



Public Post-Secondary International Student Enrolment Guidelines

Effective June 24, 2024

Context

International education contributes to the educational, cultural, and economic development of British Columbia. International engagement benefits student learning and growth; contributes to local access and affordability; and links institutions and communities across the province to international collaboration and the global knowledge economy.

The Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills expects British Columbia post-secondary institutions to continue to deliver the quality education experience all students expect and deserve. To support this objective, the Ministry has developed a framework for international education that is student-centered and sustainable.

The Ministry's objective is a balanced approach that delivers positive education outcomes and global opportunities for students through international education, underpinned by a commitment to quality education. Key priorities include:

- Putting students first and generating positive education outcomes for all learners through diversity and global experiences;
- Ensuring all British Columbia communities benefit from international education; and,
- Driving system integrity through high quality standards.

Purpose

The Ministry establishes policies and provides funding to support post-secondary education in British Columbia. Public post-secondary institutions are responsible for setting international student tuition.

These Guidelines set out the Ministry's expectations relating to the management of international education programs at public post-secondary institutions. The Guidelines support the Province's international education priorities and objectives.

Guidelines

The Ministry expects public post-secondary institutions in British Columbia to manage international education programs and enrol international students in accordance with the following Guidelines:

Program Management

- Institutions are required to hold British Columbia's Education Quality Assurance (EQA) designation to be placed on the Designated Learning Institution (DLI) list maintained by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) and host international students on study permits. Public post-secondary institutions are expected to meet or exceed EQA standards. In accordance with the EQA Policy and Procedures Manual¹, public post-secondary institutions may lose access to EQA and/or the DLI list if they do not meet EQA requirements.

¹ Institutions carrying the EQA designation are required to meet criteria specified for that designation, which is beyond what is required by legislation, regulatory bodies, and accreditation processes. The EQA criteria standardizes certain



- Institutions must establish and maintain a [strategic plan](#) for international education that identifies the goals and objectives of the institution's international education program, integrates with the institution's overall strategic plan, and aligns with the Ministry's international education goals, these Guidelines, and the EQA Policy and Procedures Manual.

Enrolment Management/Reporting

- International students should not displace an Indigenous² or non-Indigenous Canadian citizen³, or a permanent resident⁴ of Canada from a space funded through Provincial operating grants, including programs and courses needed for their credential programs.
- Institutions should manage international enrolment within the institution's Provincial Attestation Letter cap allocation to ensure enrolment does not exceed the capacity of the institution to deliver educational and support services, is aligned with the institution's strategic enrolment plan and the implementation of the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*.
- In general, international enrolment should not exceed 30% of a public institution's total enrolment⁵, subject to an institution's capacity to provide sufficient support services, mental health, and housing-related services.
- Institutions should manage international enrolment to ensure they welcome international students from a diverse range of countries where possible.
- International student numbers should be excluded from the institutions' full-time equivalent (FTE) target established through the Provincial operating grants.
- International students registering for a semester or longer at a public institution should provide evidence of sufficient health care insurance coverage for the duration of their stay.

International Student Tuition

- Institutions should set tuition fees for international students at a level that covers direct costs and overhead.
- Institutions should provide international students with transparent tuition fee costs for the standard program requirements over the standard duration of the student's study program, including any maximum expected increases in tuition. This information should be fully disclosed in advance of registration, and institutions should make every effort to maintain the student's expected tuition levels. Institutions are not expected to provide transparent tuition fee costs for any additional courses the international student chooses to take beyond the requirements for the student's study program.
- Institutions should clearly indicate which students will be charged international tuition fees, with exceptions defined in policy.

student protections and rights, including support services for international students. Institutions must abide by the standard requirements outlined in the [EQA Policy and Procedures Manual](#) to maintain EQA designation.

² Indigenous Person: As defined by the [Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act](#) of British Columbia.

³ Canadian citizen: Within the meaning of the [Citizenship Act](#).

⁴ Permanent resident: As defined in the [Immigration and Refugee Protection Act](#).

⁵ International student enrolment as a percentage of total enrolment will be calculated with Student Transitions Project Headcount Academic Year data.



International Student Tuition: Exempt Students

The Ministry expects that public post-secondary institutions will treat an individual as a domestic student with respect to tuition, if the individual falls within one of the following categories:

- I. A Canadian citizen or permanent resident.
- II. At the discretion of the institution, an individual who is in Canada, who has applied for permanent resident status and who can provide evidence of proof of application to IRCC with a fee paid receipt. This might include: the spouse of a Canadian resident or permanent resident, dependent child⁶ of the spouse of a Canadian resident or permanent resident, or dependent child of a Canadian resident or permanent resident.
- III. A legal dependent of a Canadian citizen or a permanent resident of Canada providing that the dependent status is fully documented and has been established a minimum of one year prior to the student's application for exemption.
- IV. A person who is in Canada, who has been determined under the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* to be a Convention Refugee and can present a letter from IRCC confirming this status.
- V. An Indigenous person whose ancestral lands are wholly or partly within Canada and lives outside Canada, regardless of citizenship.
- VI. An individual who is in Canada to carry out official duties as a diplomatic or consular officer; or as a representative or official of a country other than Canada, or of the United Nations or any of its agencies, or of any intergovernmental organization in which Canada participates; or as a dependent or a member of the staff of any such diplomat, consular officer, representative, or official and is able to substantiate with an identity card issued by the Department of Global Affairs Canada, which gives his/her position, date of issuance, and date of validity.
- VII. A person under an international exchange, scholarship, or fellowship agreement where there has been joint approval by the receiving institution.
- VIII. By application to the institution, the following individuals: an individual with a full-time long term work permit⁷ (at least one year or longer) and their dependents; persons on a working holiday work permit and refugee claimants who have yet to be determined Convention Refugees.

Where changes to federal legislation regarding immigration and refugee status conflict with the fee exemption eligibility requirements described in this document, federal legislation takes precedence.

⁶ Dependent child: Within the meaning of the [Immigration and Refugee Protection Act](#) and its regulations.

⁷ An individual is not eligible to pay domestic tuition fees if they, their parent or their spouse holds a co-op work permit, a post-graduation work permit, or is a spouse or common-law partner who has received a work permit as a result of the international student holding a valid study permit.