- A spouse or partner living in Canada
- Children or other dependents in Canada

Other ties may include:

- Personal belongings like a car or furniture in Canada
- Memberships in Canadian clubs or organizations
- A Canadian bank account or credit card
- A Canadian driver's license or passport
- Health insurance from a Canadian province or territory

Not Sure If You're a Resident?

You are **likely not a resident** if:

- You regularly return to your home country for long periods
- You move to another country when not attending school in Canada

You may be a **deemed resident** if:

- You stay in Canada for 183 days or more in a year
- Your home country does not have a tax treaty with Canada

You may be a **deemed non-resident** if:

- Canada has a tax treaty with your home country
- That treaty considers you a resident of your home country instead of Canada

In that case, the same rules apply to you as they do for non-residents.

Filing Taxes: What Should You Do?

Your **residency status** will determine how to file your taxes:

- If you are a **resident**, follow the rules for Canadian residents or newcomers
- If you are a **non-resident**, follow the rules for non-residents
- If you are a **deemed resident**, follow deemed resident rules
- If you are a **deemed non-resident**, follow non-resident rules

Need Help? If you're unsure about your residency status, you can submit **Form NR74** to the CRA for an official decision.

For more information, visit the Government of Canada website:

[Taxes for International Students – Canada.ca](https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/tax/international-students.html)

HEALTHCARE MEDICAL INSURANCE



Life happens and as an international student in Vancouver, it is important for you to get medical insurance. You can get access to comprehensive public healthcare in the province of British Columbia through BC's [Medical Services Plan \(MSP\)](#).

Obtaining temporary private medical insurance is highly recommended as there is a 90-day waiting period before MSP coverage begins, starting from the day of your arrival.

Proof of valid medical insurance is mandatory for all students at Alexander College. You cannot register for courses without medical insurance.

CLINICS IN METRO VANCOUVER



- **Walk-In Clinics:** These clinics are available across the region, offering care for minor illnesses and injuries without the need for an appointment. Find a list of walk-in clinics in Metro Vancouver [here](#).
- **Family Doctors:** If you have a family doctor, you can book regular appointments. If you're looking for a family doctor, you can search for one who is accepting new patients in BC [here](#).
- **Specialty Clinics:** There are many clinics in Metro Vancouver that specialize in areas like dentistry, physiotherapy, mental health, and more. You can find more information about specialized clinics [here](#).

HOSPITALS IN METRO VANCOUVER



- **Vancouver General Hospital:** One of the largest hospitals in the region, offering comprehensive care including emergency services. Visit their website [here](#).
- **St. Paul's Hospital:** A major hospital in the downtown area that provides emergency and specialized care. More information available [here](#).
- **Surrey Memorial Hospital:** Serving the Surrey area with emergency, surgical, and inpatient services. Visit [here](#).
- **Burnaby Hospital:** Located in Burnaby, this hospital provides emergency care, medical services, and inpatient care. More information available [here](#).

CRISIS LINES IN METRO VANCOUVER

Canada Suicide Prevention Service

Call or text 1-833-456-4566 (available 24/7) for immediate support for anyone experiencing emotional distress or thoughts of self-harm. More information is available [here](#).

BC Crisis Centre (for Metro Vancouver and BC)

Call 1-800-784-2433 for 24/7 emotional support in case of a crisis. They offer support for those struggling with depression, anxiety, and mental health issues. Learn more [here](#).

Here2Talk

Call 1-877-857-3397 from within Canada or 1-604-642-5212 from outside Canada for free 24/7 mental health support for post-secondary students. You can use their app or [website](#).

Emergency Response in Metro Vancouver

Emergency Number: For any emergency, dial 911 to reach ambulance, fire, or police services. The operator will direct the appropriate response based on your situation.

COMMUNITY INTEGRATION

Integrating into a new community can be both exciting and challenging. Vancouver offers a diverse range of organizations and groups that can help newcomers connect socially, culturally, and recreationally. Here are some options near campus:

Vancouver Public Library

Provides access to information services and library collections, including books, DVDs, newspapers, magazines, and research materials.

Services: Information and reference services, access to full-text databases, community information, internet access, readers' advisory services, story times for various age groups, programs for children, youth, adults, and seniors, newcomer services including English as an additional language supports, delivery to homebound individuals, interlibrary loan, free downloadable audiobooks, movie nights, and more.

Location: The Vancouver Public Library has multiple locations. To view all, follow the [link](#).

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

Founded in 1973, this organization provides social services for immigrants and other newcomers.

Services: Settlement services, language training, employment programs, and community development.

Location: 28 W Pender St G07, Vancouver, BC V6B 1R3.

Latincouver

A non-profit organization connecting Latin American communities in Vancouver.

Activities: Cultural events, business networking, language programs, and community support services.

Location: 68 Water St Unit 301, Vancouver, BC V6B 1A4

Vancouver Asian Heritage Month Society

Promotes and celebrates Asian Canadian culture and heritage.

Activities: Cultural events, educational programs, and community outreach.

Location: 612 Main Street, Vancouver, BC V6A 2V3

PLACES TO GO | Near the Vancouver campus



📍 Granville Island

Enjoy local shops, restaurants, and attractions like the lookout in this vibrant hub filled with artisan boutiques, waterfront dining, fresh markets, and lively street performers.



📍 Grouse Mountain

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



📍 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.

THANK YOU



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