

# COVID-19 and Post-Secondary Education

## Q & A

Due to the COVID-19 global pandemic, post-secondary educational institutions throughout Saskatchewan are closed to the public. In many cases, course instruction will continue to be provided online or through a blended approach. Responses to some general questions regarding post-secondary studies are listed below. More information can be found on the COVID-19 web pages on the [saskatchewan.ca](https://www.saskatchewan.ca) and [canada.ca](https://www.canada.ca) websites, and by contacting your post-secondary institution.

### Student Loans

**Q: How is the next student loan period for fall classes being impacted?**

**A:** Students may continue to apply for student loans, but should check with their institution on class availability.

Find the 2020-21 Student Loan application here: <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/studentloans>

**Q: How are students in the repayment phase of their loans affected?**

**A:** Borrowers who are experiencing financial difficulties should contact the National Student Loan Service Center and inquire about the Repayment Assistance Plan. Borrowers should check their student loan account or visit: <https://www.csnpe-nslsc.canada.ca/en/home>

### Courses Moving Online or to Alternate Delivery Methods

**Q: What if students don't have access to computers or the internet?**

**A:** Institutions are working with students to find potential solutions. Students facing these circumstances should advise their educational institution.

**Q: Are post-secondary students required to wear masks on campus?**

**A:** All students and staff are required to follow public health orders. Please check with your institution for more information.

### Living in Residence

**Q: I prefer to study away from home. Can I still apply for residence on campus?**

**A:** Please contact your institution for the latest information.

### International Students

**Q: Are International students being accepted at this time? How are institutions accommodating them?**

**A:** The federal government approved a select number of post-secondary institutions in Canada to accept international students, starting October 20, 2020. Post-secondary institutions in Saskatchewan accepting international students are required to have comprehensive readiness plans to safely support international students, complying with both provincial and federal government guidelines. These plans include a mandatory 14-day quarantine period for incoming international students.

**Q: My student study permit is about to expire, causing me to lose my health coverage. How do I avoid losing my coverage?**

**A:**

1. Submit a Study Permit Extension Application immediately to Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC).
2. Apply for a six-month extension on health cards at: [ehealthsask.ca/residents/health-cards/Pages/Update-or-Replace-a-Health-Card.aspx](https://ehealthsask.ca/residents/health-cards/Pages/Update-or-Replace-a-Health-Card.aspx) and follow the instructions in the 'Update your Health Card' registration information online section.
3. Upload receipt proofs for both their study permit extension application submission and payment.
4. When you receive an original study permit extension from IRCC:
  - a. Log in to your eHealth account again.
  - b. Complete the saved Notification of an Updated Immigration Document form.
  - c. Upload the original study permit extension electronically.

### **Mental Health related to COVID-19**

**Q: What if I am experiencing difficulties with my own or a loved one's mental health as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?**

**A:** Students are encouraged to reach out to their institution's counselling and mental health services. Further assistance may be available through a parent or spouse's Employee and Family Assistance Plan.

[Healthy Campus Saskatchewan](https://hcsk.ca/) is a collaborative effort among Saskatchewan's post-secondary institutions to improve student mental health and wellbeing. Please check their website <https://hcsk.ca/> for information, resources and upcoming events in support of positive mental health and wellbeing.

The [UniWellbeing Course for Post-secondary Students](#) is an online program provided free of charge, designed to help students effectively manage stress and anxiety. Participating students are required to be part of a research study. Full details of the study are available from the organizers.

The World Health Organization also offers a [Mental Health and Psychosocial Considerations During COVID-19 Outbreak factsheet](#).

### **Additional Financial Supports**

**Q: As a post-secondary student, I was informed that I was not eligible for the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB). What other financial aid is available?**

**A:** The Government of Canada has other financial supports for post-secondary students (listed below). Please check for updates on the Government of Canada website.

- [Changes to the Student Loan Program.](#)
- [Supporting student researchers and post-doctoral fellows.](#)
- [Supporting international students working in an essential service.](#)

### Returning to the Classroom

**Q: Why do the pre K-12 guidelines allow a return to the classroom but not for post-secondary education?**

**A:** At this time, many post-secondary institutions across Canada are taking this approach. Unlike a neighbourhood school, post-secondary institutions typically serve students from multiple communities across a city or town, the province and potentially around the world. Some locations have on-campus living accommodations. On each campus, hundreds, in some cases, thousands of students change locations for each class and use common spaces like hallways, elevators and stairwells to get to other areas on campus.