

# INBOUND EXCHANGE PRE-ARRIVAL HANDBOOK

Toronto Metropolitan University (TMU)

Toronto  
Metropolitan  
University

Global  
Learning

Toronto, Canada 





# Table of Contents

<b>1. Key Contact Information</b>	<b>3</b>
TMU Global	3
Exchange Program Coordinator	3
International Student Support (ISS)	3
<b>2. Pre-Arrival Planning</b>	<b>4</b>
Canadian Immigration Requirements	4
Housing	4
Academic Accommodations Support	5
Mental Health Support	5
What to Bring to Canada	5
Mandatory Health Insurance (UHIP)	6
Cost of UHIP	6
<b>3. When to Arrive</b>	<b>7</b>
Orientation	7
Important Dates	7
What to Expect at Customs and Immigrations	7
Documents Necessary	7
Traveling with a disability	7
What to expect after landing	8
<b>4. While in Canada</b>	<b>9</b>
Living in Toronto	9
Emergency Contact Information	9





# 1. Key Contact Information

## TMU Global

The staff members of TMU Global work in partnership with each Faculty/School to assist you in your pre-arrival preparations and settling in at Toronto Metropolitan University. TMU Global also organizes Orientation events to introduce you to the campus and to Toronto. Contact us if you have general questions about exchange, preparing for exchange, or life in Toronto.

## Exchange Program Coordinators

Each Faculty at TMU has its own Exchange Coordinator. They are a member of your Faculty who assists you with your academic program at TMU, including such activities as course selection, course registration, access to computer laboratories and other academic facilities, as well as thesis/project supervision, if applicable. However, they are also great sources of general knowledge about the university and university life. Your Exchange Coordinator is also responsible for liaising with your home university exchange coordinator.

## Contact Information:

Faculty of Community Services (FCS)/ Faculty of Engineering & Architecture Science (FEAS)	Ashley Ruffin	416-979-5026 <a href="mailto:global.learning@torontomu.ca">global.learning@torontomu.ca</a>
Faculty of Arts (FOA)	Jill Careless	416-979-5000 x4798 <a href="mailto:jill.careless@torontomu.ca">jill.careless@torontomu.ca</a>
The Creative School	Aamina Mohamed-Edoo	416-979-5000 x544365 <a href="mailto:exchange@torontomu.ca">exchange@torontomu.ca</a>
Faculty of Science (FOS)	Salwa Saeed	416-979-5000 x553248 <a href="mailto:salwa.saeed@torontomu.ca">salwa.saeed@torontomu.ca</a>
Ted Rogers School of Management (TRSM)	Kristy Holzworth	416-979-5000 x556725 <a href="mailto:trsmexchange@torontomu.ca">trsmexchange@torontomu.ca</a>
General Inquiries/ Student Contact	TMU Global	<a href="mailto:global.learning@torontomu.ca">global.learning@torontomu.ca</a>

## International Student Support (ISS)

ISS should be your first point of contact if you have any questions about visas and health insurance.

International Student Support (ISS) is the office that supports all international students, including exchange students, at TMU. ISS can offer advising and support on immigration, the mandatory University Health Insurance Program (UHIP), and working in Canada.

Location: 350 Victoria Street, POD 50A

Email: [issask@torontomu.ca](mailto:issask@torontomu.ca)

Phone: (416) 979-5000 ext. 6655







## 2. Pre-Arrival Learning

### Canadian Immigration Requirements

To enter Canada as an exchange student, you may require documentation that can be obtained through an online application or from a Visa Office located in a Canadian Embassy, Consulate, or High Commission in your home country or elsewhere.

The application process and time varies depending on your home country. The [Government of Canada's Immigration and Citizenship website](#) provides information on what documentation you may need. Some common documents required for exchange students are:

- An electronic travel authorization (eTA) is an entry requirement that is electronically linked to a visa-exempt individual's passport. It is issued up to a maximum period of five years, or upon passport expiry, whichever comes first. For more information, including on who needs an eTA, please visit the [eTA section on our ISS's Immigration site](#).
- If you are studying in Canada for more than 6 months, you must also hold a [study permit](#). (\*Please note that you cannot apply for an initial study permit from within Canada).
- Students from certain countries require a TRV to enter Canada. A Temporary Resident Visa (TRV) is also referred to as an "entry visa" or a "visitor's visa". It is a sticker placed in your passport and provides different authorization than a study permit. For more information, including on who needs a TRV, please visit the [TRV section on our ISS's Immigration site](#).

It is your responsibility to ensure that you acquire the appropriate documentation to enter and study in Canada for your exchange experience. You should determine and acquire the necessary documentation well in advance of leaving your home country.

If you have any questions, or require further assistance with any visa/immigration related questions, email TMU's International Student Support office at [issask@torontomu.ca](mailto:issask@torontomu.ca). You can also reach ISS by phone at [416-979-5000](tel:416-979-5000) ext. 6655.





## Housing

**It is your responsibility to arrange your own living accommodations while at TMU.**

The first hurdle that many newcomers experience is the search for housing. Toronto is currently going through a housing crisis - there is a shortage of affordable housing in the city. As such, it can be difficult to locate short-term (i.e. less than 12 months) housing options that are both affordable and easily accessible by transit.

### On-Campus Housing

Full-year exchange students can apply for [on-campus housing](#). However, space is limited and acceptance is not guaranteed. On-campus housing costs range depending on residence type. Please refer to the [fees page](#) for more information.

### Off-Campus Housing

The Off-Campus Housing office has put together a comprehensive guide on [Finding A Place to Live](#) in Toronto. They have information and resources for long-term housing options, as well as for short-term housing.

Check out [Housing Alternatives](#) to find more information about different types of short-term housing options.





## Academic Accommodations Support

If you have a disability (visible or invisible, permanent or temporary) that affects your academic functioning, you can access Toronto Metropolitan University's [Academic Accommodation Support \(AAS\) office](#) during your exchange for support and services.

This includes having singular or multiple disabilities such as learning disabilities, sensory impairments, acquired brain injuries, ADHD, and mental health, medical, and mobility issues. The AAS office works confidentially with incoming exchange students. You can register as soon as you have your TMU student ID and email address set up (after you receive your formal Offer of Admission to the exchange program).

For more information and additional support with the registration process, please contact [aasintake1@torontomu.ca](mailto:aasintake1@torontomu.ca). Online appointments are available.

## Mental Health Support

Incoming exchange students at TMU can also access mental health resources, such as one-on-one or group counselling, through our [Centre for Student Development and Counselling](#) (CSDC) when you are on campus.

The services offered by the CSDC are available to all students, regardless of if you have a previous or existing mental health condition.

## What To Bring To Canada

When travelling to Canada, Canadian Customs permits you to bring personal items such as clothes, books, toiletries, etc. There are, however, restrictions on some items.

Before you leave, make sure you review what items you can and cannot bring across Canadian borders on the Canada Border Service Agency website [Restricted and prohibited goods](#).





## Mandatory Health Insurance (UHIP)

All exchange students are required to have mandatory health insurance, also known as [University Health Insurance Plan \(UHIP\)](#). You should review [UHIP's coverage](#) for detailed information on what is covered, and what is not. If necessary, purchase additional health insurance to cover services that are not covered by UHIP.

Prior to receiving medical services in Ontario, Canada, you must provide valid proof of health coverage. By presenting proof of UHIP coverage, in the form of an electronic card, you will be able to access Canadian doctor's offices, clinics, or hospitals.

Before the semester starts, your UHIP electronic card will be sent to you as a link from Cowan's email to your TMU email address with information on how to access it.

For more information about UHIP at TMU, please visit the [Health & Wellness page](#).

## Cost of UHIP

You will need to pay for UHIP when you arrive. UHIP will only cover you from the start of the semester, so make sure to purchase travel and health insurance to cover the time period from your departure from your home country to your arrival at TMU, as well as the time period for your return home.

UHIP fees will be charged automatically to your TMU account, MyServiceHub. In order to provide payment, please visit [How to Pay Your Fees](#) page.

## Additional UHIP Resources

- [How to submit a UHIP Claim](#)
- [Preferred Provider Network of Hospitals](#)
- [Book with TMU Medical Centre](#)

If you have any specific concerns about the UHIP coverage, or require information and support unique to your own case, please reach out to: [uhip@torontomu.ca](mailto:uhip@torontomu.ca).





### 3. When To Arrive

We recommend that you arrive at least one week before the first day of classes. This will give you enough time to settle in, meet with your TMU Exchange Coordinator, complete course registration, pay for UHIP health insurance, and become familiar with the campus.

If you are arriving for the **Fall Term**, take note that [Labour Day, a national holiday](#), usually takes place right at the beginning of the semester. All university, government, and banking offices are closed on this day.

If you are arriving for the **Winter Term**, take note that TMU closes for a significant period of time for the winter break, which happens before the start of the winter term. All offices, including TMU Global, will be closed and staff will not be responding to emails or phone calls. For exact dates on the Winter Break, please refer to the [Undergraduate Calendar](#).

#### Orientation

There is a mandatory orientation held for exchange students at the beginning of every term, usually a few days **before classes start**. Dates and times for the orientation will be sent to you once you have registered for the exchange program with TMU.

#### Important Dates

For the most up-to-date list of important dates, including semester start and end dates, exam periods and add/drop deadlines, please refer to the [Undergraduate Calendar](#).





## What To Expect At Customs and Immigrations

### Documents Necessary

After landing at the airport, you will pass through Immigration and Customs. Be sure to carry the following documents in your hand luggage as you will require them at the Canada Immigration post:

- Passport
- Offer of Admission letter from TMU
- Proof of funds available for support (examples: bank statement, traveler's cheques)
- Letter of Introduction from Immigration, Refugee, Citizenship Canada (IRCC) for Study Permit (if necessary)

### Traveling with a Disability

If you have a disability and would want/need assistance to go through customs and immigration, feel free to reach out to the [Canadian Border Services Agency \(CBSA\)](#) upon your arrival.

If traveling by air, you can use the special services counter line that is clearly identified in all CBSA primary inspection areas.

A CBSA officer can assist you with:

- the steps of the border clearance process, including assistance in completing your declaration and providing verbal or visual cues or additional instructions
- providing you with instructions in writing or, if possible, in American, Quebec or Indigenous sign language
- directing you and any support person you are traveling with, to an alternate line to help you move more quickly through customs, if you have difficulty waiting in line for disability-related reasons
- placing and retrieving personal items on a counter for inspection, if you must undergo more extensive clearance

For further information, please refer to the [Travelling with disabilities](#) website.



# What To Expect After Landing

## STEP ONE:

Declare your travel information at an airport kiosk or eGate. If you arrive at an airport without a kiosk or eGate, you will need to fill out the [Declaration Card](#), which will be provided by your airline or at the airport.

## STEP TWO:

Proceed to the first Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) checkpoint. A border services officer will examine your Declaration Card, identification and other travel documents.

When you are directed to a booth, you may be asked a series of questions to determine your immigration status, the nature of any goods you are bringing with you, your duty-free allowance and personal exemption entitlements.

**If you have anything to declare**, including purchases and food, plants, animals and/or related products of any kind, make sure to inform the officer.

- Provide honest, consistent and accurate information at the border. Be prepared to answer questions about what you will do and how long you are going to study in Canada.
- An interpreter may be available if you do not understand the questions; however, service is typically available in English and French.

**If you need a study permit**, inform the Immigration Officer that you are here to study in Canada.

- Provide your travel documents, and a Letter of Introduction from Immigration, Refugee, Citizenship Canada (IRCC).
- They will then provide your study permit. Check the conditions on your study permit.
- Check that the spelling of your name and personal information is correct.
- Make sure the details under the “Client information” section are correct.

## STEP THREE:

Proceed to the baggage claim area. If required, you can pay duty and taxes while waiting for your luggage. Once you have picked up your luggage, proceed to the next CBSA checkpoint, where you will show the officer your Declaration Card and your receipt if you paid duty and taxes.

**TIP:** Be patient at the border. During peak periods, you can expect to spend a few hours waiting. During this time, you may be unable to leave the immigration and customs area.





## 4. While In Canada

### Living in Toronto

Check out our [Living in Toronto Guide](#) for information on everything from General Cost of Living, to Winter Clothing, Cellphones, Entertainment and more.

### Emergency Contact Information

The Global Learning team will be monitoring the [global.learning@torontomu.ca](mailto:global.learning@torontomu.ca) email address outside of office hours in order to respond to any crisis or urgent issues that may arise. This refers to anything that would not require the support of a medical or healthcare professional.

It is important to note that all medical emergencies should be directed to the local emergency number, 911. More information can be found in our [Living in Toronto Guide](#) (under Health and Wellness section). You can find information on what to do if experiencing a mental health crisis on the [Student Wellbeing site](#). If you do access these emergency services, please inform us (the global learning team and/or your Faculty exchange coordinator) when you are able so that we can offer additional support if needed.

When sending an email to [global.learning@torontomu.ca](mailto:global.learning@torontomu.ca) regarding an **urgent issue or crisis**, ensure that the subject line reads: **EMERGENCY**. Please note that the email address will be monitored periodically after hours (outside of 9 AM - 5 PM) and on weekends.

Situations that are **not considered** an emergency or crisis include:

- Concerns with course selection and registration
- Lack of long-term housing for the duration of their activity (lack of immediate, short-term housing would be a crisis)
- Looking for logistical support to set up a bank account, get a phone plan, and overall settle into a new place.

For more information, please visit our [Inbound Exchange site](#).

#### Contact TMU Global

Email: [global.learning@torontomu.ca](mailto:global.learning@torontomu.ca)

Instagram: [@tmuglobal](#)