

Pre-Departure Handbook

2023-2024







2023-2024 Exchange Pre-Departure Handbook

Acadia University

Wolfville, Nova Scotia

This handbook is an essential companion for your exchange program experience through Acadia University. Make sure you read it thoroughly before you go and keep it handy for reference while you are away.













DISCLAIMER:

This handbook is intended to assist you in your preparations to study abroad and it serves as a guide to some of the many resources available to you. Every attempt is made to verify the accuracy of the information contained in this guide book at the time of publication. For obvious reasons, however, it is impossible for the Exchange and Study Abroad Office to guarantee the accuracy beyond that time.

Due to changing political, health and security situations around the globe, it is the student's responsibility to check with the appropriate authorities to be certain that they have the most up-to-date information at their disposal prior to their departure.

Acadia International Contacts



Chelsea Hanoun
Coordinator, Exchange &
Study Abroad



chelsea.hanoun@acadiau.ca



Daniel Macgregor
Coordinator, Partnerships &
Agreements



daniel.macgregor@acadiau.ca



Michael Holmes
Director, Acadia International



michael.holmes@acadiau.ca



Table of Contents

Acadia International Contacts	1
Exchange Responsibilities & Procedure	3
International Exchange Partners	3
Lad Javorek Memorial Award	4
Preparations for Exchange Program	5
PASSPORT INFORMATION	5
VISA/RESIDENCE PERMIT/STUDY PERMIT INFORMATION	5
TRAVEL & HEALTH INSURANCE	5
RISK ASSESSMENT AND RISK MITIGATION	5
Practical Considerations	6-7
MANAGING YOUR MONEY	6
FLIGHTS	7
CELL PHONES	7
TRAVEL PLUG POWER ADAPTERS AND VOLTAGE CONVERTERS	7
DRIVING WHILE ABROAD	7
Staying Healthy	8-9
HEALTH MATTERS	8
PRESCRIPTIONS	9
MENTAL HEALTH	9
Health Care While Abroad	10
HEALTH CARE DELIVERY	10
OBTAINING MEDICAL HELP ABROAD	10
2SLGBTQIA+	10
SPECIAL HEALTH CONCERNS	10
Documenting your Experience Abroad & Social Media Guidelines	11
Recommended Travel Resources	12
Pre-Departure Checklist	13
Outbound Exchange Budget [TEMPLATE]	
Suggested Packing List	







Please Note: These times may vary depending on your program and destination. Please check with the Study Abroad Office at your Host Institution.

Acadia's Exchange & Study Abroad Office

- Offer Guidance & Support
- Liaison with Host Institutions
- Nominate Acadia Students for Exchange
- Run Pre-Departure & Reintegration Sessions

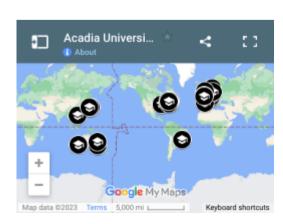
Exchange Students

- Research Costs & Develop Budget
- Submit Home & Host Applications
- Secure Necessary Travel Documents
- Arrange Travel & Transportation
- Secure Housing
- **Solution** Ensure Course Credits Transfer

International Exchange Partners

Acadia University has agreements with institutions in other countries for the exchange of students.

Explore the <u>map</u> to view universities by country/region with which Acadia University has formal exchange agreements and the areas of study available to Acadia students while on exchange.



Lad Javorek Memorial Award



AWARD FOR INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE/STUDY ABROAD

The Lad Javorek Memorial Awards are provided annually to two students entering their third or subsequent year of study at Acadia that have been accepted to participate in a recognized International Exchange or Study Abroad program.

This award was established in 2012 through the generosity of the John and Judy Bragg Family Foundation, in consultation with the Javorek family, to honour Lad Javorek, a good friend and business colleague who had a positive impact on John Bragg, particularly as it related to the development of International Trade/Business.

Preference will be given to students who express financial need and an interest in International Trade/Business.

Students with other interests can apply, but priority is given based on the criteria above.

Award: \$2000 CAD (in term of study abroad)

Application: Submit a one page letter indicating why you would like to study abroad and how this opportunity will advance your career goals, especially in the area of International Trade and Business.

Submission Guidelines:

- File Name FirstNameLastName_LJMemorialAward_Application_2023-2024
- File Type PDF
- Submit Lad Javorek Memorial Award Application

Award applications are submitted to Chelsea Hanoun, Coordinator of Exchange and Study Abroad. Applications will be reviewed and recipients will be selected in direct consultation with Acadia's Scholarships and Financial Aid Administrator, and as needed, Advancement Services.

Award recipients will be notified by Scholarships and Financial Assistance.

Application Deadline: June 30

Lad Javorek Memorial Award - Exchange

acadiau.ca

Preparations for Exchange Program



PASSPORT INFORMATION

Make sure the expiration date of your passport is well after you will be returning (at least 6 months) following your study abroad program.

VISA/RESIDENCE PERMIT/STUDY PERMIT INFORMATION

A visa is a stamp or paper in your passport from the Consulate General or Embassy of the country you will be entering. Depending on the country, there can be delays or complications in obtaining your visa. Normally, you will only need a visa or study permit if you are going to study for more than 3 months. It is important to begin looking into these details early. Many countries require a "student visa" for residence over three months. Research the website of the corresponding consulate or embassy (in Canada) for the visa requirements of the country in which you will be studying.

TRAVEL & HEALTH INSURANCE

Acadia University strongly recommends any student participating in the Exchange Program stay enrolled under the ASU (Acadia Students Union) provided benefit plans to ensure they have comprehensive emergency medical and dental benefits. For students that have opted-out of the ASU provided benefit plans it is your responsibility to secure your own private travel policy and understand what your travel benefit plan entails.

Students who have the ASU provided benefits will have the insurance fees automatically added to your AU student account at the beginning of your studies. Your insurance provider is Medavie Blue Cross, and the policy is administered by Student VIP.

Please review your travel policy before departure; it is your responsibility to understand what is covered under the plans, what exclusions are present and how this may impact your travels. Students must ensure they have their benefit card while travelling, important contact numbers and a policy booklet. Health care providers outside of Canada will require this information before providing service.

Please contact the ASU Supports Office if you have any questions or concerns before departure; tanya.comeau@acadiau.ca, 902-585-2167, Office: Student Unions' Building- main level, room 301

RISK ASSESSMENT AND RISK MITIGATION

Students are required to complete an <u>International Travel Risk Assessment form</u> prior to departing for any university activity that takes place outside of Canada. It is recommended to complete this form at least one month prior to travel but must be completed before departure.

You will use the <u>Government of Canada's travel advice and advisory</u> page for your host country to complete the various sections and answer questions. The ultimate objective of the International Travel Risk Assessment Form is to ensure that you have researched potential risks associated with your international travel and that you have given consideration to the associated risks so that your safety and the success of the activity are not compromised.

Practical Considerations



MANAGING YOUR MONEY

Managing money while abroad is important to all students and their families. Here are some general suggestions about handling your financial affairs before and during your time over-seas:

1. Prepare a budget and know what you can spend.

You will receive a budget template from the Exchange and Study Abroad Office that will help you determine the cost of your exchange. You can list your resources (money that you have saved up) and list the costs that you'll need to keep in mind. This will help you prepare financially for the time you'll be away.

Once you are in-country, keep a daily expense account the first couple of weeks to be able to plan a budget for your entire stay. Please note: you will likely spend more money on arrival than at any other point during your stay. You won't know where to find the best bargains yet, and the currency exchange rate will take some getting used to. Spend conservatively in your first few weeks and save where you can.

2. A credit card in your name will be extremely useful.

You should know what your credit limit is on the card before you leave. Leave a photocopy of your card with your parents in case of loss or theft.

3. Have local currency on arrival.

You should bring with you enough local currency to see you through at least the first few days as you get settled. Foreign currency may need to be ordered in advance from your bank. Check with your local bank for details. The Exchange and Study Abroad Office recommends at least the equivalent to \$200.00 CAD in your host country's currency.

4. Prepare for additional expenses.

Remember that as a student abroad you may be more socially active and may wish to travel more than you would at home, so additional expenses will likely be incurred. Also, it is almost certain that you will spend more money in your first few weeks that you are overseas so plan accordingly for this.

5. Be aware of changes in the value of the Canadian dollar.

You can find information about currency exchange rates on the Internet at http://www.xe.com

6. Figure out the best way to access your money abroad

Taking your money abroad and figuring out how to obtain cash when you need it can be confusing. Consult your bank in Canada for advice before going, and while abroad. Check for fees that might be charged. Please note that not all machines will accept a Canadian debit card.

Note: Many international ATMs do not except pin numbers that exceed 4 digits. If applicable, change your pin number so it is no longer than 4 digits.

IMPORTANT: Make sure banks are aware of your travel dates and locations. Many banks will freeze your account if overseas activity is noted.

Practical Considerations CONT.



FLIGHTS

The Exchange and Study Abroad Office recommends students to book direct flights to your host country, when possible. While in some cases it may be more expensive, it limits the number of entry points and borders that you will need to cross to get to your destination.

The Exchange and Study Abroad Office also does not recommend that you book your flight until you have secured your visa (if required) and confirmed your accommodation arrangements. Finally, we advise you to find out how much your airline will charge you to change your flight dates if necessary and what the cancellation policies are.

CELL PHONES

The Exchange and Study Abroad Office observes bi-directional communication with students while they are abroad. This means that the Exchange and Study Abroad Office needs to be able to reach you in your host country and that you will have a way of contacting us. In most cases, this means you will need to have a cell phone/mobile phone with you. If you plan on using your current phone while abroad, check with your carrier to see if there are any applicable fees. It may be possible for you to pause your Canadian phone plan, pay a low monthly fee to keep your phone number and previous plan dormant while you're away, and use your phone with wifi while abroad. Also ensure your phone is unlocked. This means your phone will be able to work with an international SIM card.

Note: phone plans abroad are typically much cheaper and are offered with much more variety than Canadian plans. It is a good idea to research the cell-phone plans available in your host country in advance. eSIMs are also available in many regions.

Before you go, you should make a plan with family and friends for how you will contact each other. Skype, Facetime, WhatsApp or FB Video Chat are great resources to keep in touch over wifi for free!

TRAVEL PLUG POWER ADAPTERS AND VOLTAGE CONVERTERS

You may need a travel plug power adapter or a voltage converter for your electronic devices. Depending on your host country, wall plug-ins may look different than in Canada. Normally, we have Type A or B plug-ins. In Europe and many parts of Asia, they have Type C plug-ins so you will need to find an adapter before you leave.

DRIVING WHILE ABROAD

Acadia University does not recommend that students drive while they are abroad.

Staying Healthy



HEALTH MATTERS

Before you travel abroad, it is worthwhile to take a close look at the many factors that contribute to your physical and emotional well-being. The state of your health will have a significant impact on the success and enjoyment of your trip. With proper planning, travel can be a happy and health-promoting experience.

1. Address issues in advance

Going abroad is not a magic cure for concerns and problems at home. Both physical and mental health issues will follow you wherever you go. Address any mental or physical health issues honestly before making plans to travel.

2. See your health practitioners before you go

A visit to your family physician, gynecologist, and dentist will ensure that you are in good health before you leave and this might prevent emergencies abroad. Here is a list of things to confirm:

- Update your health records and address any health issues
- Ensure you are up-to-date on your adult vaccinations
- Request a copy of your vaccination record (all vaccinations)
- Know your blood type
- Know your eyeglass prescription
- Request refills for regular medications you may need during your time abroad.
- If you expect to need regular medical care abroad, take a letter of introduction from your doctor providing details of your medical conditions and specific needs.

3. Check to see if you need any travel vaccinations for your host country

Find out about immunization requirements and recommendations for your host country, and check on any regional health or medical advisories.

4. Look into the health resources available abroad

Identify your health needs, both physically and mentally, and ensure you will be able to access the appropriate resources during your stay in the host country and at the host university. Research the resources in advance and check to see if they are included in your insurance coverage.

5. Don't underestimate the stress of leaving home

Living in another country and culture far away from the comforts of home can have serious impacts on your mental health. If you need to speak with an English-speaking psychiatrists, they are available through the <u>I.M. Well App</u>, which is available to all Acadia students. Do not be afraid to ask for help! If you are in a situation where you need help, but do not know where to find the appropriate resources, please reach out to the Coordinator of Exchange and Study Abroad.

Staying Healthy CONT.



PRESCRIPTIONS

- Always pack medications in your carry-on luggage. Keep them in the original containers. Check with your airline about the regulations regarding bringing medical supplies on-board the aircraft and any documentation that you may need.
- Carry a copy of all prescriptions (& generic names for drugs), and written instructions from your physician.
- Obtain enough prescription medications in Canada to cover your entire stay abroad. You cannot simply have prescriptions mailed to you they will likely be confiscated in customs.
- If you cannot obtain enough of your prescription medication in advance, you should contact your insurance provider to see what the procedure is for obtaining refills in the host country. It can take up to 60 days to obtain a refill, so plan in advance!
- Be aware that certain drugs used for mental health or anxiety may not be available in other countries, so bring an adequate supply and a note from your physician supporting your use of them.
- Check the host country's embassy website to see what prescription drugs may be illegal in that country.
- If you become ill and need to purchase prescription medication while abroad, be sure to save your receipts to submit the claim through your insurance provider.

MENTAL HEALTH

As many as one in three university students take medication designed for psychological purposes (Global Affairs website). There are two things to keep in mind if you fall into this common category:

- The pressures of adjustment to a new way of life, the lack of familiar support, and possibly a new language can all present special concerns.
- Study abroad is not an escape. Problems and issues that students have in Canada are often exacerbated in a foreign country when coupled with the stress of a new culture and environment.

Health Care While Abroad



HEALTH CARE DELIVERY

Health care delivery varies from country to country. Things to consider and research:

- Local system of health care delivery
- Laws and attitudes regarding sexual health, pregnancy, abortion, and birth control
- What types of health care facilities exist
- · How payments for health care services are handled
- What is your legal right to obtain services in the host country

OBTAINING MEDICAL HELP ABROAD

Keep in mind that cultural differences play a part in medical services abroad. Things to consider and research:

- Is there a 911-style emergency number?
- Can you access routine help on campus?
- Do you need to obtain an identity card or some other forms in order to assure you receive appropriate care?

It is important to be flexible. Be prepared for inevitable cultural differences in the provision of medical services. Students who need a particular type of medical care should find out in advance where such care is available. In many countries, Canadian cultural behaviours are not understood or accepted. You may be perceived as difficult to work with, impatient, or demanding. Health care practitioners in the host country may not be accustomed to treating the range of problems raised by Canadian students, especially in areas related to sexuality.

2SLGBTQIA+

Attitudes towards 2SLGBTQIA+ concerns may be more or less liberal than the experience in Canada.

Please review:

- Support services & materials provided to 2SLGBTQIA+ students studying abroad by Rainbow SIG
- ASU | Sexual Health Resource Centre presentation on Sexual Health & Travel
- ASU I Sexual Health Resource Centre Sexual Health & Travel presentation resources

SPECIAL HEALTH CONCERNS

If you struggle with eating disorders, alcohol, other substance-abuse problems, or any special mental health concerns, know these may surface while you are abroad. Understand that you are about to participate in a great adventure, and that you will be far away from your support system.

Documenting your Experience Abroad & Social Media Guidelines



As an Acadia student abroad, you are the connection between Acadia and the world. In addition, you are the ambassadors for Acadia and Canada. At the Exchange and Study Abroad Office, our main goals for students when they participate on these programs are to:

- Encourage you to make the most of your time while abroad!
- Encourage you to find ways to introduce and connect Acadia to the world, and if applicable to
 encourage students from our partner universities to come and experience Acadia (ie. if you are in a
 position to, see if you can make a presentation about Acadia or if you can host an information
 session about Acadia.)
- Encourage you to document your international experience through photos so that you'll have a
 photo/video journal. If you choose to post on social media, posting often allows you to reflect on
 your experiences in the moment as well as gain valuable insight into your host culture and society.
 Sharing content regarding how things have or have not gone in line with your expectations and
 showing people how this opportunity changed your perspective would also motivate more students
 to step out of their comfort zone.

Some important social media guidelines:

- Do not post anything on your social media that is violent, pornographic or incriminating. This includes not posting anything where you are consuming drugs or alcohol or doing anything that could be interpreted as illegal in your host country.
- Do not take pictures of children or vulnerable people without permission
- Do not take pictures or video of military, military buildings, even police
- Ensure that you engage with any people that you take photos of with respect and integrity

Here are some ways you can document your international experience and help the Exchange and Study Abroad Office promote our international programs and opportunities!

- Tag acadiau and acadiau.international when you post on Instagram
- Use <u>#AcadiaAbroad</u>
- Tag partner university/program where you are doing your exchange



Recommended Travel Resources

Use this checklist as a guide and method to track your exchange preparations. Please <u>download/make a copy</u> of the document for your personal use.

	Recommended 0/53 Reviewed Travel Resources				
1	Resource Name:	Website:	Note(s):		
	Request emergency assistance	https://travel.gc.ca/assistance/emergency- assistance	Information and resc for Canadian citizens resources to assist y		
	Assistance outside Canada	https://travel.gc.ca/assistance	General hub for getti		
	travel.gc.ca	https://travel.gc.ca/	Access key informat - Find up-to-date trae - Find emergency co and Response Cente - Find continuously t location Connect to Travel. even more about trae - Sign up for the Gov Canada in case of a		
	Ask Travel	https://travel.gc.ca/assistance/ask-travel	Interactive FAQ tool answers to question:		
	Travel advice and advisories by destination	https://travel.gc.ca/travelling/advisories	Destination-specific		
	GoC's Traveller's Checklist	https://travel.gc.ca/travelling/publications/travellers -checklist	Before you leave Ca		
	Students and youth	https://travel.gc.ca/travelling/health-safety/youth	Information for stude		
	Advice for women travellers	https://travel.gc.ca/travelling/health-safety/advice- for-women-travellers	Information on the cl		
	2SLGTBQIA+ Travellers	https://travel.gc.ca/travelling/health-safety/lgbt- travel	Minimize your risk. N		
	Travelling with disabilities	https://travel.gc.ca/travelling/health- safety/disabilities	Information to help n		
	Drugs, alcohol and travel	https://travel.gc.ca/travelling/health-safety/drugs	How to avoid problei		
	Travel vaccinations	http://travel.gc.ca/travelling/health-safety/vaccines	Determine which vac		
To do	World Health and Safety		> <		



Pre-Departure Checklist (non-exhaustive)

Use this checklist as a to do guide and method to track your exchange preparations. Please <u>download/make a copy</u> of the document for your personal use.

Outbound Exchange Checklist (non-exhaustive) | Acadia University : To do



Exchange Checklist (non-exhaustive)

Please download/make a copy of the document for your personal use.

Please download/make a copy of the document for your personal use.			
1	Time Frame	Task	
	June 30 (Application Deadline)	Consider/apply for <u>Lad Javorek Memorial Award</u>	
	3-6 months in advance	Download Terms of Participation Agreement	
	3-6 months in advance	Review, complete, & sign Terms of Participation Agreement	
	3-6 months in advance	Submit Terms of Participation Agreement	
	3-6 months in advance	Consult a health care professional or visit a travel health clinic to get on your adult vaccinations and request any prescriptions you will need to be schedule a complete physical with your doctor.	
	3-6 months in advance	Schedule an appointment with your gynecologist (females) and/or seand period and/or hormonal changes.	
	3-6 months in advance	Schedule a check-up appointment with your dentist	
	3-6 months in advance	Prepare a financial plan (budget). Download/make a copy of the Exc	
	3-6 months in advance	Consider arranging Power of Attorney	
	3-6 months in advance	Review and determine your travel and health insurance coverage	
	3-6 months in advance	Ensure provincial health insurance is valid for the entire duration you provider to inquire about travel restrictions and to see if provincial co	
	3-6 months in advance	Research host country's risk level, safety and security, entry and exi Government of Canada's travel advice and advisories	
		If applicable, start learning the basics of the host country's language	
Publisl	Published by Google Sheets - Report Abuse - Updated automatically every 5 minutes		

13



Outbound Exchange Budget [TEMPLATE]

Use this template as a guide and method to track your exchange budget. Please <u>download/make a copy</u> of the document for your personal use.

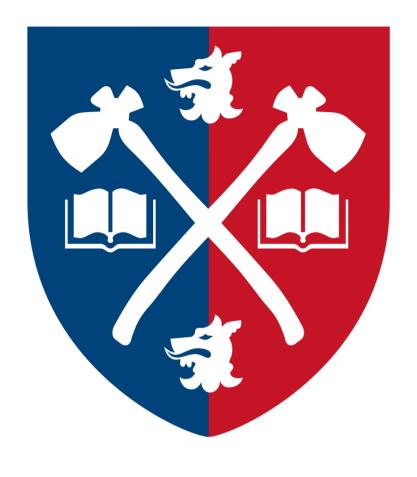
ACADIA	
UNIVERSITY	
[TEMPLATE] Outbound Exchange Budget	
Budget Time Frame: [Insert Date Range]	
Do you know the exchange rate? Look it up with a Currency Converter	CAD - Canadian Do
Total Income/Resources:	\$0
Total Expenses:	\$0
Total Exchange Budget	\$0
Income Resources	Category Total
Family Contribution	\$0.00
Student Loan and/or Grants	\$0.00
Employment Income	\$0.00
Savings	\$0.00
Scholarships/Awards	\$0.00
Other (Income/Resource)	\$0.00
Total Income/Resources	\$0.00
Expense Category	Category Total
Travel Admin	\$0.00
Visa/Study Permit	\$0.00
Passport	\$0.00
Travel & Health Insurance	\$0.00
Bank & ATM Fees (including currency conversion fees/foreign transaction fees)	\$0.00
Education	\$0.00
Acadia Tuition	\$0.00
Host University Ancillary Fees	\$0.00
Textbooks & Course Materials	\$0.00
Accommodation	\$0.00
Housing	\$0.00
Transportation	\$0.00
Round Trip International Flights	\$0.00
Budget Overview Active Detailed Budget	<



Suggested Packing List (non-exhaustive)

Use this checklist as a guide and method to track your exchange preparations. Please <u>download/make a copy</u> of the document for your personal use.

Suggested Packing List (non- exhaustive) 0/42 completed			
1	Category	Item	
	Clothing	Capsule Wardrobe	
	Clothing	Acadia University swag	
	Clothing	Sleepwear	
	Clothing	1 x dressier shoe (can dress up or down)	
	Clothing	1 x walking/hiking/athletic shoe (consider season)	
	Clothing	1 x flip flops/sandals	
	Clothing	1 x bathing suit (optional)	
	Clothing	2 x Outerwear (consider season)	
	Clothing	Underwear, socks, bras	
	Clothing	Sun and/or winter hat (+ mitts)	
	Toiletries	Travel health kit	
	Toiletries	Shampoo & conditioner	
	Toiletries	Deodorant	
	Toiletries	Body wash or soap	
	Toiletries	Face, hair, body products	
To do			



ACADIA UNIVERSITY

LIKE NOWHERE ELSE