

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY EXCHANGE & STUDY ABROAD FACT SHEET: 2026/27

GENERAL INFORMATION

About SFU

Simon Fraser University (SFU) is a globally engaged institution known for excellence in research, innovation, and sustainability. Ranked among Canada's top comprehensive universities SFU is a leader in interdisciplinary education, offering programs that integrate diverse fields of study to foster innovation, critical thinking, and global collaboration.

Born in 1965, SFU has grown into a leading institution with vibrant campuses in British Columbia's largest municipalities — Vancouver, Burnaby and Surrey — and deep roots in partner communities throughout the province and around the world.

We respectfully acknowledge the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish), səliłwətaʔt (Tsleil-Waututh), qíćəy̓ (Katzie), kwikwəłəm (Kwikwetlem), Qayqayt, Kwantlen, Semiahmoo and Tsawwassen peoples on whose unceded traditional territories our three campuses reside.

CAMPUS LOCATIONS

Simon Fraser University's three unique campuses are all within an hour of one another by public transit. [Explore our vibrant campuses with our virtual campus tours.](#)

Burnaby (Main Campus)

Perched atop Burnaby Mountain, Simon Fraser University's original Arthur Erickson-designed campus now includes more than three dozen academic buildings and is flanked by UniverCity, a flourishing sustainable residential community.

Surrey

A vibrant community hub located in the heart of one of Canada's fastest-growing cities, and the future site of SFU's forthcoming medical school.

Vancouver

Described by local media as the "intellectual heart of the city", SFU's Vancouver Campus transformed the landscape of urban education in downtown Vancouver. The campus is comprised of multiple facilities clustered in the core of Vancouver.

METROPOLITAN VANCOUVER

Frequently ranked as one of the world's most livable cities, Vancouver sits on the west coast of Canada.

Spectacular and Safe Setting

Majestic mountains, sparkling ocean, rainforests and beautiful foliage throughout all four seasons make Vancouver one of the most beautiful cities in the world. Canadians are known for our friendly nature, and Vancouver's citizens take great pride in our welcoming, clean, safe streets.

Welcoming and Accessible

With a vast, multicultural population and excellent infrastructure, Vancouver is welcoming to all.

Activities

Catering to any interest throughout the year, you can enjoy world class shopping, gourmet meals, outstanding live entertainment, sporting events, theatre, outdoor adventure, spectacular sights and attractions.

Gateway to Adventure

Quick and easy access to Whistler, the Canadian Rockies, Victoria, Vancouver Island.

Excerpts from [Destination Vancouver](#)

ACADEMIC INFORMATION

Faculties, Departments and Schools at SFU

Please note that some subjects and courses have restrictions for inbound exchange/study abroad students. **Please note that the School of Medicine and the Faculty of Graduate Studies are not open to exchange or study abroad students, and are not listed below.**

Please see these restrictions ([Restrictions and Considerations](#)); they are updated each Summer.

Faculty of Applied Sciences	Computing Science Engineering Science		Mechatronic Systems Engineering Sustainable Energy Engineering
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences	Anthropology Cognitive Science Criminology Economics English French Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies	Gerontology Global Asia Hellenic Studies History Humanities Indigenous Studies International Studies Linguistics	Philosophy Political Science Psychology Sociology Urban Studies World Languages and Literature
Beedie School of Business* (most courses only open to students from Business Exchange Partners)	Innovation and Entrepreneurship Management Information Systems Human Resource Management Operations Management		Marketing Finance International Business Strategic Analysis
Faculty of Communication, Art, and Technology	Communication Contemporary Arts		Interactive Arts and Technology Publishing
Faculty of Education	Education		
Faculty of Environment	Archaeology Environmental Science Geography		Resource and Environmental Management Sustainable Community Development
Faculty of Health Sciences	Health Sciences		
Faculty of Science	Biological Sciences Biomedical Physiology and Kinesiology Chemistry	Earth Sciences Mathematics Molecular Biology and Biochemistry	Physics Statistics and Actuarial Science

A commitment to academic integrity is a fundamental responsibility for all students who are part of the SFU community. Please see [Academic Integrity Expectations at SFU](#).

Course Load, Selection and Enrollment

Course Load for Undergraduate Study (most courses are 3-4 units each)	Minimum enrollment for full-time status: 9 units (normally 3 courses) "Full course load": 15 units (normally 4 or 5 courses) Maximum enrollment possible: 18 units (normally 5 or 6 courses) – <u>NOT RECOMMENDED</u> Recommended enrollment for exchange and study abroad students: 9 – 12 units (normally 3 or 4 courses)
Course Load for Graduate Study (most graduate courses are 3 units each)	Minimum enrollment for full-time status: 6 units (normally 2 courses) or full-time research Recommended enrollment for exchange and study abroad students: 6 units (normally 2 courses) or full-time research
Course Selection	At the time of application, students will list their preferred courses or research proposal (for graduate students planning to pursue research at SFU) on their online application. Undergraduate students must submit a minimum of 8 courses (they will take 3-5 courses). Undergraduate courses are numbered 100-400. Undergraduate students may take courses from multiple subject areas (<u>Students coming to SFU from a Business partner are required to take a minimum of 3 courses from within the Beedie School of Business.</u>). Graduate students must submit a minimum of 3 courses from within the same department (unless they will be doing full-time research). Graduate courses are numbered 500-900. Graduate students can take courses from within a single subject area. SFU does its best to accommodate course requests, but cannot guarantee access to specific courses. Students must consider each course' SFU restrictions and prerequisites at time of application to determine if a course is suitable for them to take. For more information on course selection, to see courses lists and course outlines please see: • Academic Information • Restrictions and Considerations
Course Enrollment	ISS (or the Beedie School of Business for students from Business partners) manually enrolls students in courses for their first term at SFU approximately 2 months in advance of the term. Students receive information about this over email. If students stay for subsequent terms, they will be responsible for enrolling themselves (ISS provides instructions after their arrival).
English Language Resources	SFU's "Student Learning Commons" operates a variety of programs and resources for students who speak English as an additional language through English as an Additional Language (EAL) Services.
SFU Grading System	Grading Systems and Policies
SFU Terminology	• Terminology at SFU • Terminology for codes

Term Dates

SFU operates on a unique trimester system, comprised of 3 equal full-time terms per year. Exchange and study abroad students are welcome to start their exchange in the Fall or Spring term (normally for either 1 or 2 terms). The Fall and Spring terms are the busiest on campus, and Summer term has approximately 80% of regular courses offerings. For actual term dates visit [Academic Calendar](#).

Fall Term	Orientation: Early September Classes: Early September – Early December (13 weeks) Exams: Early December – Mid December (2 weeks)
Spring Term	Orientation: Early January Classes: Early January – Early April (13 weeks) Exams: Early April – Mid April (2 weeks)
Summer Term	Students cannot start their exchange in the Summer term, but may have their subsequent term in the Summer. Classes: Early May – Early August (13 weeks) Exams: Early August – Mid August (2 weeks)

Transcripts

At the end of each student's exchange period, and once any outstanding fees to SFU have been paid, ISS will send one pdf copy of their official transcript directly to the partner's international office **electronically**.

ISS will instruct students on how to order additional hard copy transcripts for personal use (students will need to pay a fee for ordering additional transcripts). For more information, visit [Official Transcripts](#).

APPLICATION INFORMATION

Eligibility Requirements

GPA	SFU does not have a minimum GPA requirement for inbound exchange/study abroad students. We trust that our partners perform a rigorous internal selection process.
English Language Requirement	Students must meet one of the following criteria. "Undergraduate" and "Graduate" refer to students' desired level of study at SFU, not their level study of study at their home institution. Education in English a) Currently studying at an institution where the principal language of instruction is English. <i>No documentation required.</i> b) Currently studying in a degree program in which the principal language of instruction is English at an institution where the principal language of instruction is <u>not</u> English. <i>Documents accepted: Official Transcript which states the language of instruction is English, or a letter from Exchange Coordinator stating that degree is English-taught.</i> c) [NEW] Undergraduates only: Completion of a three-unit post-secondary level course taught in English with a passing grade. <i>Documents accepted: Official Transcript which states the language of instruction for the course is English, or a statement from the Exchange Coordinator stating that they have successfully completed at least one English-taught course.</i>

d) Undergraduates only: Completion of a three-unit* post-secondary level academic English course with a minimum grade of C-. (Course must be determined to be equivalent or sufficiently similar to the academic English courses offered at SFU. [See list of SFU's English courses for examples](#)) *3 SFU units are equivalent to 6 ECTS credit points.

Document accepted: Official Transcript (course outline may also be needed)

e) Graduates only: Have completed a degree at an institution where the principal language of instruction was English, or a degree program in which the principal language of instruction was English (in an institution where the principal language of instruction was *not* English).

Documents accepted: Previous degree official transcript stating the language of instruction was English, or letter from institution stating that degree was English-taught.

Standardized English Tests

f) Completion of the **IELTS** - Academic with the minimum following scores:

Undergraduates: overall band score of 6.5 with no part less than 6.0.

Graduates: overall band score of 7.0 with no part less than 6.5.

Document accepted: Official IELTS - Academic or IELTS Online (for Undergraduates only) test score.

*IELTS One Skill Retake scores are **not** accepted.*

g) Completion of **TOEFL iBT** with the minimum following scores (we can accept TOEFL PBT as well; please contact us for minimum scores):

Undergraduates: overall score of 88 or better with a minimum score of 20 in each of the four components.

Graduates: overall score of 93 or better with a minimum score of 20 in each of the four components.

Document accepted: Official TOEFL iBT test score.

*Home Edition, Essentials, and MyBest Scores are **not** accepted.*

h) Completion **Cambridge English Qualifications** with the minimum following scores:

Undergraduates: B2 First, C1 Advanced or C2 Proficiency with a minimum overall score of 176, with no part less than 169.

Graduates: C1 Advanced with minimum score of 193 or C2 Proficiency with minimum score of 200.

Document accepted: Official Cambridge English Qualifications test score. Test results are valid for 2 years from the certificate was issued.

i) Completion of the **Canadian Academic English Language (CAEL)** with an overall minimum score of 70, with no part less than 60.

Document accepted: Official CAEL test score

j) Completion of the **Pearson Test of English Academic (PTE Academic)** with an overall minimum score of 65, with no part less than 60.

Document accepted: Official PTE Academic test score

k) [NEW] Undergraduates only: **Completion of Duolingo English Test (DET)*** with an overall minimum score of 125. *Provisionally for the Fall 2026 admission cycle; only accepted from students in countries where no other English proficiency test is available.

Document accepted: Official Duolingo test score. Test results are valid for 2 years. Applicants must send the test result to "Simon Fraser University", and upload a PDF result certificate in the application to be verified by SFU.

l) [NEW] Graduates only: **Completion of Duolingo English Test (DET)**** with an overall minimum score of 125, with a minimum of 105 in each section. ** Provisionally for the Fall 2026 admission cycle

Document accepted: Official Duolingo test score. Test results are valid for 2 years. Applicants must send the test result to "Simon Fraser University"

	<i>Graduate Studies”, and upload a PDF result certificate in the application to be verified by SFU.</i>
Degree Level	SFU welcomes both undergraduate and graduate (Masters or PhD) exchange students, though graduate options may not be possible in all academic areas in all terms and are always evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the academic unit. Reference our exchange agreement to determine which levels are open for your students. Most exchange/study abroad students are registered as undergraduate students, even when they are graduate students at their home institution. See the additional note about graduate acceptance in the “Acceptance” section below. If exchange students want to study at the graduate level, they are recommended to explore their preferred host program/faculty/department and their course offerings per term to see if they align with their current study in their home university, then connect with exchange@sfu.ca in advance of their nomination to discuss the possibility. Without proper academic backgrounds, their admission request could be denied by the program/faculty/department. See the list of Graduate Studies Programs and their academic levels offered at SFU. Currently, the Beedie School of Business and Department of Psychology do not accept exchange students to the graduate programs, but this list is subject to change.
Degree Progress	SFU does not require exchange and study abroad students to have completed a minimum number of credits, courses or years prior to their exchange.

Application Process and Deadlines

Nomination and Application Deadlines	Fall term admission (Call for Nominations issued in January): Nomination deadline: March 15 Application deadline: March 31 Spring term admission (Call for Nominations issued in mid-July): Nomination deadline: September 1 Application deadline: September 15 Summer term: Full year students may stay for SFU’s Summer term (e.g. Spring 2027 and Summer 2027 for one full year space), however exchange students cannot start their exchange in the Summer term.
Nomination and Application Process	In advance of each intake, you will receive a “Nomination form” from SFU by email. Add your students’ details to this form and return to exchange@sfu.ca .
Required Supporting Documents	• Most recent official transcript (in English). ○ Official transcript issued by your home institution on the institution's letterhead and stamp (if applicable). ○ Must be written in English. You may need to request an English translation from your home institution. ○ Must include transcript grading key / legend. ○ Must scan and upload all sides, including transcript grading key / legend, and merged into 1 file. ○ Recommended: include any other higher education transcripts, if applicable (e.g. Bachelor's, transfer institutions). • Colour Passport-style photo (head shot, white- or light-colored background with full-face view, no hats or sunglasses) • Statement of interest (250-500 words statement about your interest in SFU, your study plan, and any relevant academic and international experience)

	• Proof of English Language Proficiency, if required (various documents accepted; see requirements on previous page) NOTE: Students wishing to access “writing-intensive” (courses with “W” after the course number, e.g., CMNS 323W) or “quantitative courses” (courses listed as “Q”), must submit proof of English literacy (including native English speakers) or quantitative background, respectively. For more information, please see Restrictions and Considerations. Students who wish to be registered as graduate students must also submit: • Two academic references (a letter of support from your program supervisor is preferred, and one letter of support from a recent instructor) • Curriculum vitae • Research proposal (only required if students wish to pursue research while at SFU)
Acceptance	When students submit a complete application by the stated deadline, they will receive their SFU Admission Letter as follows: Fall Admission: by end of May Spring Admission: by end of October Students will receive a pdf copy of their admission letter from ISS which can be printed. Partners will be copied on this email. We no longer issue hard copy acceptance letters except in unique circumstances. Graduate applications may take additional time to process. Graduate admission for exchange students is based on student eligibility and also on departmental/faculty capacity. Applicants will be reviewed on an individual basis by their prospective host department/faculty. Graduate admission cannot be guaranteed. A student who cannot be offered graduate admission may be admitted as undergraduate if desired, provided they meet the admission requirements.

ACCOMMODATION INFORMATION

On-Campus

SFU's on-campus residence is located at the Burnaby Campus. It is 5-15 minutes walking distance to most buildings on the Burnaby Campus and approximately 45-60 minutes by public transportation to the Surrey and Vancouver campuses. Places in residence are offered on a first-come-first-serve basis and are **not** guaranteed, so we encourage students to **apply as early as possible**.

For information on SFU's on-campus housing please visit [SFU Residence and Housing](#).

Off-Campus

Students who wish to live off-campus or are not offered a place in on-campus residence, should [Off-Campus webpage](#) for information on off-campus housing.

PRE-ARRIVAL INFORMATION

	SFU has a mandatory primary medical insurance plan for inbound international exchange/study abroad students, called guard.me@SFU . Only students whose home
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Medical Insurance	institutions are within Canada, or who are covered by specific plans can be exempted from guard.me@SFU. "Study abroad" students (who pay tuition and fees to SFU) will also be automatically enrolled into a mandatory secondary insurance plan. For more information, visit Medical Services and Insurance.
Immigration	Students should read the Immigration Documents webpage for the most current information on immigration. Students are welcome to seek advice from SFU's International Student Advisors: intl_advising@sfu.ca Provincial Attestation Letters (PAL) (<i>The information below is current as of September 2025 and is subject to change without notice.</i>): On January 22, 2025 Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) announced that students are exempt from the PAL if "you're an exchange student studying under an exchange arrangement between your home institution and a designated learning institution (DLI) in Canada, and you don't pay tuition fees to the DLI." This means that two-term exchange students who require a study permit and who are not paying tuition to SFU, will no longer need a PAL to come on exchange to SFU. Exchange students applying for a study permit will be required to provide proof of their exemption. SFU will work with your students to provide them with the documentation needed. However, the PAL does still apply to study abroad students who are paying their tuition to SFU. We will be in touch with partners directly who this applies to.
Student Support Services	Academic Accommodation: Students seeking academic accommodations should contact SFU's Centre for Accessible Learning well in advance of their exchange term. Health and Counselling Services: All incoming exchange / study abroad students have access to SFU's Health and Counselling Services should they require medical services, mental health support and resources. My Student Support Program (My SSP): My SSP is a resource designed to support the overall mental health and well-being of students by providing real-time 24/7 access to professional counsellors, with multiple language options. Student Learning Commons (SLC): SFU's Student Learning Commons provides expert and friendly help with academic writing, learning and study strategies in an environment of collaboration, discussion and peer learning, and various academic workshop at no cost.
Orientation	All exchange / study abroad students are enrolled in a mandatory online pre-arrival program, <i>SFU 101: Exchange to SFU</i>, followed by orientation activities at the start of each term. For more information, visit Orientation.
Transportation Pass (U-Pass BC)	All exchange / study abroad students must purchase a U-Pass, which provides students in Metro Vancouver with universal and affordable access to public transit. For more information, visit U-Pass BC.
Other Information	For all other pre-arrival information, please see the following: • Exchange and Study Abroad to SFU • New Students