

# Avoiding Delays in Study Permit Processing



## Citizenship and Immigration Canada

The number of foreign students coming to Canada has increased by nearly 50 percent since 2004. Applications for other temporary resident streams, including visitors and temporary workers, have significantly increased as well. As a result, processing times are often longer than they have been in the past. Delays in processing can result in unexpected challenges for international students and for host educational institutions.

Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) recognizes the benefits that international students bring to Canada, both for the contributions they make to our social and cultural development, as well as to our economy. The federal, provincial and territorial governments have agreed to work cooperatively to ensure that Canada continues to improve its standing as a destination of choice for international students.

Several initiatives are already underway at CIC to reduce processing times for study permits.

There are also a few simple steps that prospective students can take themselves to avoid unnecessary delays. By following the five steps outlined below, students can help ensure that their study permit application can be processed as quickly as possible.

## Five Key Steps to Speed Up Your Study Permit Application:

### 1. Apply online or through a Visa Application Centre (VAC)

- ◆ As of December 2012, people who have access to the Internet, a scanner or camera, and a credit card will be able to fill out and submit their application online.
- ◆ VACs make the Canadian visa process more convenient for visa applicants around the world by providing additional points of service. VACs make sure applications are complete and that they meet all of CIC's requirements by pre-screening applications. If a VAC is located in your country, consider using its services.

### 2. Apply early!

- ◆ Although you can check online how long it is taking on average to process study permits, it is always a good idea to apply as early as possible, and at least four to six months prior to the start of classes.
- ◆ To check average processing times online, please visit [www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/times/temp/students.asp](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/times/temp/students.asp).





### 3. Get your medical exam and police certificates as soon as possible

- ◆ Some prospective international students need a medical examination, depending on how long you are planning to stay and where you live, for example.
- ◆ If the duration of your visit is more than six months, you will need a medical examination:
  - ▶ If in the year immediately preceding the date that you sought entry into Canada you resided or stayed temporarily (for six or more consecutive months) in any of the countries or territories that are listed on CIC's website at [www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/medical/dcl.asp](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/medical/dcl.asp), you will need a medical exam. This applies to citizens of a country where a visa to enter Canada is not required.
  - ▶ You are coming to Canada to work in an occupation in which the protection of public health is essential. A list of jobs for which you need a medical examination can be found at: [www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/medical/medexams-temp.asp#jobs](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/medical/medexams-temp.asp#jobs).
- ◆ You can avoid delays by getting your medical examination done quickly and submitting it with your application. It is not mandatory to complete a medical examination when you submit your application. However, doing so will result in faster processing. For more information about who needs a medical examination, please visit [www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/medical/index.asp](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/medical/index.asp).
- ◆ Some prospective international students need to provide a police certificate. This can also take time, but you can avoid delays by getting it done early. While the basic student visa application does not include the need for a police certificate, individual missions may ask for them later in the process, depending on your country of origin, for example. For more information about police certificates, please visit [www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/security/index.asp](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/security/index.asp).



For more information on where to submit your application and country-specific checklists, please visit [www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/offices/apply-where.asp](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/offices/apply-where.asp).



### 4. Make sure you submit all required documents and that your documents are complete and legible

- ◆ If information is missing from an application, or if the information you provide is unclear, your application will be returned to you, resulting in a delay.
- ◆ Use the document checklist that is included in the application kit (available at: [www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/applications/student.asp](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/applications/student.asp)). Consult the website of the Canadian visa office serving the country or region where you live to see if you need to fill out additional forms or provide additional documents. For more information on the Canadian visa office serving your area, please visit [www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/offices/apply-where.asp](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/offices/apply-where.asp).
- ◆ Provide certified translations in either English or French of all supporting documents, such as transcripts, police certificates and other official documents.
- ◆ Visit CIC's website at [www.cic.gc.ca/english/department/media/multimedia/index.asp](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/department/media/multimedia/index.asp) to watch helpful tutorial videos that have great tips on filling out applications properly and avoiding unnecessary delays.



### 5. Ensure that you pay the proper fee

- ◆ In many countries, the processing fee can be paid in the local currency. You should check the website of the Canadian visa office serving the country or region where you live for additional information on fees, including how to pay them.
- ◆ If you do not pay the fee when required, or if you submit the wrong amount, it will delay the processing of your application or result in a negative decision.