

Preparing a Study Plan/Statement of Purpose (SOP) for your Study Permit Application

When you apply for a study permit, you should write a 1-to-2-page Study Plan, also known as a Statement of Purpose (SOP), to explain why you want to study in Canada and what you plan to study.

Even if the visa office in your country doesn't require you to submit a Study Plan, we strongly recommend that you submit one as it gives the visa officer a better understanding of your situation. The goal of the Study Plan is to convince the officer that you really want to come to Canada to study and, if approved, that you will respect the conditions of your study permit and leave Canada after finishing your studies.

You should cover the following topics in your Study Plan:

Reasons you have chosen to study at OCAD University in Canada in the program to which you have been accepted

- Explain your overall educational and career goals and how your OCAD U program fits into them.
- If your OCAD U program is related to your previous education or work experience, you can talk about your interest in this field and explain how studying in Canada will allow you to further your goals.
- If your OCAD U program is in a different field from your previous education or work experience, you should explain why you are making this change.
- If you already have a post-secondary degree (undergraduate or graduate), you will need to explain how this additional degree from Canada will be beneficial.

Reasons you aren't pursuing a similar program in your country of citizenship or residence

- Describe the research you have done into programs available in your country of citizenship or residence. Are similar programs available? If so, how do they differ from the program you've chosen at OCAD U? Why is the program at OCAD U the best fit for you?

How the program at OCAD U will enhance your employment opportunities in your country of citizenship or residence

- Explain how the skills and knowledge you will gain from studying in Canada are applicable to your future career goals.
- Show that you've done research in your home country to find out the job requirements and industry demand in your field.
- If you are interested in a job in your country that you are currently unqualified for, explain how your education in Canada will prepare you to apply for this type of job when you return home.

How you plan to pay for your studies and living expenses

- You need to demonstrate that you have a solid financial plan for your studies. You need to show that you will be able to support yourself in Canada without working as finding a job during your studies is not guaranteed.
- Explain where the funds for your education are coming from (family support, scholarship, bank loan, etc.).

Ties to your country of citizenship or residence

- The visa officer will consider your social and economic ties to your country when assessing if you will leave Canada at the end of your authorized stay.
- You need to show that your ties to your country are stronger than any ties you may have or develop in Canada.
- You should disclose if you have immediate family in your country (spouse, children, parents, siblings). Describe any family responsibilities you may have – for example, taking care of elderly parents.
- Describe your economic/financial ties – for example, mention if you have a job offer for when you return home, or if you or your family own property or businesses, etc.

Tips for your Study Plan:

- Be clear and concise. Your document should be a maximum of 2 pages.
- Divide your letter into sections with headings to make it easier for the officer to read. For example, “Reasons for choosing OCAD University”, “Ties to my home country”, etc.
- Provide relevant information that is specific to your situation and education plans. Avoid general statements that could apply to anyone, such as “I chose to study in Canada because it’s a safe country”.
- Include documents that support the information you provide in your letter. For example, if you mention that you or your family own property as a way of showing ties to your home country, attach proof of the property ownership.