

ENGLISH
LANGUAGE
CENTRE@UVIC

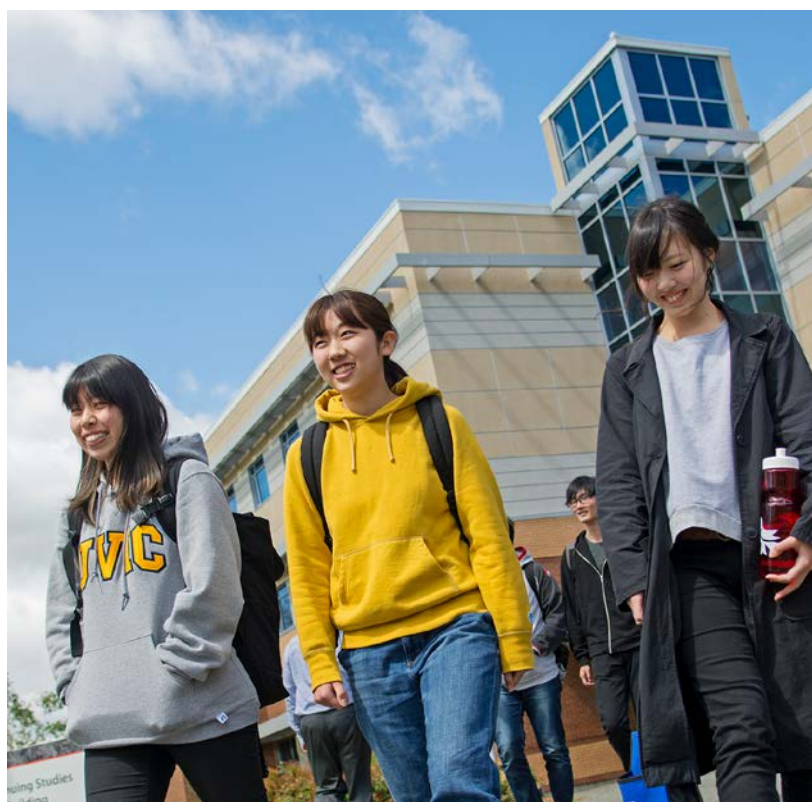


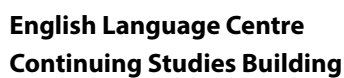
University
of Victoria




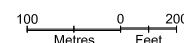
Pre-Arrival Handbook

Welcome to Victoria, British Columbia, Canada!





-  Welcome Centre
-  Student Wellness Centre
-  Food Service Outlet
-  Bus Stop
-  Parkade
-  EV Charging Station



WELCOME



Dear Student,

We are looking forward to welcoming you to the UVic English Language Centre soon!

As an ELC student you can expect to:

- speak English in many situations every day
- gain confidence using your English skills
- meet friends from all over the world
- learn about Canadian culture
- explore the city of Victoria
- make memories that will last a lifetime!

We have created this “Pre-Arrival Handbook” to prepare you for an enjoyable, successful experience studying with us. We hope you find this information helpful.

Have a safe trip and we'll see you soon - in Victoria!

~ ELC Staff, Teachers and Cultural Assistants



Program schedules:
[continuingstudies.uvic.ca/elc/
current-students](https://continuingstudies.uvic.ca/elc/current-students)



New Student Checklist:
[continuingstudies.uvic.ca/
upload/ELC/PDF/current-
students/ELC-New-Student-
Checklist.pdf](https://continuingstudies.uvic.ca/upload/ELC/PDF/current-students/ELC-New-Student-Checklist.pdf)



VISAS / DOCUMENTS



It is your responsibility to obtain the correct documents to enter and study in Canada. You can confirm which documents you will need and learn about the application process by visiting the "Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada" website:
www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship.html

At the Border

When you arrive in Canada, a Canada Border Services Agency officer will ask to see the documents listed below. Please carry these items with you:

- Valid passport or other accepted travel document
- Valid temporary resident visa or Electronic Travel Authorization (eTA) (if required)
- Valid study permit or letter of introduction that shows you have been approved for a study permit (if required)
- Valid letter of acceptance from UVic
- Copy of all documents in your visitor or study permit application



Study Permit information:
canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/study-canada/study-permit.html



Electronic Travel Authorization (eTA) information:
canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/visit-canada/eta/facts.html

MEDICAL INSURANCE + STUDENT SERVICES



As an international student at UVic, you will receive the following benefits upon payment of your program's Student Services Fee:

- Comprehensive medical insurance provided by guard.me@UVCS
- A bus pass valid for the duration of your studies
- Access to UVic's world-class athletic facility, "CARSA"
- Expanded access to UVic student clubs, organizations and events

Medical Insurance

The cost of healthcare in Canada is very high for those who do not have health insurance. Without coverage, you could be denied treatment or pay thousands of dollars each day for medical services.

As a result, in order to ensure medical issues do not cause you financial difficulty while you are studying with us, we automatically enroll you in the guard.me@UVCS plan when you register in our English program. Your coverage will be effective the Friday before your program start date until the Monday after your program end date.



Guard.me@UVCS Health Plan:
guard.me/uvcs



MSP Application Information:
[www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/
health/health-drug-coverage/
msp/bc-residents/eligibility-and-
enrolment/how-to-enrol](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/health-drug-coverage/msp/bc-residents/eligibility-and-enrolment/how-to-enrol)



WHAT TO PACK



Clothing

June – August: Weather is generally sunny and dry. Bring lighter summer clothes and a warm jacket to wear in the evening

September – May: Bring warm shoes/boots, a warm jacket, a raincoat, gloves, a hat and a scarf

All Year Optional: Semi-formal clothing to wear to the farewell event at the end of your program. Many students wear a skirt, dress, dress shirt or suit to this special event.

If you forget to pack any of these items, don't worry! You can buy them in Victoria. Cultural Assistants, teachers, your host family and/or classmates can give you tips on where to shop.

Other Items

- A voltage converter and plug adaptor if needed. Canada's electricity is 110 volts, 60 Hz
- A 90 day supply of any medications you require (in the original packaging and with a prescription from your doctor)
- Cultural items (including traditional clothing if you want) to remind you of home, show to your host family and for cultural presentations that are part of many programs
- Towels if you are living in the UVic dormitories
- An umbrella



**7-Day
Victoria Weather forecast:**
[theweathernetwork.com/ca/
weather/british-columbia/
victoria](http://theweathernetwork.com/ca/weather/british-columbia/victoria)

MONEY + BUDGET



In Canada, we use “Canadian dollars” (CAD). You will find bank machines at the airport when you arrive in Canada, but we recommend exchanging enough money before your trip for expenses like airport taxes, food and transportation. Major credit cards (Visa, MasterCard, American Express) are accepted almost everywhere. Most Canadians use their debit cards on a daily basis.

Your Budget

Your program tuition includes many free activities, but for daily spending money and optional ELC activities, you’ll need some extra money. It’s a good idea to budget \$200 - \$400 for extra activities during your program.



Cost of Living in Victoria:
expatistan.com/cost-of-living/victoria-canada



**Find today’s CAD
exchange rate here:**
xe.com



ARRIVING AT VICTORIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (YYJ)



We strongly recommend flying to Victoria International Airport (YYJ) when you arrive in Canada for the start of your program.

After a long flight to Vancouver, you will be very happy to take another 20-minute flight to Victoria instead of adding more hours to your trip by taking a bus and ferry to Vancouver Island. Save that experience for a weekend adventure during your program when you can really enjoy it!

Flights to Victoria should be reserved through your travel agent or online. Two of the main Canadian airlines that fly to Victoria are Air Canada and West Jet. Some of their routes offer direct flights to Canada without stopping in the USA.

- **Airport pick-up information for UVic homestay students:** Go to page 10.

- **Airport pick-up information for students staying in UVic dormitories:** Go to page 11.



YYJ Airport App
victoriaairport.com



**Airport Pick-Up for
Homestay & Dormitory**
[continuingstudies.uvic.ca/elc/
how-to-apply/before-you-arrive](http://continuingstudies.uvic.ca/elc/how-to-apply/before-you-arrive)

ARRIVING AT VANCOUVER INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (YVR)



Remember: Victoria is located on Vancouver Island, which is different from the city of Vancouver! If your final flight destination is Vancouver International Airport... you're not in Victoria yet! You will need to take a BC ferry to Vancouver Island in one of these ways:

- 1) The BC Ferries Connector bus is the best way to get from Vancouver Airport to Victoria. It leaves directly from the airport and offers bus-ferry-bus service to downtown Victoria. Book online before boarding the bus which will be directly outside the terminal. Cost: about \$100 one-way.
- 2) You can take a taxi from Vancouver airport to the ferry terminal in Tsawwassen (30 minutes south of Vancouver). You will then buy a ferry ticket and board the ferry to Swartz Bay (Victoria). Outside the ferry terminal you can take a taxi downtown or to UVic. Cost: about \$160.
- 3) You can take the Vancouver SkyTrain from Vancouver Airport Station to Bridgeport Station. You will then take the #620 bus to the Tsawwassen Terminal, where you will buy a ticket and board the ferry to Swartz Bay (Victoria). Outside the ferry terminal, board the #70 or #72 bus downtown. Ask your bus driver where to transfer to buses going to UVic. Cost: about \$35.



YVR Navigation Guide:
yvr.ca/en/passengers/navigate-yvr



**BC Ferries Connector
bus service:**
bcfconnector.com/tickets



AIRPORT PICK-UP: HOMESTAY



Most students receive their host family's contact information 2 weeks before the program start date. As soon as you receive this information, contact your host to introduce yourself and to share your flight details. This is very important, so that you can arrange for pick-up in Victoria at the airport or at another location.

When your host family meets you at the airport or arrival location, they will generally hold up a sign with your name on it. If you have shared photos, you might recognize one another.

If your flight is delayed, or if your host is not at the agreed-upon arrival location when you arrive, you should:

- Call their cell phone numbers and leave a message to tell them where you are waiting for them. Victoria Airport has free Wifi if you need to contact your host family.
- Go to the Airport Information Booth (Red Coats Volunteers - located in the Arrivals area) and ask if your host family has left a message for you.



Homestay flight details and arrival:

*[continuingstudies.uvic.ca/
upload/ELC/PDF/Where-to-stay/
Students/Your-Flight-Details-
and-Arrival-in-Victoria.pdf](https://continuingstudies.uvic.ca/upload/ELC/PDF/Where-to-stay/Students/Your-Flight-Details-and-Arrival-in-Victoria.pdf)*



Homestay Student Manual
*[online.pubhtml5.com/ggaa/
pebw/#p=1](https://online.pubhtml5.com/ggaa/pebw/#p=1)*

AIRPORT PICK-UP: DORMITORY



"Arrival Day" is the day before your program begins if you are attending a Summer Language and Culture program in July or August. If you arrive at the Victoria Airport on this day, our ELC Cultural Assistant staff will be there to greet you and help you to find shuttle bus transportation to UVic.

The shuttle takes 30-40 minutes to get to UVic. Once you arrive at UVic, another team of Cultural Assistants will help you check in at the UVic Housing Office, where you will receive your UVic meal card and directions to your dormitory room.

If you are **not** arriving at UVic on "Arrival Day," our Cultural Assistant staff will not be at the airport. Luckily, the Victoria airport is small and you will easily find your luggage and transportation to UVic by **1) shuttle bus** or **2) taxi**:

1) Lucky to Go shuttle tickets can be purchased online. You should buy a ticket to Capital City Station and then take the city bus (BC Transit) to UVic.

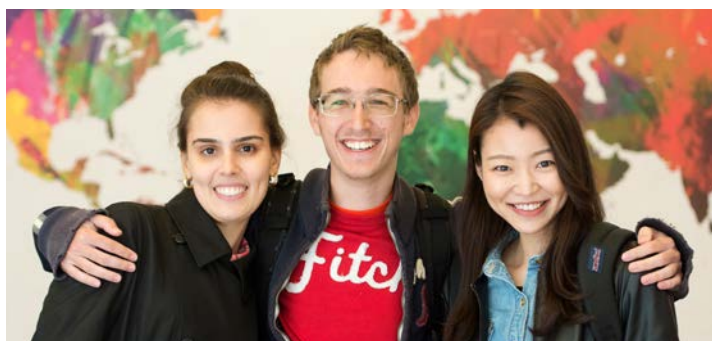
2) Taxis in Victoria wait outside the "Arrivals" area of the airport. It takes about 20-25 minutes to get to UVic. Ask your driver to stop at the UVic Housing Office in Parking lot #5.



Airport shuttle information:
yyjairportshuttle.com



**Google maps to locate UVic
Housing Office:**
www.google.ca/maps



ENGLISH LANGUAGE CENTRE @UVIC





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ELC on social media

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-  /UVicHomestayFamilies
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-  @elc_uvic
-  /EnglishLanguageUVic

In Spanish

-  /VenyViveVictoria
-  @VenyViveVictori

In Mandarin

-  /uvicpathway



UVic virtual tour