

Getting started with an IRCC secure account: A GUIDE FOR INITIAL STUDY PERMIT APPLICANTS

Creating an online account with IRCC (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada) allows you to apply for immigration documents like study permits, work permits, and temporary residence visas.

This guide walks you through the creation of an IRCC secure account, including answering the IRCC questionnaire.

This guide is intended to help **first-time users** who are applying for their **initial study permit** online.

This guide has 4 parts:

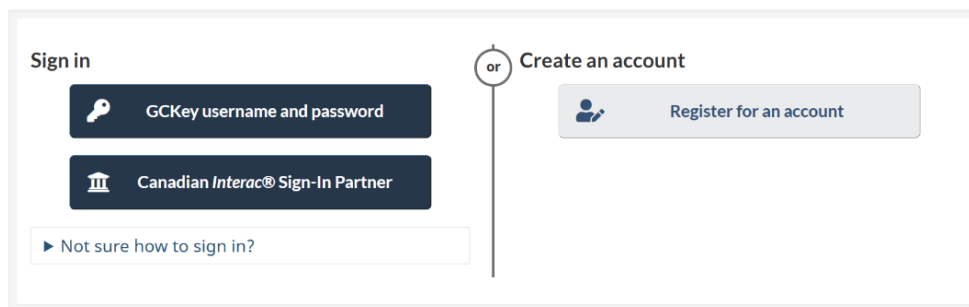
- Part 1: Register using the GCKey option
- Part 2: Create your IRCC secure account
- Part 3: Complete the IRCC questionnaire
- Part 4: Understand the “Your document checklist” page

The information in this guide may change.

The immigration information in this guide has been reviewed and endorsed by Mount Allison University’s Regulated International Student Immigration Advisor (RISIA No. S708818) in compliance with the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act and Regulations. However, this is not a legal document and information may change without notice. Always refer to Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) at www.cic.gc.ca for the most up-to-date information.

Part 1: Register using the GCKey option

1. Go to the IRCC secure account webpage at <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/application/account.html>
2. You'll see two options for registering:
 - a. GCKey username and password
 - b. Canadian Interac Sign-in Partner
3. Click the **GCKey username and password** option.



The screenshot shows a user interface for account management. On the left, under the heading "Sign in", there are two dark blue buttons: "GCKey username and password" (with a key icon) and "Canadian Interac® Sign-In Partner" (with a building icon). Below these is a link "▶ Not sure how to sign in?". On the right, under the heading "Create an account", there is a light grey button "Register for an account" (with a person icon). A vertical line with a circle containing the word "or" connects the two sections.

4. You'll be directed to the "Welcome to GCKey" page. Select "**Sign Up**".
5. You'll be guided through 4 steps to create your GCKey:
 - a. Review the "Terms and Conditions of Use" and click "I accept" if you agree.
 - b. Create your username.
 - c. Create and confirm your password.
 - d. Create your recovery questions, answers, and hints.
6. When you've successfully created your GCKey, you'll see a page that says "GCKey Sign Up Complete". Click "Continue".

Part 2: Create your IRCC online account

1. After you have created your GCKey, you'll be prompted to accept "Terms and Conditions" again. Review the info and click "I Accept" to continue.
2. On the "Create an account" page, enter your name, email address, and preferred language of notification.
3. Create your security questions and answers.
 - a. You'll need to answer one of your security questions every time you sign in to your IRCC account.

Once you complete the above steps, you will be brought to the **home page of your account**. This is the page that you see each time you sign in.

The screenshot shows the IRCC online account home page for John Smith. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the Government of Canada logo and a menu with options: Jobs, Immigration, Travel, Business, Benefits, Health, Taxes, and More services. Below the navigation bar, the user is signed in as John Smith, with links for Account home, Account profile, Help, and Logout. The main heading is "John Smith's account".

View the applications you submitted
Review, check the status or read messages about your submitted application.
Search: Showing 0 to 0 of 0 entries | Show 5 entries
Application type ↑ Application number ↑ Applicant name ↑ Date submitted ↓ Current status ↑ Messages ↑ Action
No data available in table

Did you apply on paper or don't see your online application in your account? [Add \(link\) your application to your account](#) to access it and check your status online.

Continue an application you haven't submitted
Continue working on an application or profile you haven't submitted or delete it from your account.
Search: Showing 0 to 0 of 0 entries | Show 5 entries
Application type ↑ Date Created ↓ Days left to submit ↑ Date last saved ↑ Action
No data available in table

Start an application

[Apply to come to Canada](#)
Includes applications for visitor visas, work and study permits, Express Entry and International Experience Canada. You will need your personal reference code if you have one.

[Refugees: Apply for temporary health care benefits](#)
Use this application if you are a protected person or refugee claimant who wants to apply for the Interim Federal Health Program.

[Students: Transfer schools](#)
For approved study permit holders only. Tell us if you are changing designated learning institutions. You will need your application number.

Account messages
Read messages related to your account. Messages about a submitted application are on your application status page.
You have no messages.

[Report a problem or mistake on this page](#)

Part 3: Complete the IRCC questionnaire

1. From your account homepage, click on "[Apply to come to Canada](#)".

Start an application

[Apply to come to Canada](#)

Includes applications for visitor visas, work and study permits, Express Entry and International Experience Canada. You will need your personal reference code if you have one.

[Refugees: Apply for temporary health care benefits](#)

Use this application if you are a protected person or refugee claimant who wants to apply for the Interim Federal Health Program.

[Students: Transfer schools](#)

For approved study permit holders only. Tell us if you are changing designated learning institutions. You will need your application number.

Personal checklist

Personal Reference Code

If you have already completed the Come to Canada or the Express Entry wizard, you would have received a document checklist and/or a personal reference code, based on the answers you provided.

Please enter your personal reference code to begin your application. (required)



Continue

Cancel

I do not have a Personal Reference Code

If you do not have a personal reference code, you may answer a series of questions to find out if you are eligible to apply for a visa and/or permit, apply for Express Entry, and begin an online application.

If you begin your application **after you have logged into your account**, you will not receive a personal reference code, as the system will save your document checklist right into your account.

Determine your eligibility and apply online:

[Visitor visa, study and/or work permit](#)


[Express Entry \(EE\)](#)

[International Experience Canada \(IEC\)](#)

3. Your screen now says “Find out if you’re eligible to apply”.
 - a. You’ll be guided through a series of questions to determine your eligibility to apply for your initial study permit.
 - i. Click on the blue question mark if you need help understanding a question.

Find out if you're eligible to apply


* All fields are mandatory

What would you like to do in Canada? 


Please make a selection

How long are you planning to stay in Canada?

Please make a selection

Which country issued your passport? 


Please make a selection

What is your current country/territory of residence? If you are presently in Canada, you should select Canada. 

Please make a selection

Do you have a **family member** who is a **Canadian citizen** or **permanent resident** and is 18 years or older?

Please make a selection

What is your date of birth? 

Select year Select month Select day

[Save and Exit Questionnaire](#) [Next](#)

4. When you’ve answered all the eligibility questions, you’ll see a screen that indicates your eligibility to come to Canada as a student. Click “Continue”.

Your results

Based on the information you provided, the result(s) below indicate(s) whether you may be eligible to come to Canada.

Students (Study permit)

You may be eligible to come to Canada as a student.

[Continue](#)

5. Next, you'll be guided through another series of questions that will generate your personal document checklist.
 - a. Click "Continue" on the "Create your personal checklist" screen to begin.
 - b. **Important:** There are two questions that commonly confuse students:
 - i. **"Is work an essential component of your studies?"**
 - Select "No".
 - Mount Allison does not have official co-op programs where work is a required component of a program. This is what this question refers to.
 - Note: selecting "no" does not impact your work authorization as part of your study permit. You can read about work authorization as a student on the [IRCC site](#).
 - ii. **"Have you visited or lived in any one of the designated countries for 6 consecutive months in the last year?"**
 - See the list of designated countries: <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/application/medical-police/medical-exams/requirements-temporary-residents/country-requirements.html>
 - Select "Yes" if the statement applies to you. Select "No" if it does not.
 - If you answer "Yes" you will require a medical exam for your application. For more information on how to arrange a medical exam for a study permit application, please see the IRCC website: <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/application/medical-police/medical-exams/requirements-temporary-residents.html>
6. After completing the IRCC questionnaire, you will see a screen that says "Review your answers".
 - a. **Double-check** your responses because they determine your document checklist.
 - b. Make any corrections if necessary. Then click "Continue".
7. The next screen, "Submitting your application", provides technical information to help you during your application process.
 - a. Review this information.
 - b. Click "Continue" on the bottom right.
8. You will now see the "Your document checklist" page.

Part 4: Understand the “Your document checklist” page

1. This page lists your required documents and links to any forms you need to fill out.
 - a. Review your list of required documents.
 - i. **Important:** you still need to check for **any additional documents** required by your country’s visa office (see page 9 of this guide).
 - b. If you need further information or instructions for an item, click on the blue question mark icon in the "Instructions" column to the right of the document name.
 - c. Download applicable forms by putting your cursor over the document name. You’ll see a note that says “(Opens a new window)”, which indicates a form can be downloaded.

Your document checklist

Your documents

This is the list of documents you need to submit in order to apply. You cannot proceed until each file has been uploaded. Select the question mark button to learn more about each document.

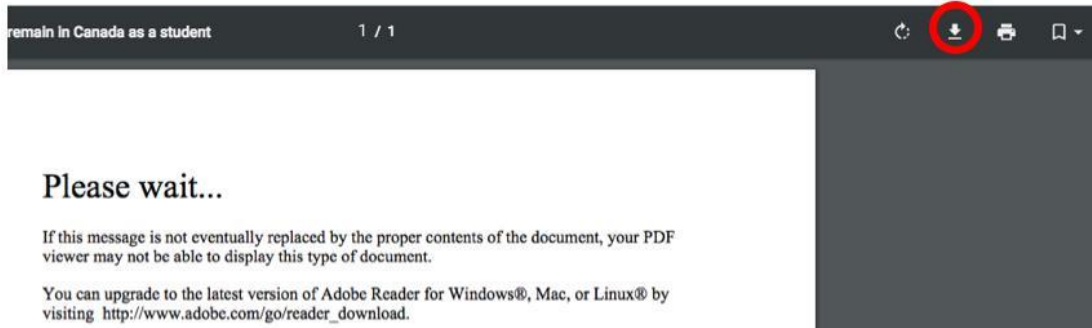
[Are you having difficulty downloading a form?](#)

Versions of application forms for study permits and work permits dated November 2013 (11-2013), or later, and applications for temporary resident visas dated March 2014 (03-2014), or later, can only be uploaded to the IRCC Portal.

Note: You are responsible for ensuring that the documents you submit are correct. Carefully review the documents you have attached to this application. A decision concerning your application will be made based upon the information you submit. You will not be able to make changes to your application once it has been submitted. Please ensure that you scan and attach all relevant documents to your online submission. Any documents received by mail related to this application will not be considered.

Application Form(s)			
Application Form(s)			
Details	Document Name	Instructions	Options
Not Provided	Application for Study Permit Made Outside of Canada (IMM1294) (required)	?	Upload File
	(Opens a new window)		
Supporting Documents			
Supporting Documents			
Details	Document Name	Instructions	Options
Not Provided	Birth Registration/Certificate (required)	?	Upload File
Not Provided	Passport (required)	?	Upload File

- c. **If you see a “Please wait...” message when you're downloading a form:**
- i. Click on the download arrow at the top right to save the file onto your computer and then open it with Adobe Reader.



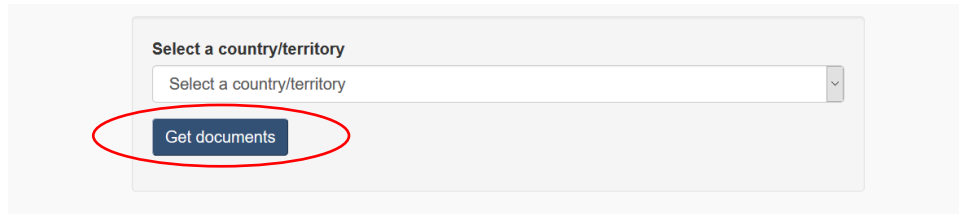
2. All students will see the following documents in their “document checklist”:

- Letter of Acceptance or Letter of Enrollment / Registration
 - You will receive your Letter of Acceptance by email. It is a two-page document which includes a letter addressed to *Canadian Immigration Officers*. Upload this two-page document for your study permit application.
- Passport
 - Provide a copy of the bio-data page (the page with your name, date of birth, passport number, expiration date, etc.). Also include a copy of every page of your passport that has stamps, visas, or markings.
- Provincial or Territorial Attestation Letter (PAL or TAL)
 - A PAL is issued by the Province of New Brunswick for prospective Mount Allison University students. Once your registration deposit has been received and processed by Mount Allison Admissions, you will receive your PAL by email.
- Proof of Means of Financial Support
 - Check the [IRCC website](#) to find out how much money you need to show for your study permit application, and how to provide proof.
- Digital photo
 - Find digital photo specifications on the "Your document checklist" page by clicking on the question mark, in the "Instructions" column, for "Digital photo".

Additional documents applicants may require include *Birth Registration/Certificate, Family Information Form, Custodianship Declaration, etc.*

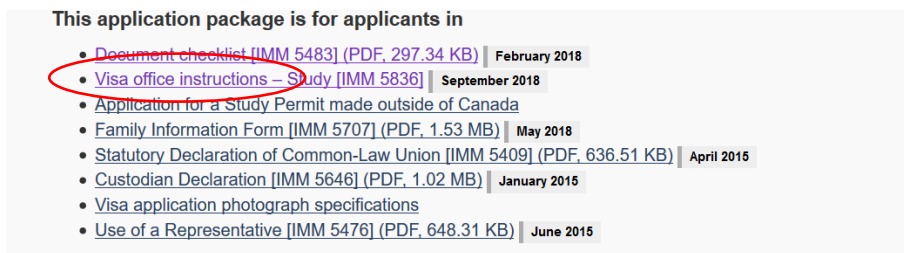
3. Documents specific to your visa office:

- a. Check the visa office instructions for your country or region for local requirements.
 - a. Go to the [IRCC website](#) and select the country/territory **from which you will be applying**. Click “Get documents”.



The screenshot shows a web interface with a dropdown menu titled "Select a country/territory". Below the dropdown is a button labeled "Get documents", which is circled in red. The dropdown menu is currently empty, showing only the placeholder text "Select a country/territory".

- b. Select “Visa office instructions” from the list, which will launch a PDF specifying requirements for your visa office. Review this list for any additional documents required by your visa office that were not shown in “Your document checklist”.



This application package is for applicants in

- [Document checklist \[IMM 5483\] \(PDF, 297.34 KB\)](#) | February 2018
- [Visa office instructions - Study \[IMM 5836\]](#) | September 2018
- [Application for a Study Permit made outside of Canada](#)
- [Family Information Form \[IMM 5707\] \(PDF, 1.53 MB\)](#) | May 2018
- [Statutory Declaration of Common-Law Union \[IMM 5409\] \(PDF, 636.51 KB\)](#) | April 2015
- [Custodian Declaration \[IMM 5646\] \(PDF, 1.02 MB\)](#) | January 2015
- [Visa application photograph specifications](#)
- [Use of a Representative \[IMM 5476\] \(PDF, 648.31 KB\)](#) | June 2015

- c. You can [merge](#) all visa office specific documents into one file and upload in the "Client Information" field on the "Your document checklist" page.

Letter of Explanation

Please note: A **Letter of explanation (or Study plan)** is required by some visa offices and will be noted in the Visa office instructions on the IRCC website. Even if it is not required, students are recommended to include a Letter of Explanation with their study permit application. This letter helps the visa officer understand you and your goals. It should be a one-page letter written by you which may address some of the following questions:

- Why do you wish to study in Canada in the program for which you have been accepted?
- What is your overall educational goal?
- Why are you not pursuing a similar program in your country of residence?
- How will this program enhance your employment opportunities in your country of residence or citizenship?
- What ties do you have to your country of residence or citizenship?

4. Uploading your files

- Once you've gathered your required documents, you will upload them to the "Your document checklist" page using the corresponding "Upload File" button on the right.

Your document checklist

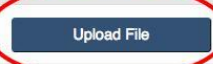
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(Opens a new window)


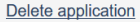
5. Once you have started your online application, you have 60 days to complete it. You can continue your application (and return to your "Document checklist") by selecting "Continue application" from your account homepage.

John Smith's account

Continue an application you haven't submitted

Continue working on an application or profile you haven't submitted or delete it from your account.

Search: Showing 1 to 1 of 1 entries | Show entries

Application type ↑↓	Date Created ↓	Days left to submit ↑↓	Date last saved ↑↓	Action
Online Application	October 3, 2018	60	October 3, 2018	 

NEXT STEPS: Biometrics (fingerprints and photo) requirement

Most study permit applicants will need to appear *in person* to have fingerprints and photograph (biometric information) taken at a biometric collection service point. Exceptions include US citizens or nationals. For more information visit the [IRCC website: Facts about biometrics](#).

After you have submitted your study permit application online, you will receive a Biometrics instruction letter (BIL) which will direct you to a list of biometrics collection service points you may choose from. The letter will go to your IRCC account message box. You will have up to 30 days to go in person to an official biometrics collection service location. For a full list of biometrics collection points, please visit the [IRCC website: Where to give biometrics](#).