



Exchange program • Fact sheet • 2025-2026

Information for Exchange Partners & Prospective Inbound Students

International Mobility Office

Building 255, Vancouver Island University
VIU International
900 Fifth Street, Nanaimo
BC V9R 5S5, Canada

[Inbound Exchange Students General](#)

Contacts

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Dates and deadlines

Nominations are accepted by email from VIU exchange partner institutions bi-annually. Please include student name, email, program area, exchange period & duration (1-2 semesters).

Fall Semester:

Deadlines for Partner Nominations: **March 15 for the following Fall Semester**
Deadline for Student Applications: **March 31 for the following Fall Semester**

Spring Semester:

Deadlines for Partner Nominations: **September 15th for the following Spring semester**
Deadline for Student Applications: **September 30th for the following Spring semester**

Late nominations may be accepted depending on program and course availability.

Academic calendar

	Fall Semester	Spring Semester
International Orientation	August 25, 2025	Jan 6-10, 2025
First Day of Classes	Sep 2, 2025	Jan 6, 2025
Last Day of Classes	Dec 5, 2025	April 11, 2025
Exam Period	Dec 8–17, 2025	April 14 –25, 2025

VIU Schedule of Dates: viu.ca/registration/dates-and-deadlines

There are no academic classes for exchange students during summer semester (May–August).

Fact sheet • For inbound exchange • 2025-2026

Programs and courses • Undergraduate Studies

VIU offers exchange options for Bachelor/Undergraduate programs only. Masters/Graduate & the English Language Centre programs are excluded. If the program you are interested in is not listed contact InternationalMobility@viu.ca to inquire.

Open Academic Programs

Registration for these courses is open to all students but classes will fill quickly.

Management Business (Accounting, Economics, Financial Services, Human Resource Management, International Business, Management & Marketing)

Arts & Humanity English, Literature, History, Media Studies, Indigenous Studies, French, Spanish, Japanese

Social Sciences Anthropology, Geography, Global Studies, Liberal Studies, Philosophy, Political Science, Sociology, Psychology

Science & Technology Math, Chemistry, Earth Sciences, 1 year of Physics/Engineering, Astronomy, Biology

Open “Limited Entry” Programs

Course seats are reserved for cohorts. If space is available, exchange students may register in these classes.

Management Tourism Management, Recreation & Sport Management, Hospitality Management

Arts & Humanities Graphic Design, Visual Arts, Interior Design, Jazz, Theatre

Social Sciences Criminology

Science & Technology Computer Science, Fisheries & Aquaculture, Forestry, Resource Management

Admissions - How to apply

Once nominated, apply online: apply.educationplannerbc.ca

Tips: under ‘Immigration Status in Canada’, select “Non-Canadian, No Visa Status (student is studying outside Canada)”; under ‘Student Type’, select ‘Short-term exchange or visiting student (e.g. 1 or 2 semesters) from a VIU partner university’; then select the closest program to your area of study at your home university.

Application fee: Exchange students do not pay the \$150 application fee. You must enter your individual Application Fee Waiver Code (sent in your welcome email from VIU’s Education Abroad office).

Supporting documents to submit at time of application:

1. University transcripts
2. Copy of the photo page of your passport
3. Proof of English language proficiency*
4. Certified English translation of any documents issued in a language other than English

* **Proof of English language proficiency** is required from applicants for whom English is not their first language or from those whose education was completed in any country where English is not the official language. Minimum score requirements:

IELTS 6.5 (with no band under 6.0) · DAAD (CEF B2 or equivalent) · TOEFL IBT 88 (with no section under 20)

We strongly advise prospective Exchange students to submit proof of English proficiency results at the time of application. In the absence of these results, you may only receive a conditional acceptance. Full acceptance is subject to submission of English proficiency results at least two months prior to the commencement of your study period. Without timely demonstration that you meet VIU’s required English proficiency benchmark, your acceptance will be revoked. For a full list of tests to demonstrate English language proficiency, visit international.viu.ca/admissions

IMMIGRATION/VISA STATUS IN CANADA
Non-Canadian, No Visa Status (student is studying outside Canada)

STUDENT TYPE
PLEASE CHOOSE THE CATEGORY THAT BEST DESCRIBES YOU. (required)
Short-term exchange or visiting student (e.g. 1 or 2 semesters) from a VIU partner university

Application Fee
An application fee is required for each submitted application.
To change your application after it is submitted, please contact the Admissions department at Vancouver Island University.

PAYMENT OPTIONS

I will pay by credit card when submitting my application.

I have an approved application fee waiver.

(Not Specified)

ENTER WAIVER CODE HERE:
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Fact sheet • For inbound exchange • 2025-2026

Registration • How to enrol in courses

Course registration for Fall & Spring semesters takes place in May and courses fill quickly so prompt action is key to secure seats.

Accepted students will receive their individual registration date and instructions by email. Plan your course registrations in advance using the VIU Timetable system. Visit international.viu.ca/course-registration for more information and for an online tutorial.

If you'd like further advice on course registration, please book an appointment with an International Advisor here: services.viu.ca/advising/meet-academic-advisor

Prerequisites

Students must demonstrate that they hold the necessary prerequisites for their prospective courses at VIU. In addition to official transcripts, VIU may request additional documentation such as course descriptions or syllabi to confirm prerequisites are met.

VIU English & Literature Courses:

Students who come from countries where the language of instruction is not in English may take ENGL 115, 125 or 135 during their first semester of study, and ENGL 115, 125, 135, 204 or 207 during their second semester of study.

Academic course load

Course delivery generally includes a combination of assignments, group activities, project work, midterms and exams throughout the semester.

- Minimum: 3 courses (9 credits)
- Maximum: 5 courses (15 credits)
- Full course load: 5 courses (15 credits)

If registered in more credits/courses, the applicable international tuition & fees will apply and the student will be responsible for completing payment by the appropriate deadline or may be subject to late fee charges. Visit international.viu.ca/fees

Course fees

Exchange programs are run on a reciprocal basis and students pay tuition fees to their home institutions. The application fee, tuition fees, student society and activity fees are waived for exchange students. Students are responsible for all other costs (housing, books, transportation, medical insurance, study permit if required, etc).

Mandatory medical insurance

Students are required to have adequate insurance while studying in Canada and inbound exchange students are **automatically enrolled in a Guard.Me plan for their duration of study**, as they are ineligible for medical insurance through the VIU Student Union (VIUSU). Exceptions may be made for virtual exchange where the student does not travel to Canada. The approximate cost is \$246 per semester (4 months' coverage).

Studying at VIU for 2 semesters (not applicable for 2025/26): Exchange students are unable to opt-out of Guard.Me, even if they attend VIU for more longer than 3 months, as they will not meet the 6 month BC residency requirement to be eligible for a provincial medical services plan until mid way through their second semester of [Guard.Me](https://www.guard.me) coverage — see [Eligibility for MSP - Province of British Columbia \(gov.bc.ca\)](https://www.bccsa.gov.bc.ca/eligibility-for-msp)

Please note: **VIU will verify that insurance has been paid for prior to arrival** and could impose cancellation/withdrawal from the Exchange program and any VIU courses if payment is not received in advance.

Living expenses

General living expenses can be **\$1,000—\$1,500 CAD per month depending** on lifestyle and accommodations. Use the cost calculator to get an estimate, including books, transit, housing, food, etc. Note: Tuition, activity fees, and student union fees do not apply to exchange students but will appear in the estimate.

VIU Cost Calculator: international.viu.ca/cost-calculator for more information.



Fact sheet • For inbound exchange • 2025-2026

Traveling to Nanaimo

Nanaimo is located on Vancouver Island in British Columbia (BC), Canada. Review these travel tips that explain travel by airplane or ferry: international.viu.ca/your-arrival. Students should plan to arrive in time to attend the [International Student Orientation](#).

Air Travel: Can be arranged directly to the Nanaimo airport (YCD)

Ferry: There are two ferry routes from Vancouver (bcferries.com) Horseshoe Bay to Departure Bay (recommended for transit availability) or Tsawwassen to Duke Point. There is also [Hullo ferry](#) arriving downtown.

Pick Up: There is no airport pick up for students staying in on-campus residences or off-campus.

Acommodation

The housing market is competitive and short-term rentals may be difficult to secure. Please see our housing resources for international students: international.viu.ca/housing for more information.

VIU student life

Extensive social and recreation programs and facilities are also available, allowing students to explore the unique region through field trips, tours, activities and intramurals. Students can register prior to arrival. Fees apply.

Student Activities: international.viu.ca/student-life-and-activities

Campus Recreation: viu.ca/campusrec

VIU Students' Union Clubs & Events: viusu.ca

Students services and supports

VIU is committed to the success and wellbeing of all students, as demonstrated through the wide array of services available such as advising, counseling, disability services, health & wellness centre, gym facilities & weight room, outdoor recreation and services for aboriginal students. Please see our online information for details.

Student Affairs: services.viu.ca/student-affairs

Support Services: international.viu.ca/student-support