

English Language Institute

Student Pre-Departure Handbook 2017



UBC English Language Institute
2121 West Mall
Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z4
Canada

Phone: 604.822.1555

Fax: 604.822.1579

www.eli.ubc.ca

(Revised: October 2016)



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Contact Information

English Language Institute

www.eli.ubc.ca

Registration/Accommodation

phone 604.822.1555

fax 604.822.1477

eli.registration@ubc.ca

University of British Columbia

www.ubc.ca

International Student Services

phone 604.822.8999

fax 604.822.9888

Undergraduate Admissions

phone 604.822.3014

fax 604.822.3599

Graduate Admissions

phone 604.822.2848

fax 604.822.5802

Vancouver Tourist Information

www.tourism-vancouver.org

Tourism British Columbia

www.travel.bc.ca

Citizenship and Immigration and Canada

www.cic.gc.ca

Vancouver International Airport

www.yvr.ca

Public Transportation (buses)

www.translink.ca



a place of mind

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Welcome to Vancouver

Vancouver is British Columbia's largest and Canada's third largest city (by population). In addition to spectacular natural surroundings and acres of parkland, Vancouver offers a wide variety of cultural, recreational, and entertainment opportunities.



There are many beautiful areas of the city to visit. Enjoy a sunset stroll along Stanley Park's seawall. Picnic on the beach and watch the bustling city from nearby. Hike, camp, ski, or swim in the natural scenic beauty of the surrounding areas. Enjoy all the resources of a dynamic, multicultural city.

Vancouver is located on the southern end of Canada's Pacific coast. It is approximately a one-hour airplane flight from Seattle, Washington in the United States (U.S.); or three hours by car or bus; or a three-hour flight from Los Angeles, California, U.S.

Planning Your Stay

Before You Leave Your Home Country

- Read this handbook carefully.
- Ensure that your passport and travel documents are updated and in order.
- Obtain the proper documents to enter Canada.
- Arrange for your accommodation while in Vancouver.

What Documents Should You Bring?

Make sure that your documents are in order before you leave your home country. We recommend that you make photocopies of all the following documents and keep them in a safe place:

- Valid passport or travel documents for traveling to Canada.
- Letter of Introduction from the Canadian embassy or consulate (if you are studying more than six months).
- Entry visa (if required for your country).
- Letter of Acceptance from the ELI.
- Current proof of funds available (for example:

Photo by: [Jon Rawlinson](#)



- a bank draft, transfer of funds, credit, or other).
- Credit cards (for example: Visa, MasterCard).
- Emergency contact information (i.e. name and telephone/fax number for your nearest relative).
- Your medical and immunization records (if available).
- A valid international driver's license (if you intend to drive while in Canada).
- A letter from your insurance company detailing your driving record if you intend to drive in Canada (a good driving record will save you money).
- Other photo identification if you do not plan to bring a driver's license.

Canadian Immigration Regulations

In all matters concerning immigration, you are strongly advised to contact the nearest Canadian embassy or consulate for details as well as approximate processing timelines. The website for immigration is www.cic.gc.ca. It is your responsibility to obtain and maintain proper immigration status while in Canada. Students do not require a study permit if they plan to study in Canada for six months or less. If you plan to study for more than six months you must have:

- proof of acceptance to the ELI, and
- proof of sufficient funds to support yourself during your period of study.

You may also be required to complete a medical examination. Once you have the appropriate documentation, bring them with your passport to the Canadian embassy or consulate in your country and ask for an application for a study permit and an entry visa. You must pay an application fee at this time. Make sure you renew your passport well before it expires, as visas cannot be issued beyond the expiry date of the passport.

If you do not initially plan to study for more than six months, but think that you *may* decide to study for more than six months, you should consider obtaining a study permit before leaving your country as some students are unable to switch from a temporary resident (visitor) visa to a study permit from within Canada. Some students are required to either return to their home country or make an application for a switch in the United States. It is best to check for current regulations on changing from a temporary resident visa to a study permit on Immigration Canada's website [here](#).

If you are accepted, the embassy will send you a Letter of Introduction advising you of their decision. Along with this letter will be your entry visa (if your citizenship requires an entry visa to Canada.) Please check the spelling of your name. If it is wrong, insist that the embassy change the spelling before you leave. We advise you to ask embassy officials to issue documents that are valid for your entire period of study. Normally, the Letter of Acceptance that you have received from the ELI will specify your expected dates of attendance.



If you are studying at the ELI for more than 6 months, you should not leave for Canada until you have:

- **received your Letter of Acceptance from the English Language Institute, and**
- **obtained your Letter of Introduction and your entry visa (if required) from a Canadian consulate or embassy.**

When you enter Canada, show your Letter of Introduction to an official when you arrive at Canadian Immigration to obtain your study permit.

If you are visiting or landing in another country on your way to Canada, check the country's consular office before you leave home to see what documents, visas, or immunizations you require for transit.

Entry Visas

If you come from a country that requires you to obtain a visa to enter Canada, consider obtaining a multiple-entry visa. This will allow you to leave Canada and re-enter without having to apply for a new visa. A multiple-entry visa allows you to leave Canada and return again whereas a single-entry visa allows you to enter Canada once only. There is a fee for each entry visa.

If You Plan to Visit the United States

If you wish to visit the United States while studying in Canada and you require a visa to enter the U.S., you must obtain this visa from the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate BEFORE leaving your home country. The U.S. consular office in Vancouver is NOT currently processing any requests for visas.

Cost of Living in Vancouver

Health/Medical Insurance

iMed - Mandatory Private Insurance

You are required to have adequate medical insurance to enroll in UBC-ELI programs. UBC ELI's medical insurance provider is iMed and this will be provided for the duration of your UBC-ELI program. iMed fees will be assessed with the final tuition balance for all students. iMed covers emergency hospitalization and medical services for an unexpected sickness or injury. A copy of your iMed card will be emailed to you approximately one week before the start of your ELI program. You must carry your iMed card with you at all times in case of medical emergency. Please note that it is common practice for hospitals and clinics to charge you up front for medical services even if you show your iMed card. In this case, it is your responsibility to keep all receipts and to make the claims to iMed. You can find more information about iMed prices, coverage and how to make claims here:

www.eli.ubc.ca/application/medical-insurance.html. If you need further assistance related



to iMed, please see a UBC-ELI representative at the ELI.

BC's Medical Services Plan (MSP) – Government Insurance

If you are staying in British Columbia for more than six months and you have obtained a study permit, you MUST purchase government insurance (called the BC Medical Services Plan or MSP). You should apply for it as soon as you arrive in Canada. Application forms are available at the ELI. There is a waiting period of three months before you will be eligible to claim expenses under MSP. All students will be covered by iMed (mandatory private insurance) for this initial waiting period. MSP covers the cost of hospitalization and most services provided by a physician. It does not cover dental care, eyeglasses, or prescription medications. If you need further assistance related to MSP, please see a UBC-ELI representative at the ELI.

How Much Money Should You Bring?



You should bring enough money to cover at least your first month's expenses. You may want to bring cash as well as a debit and credit card. Most foreign debit and credit cards are accepted at Canadian banks. We recommend that you do not carry more than \$200 in cash at any time. A bank and a currency exchange centre are available at the airport. Do not bring traveler's cheques as they are becoming less common in Canada and are difficult to cash.

There are four banks located on campus:

Bank of Montreal (BMO)
#105-2142 Western Parkway
Vancouver, BC V6T 1V6
Phone 604.665.7076
www.bmo.com

Royal Bank of Canada (RBC)
UBC Wesbrook Village
5906 Berton Ave
Vancouver, BC
Phone 604.221.5702
www.rbc.com

Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce (CIBC)
5796 University Boulevard
Vancouver, BC V6T 1K6
Phone 604.221.3550
www.cibc.com

Scotiabank
5960 University Boulevard
Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z3
Phone 604.225.2265
www.scotiabank.com



Estimated Monthly Living Expenses

There are usually significant extra costs in the first month of your stay, such as:

- temporary accommodation
- rental damage deposits (usually 50% of monthly rent if you secure accommodation off-campus), and
- textbooks (Intensive English /English for Academic Purposes Program only)

The first month's expenses can amount to \$1,500 CAD or more for a single student. It is important to have a realistic idea of the amount of money you will need to live in Canada and to plan accordingly.

The following chart is provided to give you an estimate of the monthly cost of living while studying at the ELI. Fees for accommodation services provided by the ELI will vary for different programs.

Accommodation	Cost per day	Cost per Month
Homestay - includes 3 meals per day	\$35 to \$37 CAD	\$1050-\$1110 CAD
Off-Campus (Apartment)	One-bedroom close to UBC	\$800-\$1000 CAD
Campus Residence – no meals (May to August only)	\$32 CAD per night	\$960-\$992 CAD

Public Transportation

Per ride (1 zone)	Monthly bus pass (1 zone)
\$2.75 CAD	\$91 CAD

Prices are subject to change



Medical Insurance

Private - iMED	Government (BC Medical Services Plan)
\$280 (16 weeks IEP/EAP) \$145 (8 weeks IEP/EAP) \$80 (3-4 weeks program)	(only if in BC for more than 6 months) \$75 CAD X number of months

Meals (Note: Homestay cost includes 3 meals per day)

	On-Campus (cafeterias)	Off-Campus (restaurants)	Off-Campus (groceries)
Breakfast	\$6 CAD	\$8 CAD	
Lunch	\$8 CAD	\$10 CAD	
Dinner	\$10 CAD	\$20 CAD	
Total per day	\$24 CAD	\$38 CAD	
x 30 days	= \$720 CAD	= \$1140 CAD	= \$400 CAD

Miscellaneous (entertainment, clothing, etc.)

\$175 - 250 CAD per month
\$250 - 300 CAD Textbooks (Intensive English/English for Academic Purposes only)

Prices are subject to change

This table of cost estimates should be used as a guideline only. The figures do not include travel or tuition costs. Please note that there are additional costs associated with most extra-curricular activities. In addition, there is a Provincial Sales Tax (PST) of 7% and a Goods and Services tax (GST) of 5% on most goods and services purchased in BC.

Important Registration Policies & Guidelines

ELI Terminology	The following are definitions of terms commonly used at the ELI:
Program	Program used to define the type of academic study in which students register (i.e. Intensive English Program or English for the Global Citizen).
Session	This is an offering of a program. Sessions may either be referred to by a seasonal name (i.e. summer session) or by starting month of the session (i.e. May session).
Term	This refers to half of a session of the Intensive English /English for Academic Purposes Program. Terms are 8 weeks long and each IEP/EAP is comprised of two 8-week terms, referred to as Term 1 and Term 2.



Deposits	Deposits are the non-refundable portions of tuition. Deposits are paid towards each session's/term's tuition and will hold a space in the program for the student until one month before the start date of the session/term. After that time, if the program fills up, and the balance of tuition remains unpaid, the ELI reserves the right to cancel the registration and give the space to another student.
Balance of Tuition	The balance of tuition is the full tuition less the non-refundable deposit plus the medical insurance fee [i.e. \$6550 (tuition for the Winter/Summer/Fall 2017 IEP/EAP) less \$600 (deposit) plus \$280 (medical insurance fee) equals \$6230].
Homestay	Homestay is living with a Canadian family. The actual homestay fee (\$35/night for IEP/EAP and \$37/night for short programs) is paid directly to the host family and will include 3 meals per day. It is available year-round. Homestay placement begins on the first day of the session for all programs. For students beginning in Term 2 of the IEP/EAP, homestay begins two days before the program begins. All students going into homestay must attend a homestay orientation before meeting their families.
Pre-Homestay Accommodation	This is the temporary accommodation located on campus that students use to stay from their day of arrival until they go into homestay. It is available only starting on the Saturday or Sunday (and Mondays if the program starts on Tuesday) immediately before the start date of each session. For students starting in Term 2 of the IEP/EAP, pre-Homestay is not available. Students starting their studies in Term 2 go directly to homestay. Depending on the time of year and which dormitories are available, students may share a room with two or three other students of the same sex.
Campus Stay	The campus dormitories are only available for "English for the Global Citizen", and "Business English" students during the summer months (May, June and July). Students go directly into Campus Stay and may arrive as early as two days before the program begins. They will stay in either single or double furnished rooms and will share facilities such as washrooms and common areas. There are no cooking facilities in the dormitories but meals are available at cafeterias and food outlets around campus. Bed sheets will be provided but students must bring their own towels.



Airport Welcome

This service is available for groups of ten people or more ONLY. For individual students, you can take a taxi cab to your destination. Once you have cleared Customs and Immigration, please go outside through the glass doors on your left. You will see many taxi cabs lined up. The approximate cost from the airport to UBC is \$40-\$46. Each taxi cab has a meter on which you will be able to see the exact amount once you arrive.

Socio-cultural Activities

These are extra-curricular activities and they usually have additional fees. In general, there will be at least one weekend trip outside of Vancouver (i.e. Whistler, Victoria, etc.) and many after class and evening outings. Students sign up and pay at the ELI only for those activities in which they are interested.



Cultural Assistants

Cultural assistants are commonly referred to as “CAs”. They are university students who are hired to organize and run socio-cultural activities. They provide students with many opportunities to practice their conversational skills.

Important Dates

Balance of Tuition DUE	1 month before each session/term start date (You may be able to register on the first day of the program if space is still available)
Accommodation Form and Payment DUE	4 weeks before your program start date
Accommodation Information sent to Student	Approximately 2 weeks before your session/term start date
Testing and Orientation at ELI	First two days of program
Homestay Placement Day (subject to change)	First day of the session for: Intensive English, English for Academic Purposes, English for the Global Citizen and Business English.



Late Arrivals

It is the student's and/or their representative's responsibility to notify the ELI in writing by email of any change in plans before his/her session/term starts. Students who anticipate arriving late **MUST** obtain approval from the ELI before they arrive. All application fees and program deposits are non-refundable and non-transferable. Unapproved late arrivals will not be accepted into the session.

Postponement of Registration

It is the student's and/or their representative's responsibility to notify the ELI in writing of any change in plans before his/her session/term starts. Students will be allowed to postpone their start date only **ONCE**. The new start date must be within one year of the original start date and you may select a new start date from any of the dates published on our website. Your deposit or full tuition will be transferred to the new session. We require a minimum of one week written notice that you wish to postpone your start date, or the cancellation schedule will apply (see Cancellation of Registration). Students are permitted to transfer the deposit only to a study period in which they are not yet registered. If there is an increase in fees, payment for the difference is required by the stated deadline for final payment.

Cancellation of Registration

It is the student's and/or their representative's responsibility to notify the ELI in writing within the timelines provided of any change in plans before his/her session starts. All application fees and program deposits are non-refundable and non-transferable. Requests to cancel a program must be made in writing to the ELI and require a brief explanation for the withdrawal. The following chart lists the schedule for refunds. It is important to notify the ELI as soon as you decide to cancel. The last day for the ELI to receive written notice is as follows:

Intensive English/English for Academic Purposes Program

Withdrawal Deadline	Refund
7 days before the first day of the program (testing day)	100% of the balance of tuition
Up to and including Friday of week two	70% of the balance of tuition
After Friday of week two	No refund

Short Programs

Withdrawal Deadline	Refund
7 days before the first day of the program (testing day)	100% of the balance of tuition
Up to and including the third day of classes	70% of the balance of tuition
After the third day of classes	No refund



The balance of tuition is the full course fee less the non-refundable and non-transferable deposit. If full tuition has been paid at the time of registration, the equivalent amount of the program deposit is considered to be non-refundable and non-transferable from the full tuition. Refunds will be made to the person who paid the tuition. This may be a third party. Refunds for payments made by credit card **MUST** be credited back to the credit card originally used to pay for the original transaction. For payments received by debit, cash, bank draft, or money order, the University's finance department will issue a cheque. Refunds normally take 4-6 weeks to process.

Visa Denial

The deposit required for each session will be refunded only in cases where Citizenship and Immigration Canada has denied the applicant a study permit and the following conditions are met:

- You notify us immediately in writing about your visa denial or delay, at least seven days before the program starts.
- The ELI receives the original letter of visa denial within 30 days from the date shown on the letter.

ELI Accommodation Services

The ELI accommodation staff arrange for homestay placement, pre-homestay accommodation and campus accommodation. Students who want to make their own arrangements should turn to the section called "Independent Accommodation Arrangements". All students are encouraged to apply for accommodation services as early as possible. This will ensure there is sufficient time to make the best arrangements for you. In addition, these services are available on a first come first served basis.

Married? With Children?

We strongly advise that your family not accompany you when you first come to Canada, especially if you do not have long-term accommodation secured.

Finding convenient temporary accommodation for a family can be difficult and expensive. We suggest you arrange for your family to arrive at a later date in order to give you time to familiarize yourself with Vancouver and to secure accommodation before their arrival. Please note that homestay is available **ONLY** for individual students registered in ELI programs and is not available for families.

Homestay



Photo by: [Joe Mabel](#)



Homestay is a private room in a house or an apartment with English-speaking residents of Vancouver. It offers students an opportunity to learn more about Canadian culture while improving their English. Accommodation staff will visit each family, and take great care when matching families with students.

Homestay is available year-round. The daily cost includes a furnished room (linen and towels are provided) with three meals a day, including a packed lunch on school days. Students usually travel within 60 minutes by bus from their homestay to the UBC campus.



Canadian host families come from many different cultures. They may originally be from Europe, the Philippines, China, India, South America, or any other part of the world. They may also be second generation Canadians. A host family may be a family with or without children, an older couple, a single parent, or even a single person. ELI families may live in small apartments, small houses, or large houses. They may or may not have a car. Many Canadian families keep dogs or cats as pets in their homes.

While studying at the ELI, we hope students will not only improve their English language skills, but also broaden their outlook by learning to live with and meet people of different cultures. You will also learn to cope with new experiences in an environment different from what you experience at home. Culture shock is a very real condition caused by cultural and environmental changes over which you have little control. For some people, adjusting to a new culture can be very challenging – be patient, it will take time for you to settle.

Although there may be similarities between the way of life in Canada and that of your home country, there will certainly be many differences. Standards of living may be higher or lower than what you are accustomed to and we hope you will realize that quality of life is determined by people's general approach to life – not by their possessions.

Try to set realistic goals so that you will have the greatest chance to have a successful and positive experience. If you have unrealistic ideas about your stay in Canada, remember that most disappointments are the result of your own expectations. If you give yourself and your host family some time, you will discover that the differences between cultures are not "right" or "wrong" ...just different.

Keep in mind that you are coming to Vancouver to study English, and total immersion in the language is the best way to improve your skills. The English Language Institute promotes an ENGLISH ONLY environment to encourage students to speak English at all



times. To gain the maximum benefit of your time abroad, you should take an active part in the school, community and host family activities. Try to keep an open mind. Remember nothing is better or worse than it was at home – it is different. Treat every event as a learning experience and be willing to try new things.

Living with a host family is not like living in a hotel. In homestay you will be expected to participate in the family's daily activities. This includes helping out with daily work, such as setting the table or washing the dishes. In Canada we do not have maids, so all family members help with the daily work. Helping your host family is a good way to practice English.

While in Canada, you will be seen as a representative of your country and as such, you should behave in a manner that reflects well on your family and country. You should show tolerance, mutual respect, and cultural sensitivity at all times.

Students are expected to obey Canadian laws at all times. You are expected to accept and respect the host family and their rules. You must give yourself and the host family a chance to get used to each other – this usually takes a few days. It is your responsibility to adjust to your new environment. ELI staff are available to assist you with any difficulties you may encounter. It is our goal to ensure that the homestay experience is fulfilling and rewarding for the students and the host families.

Please note that smoking is not permitted inside most buildings in Vancouver. Unless otherwise specified, smoking is not permitted in your host family's home. Many families will accept students that smoke, however you may have to go outside to smoke.

If you decide that you want to leave homestay or change host families, you **MUST** give a minimum of 30 days' notice to your host family and advise the Accommodation Office of your intention to move. In the first week of the program, there will be a detailed Homestay Orientation Session for all students entering homestay. Attendance at this Homestay Orientation Session is mandatory. Those students who fail to attend the orientation **WILL NOT** be placed in homestay.

Student Responsibilities

- Pay within two days of arrival.
- Be ready and waiting on pick-up day.
- Never allow relatives or friends to visit or "inspect" the host family's home upon the student's arrival.
- Give 30 days' notice to families of intention to depart the homestay.
- Follow basic house rules.
- Do not smoke inside the house (or on the property at all, if specified).
- Demonstrate respect and honesty at all times.



- Show a willingness to prepare your own breakfast and lunch, if required.
- Leave bathroom, kitchen and other areas of the house as clean as they were found.
- Communicate with host family or Homestay Department if there are problems.
- Show a willingness to participate and learn about Canadian culture and individual host family's way of life.
- Accept that access to Internet and computers is entirely at the discretion of the host families and is subject to students' agreement to not download material or visit inappropriate sites. We have computer labs at the school where they can download any attachments or programs that they may need.
- Use telephone cards or call collect for any long distance calls.
- Do not have overnight guests.
- Show a willingness to try foods and do not expect specialty foods or items that the family normally does not eat such as a Halal diet or Kimchi.
- Inform families of plans regarding missed meals or late nights.
- Respect the security of the host family's home and do not give the family's name, address or telephone number to anyone.

Homestay Placement Fee

- \$200 CAD (non-refundable and non-transferable)

The Homestay Placement Fee MUST be submitted with the accommodation form. Homestay begins on the first day of the session for all programs. Most students will require Pre-Homestay Accommodation to cover the time from their arrival to the night before homestay placement. This fee is not included in the homestay placement fee. Please refer to the section titled "Pre-Homestay Accommodation" for more information regarding this service.

Pre-Homestay Accommodation (non-transferable, meals are not included)

Programs starting in:	Pre-Homestay fee
January to May 2017	\$90 CAD / night
June to August 2017	\$32 CAD / night

Students who choose Homestay will need a place to stay before they meet their families on the homestay placement day. Pre-Homestay Accommodation is available only on the Saturday or Sunday (and Monday if the program begins on Tuesday) immediately before each session begins. For students starting in Term 2 of the Intensive English Program/English for Academic Purposes, pre-Homestay is not available.

Campus Stay



- \$100 CAD Campus Placement Fee (non-refundable and non-transferable).
- \$32 - \$90 CAD per night depending on which residence is available (non-transferable). Meals are not included.

Campus Stay is available only for the English for the Global Citizen and Business English Programs (dates are determined on an annual basis). If Campus Stay is not available for the full duration of a session, Campus Stay will not be offered for that session. The fees for this type of accommodation do not include meals. Students may live in single or double furnished rooms. Clean sheets are put in the room once a week, but students must make their own beds and bring their own towels.

Most ELI students are placed in the Place Vanier Residence Complex that consists of ten separate four-story buildings surrounding a central Common Block where the information desk is located. Each



floor of the residences contains common washroom facilities, pay telephones, and a lounge. The Common Block has a snack bar, lounge with a big screen TV, exercise room, and a music room. Please note, there are no cooking facilities in the residences. A variety of hot and cold foods are available on a cash basis in several cafeterias on UBC campus. Unfortunately, there is no meal plan available.

Photo by: [Jeff Hitchcock](#)

Independent Accommodation Arrangements

If you want to live off-campus you are strongly advised to arrive two to three weeks before your studies begin in order to secure off-campus accommodation, as the vacancy rate for apartments in Vancouver is very low. You should not arrive in Vancouver without having reserved temporary accommodation for the initial part of your stay. Off-campus accommodation is increasingly difficult to obtain in the Vancouver area but can be less expensive than on-campus housing. Students should be aware that there is a very high demand for accommodation in Vancouver and that finding something suitable to their taste may take longer than expected. Vancouver accommodation is expensive by Canadian standards.

Unfurnished apartment rents are generally in the range of \$800 to \$1000 CAD per month. Please note that rent prices may or may not include the cost of utilities (such as electricity, heat, and water) in the monthly rent. You may choose to share accommodation with other people in order to reduce expenses. Make sure that you feel comfortable and secure with your prospective roommates before deciding to move in together. A popular form of accommodation is a single room or suite in a private house, often in the basement, with shared bathroom and cooking facilities. The cost for this type of accommodation starts at



about \$500 per month.

Preparing for your Departure

What Should I Pack?

Consider the climate and clothing before you leave your home country. Temperatures vary from an average of 22°C (13°C overnight) during the summer months to 5°C (0°C overnight) in winter. Canadian homes and buildings have central heating so you can wear light clothing indoors. You will need a pair of good walking shoes, as the UBC campus is large.



Photo by: [Solidether](#)

Vancouver is well known for its heavy rainfall so umbrellas, raincoats, and boots are essential items to bring. The heavy rain season lasts from mid-November until mid-February but you can expect light rain often throughout the year. Vancouver usually has a few days of snow and the winters can be windy so bring some warm clothing

including a rain jacket, if you plan to do outdoor activities.

The weather in spring, summer, and fall can be very pleasant. You can take this time to enjoy the outdoor cafés, beaches, parks, and nearby mountains. Bring mostly informal, sporty clothes, as people in Vancouver tend to dress casually. You may wish to bring your cultural dress for special events organized by the ELI as well as formal wear for special occasions.



A bilingual dictionary will be of use to you but you do not need to bring any spices, cooking utensils, or food. Vancouver is a cosmopolitan city and you will probably be able to find all of these here.

The electrical equipment you bring should be compatible with Canadian voltage, which is 110 volts, 60 Hz.

What Can I Bring Into Canada?

For information on what you can legally bring into Canada, contact the Canadian embassy, high commission or consulate in your home country. The Canadian government allows you to bring a reasonable quantity of clothing, books, and other items for personal use but limited amounts of alcohol and tobacco. You may bring all personal effects into Canada duty-free. Make a list of all the items you are bringing, including serial numbers of cameras, stereos, and computers and the approximate value of each.

When Should I Arrive?



To get accustomed to life in Vancouver, we recommend arriving one or two days before the first day of your program. If you have not secured permanent accommodation, you are strongly advised to arrive two to three weeks earlier (please refer to the “Independent Accommodation Arrangements” section). It is also important to arrive in time for the testing and orientation for your program, which will provide valuable information for successful studies and transition to Canadian culture. In addition, you will need some time to familiarize yourself with the University and the city before classes begin.

The best time to arrive on campus is between 09:00 and 15:00 Monday to Friday. University offices are closed Saturdays, Sundays, and public/university holidays. See the list of holidays in 2016 below. Students arriving for January programs should be aware that a number of offices and services on campus will be closed between Christmas and New Year’s Day.

UBC Holidays

2017

Monday, January 2	in lieu of New Year’s Day
Monday, February 13	Family Day
Friday, April 14	Good Friday
Monday, April 17	Easter Monday
Monday, May 22	Victoria Day
Monday, July 3	in lieu of Canada Day
Monday, August 7	BC Day
Monday, September 4	Labour Day
Monday, October 9	Thanksgiving Day
Monday, November 13	in lieu of Remembrance Day
Monday, Dec 25, 2016 to Monday, Jan 1, 2017	Christmas & New Year holidays



Photo by: [Scazon](#)

Reducing Jet Lag

Jet lag results from traveling by plane quickly over many time zones. It can upset the internal “biological clock” which keeps daily habits such as eating and sleeping on a fairly regular cycle. Flying east generally causes more problems than flying west. Daytime sleepiness and difficulty sleeping at night are common symptoms. Others include fatigue, diminished appetite, changes in bowel habits, headaches, irritability, and poor concentration. Jet lag affects nearly all travelers crossing



more than three time zones. The following advice will help reduce symptoms:

- Start well rested.
- Prepare yourself mentally for the actual number of flying hours. Remember that times shown on the plane ticket are local times and may not reflect the total number of hours in flight.
- Wear loose, comfortable shoes during the flight as feet often swell and shoes become tight due to air pressure.
- Set your watch to destination time as soon as you board the plane. Adjust activities such as sleeping and eating during the flight to correspond.
- On the flight, eat light meals and limit alcohol intake.
- Drink a lot of water or juice as the air on the plane is very dry.
- Stretch and walk around the cabin of the plane frequently.
- Rest for the first day or two after arrival in Vancouver. You should get over the jet lag after a few days. Adequate rest, exercise without too much exertion, and eating a balanced diet can help your body adjust to a new country with new time, weather, food, and customs.

At the Airport

We recommend that you carry all of your official documentation on your person rather than in your luggage when you travel. The airport is often a very busy and confusing place. Please watch your luggage carefully.

When you arrive at the Vancouver airport, plan for line-ups in the International Arrivals section, especially in the busy summer season. You will find an Airport Information Booth on Level 3, one floor above International Arrivals.

Photo by: [Matthew5000](#)



Taxis

Taxis are available on a 24-hour basis at the Vancouver airport. If you have a lot of baggage, this is a good option. The cost is approximately \$40-\$46 to UBC or Vancouver. It is common to tip the driver (usually an additional 10-15% of fare).

For those who have a small amount of baggage, public transit is an option (Canada Line SkyTrain).

Public Transit

It is not advisable to take city buses if you are carrying heavy bags. The public transit system is called "Translink" in Vancouver. You may catch the Canada Line SkyTrain outside the airport. You can purchase a Compass Card at the SkyTrain terminal, which is a plastic,



reloadable fare card. You can store fare money on it and use it on all buses and SkyTrains.

More information can be found here (<http://www.translink.ca/en/Fares-and-Passes/Compass-Card.aspx>). There are different ways to get to campus. The easiest way to plan your trip is to go to the Translink website (www.translink.ca) and use the Trip Plan button. Enter your starting place as “Airport, 3880 Grant McConachie Way, Richmond” and your destination as “UBC Loop”. You will get different routes to get you to your destination. This is a very useful website for you to use while you are in Vancouver.



You may ask the bus driver to let you off at the stops indicated on your route. The student residences and the ELI are approximately a 10-15 minute walk from the final bus stop on campus (known as the Bus Loop). The student residences’ front desks are open between 06:00 to 24:00 (midnight) for you to check-in.

Safety

Vancouver is fairly safe even though it is a large city by Canadian standards. Students are advised to be aware of their surroundings and to take the appropriate precautions. Keep these safety measures in mind:

- Do not carry large sums of cash with you.
- Never leave your belongings unattended.
- If you are staying alone for your first few days, do not open your door to anyone you do not know.
- Never get into a car with any people you do not know.
- It is important to remember that there is no place in the world that is completely safe. You must do your best to be responsible and practice personal safety at all times.
- In the case of an emergency, dial “911” from any telephone to contact Fire, Ambulance, or Police for immediate assistance.

Hints for a Successful Stay



The first day of school for the Intensive English/English for Academic Purposes Program will begin at 08:00 at the English Language Institute. The first day of school for the English for the Global Citizen and Business English will begin at 09:15 at the English Language (2121 West Mall). You will receive more information about your program once you have arrived. First, check in with a cultural assistant. You will then be tested and/or interviewed to determine



your level of English. There will also be an orientation to your program, to the campus and to the city of Vancouver. You will find out about the recreational facilities available on campus and how to obtain a library card. If you are going into homestay, you will also attend an orientation before you meet your host family.

We have found that the most successful students are those who come with a positive attitude and a willingness to try new things. Students should be aware that they will be challenged and how they meet challenges will determine their success. Students should think about why they are coming to the ELI and what they plan to achieve while they study here. Learning English is one part of studying abroad. Living in another diverse culture is equally important.

The university's motto is "Tuum Est" which is Latin for "It's up to you". Taking this phrase to heart is essential in making the most of your experience.

Best of Luck!

We are sure you will find your time at the ELI to be a fulfilling experience. During your first days, you may feel homesick, lonely, or worried. It is natural to experience periods of disorientation and anxiety as you adjust to a new culture and learning environment without the support of your family and friends from home. Remember that you can always turn to the staff at the ELI for support, information, and advice.

We look forward to meeting you!



The English Language Institute gratefully acknowledges UBC International Student Services for the use of the information from their Pre-Arrival Handbook (31st Edition).

