



2012-2013 Student Mobility/Exchange Program Outgoing Undergraduate Application – Frequently Asked Questions

Imagine spending a semester as an exchange student in the United Kingdom, Europe, Israel, Australia, China, the United States or another part of Canada and receiving credit towards your OCAD U degree!

1. [What are the benefits of participating in the Mobility/Exchange Program?](#)
2. [Am I eligible to apply?](#)
3. [Can Mobility/Exchange Program credits be applied to my minor?](#)
4. [Where can I study?](#)
5. [How can I get more information about the programs of study and suitable institutions for my mobility/exchange semester?](#)
6. [How do I apply?](#)
7. [What are the application deadlines?](#)
8. [Is it possible to apply to more than one school?](#)
9. [Can I talk to someone who has completed a semester abroad at the host institution\(s\) I am interested in?](#)
10. [What about the language requirements?](#)
11. [What costs can I expect?](#)
12. [What funding is available?](#)
13. [Who can advise me on portfolio preparation?](#)
14. [What should I include in my Letter of Motivation?](#)
15. [What should my instructors include in my letters of recommendation?](#)
16. [What happens after I submit my application to OCAD U?](#)
17. [How will I find out if I am accepted?](#)
18. [Once I am accepted, what do I do next?](#)
19. [What do I need to do after I arrive at my host institution?](#)
20. [Is there anything I need to do before I leave my Host Institution and return to OCAD U?](#)
21. [What am I required to do once I get back?](#)
22. [What if I'm having trouble adjusting to life back home?](#)
23. [How can I promote the program to potential mobility/exchange students?](#)

1. What are the benefits of participating in the Mobility/Exchange Program?

- Gain a new global perspective
- Develop cross-cultural skills
- Investigate different art and design communities
- Explore courses and subjects unique to your host institution
- Learn a new language or improve existing language skills
- Share your experiences and insights with other OCAD students and the larger community
- Gain valuable international experience for future career opportunities

2. Am I eligible to apply?

The Student Mobility/Exchange Program is open to full-time third-year students. You must have completed a minimum of 10.0 credits and a maximum of 12.5 credits towards your program requirements prior to your participation in the program (Year 3 level). You must also be in satisfactory academic standing with a minimum overall average of 70% at the time of application and at the time you participate in the program.

Prior to applying, check your academic standing and credits online through [MY RECORDS](#) to confirm that you meet the eligibility requirements for the program. You are then required to visit your Faculty Office to verify your eligibility for the program. Once your eligibility has been verified, you will be directed to make an appointment with your Program Chair to discuss your reasons for applying, suitable host institutions, portfolio preparation, etc.

3. Can mobility/exchange program credits be applied to my minor?

No, your mobility/exchange program credits will be applied *only to your major requirements*, as all credits for a minor must be completed in residence at OCAD U.

4. Where can I study?

Mobility/Exchange agreements currently exist with a wide variety of institutions around the world. Please review our *Mobility/Exchange Partner List* and our more detailed *Mobility/Exchange Partner Institution Profiles* for more information.

5. How can I get more information about programs of study and suitable institutions for my mobility/exchange semester?

There are several ways to find out more information about potential programs of study:

- Look at our *Mobility/Exchange Partner Institution Profiles*
- Review the host institution's website
- Speak to the Chair of your OCAD U program to discuss program suitability
- Make an appointment with Susan Kemp, Mobility/Exchange Coordinator, to discuss your options
- Attend a Mobility/Exchange Information Session

6. How do I apply?

All students must complete the *2012-2013 Undergraduate Mobility/Exchange Program Outgoing Students Application* to be considered for the program.

As indicated on the application form, you are required to submit the following items to the Mobility/Exchange Coordinator by the appropriate deadline:

- **\$100 application fee** (This includes up to 3 schools) - **cheque or money order payable to OCAD**
- **1 page Letter of Motivation** outlining your goals as a student in the program
- **2 academic letters of recommendation from OCAD U teaching faculty**

These must be formal typewritten letters, preferably on OCAD U letterhead.

- **Official transcript from OCAD U**

Submit a [Document Request Form](#) to the Office of the Registrar - 115 McCaul Street, Level 2. Do not order your transcripts until your grades from the previous semester have been released.

- **Course descriptions for all courses selected at the host institution**

This information is usually available on the host institution's website

- **Portfolio: 6-10 examples of your work on a CD** (or as specified by the host institution)

Your portfolio will be reviewed by your OCAD U Program Chair and the host institution. Please check with the Mobility/Exchange Coordinator at OCAD U before submitting your application to see if the host institution has different portfolio requirements from those listed above.

- **Host institution's application form** - available from Mobility/Exchange Coordinator at OCAD U
- **Any additional items required by host institution**

Please check with the Mobility/Exchange Coordinator at OCAD U before submitting your application to see if the host institution requires any additional items. Additional items may include a passport-size photo, a copy of your curriculum vitae, etc.

7. What are the application deadlines?

Fall 2012 Semester (Sept - Dec 2012) - **Deadline is 13 Feb 2012***
Winter 2013 Semester (Jan - April 2013) - **Deadline is 20 Aug 2013**

*Please note that ALL applications to Glasgow School of Art for Fall/Winter 2012/2013 must be submitted to OCAD by the February 13th deadline. GSA only accepts applications once a year in the spring.

Deadline for Ontario-Jiangsu Exchange Program only:

January 11, 2012 for 2012/2013

8. Is it possible to apply to more than one school?

Yes, you may apply to a maximum of three schools. You must submit a separate application package for each school; however, the \$100 application fee **only needs to be paid once**.

9. Can I talk to someone who has completed a semester abroad at the host institution(s) I am interested in?

Yes, International Student Services will make every effort to connect you with a recently returned mobility/exchange program participant. You can also visit our office to look over the students' reports on file.

10. What about language requirements?

Our partner institutions in Denmark, Finland, Sweden and Switzerland offer some courses in English for mobility/exchange students. You generally require an advanced level of French to study in France, but we do have two partner schools that offer instruction in English. If you plan to study in Israel, it is helpful to have a basic knowledge of Hebrew. For more information, please refer to our *Mobility/Exchange Partner Institution Profiles*.

11. What costs can I expect?

All applicants are required to submit a non-refundable application fee of \$100 payable to OCAD U (cheque or money order).

If accepted, you will pay tuition fees to OCAD U by the published deadlines before you begin your studies at the host institution. Please be aware that there may be additional fees required at the host institution, such as class and equipment fees, but these should be minimal. The host institution will notify you of any additional fees at the time of your acceptance.

You are responsible for all other costs associated with your mobility/exchange semester. These expenses include, but are not limited to: student visa, transportation to and from the host institution, health insurance, housing and daily living expenses. The cost of living varies depending on where you will be studying. You can ask the host institution to send you an estimate of living expenses for one semester and you can browse the reports completed by past OCAD U mobility/exchange students in the International Student Services Office.

12. What funding is available?

Generally, host institutions do not provide funding for incoming mobility/exchange students. However, as an OCAD U student studying outside of Ontario in the Student Mobility/Exchange Program, you may be eligible to access funding through the [Ontario Student Assistance Program \(OSAP\)](#).

In addition, OCAD is pleased to offer these funding opportunities for eligible mobility/exchange students studying at partner institutions:

- [OTTS Joubin-Selig Bursary](#)
- [Ontario International Education Opportunity Scholarship](#)

13. Who can advise me on portfolio preparation?

You can ask the Chair of your program for advice on how to prepare a portfolio that is suitable for your mobility/exchange application.

14. What should I include in my Letter of Motivation?

When writing your letter of motivation, you may want to consider answering some of the following questions:

- What do you want to achieve by participating in an exchange?
- What will you do with this knowledge and experience?
- How will this mobility/exchange experience help you attain your career goals?
- Why do you want to pursue a career in your chosen program of study? What life experiences have influenced these interests?
- What are some of your strengths and weaknesses? How do you see yourself growing from this experience?
- What have you done to prepare yourself for this opportunity? What do you have to contribute to the program?
- Is there anything extraordinary that needs to be taken into consideration?

It's also a good idea to have someone read over your application and make sure there are no typos, spelling mistakes or grammatical errors. We recommend you visit the Writing & Learning Centre at OCAD U for help.

15. What should my instructors include in my letters of recommendation?

We ask for general letters of recommendation in which your instructors can write about how they know you (usually which courses you were in), their impressions of you as a student and the qualities you possess that would make you a suitable candidate for the mobility/exchange program. It is helpful for the instructors if you provide them with some information about the schools to which you are applying and your proposed program of study.

16. What happens after I submit my application to OCAD U?

The Mobility/Exchange Coordinator will ensure that your application package is complete.

Complete application packages will be sent to your Program Chair who will make the decision on whether or not to recommend you for mobility/exchange. The Chair will consider the quality of your submission, the suitability of your proposed program of study at the host institution and how you would benefit from the experience.

If you receive a positive recommendation, the Mobility/Exchange Coordinator will forward your application package to the host institution. The host institution then makes the final decision on whether to accept or deny an application. The decision of the host institution is final.

17. How will I find out if I am accepted?

The host institution's Mobility/Exchange Coordinator will notify OCAD U's Mobility/Exchange Coordinator of their decision. We will then notify each student by email of the host institution's final decision.

Some students find waiting for their acceptances from the host institution quite nerve wracking. Try to be patient as some institutions may have a later start date than OCAD U. We do advise that you wait until you receive your acceptance package before you book your flight.

18. Once I am accepted, what do I do next?

Depending on your host country, you may be required to get a student visa. Your host institution will provide you with immigration information and forms for the visa application process. You can then apply for your visa at your host country's consulate in Toronto or embassy in Ottawa.

You must purchase travel insurance that will provide you with health coverage for your travel to and from the host institution and for the duration of your exchange. You can buy travel insurance from your travel agent at time you book your flights.

We require all outgoing students to complete OCAD U's pre-departure forms prior to leaving the country. Please be aware that failure to submit these forms to the International Student Services Office may jeopardize your participation in the program. The forms will be emailed to you well in advance of your departure.

If you identify as having a disability and may require accommodations while you participate in the Mobility/Exchange Program, please speak to Susanne Seiner in the Centre for Students with Disabilities and Susan Kemp, Mobility/Exchange Coordinator. We will work with your host institution to ensure that the proper supports are in place for you when you arrive. Please be aware though that some institutions do not have accessible buildings and/or do not offer disability support services.

19. What do I need to do after I arrive at my host institution?

Please send your new address and phone number to the International Student Services Office.

You are required to send course outlines and grading information for all your courses to the International Student Services Office within 2 weeks of beginning your exchange. The final course information will be reviewed by your Program Chair and the Office of the Registrar at OCAD U in order to confirm the courses are acceptable for transfer credit.

20. What do I need to do before I leave my host institution at the end of the semester?

You should request that your official transcript be sent to the International Student Services Office at OCAD U as soon as it is available. Please obtain an unofficial copy for yourself to bring back with you.

21. What am I required to do once I get back?

Once you return from your semester away, there are several things you need to do in order to successfully complete your program. These include:

1. Complete the Mobility/Exchange Program Report and return it to the International Student Services Office. This is your chance to share your insights and suggestions, which are very helpful for fellow students considering the program.
2. Contact the International Student Services Office to confirm that your official transcript has arrived at OCAD U.
3. Make an appointment with your Program Chair at OCAD U to discuss your mobility/exchange experience.
4. If you were away in the winter semester, you will be able to register for your fourth-year courses after your mobility/exchange credits have been entered onto your OCAD U student record. The Office of the Registrar at OCAD U can only enter your mobility/exchange credits with an official transcript from your host institution.

22. What if I'm having trouble adjusting to life back home?

Don't worry, it's normal. You have just experienced an intense period of time away from all that is familiar academically, socially and emotionally. Sometimes, adjusting back to life at home can be as difficult (if not more) as the culture shock you might have experienced while studying in another country.

Check out University of Calgary's [Returning Home - Dealing with Reverse Culture Shock](#) for information on how to deal with reverse culture shock.

23. How can I promote the program to potential mobility/exchange students?

1. We will invite you to take part in our Mobility/Exchange Information Sessions held each semester.
2. Be sure to submit your Mobility/Exchange Program Report to the International Student Services Office so that we can share it with potential applicants.
3. Drop by the International Student Services Office to share your pictures and stories about your experience - we love to hear about your adventures.