

## Post-Graduation Work Permit Application Guide

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### Important Notes About This Guide and About PGWPs

This is a practical guide that most Carleton graduates can use to assess their eligibility and prepare an application for a Post-Graduation Work Permit (PGWP) from within Canada. Watch for the alert icons: some students are advised to seek a personal consultation with a GO-ISSO immigration advisor.

- This guide assumes you are making an online application for a PGWP from within Canada and that you have a valid study permit at the time of submission. Students may be applying in other circumstances such as:
  - From outside of Canada
  - With restoration of status in Canada
  - With accompanying applications for extensions of status for family members
  - Applying for the residual portion of a PGWP, if a first work permit was valid only to passport or biometrics expiry



Contact the GO-ISSO for information about these situations, which are not covered in this guide.

Note: “Flagpoling” for a PGWP is no longer an option. Students in Canada must apply online.

It’s important to know:

- Following this guide does not guarantee a particular outcome.
- IRCC stands for *Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada*, the Canadian government department that establishes PGWP eligibility rules and makes decisions on work permit applications. IRCC revises PGWP program rules from time to time. Official, up-to-date and fully detailed information about the PGWP is always found on the [IRCC website](#).
- Eligibility for the PGWP depends on your academic record throughout your program. Part-time study and some breaks from study can make you ineligible. If you took an [authorized leave](#) from studies you can still be eligible for a PGWP, but your application **must** explain and document the circumstances related to your leave.
- There is a strict 180-day eligibility period to apply for the PGWP. This eligibility period starts *before* your convocation date, as explained in Part One of this guide. You must have a study permit that is valid up to your program completion date and within 180 days of submitting your application for a PGWP.
- If your study permit will expire before or very shortly after you expect to finish your studies, you should apply for an extension early in your final term. It is IRCC’s policy to issue study permits that are valid for at least 90 days after the last term of study, so that graduates have time to get their final grades and apply for a PGWP without going out of status in Canada.
- Distance learning/Online study information — Due to COVID-19, IRCC established temporary PGWP rules related to distance learning. These temporary rules over-rode some of the usual PGWP rules, so that distance learning, either inside or outside of Canada, did not affect PGWP eligibility or validity (length) during most of the period 2020 to 2022. The temporary rules were phased out during 2023 and 2024. Temporary rules for 2020 to 2024 are explained on [the IRCC website](#). This guide presents only the usual PGWP rules related to distance learning, which are:
  - Completing a program of study with more than 50% done as distance learning can make the student not eligible for the PGWP; and
  - Online learning from outside of Canada is not credited towards the length of the PGWP.
- If you want to work in certain fields (as listed in the set-up questionnaire for the PGWP application), you may need an immigration medical exam (IME). IMEs are normally valid for one year, but IRCC has a temporary policy in place until October 5, 2029. In-Canada applicants who would normally require an IME may be exempt from completing a new exam if they had a clear IME within the past five years. Find details on the [IRCC website](#). When applying for the PGWP provide the e-medical receipt of the old exam and explain that you wish to have a work permit that allows you to work in fields where public health must be protected.

Other ways to learn about the Post-Graduation Work Permit are:

- Online PGWP information sessions — Multiple sessions each term are listed on the GO-ISSO's [Event Calendar](#).
- The GO-ISSO's [PGWP Brightspace course](#) — You can self-enroll and watch the videos at your own pace.
- Carleton University students may contact the GO-ISSO for additional information and support.

Email: [immigration.advising@carleton.ca](mailto:immigration.advising@carleton.ca)

[Learn more about how to contact us or meet with an immigration advisor.](#)

## Part One: Check Your Eligibility and Get Ready to Apply

Once your final marks are posted in your audit on Carleton Central, you can get the Carleton documents you need to apply for your PGWP. It's not possible to apply before you have completed all program requirements. If you answer "yes" to each question below, you are ready to begin the application.

### a) Are you eligible for a PGWP?

Applying for the PGWP can be a waste of your time and application fees if you don't first confirm that you are eligible. Some of the important eligibility criteria are:

- You completed a Carleton degree, diploma or certificate program that is at least 8 months long.
  - If you completed a diploma or certificate program at Carleton, your program must be in one of IRCC's designated fields of study. See the [IRCC website](#) for details. *All fields of study are PGWP-eligible for graduates of degree programs.*
- You studied with full-time status throughout your program, unless it was a summer break period or in only one final term.
- You have been compliant with [conditions of study permit holder status](#), including not taking [unauthorized leaves](#) from your studies.
- You had a valid study permit up until you were confirmed as eligible to graduate and sometime within the last 180 days.
- You have valid language test results.

All university graduates applying for the PGWP must include valid language test results (no more than 2 years old) showing at least Canadian Language Benchmark 7 (adequate intermediate ability) in all four skill areas in one of Canada's official languages.

#### *English language test options:*

- IELTS General Training
- CELPIP-General
- PTE Core

#### *French language test options:*

- TEF Canada
- TCF Canada

- You are not ineligible for one of the reasons listed under “Exceptions to the eligibility requirements” at the [IRCC website](#). A few of the exceptions are:
  - You previously had a PGWP
  - You received funding from certain scholarship or fellowship programs
  - You did more than 50% of your program credits through online study (excepting possibly during the COVID-19 years)

*This is not a complete or detailed list of the eligibility criteria.* It is important to check all the criteria at the [IRCC website](#), including an explanation of what types of breaks may be “authorized”.



If you are not sure whether you are eligible for a PGWP, or if you have concerns about part-time study, distance learning, or breaks from studying, contact the GO-ISSO.

b) Do you have a valid study permit?

Your study permit is valid if:

- It has not yet expired according to the date printed on it, and
- It has not become invalid because more than 90 days has passed since the date on your program completion letter from Carleton, and you aren’t continuing to study in another program within 150 days.

If you are applying for the work permit in Canada, you must have valid temporary resident status as a student or worker; or be within the 90-day restoration period.



If your study permit is no longer valid, you may still be able to apply for the PGWP, provided you are still within the 180-day eligibility period. Contact the GO-ISSO for more information.

c) Do you have a document from Carleton confirming that you have completed all program requirements and are eligible to graduate?

This document is *not* your diploma given at convocation. It can be *one* of the following options, but you must use whichever document has the earlier date as your program completion letter.

- *For those who want to apply as soon as possible, **Confirmation of Eligibility to Graduate** —* The letter is available at Carleton Central once your audit indicates “All Requirements Identified Below Have Been Met”. Look under “Student Online Applications” → “Apply to Graduate”. This letter is no longer available after the Carleton Senate meets to confer degrees.

A \$20 + HST administrative fee will be implemented for this document in 2025. See: [Miscellaneous Administrative Charges](#).

- Following the Carleton Senate Convocation Meeting, which usually takes place 1-2 months after the end of your final term, a **Certificate of Enrolment, option 4 showing graduation**, is available from Carleton Central and may be used as a completion of studies letter.

d) Is the date of your program completion, as noted on one of the documents above, within the past 180 days?

If more than 180 days have passed, you are no longer eligible for a Post-Graduation Work Permit.

e) Do you have a final transcript?

Once your final grades have been posted, you can request a transcript from Carleton Central. IRCC accepts an unofficial transcript for an online PGWP application.



Some students cannot order documents from Carleton Central due to a financial hold. The GO-ISSO may be able to facilitate a process that will allow you to apply for your PGWP within your eligibility period. [Contact an immigration advisor](#). *Please note* that Carleton will not give you the transcript but may agree to send it directly to IRCC. We cannot guarantee that IRCC will accept documents sent by Carleton. It is preferable if you can pay what you owe to the university so you can include all required documents with your application.

f) Do you have a valid passport?

Your PGWP won't be valid beyond the expiry date on your passport. If your passport is going to expire soon, you may want to get a new passport before you apply for the PGWP. If you choose not to do that, your initial PGWP will be issued to passport expiry. You can apply for the remaining PGWP validity once you have a new passport. You will have to pay the application fees a second time. This is the only scenario in which you can apply for an extension of a PGWP.

g) Do you have qualifying English or French language test results?

All applicants for a PGWP must demonstrate Canadian Language Benchmark 7 in one of Canada's official languages.

*English language test options:*

- IELTS General Training
- CELPIP-General
- PTE Core

*French language test options:*

- TEF Canada
- TCF Canada

Test results remain valid for two years. Students nearing the end of their program are advised to take their language test sometime in their final term, so that they have results in hand by the time they get their final grades and are ready to apply for their PGWP.

*Important Note*

Until IRCC's online application system is re-programmed to ask applicants about language test results and to provide a dedicated line to upload test results, applicants should upload their language test results to the application line for "Client Information".

### Other Considerations Before You Apply

a) Do you know the application fees for a PGWP?

Fees are:

- \$155 for a work permit application plus \$100 open work permit fee = \$255.
- Some students might pay extra fees to update their biometrics (\$85) or do an immigration medical exam.
- If restoration of status is required, the additional fees are: \$150 for a study permit application and \$239.75 for restoration.

b) Do you know if you have given biometrics within the past 10 years?

If you are not sure, use the [Check Status tool](#). You may have to give new biometrics, or you may choose to give them again so that your Post-Graduation Work Permit's validity period is not shortened by your biometrics expiry date.

After you submit your application you will receive a biometrics instruction letter. You can then make an appointment to go to a Service Canada biometrics collection centre.

c) Do you know what work is authorized while you are transitioning from study permit holder to work permit holder?

If you have a valid study permit when you apply for the PGWP AND you have been authorized to work off-campus while studying, AND you have not worked more than authorized by your study permit, then these rules apply:

- *Until you receive confirmation that you are eligible to graduate* — You have the usual school term work authorization. You are not on a break (because you are not returning to school) so the hourly cap on off-campus work will apply to you.
- *Once you receive the confirmation* — You have no authorization to work, either on- or off-campus.
- *Once you submit an application for the PGWP* — You may work full-time. The proof of this is your study permit, the Acknowledgement of Receipt from your online application, your sworn statement on IMM 5710, and [IRPR 186\(w\)](#). *If you did not apply while you had a valid study permit, you are not allowed to start working until you receive the work permit.*

If your work permit application is refused, you must stop working. Unauthorized work can make you ineligible for a PGWP and inadmissible to Canada for a period of six months.

d) Do you know how long your work permit will be valid?

The validity period of the work permit is the amount of time between the issue and expiry dates. PGWP validity can be between 8 months and 3 years, depending on the length of the program of study. These are the guidelines:

- Program length more than 8 months and less than 2 years: PGWP validity period is the same as the program length
  - Exception: Graduates with a Master's degree can be eligible for a 3-year PGWP even if the length of their program was less than 2 years. (This does not apply to certificate or diploma programs.)
- Program length is 2 years or more: PGWP validity period is 3 years.

Distance learning from outside of Canada is not credited in the PGWP validity period.

Detailed information on how officers determine PGWP validity is found at the [IRCC website](#).

e) Do you know what work you will be authorized to do with a PGWP?

A PGWP is an open work permit, which means you may work at most types of jobs, for any employer, anywhere in Canada. There will be a few restrictions noted on the work permit, especially if you choose not to do a medical exam before applying for the work permit.

If you hope to use your work experience on a PGWP to qualify for one of Canada's permanent residence programs for skilled workers, you should know that:

- Canada's largest PR programs for economic immigrants that do intake through Express Entry require work experience in skilled position (TEER 0, 1, 2 or 3) according to Canada's [National Occupational Classification](#).
- You may be self-employed on a PGWP. However, self-employment is not qualifying work experience for the [Canadian Experience Class](#).

If you want to know more about Canada's permanent residence programs, please refer to upcoming information and Q&A sessions on the [GO-ISSO's Event Calendar](#). The GO-ISSO does not offer personal advising on permanent residence.

f) Will you be able to extend your PGWP?

It's not possible to extend a PGWP, unless the validity of an initial PGWP was limited due to passport or biometrics expiry.

g) Can you get a second PGWP if you do a second qualifying program of study?

No. You are not eligible for a second PGWP if you have already had one.

h) Can your spouse or common-law partner (SCLP) get a work permit?

The open work permit of a SCLP of a full-time student remains valid until its expiry date, even if the student has finished school. The SCLP is not eligible to apply for a new open work permit as the spouse of a work permit holder until they can include proof that the former student is



employed in a TEER 0 or 1 position or in one of the identified TEER 2 and TEER 3 positions. [Learn more about work permits for family members.](#)

## Part Two: Make an On-Line Application

- 1) [Sign in](#) to an IRCC Secure Account to begin an application
- 2) Scroll down your home page to look for “Start an Application → “Apply to Come to Canada”
- 3) Choose “Visitor visa, study or work permit”
- 4) Answer the eligibility questionnaire:
  - See Part Three: *Answer the Eligibility Questionnaire*

After you finish the questionnaire, the system will create your document list. Most in-Canada PGWP applications will consist of these items:

- IMM 5710 — Application to Change Conditions or Extend your Stay in Canada as a Worker. See Part Four for tips.
- Education Transcript, showing all final grades — For online applications you may use an unofficial transcript.
- Completion of Studies Letter
- Passport
- Digital Photo

Some applications include a Family Information Form. Note that this document does NOT have to be signed in the spaces provided. Your digital signature when you submit is a signature for all items in the application.

### *Optional Items and Language Test Results*

- Schedule 1 – IMM 5257. If you answer “No” to the background questions 3-6 on IMM 5710, you don’t need to complete this form.
- Client Information – Until IRCC re-programs the system to include a separate line for language test results, test results must be uploaded as “Client Information”.

You can also use this line to add a letter of explanation and documentation related to breaks from studies or anything else about your academic history. The GO-ISSO can assist you to prepare this information.



*Important note for graduate students:* If the number of courses on your transcript might lead the immigration officer to believe you were not a full-time student (fewer than 1.5 credits per term), the GO-ISSO recommends that you add historical Certificates of Enrolment to your application, as they will confirm your full-time status.



If you have questions about what documents to include in a PGWP application or where to put them in the application, [contact the GO-ISSO](#).

Once you start the online application, you have 60 days to finish it. The system automatically saves your work.

Upload your documents in digital format, one document per line. The website [www.smallpdf.com](http://www.smallpdf.com) can be used to merge multiple PDFs into one document, or to reduce file size.

When all your documents are uploaded, “continue” to sign the application electronically, pay the fees and submit the application. Note: additional fees for a restoration application are paid through a separate [IRCC payment portal](#). The receipt from this payment is then uploaded to your PGWP application.

Once you submit the application, you will shortly receive an Acknowledgement of Receipt in your Secure Account. This is an important letter that you should keep in your files.

IRCC also provides a second letter that you can show to employers to confirm your authorization to work. This letter will state that you are authorized to work until a certain date, probably 180 days after you submitted your application. However, according to [Canadian law](#), you may be authorized to work without a work permit for as long as it takes for IRCC to process your application. You **do not** have to stop working on the date given in this letter. Your Social Insurance Number (SIN) also remains valid while IRCC is processing your application for renewal of status.

If you need an updated letter showing that you are authorized to work past the date on the original letter, you may request a new one using the [IRCC web form](#).

### Part Three: Answer the Eligibility Questionnaire

These are *suggested* answers, assuming the application is made in Canada with a valid study permit. You should of course provide the correct information for yourself and your situation. The questionnaire may have fewer or more questions, depending on your personal answers.

*What would you like to do in Canada? Work*

*How long are you planning to stay in Canada? Temporarily – more than 6 months*

*Select the code that matches the one on your passport* [Select your country from the pull-down menu]

*What is your current country of residence? Canada*

*Do you have a family member who is a Canadian citizen or permanent resident and is 18 years or older?* [Yes/No. The answer should be Yes if your family member is a spouse or common-law partner, dependent children, and their dependent children. Answer No otherwise.]

*What is your date of birth?* [Select from pull-down]

*Are you a lawful permanent resident of the United States with a valid U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) number?* [Yes/No]

*What is your current immigration status in Canada?* Student

*Do you plan to work on campus?* No

*Are you a full-time student at a participating post-secondary institution and want to work off-campus up to 20 hours per week?* No

*Have you recently graduated from a participating Canadian post-secondary institution for which your study program was full-time and minimum of eight months?* Yes

*Is work an essential part of your studies (for example, a Co-Op or internship program)?* No

*Have you been told by an Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada office that you are approved in principle for permanent residence in Canada?* No

*Have you submitted a permanent resident application in Canada?* No

*Do you have a written job offer?* No [Even if you have a job offer, or are working, your answer to this question is No because you are applying for an open work permit, meaning that no employer is named on the permit.]

*Do you have an official letter from your school that confirms you've completed your study program, as well as a copy of your final transcript?* Yes

*Marital Status* [Choose from pull-down. Single = never married]

*What is your province of destination? If visiting multiple provinces, select the one in which you will be spending most of your time?* Ontario

At this point, you may be offered the choice of a Temporary Resident Visa or a Post-Graduation Work Permit. Click "Continue" next to the PGWP. If you need a TRV, you will apply for it after you get your work permit.

*Do you have an official letter from your school that confirms you've completed your study program, as well as a copy of your final transcript?* Yes

*Have you had a medical exam performed by an IRCC authorized panel physician (doctor) within the last 12 months?* [Yes/No]

*A medical exam is needed before you submit your application for foreign nationals who:*

- *Want to stay in Canada for more than 6 months and have live in one or more designated countries or territories for more than six months in the past year or;*
- *Intend to work in one of the following jobs:*
  - *Health sciences worker*
  - *Clinical laboratory worker*
  - *Patient attendant in nursing or geriatric homes*
  - *Medical student admitted to Canada to attend university*
  - *Medical elective and physician on short term assignment*

- *Teacher of primary or secondary schools or other teachers of small children*
- *Domestics worker, someone one gives in-home care to children, the elderly and the disabled*
- *Day nursery worker*

*Do you fit into one of these categories?* [Yes/No] If you answer No, you will be restricted from working in these jobs.

*Do you want to work in one of the following jobs?* [Yes/No]

- *Health sciences worker*
- *Clinical laboratory worker*
- *Patient attendant in nursing or geriatric homes*
- *Medical student admitted to Canada to attend university*
- *Medical elective and physician on short term assignment*
- *Teacher of primary or secondary schools or other teachers of small children*
- *Domestics worker, someone one gives in-home care to children, the elderly and the disabled*
- *Day nursery worker*

*Do you want to submit an application for a family member?* [Yes/No] If you answer Yes, you will have the option to add temporary resident applications for other family members.]

*Are you giving someone access to your application?* No

*In the past 10 years, have you given your fingerprints and photo (biometrics) for an application to come to Canada?* [Yes/No]

*There are fees associated with this application. Will you be paying your fees or are you fee exempt?* Yes, I will pay my application fees.

*Are you able to make a digital copy of your documents with a scanner or camera?* Yes

*Will you be paying your application fees online? To pay online, you can use a credit card (Visa, MasterCard, American Express, JCB, China Union Pay) or a Visa Debit or Debit MasterCard).* Yes

You will have the chance to review your answers, and any answer may be changed up until the time you submit your application.

## Part Four: Complete Application Form IMM 5710

- Download the form from the document list to your computer.
- Open the file with [Adobe Acrobat Reader](#).
- Fill in the information on your computer (*tips are found below*).
- When it is complete, click “Validate”, then save the document on your computer.
- Upload the form to your application.

Tips for completing the form:

- If a field is marked with a “\*”, it must be completed. Other fields may be left blank, if the question does not apply to you.
- Page One: UCI = Unique Client Identifier. This is your ID number with IRCC. You can find this number on your study permit.
- Page One: I am applying for one or more of the following — Select “Apply for a work permit for the first time or with a new employer”
- Page One: Current country of residence – Canada
  - Status:* Student
  - From:* (Date of start of studies/first study permit) *to* (expiration date of current study permit)
- Page Two: National Identity Document — Not all countries have a National ID. If yours does, provide the information. Not all National IDs have an expiry date. If that is the case, leave the “to” field blank.
- Page Two: Mailing address in Canada — This is where you want IRCC to send the new study permit. Residential address — This is where you are living now.
- Page Three: Date and place of your original entry to Canada; date and place of your most recent entry to Canada — Dates and locations of entry should match stamps in your passport or your travel records, if you don’t have a stamp.
- Page Three: Document number of your current status document — For a study permit, this number starts with an F and is printed in black ink near the top right of the permit.
- Page Three: Details of Intended Work in Canada — Select “Post-Graduation Work Permit” from the pull-down menu. The rest of the section can be left blank – except for checking “No” beside the question *Have you been issued a certificate under the Provincial Nominee Program?* Details about employer, job title and duties aren’t relevant to an open work permit like the PGWP.
- Page Three: Employment — For current activity, you may want to say that you are a “Job Seeker”, or “unemployed” or “recent graduate”, in which case write “not applicable” or “none” in the field for the employer. It is mandatory to complete line 1, but you do not need to complete the additional lines in this section for a PGWP application.
- Pages Four and Five: Background Information — Read the questions carefully and answer truthfully. Provide explanations for “yes” answers. Your answers to these questions are a sworn statement. Incorrect or missing information may be treated by IRCC as [misrepresentation](#), making you inadmissible to Canada.
- Page Five: Signature — Type your name in the box.

## Part Five: Online Resources

- **IRCC PGWP info and links to application material:** <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/study/work-postgrad.asp>
- **Operational Manual – Post-Graduation Work Permits** (additional PGWP info for immigration officers): <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/tools/temp/students/post-grad.asp>
- **Facts About Biometrics:** <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/campaigns/biometrics/facts.html>
- **Online Application: Sign in or Create an Account** — <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/application/account.html>
- **IRCC Web Form** — <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/contacts/web-form.asp> Use this form to:
  - Ask about an application that is taking longer than published processing time
  - Update an application or add new information
  - Change contact information
  - Report a technical problem
- **IRCC Call Centre** — **1-888-242-2100**. Speak to an agent Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- **IRCC Help Centre (Frequently Asked Questions)**  
— <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/helpcentre/index-featured-can.asp>
- **Application Processing Times** — <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/application/check-processing-times.html>