

Canadian VISA Information

This document is designed to give you an overview of the Visas available for students who want to study at St Giles Vancouver.

You can also visit the Canadian Immigration Website for more information: www.cic.gc.ca. In particular, you can see if you will need a VISA here: <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/visit/visas.asp>.

1. Temporary Resident Permits (Tourist Visas)

This Visa allows students to study non-credit courses, including English as a Second Language, for up to six months. This can be a full-time or part-time course. Students cannot work if they have this Visa.

Students can apply for the Temporary Resident Permit at the nearest Canadian Embassy with an Immigration Department. (Please note this may not be in your country.)

Students with EU passports do not need to apply for a Temporary Resident Permit in advance; they can get a stamp in their passports when they arrive in Canada to give them the Temporary Resident Permit.

Students will not always be given a VISA for the full six months, but instead for the length of their course. If they do not get a VISA for the full six months it will be possible to extend it for up to six months, after arriving in Canada. After six months, students can only extend their visa for tourism purposes, but not for further study.

These temporary resident visas are less expensive than Study Permits (see below) and are usually processed faster. However, it is important to note that a student cannot change Visa once in Canada e.g. upgrade to a Study Permit or Work Permit. So if you would like the option to study for more than six months, or would like to work, you should apply for a Student Permit, as detailed below.

2. Student Permits (Student Visas)

These permits are for students who are studying non-credit English as a Second Language courses for longer than six months (as well as any credit program at a post-secondary institution such as a university); or for students who would like to take a work placement or work during their stay, whether paid or unpaid.

A Study Permit can be for a program shorter than six months if the student wants to take a work placement during their stay. You will need to also apply for a Work Permit (see below) if you do want to work.

A Study Permit can be extended from within Canada, if the student is "in status". This means the original Study Permit cannot have expired and the student will need a letter from the school to say that the student is studying and in good standing.

Study Permits sometimes require an interview and sometimes a medical examination. Because of this, they generally take longer to apply for than temporary permits.

Students of all nationalities must apply for a Study Permit before they enter Canada, usually at the nearest Canadian Embassy with an Immigration Department. (N.B this may be in a different country.)

3. Work Permits

These are required for all internships/work placements, regardless of whether they are paid or unpaid.

Depending on the student's country of origin, students can sometimes apply for the Work Permit in their own country before arrival, or it can be done once they arrive and are already studying. You can contact St Giles Vancouver for advice about this at the time of enrolment.

The main rule is that the "work" portion of the program cannot be longer than the study portion. This means that if the student studies for four months, the longest internship possible is four months. Usually the internship cannot be done concurrently with the studies, so using the same example, if the student studied English for four months and then did a four month internship; he would stay for eight months in Canada. Additionally, the number of hours of work per week should not exceed the number of hours per week that the student studied.

What documents are required for the Visa applications?

For visas applications, the school will supply an official "Letter of Acceptance" which the student uses when applying for a visa. Even if the student is coming as tourist and getting a Temporary Resident Permit upon arrival, they should carry this letter with them. Canadian Immigration officials will ask you "What is the purpose of your visit?" upon arrival. You can then show your Acceptance letter if asked.

St Giles Vancouver is accredited by Languages Canada. Languages Canada accredits both public and private institutions and Canadian Immigration uses this list of accredited schools when assessing visa applications.

In addition to the Letter of Acceptance, you must provide proof of financial ability to pay for his stay in Canada and his studies. The amount needed will depend on the student's nationality; so you should consult the Canadian Embassy in the student's country for specific requirements.

In some countries, students will be asked to give a "Letter of Intent" with their visa application. If this is a requirement in your country, please contact us and we can advise you on this.

Age of Consent

The legal age for a student to be an adult in British Columbia, Canada is 19 years old. Therefore students under 19 years of age usually need a legal custodian in Canada in order to get a visa. St Giles Vancouver can arrange this for the students.

Please note that there is a fee of CAD \$100 for preparing the custodian documentation.

Single vs. Multiple Entry Visas

Before the student comes to study, they should check to see if they have a single entry visa or a multiple entry visa.

This refers to the number of times a student can enter/exit Canada while he is studying in Canada and it applies to all visas: Temporary Resident Permits, Study Permits and Work Permits.

If students are studying in Canada with a single entry permit, they will probably not be re-admitted if they leave Canada for any reason.

Working Holiday Visas

These are special visas that are available as part of bilateral agreements between Canada and specific countries. They are meant for young people (19 to 30 years) to be able to work part-time while travelling. Students with Working Holiday Visas can study and work part-time at the same time. They do not need to be in an internship program; instead they have to find their own jobs. These visas are limited in quantity as the programs are usually reciprocal (e.g. In Japan, the number of WHV available to Japanese students depends on the number of Canadians who went to Japan to work/study the previous year. Please ask at the Canadian Embassy in your country to see if these visas are available.

Further Information

You can find more information about Canadian Visas on the website of the Canadian Immigration Department: www.cic.gc.ca.

In addition, we recommend you check the website of the Canadian Embassy in your country for country specific information.

If you have any questions; you can also contact our team in Vancouver. They will be happy to help you!

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