



*Orientation Guide for
International Students*

Cégep Heritage College

Gatineau, Quebec, Canada

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About this guide

The information from external organizations is current at the date of publication of this guide and subject to change without prior notice.

The term “Cégep” is an acronym for *Collège d’enseignement général et professionnel*.

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Welcome

This practical guide is for international students who are studying at Cégep Heritage College.

It contains general information on the rights and obligations of international students as well as essential information for making your stay run smoothly.

The formalities for obtaining authorizations issued by the immigration authorities of Canada and Quebec are available on our Web site in the [section for international students](#).

Thank you for choosing to study at Cégep Heritage College and welcome to the National Capital Region of Canada.

Student life at the College

At Cégep Heritage College, we care about the success of our students!

Some aspects of your student life, such as the school structure, teaching, pedagogical methods, homework, and deadlines, may be different from what you are used to.

Recognizing this, the College has concrete ways to support students in achieving their goals, including:

- One-on-one pedagogical help and counselling
- [The Learning Centre](#)
- Library
- IT support and free Wi-Fi

Use of the laptop is not required in classes. Some courses may have mandatory textbooks. You may expect to pay between \$300 and \$400 CAD per semester for textbooks.

The College has modern sports and recreational facilities. It is possible to practice various activities for fun or join a sports team (basketball, rugby or soccer). There is usually a fee to participate in competitive sports.

For more information, contact **Student Services** by email at sservices@cegep-heritage.qc.ca or by telephone at 819-778-2270, extension 1320.

Relationship with your teachers

The relationship between teachers and students is direct and informal. It is easy to see teachers in their offices. Students are encouraged to consult their teachers as needed.

Canada (and Quebec)

Canada has a broad diversity of ethnic, religious, and socio-economic groups of people of all ages and occupations, and these people have a broad diversity of ideas and opinions. Despite this diversity, it is possible to describe some characteristics that, in general, represent the attitudes and customs that Canadians value.

About Canadians (and Quebecers)

Generally speaking, Canadians define the ideal person as being honest and independent but ready to help others if asked to do so.

You may notice the directness with which Canadians approach their personal and professional relationships. For example, they treat others naturally and as equals, even where there are differences of age or social position.

Other examples of values and behaviours

Here are some examples of the values and behaviours that generally characterize Canadians:

- the importance of family and social connections
- the importance of the individual
- the importance of privacy
- the importance of change, growth, and advancement
- the importance of honouring important dates and respecting people's busy schedules
- the importance of providing for yourself and loved ones
- autonomy
- the value of education
- the value of work outside the home
- equality between individuals and between the sexes

Canadian winter

In Canada, winter starts in December and ends in March, Mother Nature permitting! The cold and snow can, however, start before December and continue past March. It is not uncommon to reach temperatures upwards to 25 °C even 30 °C in September and May.

Here are some facts about our winters:

- The temperature varies from 0 °C to -30 °C
- January and February are usually the coldest months
- December is the month with the most precipitation
- There are a few periods of intense cold weather every year
- The average snowfall per year is 300 cm

Arriving in Canada

When to arrive

We strongly advise that you arrive at least two weeks before your courses start in order to familiarize yourself with your new environment. For students participating in an exchange project with your educational institution, may arrive approximately one week before courses start.

College services are unavailable from approximately December 24 to January 3. It is difficult to get services in July because it is the summer vacation period.

Airport choice and formalities upon arrival

Students can choose to arrive at Pierre Elliott Trudeau International Airport in Montreal or at the Ottawa McDonald-Cartier International airport.

After getting off the plane, students will be directed to the Canadian immigration office to present their passport, Quebec certificate of acceptance for studies, and their letter of confirmation of their study permit for validation, if applicable.

The student must also verify if he needs an [Electronic Travel Authorization \(eTA\)](#).

Transportation

Public transit by bus in the National Capital Region is provided by [STO](#) in the city of Gatineau and the Outaouais region in the province of Quebec, and by [OC Transpo](#) in the city of Ottawa in the province of Ontario. Passenger rail transportation in Canada is provided by [VIA Rail Canada](#).

Transportation from the Ottawa Airport after your arrival in Canada

The airport is 20 km from the College and is served by public transit departing from Pillar 14 outside the Level 1 Arrivals area. Tickets are on sale at the Ground Transportation Desk located on Level 1 at the central door of the Arrivals area. Remember to ask for a transfer for the STO.

Transportation from the Montreal-Trudeau airport after your arrival in Canada

The airport is 200 km from the College. You must take the train to get to Ottawa. Buy your ticket from [VIA Rail Canada](#) before you leave for Canada. The earlier you buy your ticket, the more you can save on your ticket price.

Mandatory health and hospitalization insurance

In accordance with the regulations of the Ministère de l'Immigration, de la Diversité et de l'Inclusion du Québec, and of the Department of Citizenship and Immigration of Canada, all international students must have a valid health insurance and hospitalization contract while in Canada. You will need to provide proof of this in a document written in English or French.

The Quebec government has reciprocal agreements on social security, including a health component, with several countries. Check the list of countries and how to proceed with the [Régie de l'assurance maladie du Québec](#) (RAMQ). You must be a resident of the province of Quebec during your study stay to benefit from this agreement. Go to the RAMQ Facebook page [Facebook pour étudiants internationaux](#) for more information.

To apply under the reciprocal agreement, you must appear in person at a service outlet, usually a local community service centre (CLSC), after you arrive. It is recommended to take out a temporary insurance for at least four (4) weeks to avoid finding yourself without health services until you receive confirmation of coverage from the RAMQ.

For private insurance, it is important to choose a visitor's coverage in Canada if you are purchasing insurance from a Canadian provider. Here are a few insurance providers who offer products that can suit your situation:

- Blue Cross – <http://www.bluecross.ca/fr/index.html>
- April International Canada – <http://fr.april-international.com/canada>
- Assurance Voyage RSA – <https://www.rsatravelinsurance.com/fr>

Consult a physician

It is always best to go to a clinic rather than an emergency room of a hospital for a consultation which does not require immediate care. The waiting time may be shorter.

Present your Quebec health insurance card if you are covered by RAMQ, or your insurance card and a claim form so that the part of the form for the service provider can be filled out. Then, fill out and sign the form making sure to attach the original receipt to the address indicated on the claim form.

CLINICS near the College

GMF Omni-plateau

28 Mont-Bleu Blvd., Suite 202
Gatineau, Quebec
Information: 819-777-2111

Clinique de médecine familiale de Hull

15 Montclair Blvd., Suite 202
Gatineau, Quebec J8Y 2E2
Register for walk-in clinic: 819-317-1742

There are many walk-in clinics in Gatineau. You can check with Info-Santé by calling 811 to find the clinic nearest your place of residence.

CLSC – Service outlets for obtaining a health insurance card *

* For students who have a reciprocity agreement between Quebec and their country.

CLSC de Gatineau: de la Gappe

777 de la Gappe Blvd.
Gatineau, Quebec J8T 8C2
Tel.: 819-966-6550

CLSC de Gatineau: Saint-Rédempteur

85 Rue Saint-Rédempteur
Gatineau, Quebec J8X 4E6
Tel.: 819-966-6510

CLSC de Gatineau – LeGuerrier

425 Rue LeGuerrier
Gatineau, Quebec J9H 6N8
Tel.: 819-966-6540

For emergencies, call 911 or go to the hospital located near the College:

Hôpital de Hull

116 Lionel-Émond Blvd.
Gatineau, Quebec J8Y 1W7
Tel.: 819-966-6200
Toll free: 1-866-595-2002
Centralized appointment centre: 819-966-6300
Emergency Room: 819-966-6222

PHARMACIES near the College

Jean Coutu Pharmacy

28 Du Mont-Bleu Blvd., Suite 100
Gatineau, Quebec J8Z 1J1
Tel.: 819-776-3151

Pharmaprix

320 Saint-Joseph Blvd.
Les Galeries de Hull shopping centre
Gatineau, Quebec J8Y 3Y8
Tel.: 819-770-6668

Housing

Rental apartments or rooms

There are no student residences at Heritage College. Nevertheless, the site yourRent.ca has a Student Housing tab where landlords are invited to post apartments or rooms for students. There is also an Advice tab to help you in the process. You should know that rent does not always include heating and electricity. The public utility that provides electricity in Quebec is Hydro-Québec.

When you rent a room or an apartment, it is strongly recommended that you purchase home insurance because you automatically become liable for any damages to your space or to the building (fire, water damage, etc.). Without adequate insurance, you can be sued personally for several thousands of dollars. Home insurance also covers your property.

The Régie du logement du Québec has a mandate to resolve disputes between the tenant of an apartment and the owner.

Shopping

Food

The main grocery stores in Gatineau are:

- [Maxi](#)
- [Walmart](#)
- [Loblaws](#)
- [IGA](#)
- [Metro](#)
- [Super C](#)
- [Provigo](#)

Consult the supermarket Web sites to find the one nearest your place of residence.

Shopping centres

Shopping centres have boutiques, services, and include several shops, services, and department stores. The main shopping centres in Gatineau are:

- [Les Promenades de l'Outaouais](#)
- [Les Galeries de Hull](#)
- [Les Galeries Aylmer](#)

Internet access and telephone services

Heritage College offers free WiFi service to its students throughout the building.

The main telephone and data service providers in Quebec are:

- [Bell](#)
- [Fido](#)
- [Telus](#)
- [Rogers](#)
- [Koodo](#)

Work and internships

Work

International students may be authorized to work while studying in Canada, but only under certain conditions. For more information, consult the Web site of [Citizenship and Immigration Canada](#). Eligible students must also ensure that they have a social insurance number issued by [Service Canada](#).

There are several job search sites, including:

- [Emploi Québec](#)
- [Workopolis](#)

Students must file a federal and provincial (Quebec) tax return if they earn taxable income in Canada. For more information, see the video clips for international students on the [Canada Revenue Agency](#) Web site.

Internships

Students who participate in one or more internships as part of their curriculum, must apply for a [work permit for an intern](#) with Citizenship and Immigration Canada. If it is a paid internship, the student must also get a social insurance number and file a tax return.

The conditional admission letter will inform you of this obligation and will be accompanied by a letter stating your participation in internships as part of your studies, a letter you must attach to your application to Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

Banking

If you plan to stay in Canada for the duration of a study program, not a short stay of only a few weeks, or if you participate in a paid internship, you should open a bank account at a financial institution to facilitate your transactions.

Here are some financial institutions that have branches throughout Gatineau:

- [Caisse populaire Desjardins](#)
- [National Bank](#)
- [Scotiabank](#)
- [RBC Royal Bank](#)
- [TD Canada Trust](#)
- [BMO Bank of Montreal](#)
- [CIBC](#)

Be sure to check the Web site of the financial institution of your choice before you arrive for the list of documents you will have to provide.

Good luck in your studies!