

University Guidance – Canada

TYPES OF UNIVERSITY

Location: Before researching, please take the time to think about where. Canada is an exciting but huge country with **varying landscapes, remoteness,** and **weather.** If the cold affects you, look closer to the US border. Also consider **cost.** Think about how close the university is to an **international airport,** how long would a **flight home** be and how much are **living expenses.** For example, The University of British Columbia is in Vancouver, one of the most expensive cities in the world.

Types of university:

Public Universities: Mostly government funded, more expensive for international students with less scholarship options, but well respected in the job market and offer the chance to work part-time while studying and offer post-graduate working visas for a year.

Private Universities: Privately funded and offer good scholarships. They often retain the best teaching staff due to their purchasing power and research funding.

Liberal Arts Colleges: place a particular emphasis on undergraduate courses in the liberal arts, namely the humanities but also social, natural and formal sciences.

Colleges and polytechnic institutes These are Canadian institutions offering a range of technical diplomas and applied degrees. It's also worth noting that some Canadian universities also offer some shorter diplomas and career-based programmes.



University Guidance – Canada

TYPES OF DEGREE

Academic degrees

Canada sits in what could be called a ‘sweet spot’ between the US system and the UK system of higher education. This means that, like the British system, applicants apply to a course of study, but they have flexibility to make their own path to the degree. You can expect to take around 5 courses per semester; it is these classes which make up the degree programme. Typically, each course is made up weekly of two hours of lectures and a one hour tutorial where a teaching assistant leads a discussion based around that lecture or the week’s reading.

Applied Degrees

Applied Degree programs in Canada combine the academic focus of a university degree with practical, job-ready skills. A number of colleges and technical institutes across Canada, as well as some universities and university colleges, have introduced Applied Degree programs to respond to today’s demanding job market. Applied Degrees fill the need for educated and highly-skilled workers by producing graduates who bring a strong combination of technical and theoretical skills to the job.

Differences between Quebec & the rest of Canada

In Quebec, ‘college’ (or ‘CEGEP’) refers to either a 2-year pre-university programme or a 3-year professional programme. These could be thought of as equivalent to a British ‘sixth form’. Students are then expected to do a typically 3-year course at a university to gain a Bachelor’s degree. Everywhere else in Canada, ‘college’ refers to a community college or a technical school where students can earn a certificate, diploma or associate’s degree.



University Guidance – Canada

ADMISSION AND ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

How the application process works in Canada Students apply to **courses/programmes**, not just universities. If you're familiar with the US admissions process, this may surprise you. It doesn't mean that students are locked into one series of modules for their whole university life - there's **lots of choice** within the programmes. However, they do need to apply to a programme of study (such as Actuarial Science, English or Biology). **Having found the right course**, it's necessary to look at the **deadlines** and **requirements** because they can vary from province to province, as well as from university to university!

University application deadlines Applications normally open up in **Autumn, around September**. It is advisable to start looking into **scholarships straight away** as well. The best advice for both counselors and students is to check, check and triple check before the application process begins as they may vary every year for different universities and for different provinces! A **typical deadline is March 1st**, but it can be **as early as November 1st for some programmes**. Students are strongly **encouraged** to submit their application far **in advance** of the posted deadlines. Spaces fill quickly for popular universities and programs, and it is **common for a program to close before the application deadlines listed**.

Other requirements Students will be required to offer an **academic transcript** with their grades and **predicted Grades for A level**. The final grades will also have to be submitted when exams are completed. Some universities, such as the **University of Toronto** might stipulate a requirement for a standardised test such as the **SAT or ACT**. English proficiency may be required through an **IELTS or TOEFL** for students without a passport from an English-speaking country.



University Guidance – Canada

STUDENT FINANCES

Tuition fees at universities in Canada will vary depending on the institution and the course, ranging from \$1,500 to \$20,000. As a general rule, humanities courses tend to be less expensive than a course in medicine, engineering or dentistry.

University scholarships: Almost every university in Canada will offer some kind of financial aid. It is a very good idea to look up scholarships as part of the university research. Many universities, such as the University of Manitoba and the University of Alberta, offer what are known as entrance scholarships, where they will offset either all, or part of, the cost of tuition fees. These scholarships will be awarded based on academic merit.

Needs-based scholarships: These are based on evidence of need of financial support to study.

Merit-based scholarships: These scholarships are typically aimed at students who are either academically gifted, or excel at sports/athletics. The university entrance scholarships we discussed above are often a form of merit based scholarship.

Country-based scholarships: If your school is based in a qualifying country, it's worth seeing what financial aid is on offer.

Government funded scholarships: The Canadian government offers a number of scholarships for international students.

Privately-funded scholarships: Some private companies and organisations may offer scholarships for international students. They are likely to be targeted at students from specific countries, or from minority backgrounds.



University Guidance – Canada

Examples of applications

OUAC: Applications open in September for 2021. The earlier you apply the better.

For important dates use the following link: <https://www.ouac.on.ca/guide/105-dates/>

If you look on the right hand side of the the website home page that this takes you too you will be able to see the [How-to Videos](#). These are very useful to take you [step-by-step](#) through the process. They explain everything from [How to start the application, browse and choose programs, complete your applications, edit them and accept offers](#). Make sure when you register that you choose a [memorable username](#) and [an email you regularly check](#). When you get communications from OUAC and eventually from universities, please remember to [check your junk mail or spam](#) as they tend to end up there at first.

University of British Columbia: Many universities will have How-to videos and UBC is no exception. If you are interested in UBS, please check out this link for example:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D262eMQV-UQ>

The link mentioned in the video to help you look at specific requirements for courses is

<https://you.ubc.ca/applying-ubc/how-to-apply/> All other information, such as how to complete your [personal profile essays](#) (these can be completed in advance before you apply in year 13) are available here. The [application deadline](#) is usually [mid-January](#). However, [scholarships](#) require you to complete the application really in [December of the preceding year](#).



University Guidance – CANADA: BE PREPARED

Students must be **organised**, **determined** and **dedicated** to their research to find the right fit for them, with the **right location**, the **right university community**, the **right courses** and the **right cost**. The Canadian system is fantastic with **some of the best universities in the world** and **with the right attitude**, **the application process can be smooth**. We can help and guide, but if students are disorganised or disengaged, the Canada application system can become an arduous task. When searching students should make a document filling in the following information below. Remember that OUAC opens at the beginning of year 13 in September and the earlier you apply the more likely you are to get in, it's as simple as that.. **You should have a shortlist made before the start of the year**.

University Name and State	Major	English req.	OUAC or state specific (if so copy and paste admission website)	Specific requirements (including essays).	SAT or ACT req	Deadline	Fin. aid	Reference req.
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