

STUDENT EXCHANGE

FACT SHEET

2026 - 2027

A photograph of a University of Waterloo campus scene. In the foreground, there is a large, low concrete wall with the words "UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO" in large, black, sans-serif capital letters. Behind the wall, there are several yellow patio umbrellas and wooden chairs arranged in a seating area. In the background, there are trees with green leaves and a modern building with a grid-like facade. A person is walking in the distance.

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CONTENTS

Important Dates	3	Language Requirements	5
Course Restrictions	3	Immigration Documents	6
Nominations	3	Transcript	6
Housing	3	Fees	6
Spring Term	3	Health Insurance	6
Term Dates	4	Orientation	7
Faculties	4	Accessibility	7
Nomination Process	4	Student Support	7
Eligibility	4	Clubs, Sports and Recreation	7
Application Instructions	5	International and Canadian Student Network (ICSN)	7
Course Selection Process	5	Location	8
Course Credit System	5		

CONTACT US

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WEBLINKS

[Come to Waterloo](#) – General Inbound exchange related information

[Prepare for Waterloo](#) – Guide sent to admitted exchange students to help them prepare for their exchange

 [@uwaterloolife](https://www.instagram.com/uwaterloolife)



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IMPORTANT DATES

Nominations Open	February 15	June 15	October 15
Nomination Deadline	March 15	August 15	November 15
Application Deadline	April 1	September 1	December 1
Orientation	End of August	Early January	Early May
Classes Beginning	Early September	Early January	Early May
Mid-term break – no scheduled classes	4 days following Thanksgiving (October)	4 days following Family Day (February)	Not applicable
Classes end	Early December	Early April	Late July
Exams end	Late December	Late April	Mid-August
Holidays	Labour Day – September 7 Thanksgiving – October 12 University closure December 24 – January 1	Family Day – February 15 Good Friday – March 26	Victoria Day – May 24 Canada Day – July 1 Civic Holiday – August 2
Official Transcripts Released	Late February	Late June	Late October

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR 2026-2027

COURSE RESTRICTIONS

- › Undergraduate exchange students can only enrol in a maximum of two Computer Science courses per term. This includes courses cross-listed with Computer Science.
- › View the full [list of restricted courses](#).
- › Space is limited in our Architecture programs at all levels. We will be reviewing nominations on a first come first serve basis when nominations open. The Undergrad Architecture Rome program will be available in 2026-2027. [Visit our website to learn more about the Undergrad Architecture Rome program](#).

NOMINATIONS

- › Split quota between our fall, winter and spring terms when possible.

HOUSING

- › Like many cities in Canada, Waterloo Region is experiencing a housing shortage. On campus housing is extremely limited and not guaranteed. Partners are encouraged to nominate early so students can apply.

Most exchange students live off campus. Students are encouraged to start their off campus housing search once they receive their offer of admission. Housing is more accessible in the spring term.

- › Off-campus: Students can live off-campus with either [Waterloo Co-operative Residence Inc. \(WCRI\)](#) or [Off-Campus Housing](#).
- › On campus: Students can apply to [Campus Housing](#) but we cannot guarantee students a spot. On campus accommodation for both the fall and winter terms is extremely limited.

SPRING TERM

- › Waterloo offers full academic programming during our Spring term (May to mid-August). Many courses are offered in spring and all services, including Orientation, on-campus housing, and student clubs are available.

TERM DATES

Two terms of study are equivalent to a full academic year, although we operate on a trimester system with a full fall, winter, and spring term. Each term is four months and counts as 0.5 FTE towards the exchange balance. Exchange students can study for one term or two terms.

Eligible Exchange Terms	Term Dates
Fall	Beginning of September – End of December
Winter	Beginning of January – End of April
Spring	Beginning of May – Mid August
Fall + Winter	Beginning of September – End of April
Winter + Spring	Beginning of January – Mid August

FACULTIES



NOMINATION PROCESS

Complete online for each student under the [nominator login portal](#). You will receive an email when nominations open. Once approved, we will email the nominator and the student with detailed application instructions.

ELIGIBILITY

UNDERGRADUATE

Students must:

- › Be enrolled at one of the University of Waterloo’s exchange partner institutions
- › Be nominated by their home institution as an exchange applicant
- › Meet the University of Waterloo’s undergraduate [English language proficiency \(or equivalent\)](#)
- › Have a 70% cumulative average or equivalent at their home institution

ARCHITECTURE APPLICANTS MUST ALSO HAVE:

- › Completed at least two years of study (equivalent to four/five terms is ideal) prior to the commencement of exchange
- › A 75% cumulative average or equivalent at their home institution.

GRADUATE

- › Completed an Honours Bachelors’ degree or equivalent and be actively enrolled in a graduate-level program at one of the University of Waterloo’s exchange partner institutions,
- › 75% (or equivalent) overall standing in the past two years of study
- › Be nominated by their home institution as an exchange applicant
- › Meet the University of Waterloo’s graduate [English language proficiency](#) (or equivalent)

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Our [application process](#) is entirely online. We do not require hard copies of any documents. We aim to provide students with offer letters eight weeks after the application deadline.

COURSE SELECTION PROCESS

We cannot guarantee enrolment in any specific course, and it is important to be flexible during this process. Waterloo's [course registration process](#) for undergraduate and graduate students occurs after admission.

COURSE CREDIT SYSTEM

UNDERGRADUATE

The full-time course load is five courses per term (equivalent to 2.5 units) with a minimum of three courses per term (equivalent to 1.5 units). Most courses are assessed as a unit of 0.5 and are approximately 39 teaching hours per term.

GRADUATE

The full-time course load is one graduate course per term. Details of specific credit weights and teaching hours per course are available on the [graduate schedule of classes](#). Most courses are assessed as a credit of 0.5 and are approximately 39 teaching hours per term.

LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS

All incoming exchange students must have sufficient English language skills to be successful in their exchange. Students may be required to submit proof of English language proficiency prior to admission to the exchange program.

UNDERGRADUATE

Students should provide a digital copy of their [English language proficiency scores](#) or equivalent documentation supporting their language proficiency

See complete [English language requirements](#) for more information.

GRADUATE

Students should provide English language proficiency certification ([official test score](#) or English language equivalency letter from the student's home school)

See complete [English language requirements](#) for more information.





IMMIGRATION DOCUMENTS

Review our [Come to Waterloo - Immigration](#) tab for more information

TRANSCRIPT

An official Waterloo transcript will be available for students to share in electronic format with their home institution approximately two months following the end of their study term. Students will receive instructions once their transcript is ready to share.

We do not send transcripts directly to the home school coordinator.

FEES

Students will be assessed for incidental fees, every term. Fees include mandatory health insurance and a student services fee that provides unlimited access to the regional transit system. All fees are approximate in Canadian dollars and are subject to change. Student Financial Services will post fees to students' accounts approximately one month prior to the beginning of term, and fees must be paid before arriving at Waterloo.

HEALTH INSURANCE

Students are enrolled in two health insurance plans. The University Health Insurance Plan (UHIP) covers basic health care services, such as medical doctor appointments, hospital visits, and most diagnostic tests. The Studentcare extended Health and Dental Plan covers extra costs like prescription drugs, paramedical practitioners, vision, and dental care. Students can opt-out of extended health and dental insurance if they meet the criteria and can prove that they have equivalent coverage. Applications for UHIP exemption are only considered if students meet the criteria outlined on the UHIP website.



ORIENTATION

It is strongly encouraged that students attend Exchange Orientation to experience a balanced introduction to the academic, social, and community aspects of life at Waterloo. Program details and dates will be sent to students closer to the start of the term.

ACCESSIBILITY

Waterloo is committed to ensuring all students can access and meaningfully participate in their education by removing barriers and building capacity for personal success. Students with permanent, temporary, or suspected disabilities are encouraged to contact [AccessAbility Services](#) to register for supports and services.

STUDENT SUPPORT

International Peer Community (IPC) connects with fellow international students and upper-year student leaders. Together students engage in fun events to explore campus and the Kitchener-Waterloo area.

CLUBS, SPORTS AND RECREATION

Students can get involved through the [Waterloo Undergraduate Student Association \(WUSA\)](#) or the [Graduate Student Association \(GSA\)](#). Whether students are interested in food, politics, dance, business, gaming, or the environment, joining a club is the perfect way to find something students love and meet others who share that same passion.

Stay active and enrich wellness experience while at Waterloo by checking out our [Athletics and Recreation facilities](#). Follow [@WlooRec](#) and [@WlooWarriors](#) for tips and events.

INTERNATIONAL AND CANADIAN STUDENT NETWORK (ICSN)

Community of fellow Canadian, international and exchange students. Together, students will build connections, participate in events, and get a taste of life in Waterloo. Follow [@UWICSN](#) on Instagram for upcoming events.

LOCATION

