

GATEWAY EDUCONNECT

Canada Study Permit 2026

A practical guide to the international student cap, DLI and PGWP checks, programme selection, finances and application readiness.

408,000 expected permits

155,000 new students

Check programme-level PGWP

Canada is not closed to international students. However, the system is more controlled and programme checks are more important. A school being a DLI does not automatically mean every programme leads to PGWP eligibility.

Use this guide to: understand the latest rule, identify the checks you must complete, discuss the budget with your family, and prepare better questions before paying any fee.

Free profile review: gatewayeduconnect.com

1. What is different in 2026?

2026 national planning figure	Expected number	What it means
Total study permits	Up to 408,000	Includes new arrivals and extensions
Newly arriving students	About 155,000	New study permit issuance is more limited
Current/returning student extensions	About 253,000	Extensions form a large share of the total
PAL/TAL-required permits	Up to 180,000	Distributed across provinces and territories
Public DLI master's and doctoral cohort	About 49,000	Eligible public graduate programmes are PAL/TAL-exempt in 2026

What this means for applicants

Programme relevance, financial proof, institution verification and a clear study plan matter. Apply with a strong, consistent file instead of rushing into a programme only because it is available.

2. The DLI and PGWP checks you must complete

Check the school

You need a letter of acceptance from a Designated Learning Institution (DLI) to apply for a study permit. Search the official DLI list and confirm the exact campus.

Check the exact programme

A DLI may offer some PGWP-eligible programmes and some that are not eligible. Confirm the exact programme, campus, study level, duration and current PGWP status.

PGWP points to verify

- The programme is at a PGWP-eligible DLI and meets the minimum programme requirements.
- The exact programme is listed as eligible where programme-level details are provided.
- Language-result requirements for the PGWP are understood.
- Field-of-study rules are checked when they apply to the qualification.
- Bachelor's, master's and doctoral graduates are generally exempt from the field-of-study requirement, but must still meet other PGWP conditions.
- For 2026, the eligible PGWP field-of-study list is frozen, but applicants should still verify their CIP code and current rules.

Important

Graduating from a DLI does not automatically make a student eligible for a PGWP. Check both the institution and the programme before paying a deposit.

3. Study permit readiness

Area	What the official rules expect	Your preparation
Enrolment	Acceptance at a DLI	Keep the official letter of acceptance and verify it matches the campus and programme
Funds	Tuition, living expenses, return transportation and family costs where applicable	Prepare clear and traceable financial documents
Academic purpose	A credible reason for the programme	Explain why the programme fits previous study and career goals
Compliance	Lawful conduct, health and other requirements where applicable	Prepare police or medical documents if requested
Temporary intent	Ability to satisfy the officer about compliance with permit conditions	Keep the study plan factual and consistent

Questions parents should ask before paying

- Is the institution public or private, and what does that mean for this exact programme?
- Is the programme PGWP-eligible today?
- What are the total tuition, accommodation, insurance, travel and settlement costs?
- What is the backup plan if the student does not receive the expected work permit or job outcome?
- Does the family have clear evidence for the source of funds?
- Is the course choice defensible based on the student's academics and career direction?

4. Who should apply - and who should pause?

Profile	Good reason to proceed	Reason to pause and review
Academic fit	The programme is a logical next step	The programme is unrelated and the reason is weak
Institution check	DLI and exact campus verified	Student has checked only the brand name
PGWP check	Exact programme and conditions verified	Student assumes all DLI programmes are eligible
Funding	Clear funds for tuition, living and travel	Application depends mainly on future part-time work
Career logic	Course supports realistic target roles	Decision is based only on migration expectations

Your next 7 actions

- Choose the study level and programme based on academic progression.
- Search the institution and campus on the official DLI list.
- Check the exact programme's PGWP status and current requirements.
- Confirm whether a PAL/TAL is required for your situation.
- Prepare a complete and traceable financial file.
- Write a factual study plan that connects education and career goals.
- Request a profile and programme review before paying the deposit.

5. Final Canada checklist

Before you pay an application fee or make a final country decision, complete these checks:

- The school and campus are confirmed on the official DLI list.
- The exact programme's PGWP eligibility is verified.
- PAL/TAL requirements are confirmed for the applicant's category.
- The programme clearly matches the student's academic and career profile.
- Funds for tuition, living costs and travel are documented.
- All claims are based on current Canada.ca information, not social media rumours.

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Important

This guide is for general education planning. It is not a visa decision, legal advice, financial advice, admission guarantee, scholarship guarantee or job guarantee. Rules, fees and eligibility can change. Always verify the official page and the university page before submitting or paying.

Official sources used

2026 international student cap: <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/news/notices/2026-provincial-territorial-allocations-under-international-student-cap.html>
Official DLI list: <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/study-canada/study-permit/prepare/designated-learning-institutions-list.html>
PGWP eligibility: <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/study-canada/work/after-graduation/eligibility.html>
Study permit eligibility: <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/study-canada/study-permit/eligibility.html>