INCOMING EXCHANGE STUDENTS

Before You Arrive | 2018

BRIGHTER WORLD

McMaster University
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Welcome to McMaster

A Welcome from McMaster’s President and Vice-Chancellor, Patrick Deane

Welcome to McMaster University. My congratulations on your admission to McMaster as an incoming exchange student. May I be the first to welcome you to our beautiful campus on the shores of Lake Ontario, in the vibrant city of Hamilton.

McMaster’s international reputation, award-winning teaching, and innovative research programs make our university an ideal study abroad destination. With over 300 student clubs and societies, there are a myriad of academic, peer and community connections supporting a diverse student population, and many opportunities for personal growth and development.

At McMaster we prize the diversity of our student body and value the critically important role that our international students play. As an institution, we seek to be globally engaged, to consider and understand diverse perspectives, and to equip our students to live as global citizens, able to consider and help solve the big issues facing our world. Building friendships, partnerships and collaborations with institutions across the globe, and welcoming international and exchange students into our community, is a crucial component of our mandate as we seek to create a Brighter World.

I commend you on your initiative and your curiosity in pursuing this unique opportunity for cultural exchange. I wish you much success during your time in Ontario and am proud to welcome you as our newest members of the McMaster community.

Sincerely,

Patrick Deane
Welcome to Canada

Canada has two official languages: English and French. The bilingual character of our country is a fundamental part of our national identity! Official symbols of Canada include the colours on our flag (red and white), the beaver, maple tree, and ice hockey, among others. Canada values multiculturalism and strives to ensure that all citizens maintain their unique identities, take pride in their ancestry and have a sense of belonging. Before you arrive, take some time to learn more about Canadian identity, history and culture.

The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) is Canada’s national public radio and television broadcaster. Also available in French as Radio-Canada, it offers news, ideas, and culture.

“Kanata”

Canada, as we know it today, became a country on July 1, 1867. We believe the name “Canada” comes from the Huron-Iroquois word “kanata,” meaning “village” or “settlement.” Canada has three distinct groups of Indigenous peoples with unique histories, languages, cultural practices, and spiritual beliefs that are woven into the fabric of Canada. They are: First Nations, Inuit and Metis. More than 1.4 million people in Canada identify themselves as an Indigenous person. Indigenous peoples are thus an integral part of Canada’s past, present and future.

McMaster University recognizes and acknowledges that it is located on the traditional territories of the Mississauga and Haudenosaunee nations, and within the lands protected by the “Dish With One Spoon” wampum agreement.

Our city, Hamilton, the “Hammer”

Hamilton is the ninth largest city in Canada, fourth largest in Ontario, and ranked as one of the top 10 places to do business in Canada. Situated on the Niagara escarpment, Hamilton is only 45 minutes from Toronto and the U.S. border.

McMaster is nestled in the west end of Hamilton in a residential area called Westdale Village. Bordered by Cootes Paradise, the Royal Botanical Gardens, and the shores of Lake Ontario, the campus connects to kilometres of nature trails, biking paths, and Hamilton’s burgeoning waterfront. Learn more about your new home, Hamilton!

The Hamilton Spectator is the local newspaper for Hamilton, Ontario.
Studying in Canada

In order to study in Canada, there may be immigration requirements that students must satisfy. Students should visit the website Citizenship and Immigration Canada upon receiving their acceptance letter from McMaster University. As processing times vary, we recommend students apply as soon as possible. Guidance on study permits/ETAs can also be found on the International Student Services website.

Working in Canada

Exchange students are eligible to work on-campus without a work permit if they:

- have a valid study permit.
- are enrolled full-time.
- have a valid SIN (social insurance number).

On-campus work includes any job that is located within the boundaries of the campus. The employer can be the University (for example: library, bookstore) or a private business located on-campus (for example: coffee shop, restaurant).

You need a SIN from Service Canada to work in Canada. There are no restrictions on the number of hours that an exchange student can work on-campus as long as they meet the eligibility criteria. Students must stop working on-campus the day they no longer meet the on-campus eligibility criteria.

As exchange programs do not lead to a formal degree, exchange students are not eligible to work off-campus.
Exchange Welcome Events

Exchange Welcome Orientation

This session is for new exchange students to McMaster. Come meet other new exchange students, learn about studying at McMaster, and get your questions answered before classes begin.

**Fall term:** Join us on Friday, August 31, 2018. Exact times will be shared closer to the date.

**Winter term:** Join us on Friday, January 4, 2019. Exact times will be shared closer to the date.

Registration for this event will be on OSCARplusmcmaster.ca

Graduate Student Welcome Events (All Graduate)

Are you a new graduate student at McMaster? The School of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Students Association run welcome events open to all new and returning graduate students.

**Fall term:** Tuesday, September 4, 2018.

**Winter term:** TBA

MBA Welcome Orientation

MBA students study at the Ron Joyce Centre in Burlington. A special welcome breakfast will be provided in addition to MBA academic events. More details to come in August.
MOOSE-eXchange – Outdoor Orientation Program

Come out and see one of the most beautiful natural areas in Ontario, an iconic wilderness and inspiration to painters such as the Group of Seven. This is a great first opportunity to meet other new exchange students at McMaster. Learn more.

Exchange Buddy Program Welcome

Were you paired with a McMaster Exchange Buddy this Spring? Take this opportunity to meet your Buddy in-person over some complementary snacks! More information will be sent out to students registered in the Exchange Buddy Program in August.

MIX Club Welcome Events

The McMaster International and Exchange Club (MIX) is made up of new and returned exchange students who know all about the joys and challenges of study abroad. Join the group in social activities to meet other exchange students, explore Hamilton, and have some fun in the process! Join the MIX Facebook Group to learn about upcoming events.
Local Transportation

Arriving by Plane

Toronto’s Pearson International Airport is located one hour from McMaster University. There are bus, train, cab, rideshare and shuttle options available.

See the Ground Transportation website of Pearson International Airport for more information.

Hamilton Street Railway (HSR) – Bus Service

McMaster undergraduate and graduate exchange students (excluding MBA) receive unlimited travel on the HSR using their pre-loaded U-Pass PRESTO card together with their valid student ID card.

To pick up your PRESTO card, visit the Campus Store located in Gilmour Hall B101. You must show your student ID card. Once you receive your new HSR UPASS/ PRESTO card, register your new card online. Your PRESTO voucher code for 2018-2019 will be available on Mosaic mid-August.

Your HSR U-Pass PRESTO card is valid as of September 1, 2018. Using the card in advance of this date will apply a bus fare to the card. Between August 26 – 31, you only need to show your Student ID to the bus operator to board the bus. Visit the MSU for the 2018 HSR bus pass validity period. Visit the City of Hamilton for more information on HSR bus schedules.

Ron Joyce Shuttle Service (MBA)

Free shuttle service is available for MBA students travelling between the main McMaster campus in Hamilton, the Ron Joyce Centre in Burlington, and the Appleby GO Transit Station. To take the shuttle, students need a shuttle sticker on their student ID card. For shuttle schedules and more information, please see the transportation page.

Hamilton Bike Share (SoBi)

The SoBi Hamilton fleet is made up of bikes that are located at over 100 stations across the city, including six stations at McMaster. Bikes can be returned to any station anywhere in the system. Users can purchase any level of membership (discounted membership for McMaster students) online. For more information visit: https://hamilton.socialbicycles.com/
Student Identification at McMaster

Update your Canadian contact details on Mosaic

Prior to or upon arrival in Canada, it is important that you update your Canadian contact information (address and telephone number) on your Mosaic student account. In Mosaic, navigate to Student Center > Personal Information.

McMaster Student ID Card & Student Number

Your McMaster Student ID card identifies you as a McMaster student and permits you access to services on-campus. It is important to note that you must present your student ID card at all university examinations. Students will not be admitted without their student card.

Your student number is also:
- Your account number for fee payments.
- Your meal card (students in residence).
- Access card to the David Braley Athletic Centre.

Pick up your Student ID card:

Undergraduate Students
Registrar’s Office, Gilmour Hall 108

Graduate Students
School of Graduate Studies, Gilmour Hall 212

MBA Students
Ron Joyce Centre, Burlington – MBA Office
Getting Ready for Classes

Important Dates and Deadlines

ACADEMIC
Undergraduate – Important Dates
Graduate – Important Dates/Sessional
MBA – Dates & Deadlines

FINANCIAL
All students – Important payment dates (September 1)

Course Drop and Add Procedure

If you decide to drop a course, you must unenroll on Mosaic before the last day to drop/add courses within a session. Cancelled courses after the drop/add deadline will show as “W” (Withdrawn) on your transcript. You will remain registered in courses whether you attend classes or not. For any course not successfully completed, your transcript will show as “F” (Fail).

Academic Integrity

All inbound exchange students are subject to the academic rules and regulations governing McMaster University. This includes, but is not limited to, academic dishonesty.

McMaster University defines plagiarism as “submitting academic work that has been, entirely or in part, copied from or written by another person without proper acknowledgement, or, for which previous credit has been obtained.”

Students are expected to familiarize themselves with this information and speak to their Academic Programs Office or the Office of Academic Integrity if they have any questions.

Exams and Missed Academic Work

You are expected to attend all classes, lectures and labs as assigned, and submit all assignments, tests, mid-terms and exams as instructed. Students are expected to be available for the full examination period.

At McMaster, you can apply for relief of missed term work if you have or are going to miss an evaluated portion of your course. You may be asked to submit supporting documentation with this request. Please note; relief will not be given for travel/early departure.
Avenue to Learn

*Avenue to Learn* is McMaster’s web-based course management system. This portal manages academics between professors and students.

Go to *Avenue to Learn* to sign into your personal account using your MACID and password.

The platform gives you access to class announcements, assignments, grades, discussion boards, and more class specific material according to the needs/demands of the class.

**Please note that some courses will not appear right away.**

For more information or tips on using Avenue to Learn, go to *e-support*. This e-support icon can be found in the upper right corner of the screen. E-support contains articles on how to use different components of Avenue to Learn as well as video tutorials to guide you.

Buying Textbooks

Students are advised to only buy textbooks after their first class. Your professor will review the course syllabus with you and confirm what texts are needed. Once classes start, see what course materials are needed on your course syllabus what the professor has advised!

Academic Skills and Writing Workshops
*(Student Success Centre)*

These *workshops* can help improve your skills. Workshops include note-taking, the writing process, study strategies, time management, and more. Also available are writing assistants to provide support on your assignments or academic writing questions.

McMaster Libraries

The four libraries in the University Library system are here to help you with your research, teaching and learning!

- *Mills Memorial Library* (Humanities and Social Sciences)
- *Innis Library* (Business) located in Kenneth Taylor Hall, Room 108
- *H.G.Thode Library of Science & Engineering*
- *Health Sciences Library* located in the Health Sciences Centre

For information on accessibility services, account/renewals, study room bookings, citations and style guides, course reserves, off-campus access, PrintSmart, RACER Interlibrary loans and request forms, please visit: [https://library.mcmaster.ca/](https://library.mcmaster.ca/).
Healthcare in Canada

University Health Insurance Plan (UHIP)

UHIP is a mandatory health insurance plan for incoming exchange students and their families. As soon as you have enrolled in courses at McMaster, you will find charges applied to your Mosaic student account. You will likely notice an initial charge equivalent to full year coverage; however, this will be updated in advance of payment deadlines to reflect only your months of exchange.

It is important to note that UHIP does not provide coverage for prescription, dental, or vision care. It also has limited provisions outside of Ontario. For this reason, we highly recommend students obtain supplemental health insurance when travelling outside Ontario or Canada.

Visit the website for International Student Services for more information about UHIP at McMaster. We also recommend you visit the UHIP website for the most detailed and up-to-date policy information and to find out what is covered under the plan. Email uhip@mcmaster.ca with any questions.

Health Clinics and Hospitals

Student Wellness Centre (On-Campus)

The Student Wellness Centre is the on-campus doctor to address your wellness needs. They provide a range of counselling, medical, and naturopathic services, in addition to wellness education programs. A valid UHIP (University Health Insurance Plan) card and Student ID card are required for medical appointments.

Clinics and Hospitals (Off-campus)

Walk-in clinics give access to off-campus healthcare. Hospitals are for emergency treatment only. A valid UHIP (University Health Insurance Plan) card is required. As you may be asked to pay for services upfront, we recommend that before seeking healthcare, students print off a claim form to complete at the time of their doctor’s visit, as you’ll need specific information from the clinic. Remember to keep all receipts.
Personal Safety and Security

Your safety and security is important to us. Please review the listed services and tips to ensure you have an enjoyable experience at McMaster.

Considerations:

- **No open alcohol in public** (parks, streets, campus, front yard).
- **No smoking in indoor public spaces.**
- **Canadian laws around cannabis are changing.** Read the current status here.
- **McMaster’s No Smoking Policy – Smoke-Free Campus.**

Student Walk-home Attendant Team (SWHAT)

The **Student Walk-Home Attendant Team (SWHAT)** is a volunteer service within the McMaster Students Union that will walk or bus with students during the evening hours seven days/week. No matter the weather, the team will walk with you to your destination while providing safety and company. They also have umbrellas to help keep you dry!

Red Assistance Phones (Red Towers)

These red towers are located across campus. Reach campus security or emergency services at the touch of a button.

Emergency Services

Trigger the nearest Assistance Phone (red emergency tower)

**Dial 911 for Hamilton Fire, Police, and Ambulance**

McMaster Security App

Download the MUSST App on your smartphone. You can contact McMaster Security (905.522.4135) or Emergency Services (911) with the touch of a button.

Features

- Contact the Student Walk-Home Attendant Team (**SWHAT**).
- Contact the Emergency First Response Team (**EFRT**).
- Access bus, taxi and commuter transit information.
- Receive push notifications to advise of campus emergencies.
- Location information of doctor’s clinics and medical facilities.
Important Campus Services

International Student Services (ISS)

International Student Services provides support for international and exchange students at McMaster. We promote an internationally informed and cross-culturally sensitive community with a shared purpose: the student experience. International Student Services is located within the Student Success Centre, Gilmour Hall 110. Visit International Student Services if you have questions regarding:

- Exchange student transition support
- University Health Insurance Plan (UHIP) questions
- International student events and workshops
- Immigration advising (Canada only)

Student Success Centre (SSC)

The Student Success Centre (SSC) provides the services, programs and resources helpful to your personal, academic and professional goals. The SSC is located in Gilmour Hall 110. Visit the Student Success Centre if you have questions regarding:

- Academic skills and writing workshops
- English as an additional language support
- Career counselling and job search assistance
- Career mentorship and experience opportunities
- Events on OSCARplus

Office of the Registrar

The Office of the Registrar is the primary information source on enrollment, convocation ceremonies and important campus dates throughout the year. The Registrar’s Office is located in GH 108. Visit the Office of the Registrar if you have questions regarding:

- Receiving your student card
- Official university dates and deadlines
- Course calendar and timetable search
- Exam timetable and locations
- Getting enrolled through Mosaic
- Requesting transcripts
Student Accounts and Cashiers

The **Student Accounts & Cashiers Office** is responsible for student fee payments. It is located in GH 209. Visit if you have questions regarding:

- Important financial dates and deadlines
- How to make a payment
- Preferred payment methods
- Interest and outstanding accounts

**A note on fees:**

Exchange students do not pay tuition to McMaster. Charges to student accounts may include: UHIP, residence rooms and meal plans, library book fines, missed appointments, and so on.

It is your responsibility to ensure you pay in a timely manner. **The deadline for payments is September 1.** Interest is then charged to your account each month, based on the number of days you had an outstanding account.

Student Wellness Centre

The **Student Wellness Centre** located in MUSC B101 is the doctor’s clinic on-campus providing counselling, medical and wellness services. Students are expected to show their UHIP card and student card at each visit.

Student Accessibility Services

**Student Accessibility Services (SAS)** supports students who have a disability or disorder, such as a learning disability, ADHD, mental health disability, chronic medical condition, sensory such as blindness, Deaf or hard of hearing, neurological or mobility limitation.

SAS assists with academic and disability-related needs, including:

- Individual student advising
- Learning strategies
- Assistive technologies
- Academic accommodations for classes
- Test and exam administration
- Notetaking program

Students must register with SAS in advance to be eligible for services.
Clubs

McMaster Students Union (MSU) Clubs

The McMaster Students Union recognizes over 300 clubs in five distinct categories: Academic, Cultural, Recreational, Religious and Social Issues. Clubs are a cornerstone of student life on campus, allowing students with similar interests, backgrounds and ambitions to come together in a shared experience. Get involved, as McMaster University has one of the largest club listings in Ontario! Also check out Clubsfest, taking place in both September and January!

McMaster International & eXchange Club (MIX)

The McMaster, International Exchange Club is an MSU Club made up of exchange, international and McMaster students. MIX runs events and socials that help connect exchange students with others at McMaster. Events are posted to the MIX Facebook group.

McMaster Outdoor Club

The McMaster Outdoor Club has been a part of McMaster University since the 1970s. The club leads many outdoor focused events in the Hamilton community, as well as week-long trips exploring Ontario’s great outdoors. Some popular events frequented each year by exchange students include trips to Algonquin Park, Hamilton waterfalls, and dogsledding. The club runs extended trips over the fall and winter breaks. Join the MOC Facebook Page.

Athletics & Recreation

All undergraduate and graduate exchange students have a free base membership for the David Braley Athletic Centre, McMaster’s extensive recreation facility. This includes use of the indoor/outdoor track, pool, squash courts, saunas, open gym time and member rates for instructional/intramural programs.

Additionally, undergraduate students have free access to the Pulse (Fitness) centre.