

STUDENT EXCHANGE

FACT SHEET

2025 - 2026



UNIVERSITY OF
WATERLOO





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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](#)



UNIVERSITY OF
WATERLOO

IMPORTANT DATES

Term Deadline	Fall 2025 September–December	Winter 2026 January–April	Spring 2026 May – August
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 1 Thanksgiving – October 13 University closure December 24 – January 2	Family Day – February 16 Good Friday – April 3	Victoria Day – May 18 Canada Day – July 1 Civic Holiday – August 3
Official Transcripts Released	Late February	Late June	Late October

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR 2025–2026

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 2025-2026. [Visit our website to learn more about the Undergrad Architecture Rome program](#).

NOMINATIONS

- › Split quota between our fall, winter and spring terms when possible.
- › We hope to have clarity on whether Waterloo can accommodate two term students by the end of December 2024. We will update partners as soon as information is available.

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.

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

FACULTIES



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](#)
 - › 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.

UNDERGRADUATE

Step 1: Students will receive an email to create a course wishlist with course descriptions.

Step 2: Students will submit a University of Waterloo International Incoming Exchange Program Application online

Step 3: Students receive a welcome email with instructions on how to create a Quest account to upload their supporting documents within five business days of completing their application.

Step 4: Students upload their supporting documents in Quest as detailed in the application instructions. Students must continuously upload the most recent version of their documents even after the application deadline, as this supports the course approval process.

GRADUATE

Step 1: Students receive an email with a link to the online application form.

Step 2: Students email studyabroad@uwaterloo.ca to confirm they applied.

Step 3: Students receive a welcome email with instructions on how to create a Quest account to upload their supporting documents within two business days of completing their application,

Step 4: Students upload their supporting documents in Quest as detailed in the application instructions. Students must continuously upload the most recent version of their documents even after the application deadline, as this supports the course approval process.

COURSE SELECTION PROCESS

UNDERGRADUATE

In their application, students are required to submit a course wish list for their first term. Students should list 10 courses in their application. We attempt to enroll them in their first five approved courses. Students can make changes to their schedule approximately one month before the start of term.

To help students select courses we encourage them to:

- › View course descriptions through the [undergraduate calendar](#) paying close attention to ensure students meet the pre-requisite requirements.
- › Review the [undergraduate schedule of classes](#). Students can look at course offerings for the same term in the previous year if the schedule for the term they are applying for is not yet available.
- › Review the [list of restricted courses](#) These courses are not available to exchange students.

GRADUATE

Students must list courses on the supplementary information form for the duration of their studies during the application process. Prior to filling out these forms, ensure that students follow these three steps:

1. View course descriptions through the respective [graduate programs listing](#) and [Graduate Studies Academic Calendar](#). Have courses pre-approved for credit transfers at their home institution prior to applying for the exchange.
2. Review the [graduate schedule of classes](#) (paying close attention to the search code applicable for each term).
3. Select three to five courses per term, allowing for contingency courses if restrictions or scheduling conflicts arise. Students should select courses from the graduate department they applied to. Graduate departments will not approve course enrolment for other departments. If students are interested in courses across multiple departments, contact the course department and/or instructor to get permission after your 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

