Happy New Year!

Goodbye 2021 and Hello 2022!
ISS would like to welcome you back to McGill for this new year! While recent circumstances have been challenging, ISS is committed to ensuring the best possible level of support to all our International Students.

With this in mind, we have been making investments into improving our service level. We will soon be adopting new processes, supported by a new system called “myISS”, to offer you a more streamlined experience at ISS. myISS will become your first stop for any questions you might have for ISS. With this new initiative, we should be able to provide information to you more quickly and make scheduling and attending advising appointments more straightforward. Please stay tuned for more information!

Here are a few tips to help you start the term right:

- If you are experiencing travel delays or delays in the processing of your study permit, please visit the campus [COVID-19 website](#) for more information about academic accommodations.
- Find out what to do if you have COVID-19 symptoms.
- Check out what is [open and closed on campus](#).
- The course Add/Drop deadline is Tuesday, January 18th.
- Review your immigration documents for expiry dates (and take steps to [renew](#) if necessary).
- Check out the ISS’ [list of workshops and webinars](#) for this term.
- New students: If you missed the ISS orientation, you can view the recording [here](#).

Finally, the uncertainty and isolation from the COVID pandemic can take a toll on your mental health. We all need help sometimes. If you are feeling overwhelmed, anxious or depressed, please reach out to some of the [many resources that are there for you](#).

Best wishes for a healthy, and successful 2022!

International Student Services

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**IMMIGRATION UPDATES**

**Travelling to Canada**

[https://e1.envoke.com/m/8f5ff1b21b29fab62535812b1e85a40b/m/913ee6a2555cbe0a4561d5fa1a58f80/198b7d7686b5236a2123c36ebcc71fe4?mod…](https://e1.envoke.com/m/8f5ff1b21b29fab62535812b1e85a40b/m/913ee6a2555cbe0a4561d5fa1a58f80/198b7d7686b5236a2123c36ebcc71fe4?mod…)

1/6
As of January 15, 2022, all international students and their dependents, with limited exceptions, must be **fully vaccinated** to enter Canada.

Even if you qualify as a fully vaccinated traveller, you will still have to respect certain border and health measures before travelling to Canada and upon arrival. Please see our [Travelling to and from Canada](https://e1.envoke.com/m/8f5ff1b21b29fab62535812b1e85a40b/m/913ee64a2555cba0a4561d5fa1a58f80/198b7d7686b5236a2123c36ebcc71fe4?mod) page as well as the Government of Canada’s [COVID-19: Travel, testing and borders](https://e1.envoke.com/m/8f5ff1b21b29fab62535812b1e85a40b/m/913ee64a2555cba0a4561d5fa1a58f80/198b7d7686b5236a2123c36ebcc71fe4?mod) page for detailed information.

In order to enter Canada, you **must** have a valid CAQ and study permit or study permit approval letter as well as a valid eTA or Temporary Resident Visa, unless exempt.

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**Post-Graduation Work Permit Facilitative Measures**

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) has extended their facilitative measures for the PGWP as follows for students who had to study online from outside of Canada:

You can apply for a PGWP if you

- were enrolled in a program that was **in progress in March 2020** or
- started or will start a program **between spring 2020 and summer 2022** and
  - you have a study permit or
  - you’ve been approved for a study permit or
  - you applied for a study permit before starting your study program
    - Your study permit must eventually be approved.

And you:

- completed a study program
  - at a [designated learning institution](https://e1.envoke.com/m/8f5ff1b21b29fab62535812b1e85a40b/m/913ee64a2555cba0a4561d5fa1a58f80/198b7d7686b5236a2123c36ebcc71fe4?mod)
  - that was at least 8 months long and
  - which led to a degree, diploma or certificate
- maintained **full-time** status as a student during each semester of your study program
  - This doesn’t include your final semester, which can be part-time, or if you took an approved leave from your studies.
  - If you had to stop studying or change to part-time studies between March 2020 and the fall semester in 2020 because of reasons related to COVID-19, you may still be eligible for a PGWP.

Only the time you spent studying outside Canada **after we received your study permit application** counts towards the length of your PGWP.

This means that Winter 2022 admits who are still waiting for their study permits to be processed can still maintain their PGWP eligibility, as long as they respect the requirements above.

For students who completed (or will complete) their studies online from inside of Canada, the following measures apply:

You’re still eligible for the PGWP if either of the following situations applies to you:

- Your in-person classes in Canada have been moved to an online-only format and you are taking your classes online because of COVID-19.
  - It’s highly recommended that you attend in-class options when offered.
- You had to put your studies on hold, or study part-time, during the winter, spring or summer 2020 semesters because of COVID-19.

As of the fall 2020 semester, you must be studying full-time to be eligible.
ISS January News: Travel, PGWP, Reduced Course Load and More!

International Student Health Insurance (IHI): UPDATES

1. If you have not yet done so, please activate your McGill’s International Health Insurance (IHI) contract on Minerva before January 31st, 2022. Please be mindful of the January 31st deadline to send your supporting document, if you have applied for an exemption or to opt-in to the IHI plan, if you are a Canadian without a provincial health plan. International students applying for Régie de l’assurance maladie du Québec (RAMQ), under the citizenship agreement, may experience delays with obtaining their RAMQ letter of confirmation or card by the January 31st deadline. For this reason, we will be, exceptionally, accepting RAMQ confirmation coverage until the end of the winter 2022 term (April 30th). However, to avoid incurring any interest fees, please pay your IHI premium fees before the January 31st deadline.

2. We highly encourage you to learn all about McGill’s International Health Insurance Plan and Accessing Healthcare in Quebec by viewing our webinar recording that was live on December 3, 2021.
   - Discover what your health insurance plans covers, benefits, exemptions, and how to make a claim
   - How and where to seek help related to your health?
   - Learn how to navigate off-campus health resources as an international student
   - Familiarize yourself with the Quebec healthcare system.
   - Understand how your Health Insurance plan works.
   - Download the Links document.

3. Finally, did you know that minors (under the age of 18) are now eligible to have a RAMQ plan in Quebec? Read all about it on our website. If you have any questions, please contact us!

PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES

Q&A with an Advisor: Leave of Absence and Reduced Course Load

Are you unsure how an LOA or Reduced Course Load will impact your status as an international student? Bring your questions and one of our licensed immigration advisors will answer your questions.

Event Details
Thursday, January 13th at 10am
Register Here

Mental Health Supports for International Students

As the pandemic continues, it's normal to struggle with feelings of isolation and anxiety. That's why it's more important than ever to prioritize self-care, to connect with friends and loved ones (near and far), and to reach out for help when we need it. If you need a little extra support, the Student Wellness Hub offers a variety of workshops and support groups throughout the semester.
If you're here in Quebec, you can also take advantage of the clinical services at the Student Wellness Hub, including meeting with Jos Porter, the Local Wellness Advisor (LWA) for international students. Jos is a licensed mental health professional who works closely with ISS to promote the wellbeing of international students at McGill.

The keep.meSAFE counseling service is also available 24/7 from anywhere in the world. This month, they're also starting Community Connection support groups, including a group specifically for international students. Together we'll get through these challenging times!

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Micro ExP

It's hard to land a great summer job or internship without professional experiences or contacts. This is why CAPs is launching the Micro-ExP program to help you build your skills and network without the stress of missing class or work so you have an edge the next time you apply.

Learn more about Micro-ExP and make sure you get a spot!

*Includes 12-month access to LinkedIn Learning ($300 USD)*
*1st and 2nd-year undergraduates only. International students accepted too.*
JANUARY CELEBRATIONS AROUND THE WORLD

January 7: Coptic Christmas  
January 10: Coming of Age Day  
January 12: Berber New Year (Yennayer)  
January 13: Lohri  
January 14: Pongal  
January 14: Makar Sankranti  
January 16: World Religion Day  
January 17: Tu B'Shevat (Israeli Arbor Day)  
January 18: Thaipusam  
January 19: Timket  
January 21: Altagracia Day

**If we missed a celebration in your country or region, send us more information at events.iss@mcgill.ca!**
This message was sent to you by International Student Services

Brown Student Services Building
3600 McTavish Street, Suite 5100
Montreal, Quebec
H3A 0G3
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