



**EXCEL**  
CAREER COLLEGE



**Your Student Guide**  
to Studying and  
Living in Surrey.

# Welcome to Surrey, Canada!





*You've chosen an excellent location for your study experience, and Excel Career College is thrilled to be part of your journey.*

### **ABOUT SURREY**

Surrey is one of the fastest-growing and most diverse cities in Canada. Here, you will encounter a vibrant mix of cultures and languages, making it a welcoming environment for international students. Whether you enjoy urban conveniences or peaceful natural surroundings, Surrey has something for everyone.

From exploring beautiful parks and nature trails to shopping and dining or local markets, you'll create memories that will last a lifetime. Plus, Surrey's proximity to Vancouver gives you access to even more cultural, entertainment, and recreational opportunities.

Canada is known for its safety, diversity, and world-class services, and Surrey is no exception.

**Enjoy your time with us as you learn, grow, and take your career to the next level at Excel Career College!**



# Your Student Guide to Studying and Living in Surrey

We hope you enjoy the city and your study experience. However, we understand that adjusting to a new life here can be challenging. To help you settle in smoothly, we've put together this brief guide filled with tips and recommendations.

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## 1. GET YOUR BCID

The BCID (British Columbia Identification Card) is an official photo ID for residents. It can be used as identification across Canada.

### HOW TO APPLY:

1. Book an appointment
2. Bring requested documentation
3. Pay the fee for your BCID

### WHERE TO APPLY:

- ICBC driver licensing office
- Service BC centres

### WHAT YOU NEED:

- Passport
- Study/Work Permit
- Proof of address (you can obtain this from your landlord, or accommodation provider).

### WHY IT'S IMPORTANT:

Having a BCID makes everyday tasks like opening a bank account or accessing services much easier.

### BOOK AN APPOINTMENT:



**Scan or Click**  
the QR code to visit:  
[www.icbc.com](http://www.icbc.com)

Cost: \$35 CAD



## 2. APPLY FOR YOUR SIN (SOCIAL INSURANCE NUMBER)

The Social Insurance Number (SIN) is a confidential 9-digit number required to work, file taxes, or access government benefits in Canada. It's essential to protect your SIN to avoid identity theft or misuse.

### WHAT YOU NEED:

- Primary Document: Study Permit or Work Permit
- Secondary Document: Passport

### HOW TO APPLY:



#### In Person

- Visit the nearest Service Canada Centre with your original documents.
- Complete the SIN application (available at the office).
- Your SIN will be issued on the spot in a paper format.



#### Online

- Visit the official Service Canada website.
- Submit scanned copies of your documents.
- Your SIN will be mailed to you.
- Processing time: **10 business days**.



#### By Mail

- Download and complete the SIN application form.
- Mail your original documents.
- Your documents will be returned by registered mail.
- Processing time: **20 business days**.

**COST:** Free



# 3. OPENING A BANK ACCOUNT

Opening a bank account in Canada is straightforward and essential for managing your finances. Most banks offer student accounts with lower fees and additional perks. To get started, you will need to book an appointment with your chosen bank.

## DOCUMENTS REQUIRED:

To open a bank account, you will need:

- **Two valid pieces of ID, such as:** Passport, Study Permit or Work Permit
- **Driver's License**
- **Proof of Address:** (you can obtain this from your school, landlord, or accommodation provider).

## HOW TO GET STARTED?

- **Schedule an Appointment:** Contact your chosen bank to book a meeting in person or online.
- **Bring Your Documents:** Ensure all IDs and proof of address are up-to-date.
- **Select the Right Account:** Banks offer various options, including student accounts and savings plans.
- **Activate Online Banking:** Set up access to your account through online or mobile banking for easy management.

## TOP BANKS IN CANADA:

BMO  Bank of Montreal

**CIBC** 

 **Canada Trust**

 **RBC Royal Bank**

 **Scotiabank**



## 4. GET YOUR MSP BC MEDICAL SERVICES PLAN

### WHAT IS MSP?

The Medical Services Plan (MSP) provides essential healthcare coverage for residents of British Columbia, including international students and workers with valid permits. Once approved, you'll receive a Personal Health Number (PHN), granting access to medical services.

### WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

- BC residents (citizens, permanent residents).
- International students and workers with valid study or work permits.
- Note: Visitors and tourists are not eligible.

### COST OF MSP

- Monthly premiums depend on your income.
- Individuals with low income may qualify for reduced or waived fees.

### HOW TO APPLY:



#### Online

Complete and submit the application form through the official BC government website.



#### By Mail

Download and fill out the physical form, then mail it to the designated address.

**Important:** Coverage starts 3 months after arrival in Canada.



## studyinsured™

**We've got you covered!**

Excel Career College has partnered with **Studyinsured**, an experienced firm that offers private insurance to make sure you stay protected while you settle in—no need to worry about health coverage during your first few months here.

### WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

- New international students who've been in Canada for less than 3 months.
- Students without the BC Medical Services Plan (MSP)



**Scan or Click**  
the QR code to visit:  
[www.studyinsured.com/excelcareercollege](http://www.studyinsured.com/excelcareercollege)



## 5. FIND A CELL PHONE PLAN

In Canada, cell phone plans can be customized based on your needs. Key factors to consider when choosing a plan include:

- Minutes
- Text Messaging
- Data

It's important to compare offers from multiple providers to find the best price and features for your usage.

### PREPAID PLANS VS. CONTRACTS

#### Prepaid Plans:

- Best for unlocked phones.
- Allows you to purchase minutes and data without long-term commitments.

#### Contracts:

- Lower upfront cost for a new phone.
- Requires monthly payments for a fixed period (usually 2–3 years).
- Early cancellation fees may apply if you terminate the contract.

### TOP CELL PHONE PROVIDERS IN CANADA



## 6. TRANSPORTATION: PUBLIC TRANSIT

Surrey's public transit system is managed by TransLink, which operates buses, SkyTrains, and SeaBuses across Metro Vancouver. The region is divided into 3 fare zones, with prices increasing based on the number of zones you cross.

### COMPASS CARD

The Compass Card is a reloadable card that makes paying for transit easy. You can:

- Load money onto your card for single trips or monthly passes.
- Tap your Compass Card on buses, SkyTrains, or SeaBuses.



### HOW TO GET ONE:



#### Online

Visit the official Compass Card website at TransLink's Compass Card page. You can purchase and load cards online.



#### Compass Vending Machines:

Found at all SkyTrain stations, SeaBus terminals, and select West Coast Express stations. These machines accept debit, credit, and cash.



#### Customer Service Centres:

- TransLink Customer Service Centre at Waterfront Station.
- West Coast Express Office at Waterfront Station.



#### Retailers:

Many local convenience stores, including London Drugs locations, sell Compass Cards. Look for the Compass Card logo at participating retailers.



#### By Phone:

Call TransLink Customer Service at: 604-398-2042 to order a Compass Card.



## BUS

Surrey has an extensive bus network with:

- **Regular buses** providing continuous service throughout the day.
- **Express buses** with fewer stops for faster travel.

Bus fares remain the same within each zone, and schedules can be checked on the TransLink website or mobile apps.

## SKYTRAIN

Surrey is served by the Expo Line, which connects the city to downtown Vancouver and other areas in Metro Vancouver. Major stations in Surrey include:

- King George Station
- Surrey Central Station
- Gateway Station

Trains operate frequently, making it a fast and efficient way to travel.

## ALTERNATIVE TRAVEL OPTIONS

### Bike share:

- Mobibikes

### Car share:

- Evo Car
- Modo

### Taxis and ride share:

- Yellowcab
- Vancouver Taxi
- Black Top & Checker Cabs
- Uber
- Lyft



# 7. TAX & TAP IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

## TAXES

In British Columbia, two taxes apply to most purchases:

- Goods and Services Tax (GST): 5%
- Provincial Sales Tax (PST): 7%

When shopping or dining, the prices listed often do not include taxes. The final price you pay will include both taxes, so expect the total to be higher than what's displayed.

## TAP PAYMENTS

Most businesses in Canada accept debit and credit cards with tap payment technology, making transactions quick and easy.

- **How It Works:** Simply tap your card or phone (if enabled with Apple Pay or Google Pay) on the payment terminal.
- **Benefits:** No need to enter a PIN for purchases under a certain limit (usually \$250).

Tap payments are fast, secure, and widely accepted across British Columbia.



## 8. GROCERY STORES IN SURREY, BC

Surrey has a variety of supermarkets offering everything from fresh produce to international groceries and household essentials. Whether you're shopping on a budget or looking for organic products, you'll find a store that meets your needs.

### SUPERMARKETS IN THE AREA

FRESH <sup>ST.</sup> MARKET

 **NOFRILLS**

 **REAL CANADIAN  
SUPERSTORE**

SAFEWAY 

  
SabziMandi  
online

save  on foods

Walmart 



# 9. HOUSING AND HOME-STAY IN SURREY

Finding housing in Surrey as a newcomer or international student can be easier with a clear plan. Follow these tips to secure the right place for your needs:

## TIPS FOR FINDING HOUSING



### Set Your Budget

Calculate your total monthly expenses, including rent, utilities, and any deposits, to ensure affordability.



### Explore Neighborhoods

Popular areas in Surrey include Guildford, Newton, and Fleetwood, known for their accessibility and amenities.



### Consider Shared Living

Renting with a roommate can reduce costs and make living in prime locations more affordable.



### Use Online Tools

Platforms like Craigslist, Kijiji, and Facebook Marketplace are great resources for finding rentals within your budget.

## RENTAL LISTINGS WEBSITES



# 10 - EMERGENCY NUMBERS IN SURREY

In case of an emergency, disaster, or accident, knowing the right numbers to call can make a big difference. Below are essential emergency and non-emergency contacts to help you stay safe.

## WHEN SHOULD YOU CALL 911?

- Immediate assistance for **fire, police, or ambulance services**.
- There's an **immediate threat** to life or property (e.g., car accident, fire, gunshot, bomb threat).
- A **medical emergency** occurs (e.g., severe injury, sudden chest pain, breathing difficulties, head trauma).
- You witness a **serious crime** in progress or just after it occurs (e.g., robbery, break-in, assault, impaired driving).

## WHAT INFORMATION IS REQUIRED WHEN CALLING 911?

Be prepared to provide:

- A description of the emergency
- Your location (address, building name, room number)
- Your phone number
- Do not hang up until instructed, as more details may be needed.

## HOW TO RECOGNIZE AN EMERGENCY

- When in doubt, be cautious and act.
- If you're unsure, notify a supervisor, or a co-worker, or call 911 to confirm the situation.

## STUDENT, STAFF, AND FACULTY IN CRISIS

For students, staff, or faculty experiencing an immediate crisis:

Medical Emergency	Call 911
Death	Contact Police at 911
Missing Person	Report to Police at 911



# 11 - NON-EMERGENCY NUMBERS AND SUPPORT RESOURCES

For situations that don't require immediate emergency assistance, several resources in British Columbia provide help with safety, crisis prevention, and support for those in need.



## WHAT TO DO IN A CRISIS

1. Stay calm and assess the situation.
2. Contact the appropriate resource using the following numbers.
3. For life-threatening emergencies, call 911 immediately.

These non-emergency resources ensure you can access support when facing challenges, from mental health concerns to personal safety. Stay informed and reach out when you need help.



## ESSENTIAL NON-EMERGENCY SERVICES

Access & Diversity	604-822-5844
Ambulance (E-Comm)	604-872-5151
AMS Safewalk ( <i>accompaniment service</i> )	604-822-5355
Fire Department ( <i>Fire Prevention</i> )	311
Safety & Risk Services	604-822-2029
Sexual Violence Prevention & Response (SVPRO)	604-822-1588
Poison Control Centre	604-682-5050

## CRISIS COUNSELLING AND MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

<b>Suicide Prevention:</b>	
Greater Vancouver	604-872-3311
BC-Wide	1-800-784-2433
Emotional Distress ( <i>Non-Crisis</i> )	604-822-7011
Emotional Distress ( <i>Crisis</i> )	Contact Suicide Prevention Lines (above)

## SEXUAL ASSAULT SUPPORT SERVICES

Immediate Reporting:	911
AMS Sexual Assault Centre (SASC)	604-827-5180
Sexual Violence Prevention & Response	604-822-1588
Sexual Assault Services at Vancouver General Hospital (VGH)	604-875-2881
Women Against Violence Against Women (WAVAW)	604-255-6228 604-255-6344
BC Society for Male Survivors of Sexual Abuse	604-682-6482





## 12 - MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT SERVICES

If you or someone you know is struggling with mental health concerns, there are confidential and accessible resources available 24/7 across British Columbia.

### MENTAL HEALTH EMERGENCIES

**Crisis Centre BC:** Offers 24/7 support for mental health crises, suicide prevention, self-harm, and violence concerns. All calls are anonymous and confidential.

Visit:

[www.crisiscentre.bc.ca](http://www.crisiscentre.bc.ca)

Vancouver	604-872-3311
Howe Sound and Sunshine Coast	1-866-661-3311 (Toll-Free)
TTY/TDD	1-866-872-0113
BC-Wide	1-800-784-2433

**Youth in BC:** Anonymous, online support for youth.

Visit:

[www.youthinbc.com](http://www.youthinbc.com)

**Kids Help Phone:** Provides help for concerns like bullying, health, suicide, or emotional issues. Support is available via phone, email, or chat for ages 5 to teenagers.

**WAVAW:** Support services for women facing violence.

**Vancouver Coastal Health:** Immediate intervention for mental health emergencies, offering mobile crisis support, assessments, and referrals.

## ONGOING MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

### Fraser Health – Emergency Mental Health Services

24-hour emotional support for mental health crises with registered nurses, social workers, and counselors.

1-877-384-8062 (Toll-Free)

### Mood Disorders Association of BC

Support groups and resources for individuals and families managing mood disorders.

Address: 200-460 Nanaimo Street, Vancouver, BC

604-873-0103

### Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA)

Focus on prevention, education, and rehabilitation for those recovering from mental illness. Services include peer support and youth programs.

Address: 175 West Broadway, Vancouver, BC

604-872-4902

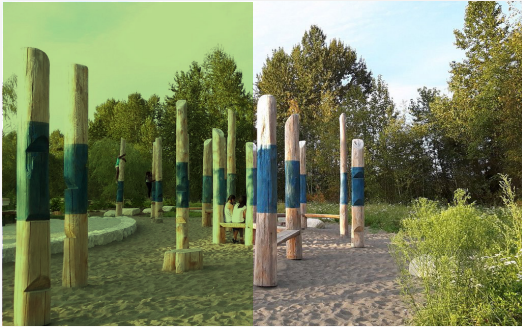


### REACH OUT FOR HELP

Whether you're facing a crisis, need someone to talk to, or are seeking long-term support, these services are available to help you navigate mental health challenges. Don't hesitate to reach out - **you're not alone.**

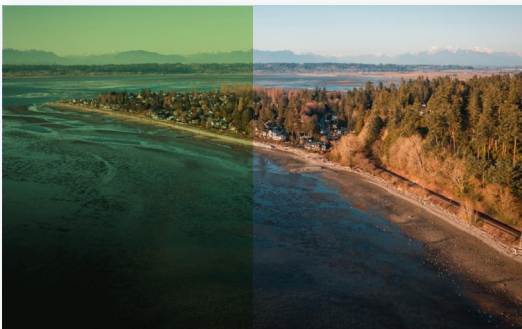


# 13. TOP PLACES TO VISIT IN SURREY AND NEARBY AREAS



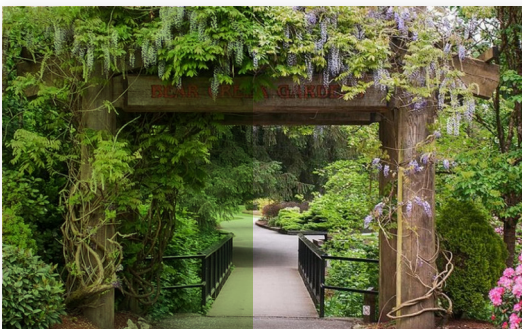
## Surrey Bend Regional Park

A peaceful park with scenic trails, picnic spots, and wetlands. It's perfect for walking, cycling, and birdwatching along the Fraser River.



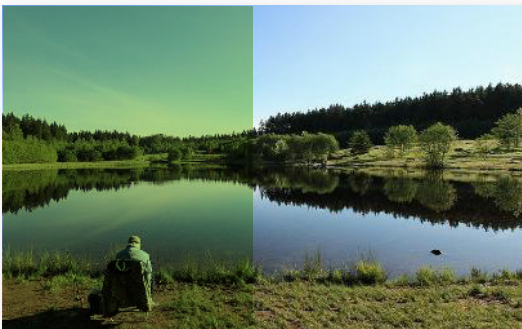
## Crescent Beach

A relaxing waterfront escape in South Surrey. Visitors can enjoy beach walks, swimming, and beautiful sunsets. The area also has charming cafes and ice cream shops.



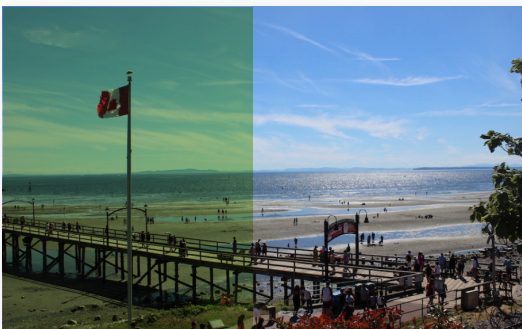
## Bear Creek Park

This family-friendly park features gardens, walking trails, sports fields, and a fun miniature train ride. There's also a water park for kids during the summer.



## Green Timbers Urban Forest

A hidden gem for nature enthusiasts with forested walking trails, a peaceful lake for fishing, and plenty of wildlife to spot.



## White Rock Beach and Pier

Just minutes from Surrey, this iconic destination offers a long pier, sandy beaches, seaside dining, and vibrant local shops. It's ideal for a day trip.



### **Stanley Park**

Vancouver’s iconic urban park features lush trails, beaches, and the Vancouver Aquarium. Don’t miss the scenic seawall walk or the famous Totem Poles.

**Distance:** 45 minutes by car or SkyTrain from central Surrey.



### **Capilano Suspension Bridge**

Walk across this breathtaking 137-meter suspension bridge surrounded by a stunning rainforest. The park also offers cliff walks and treetop adventures.

**Distance:** 50 minutes by car from central Surrey.



### **Granville Island**

A vibrant cultural hub with artisan shops, a public market, galleries, and delicious food vendors. Ideal for shopping and dining.

**Distance:** 45 minutes by car or SkyTrain, with a short water taxi ride.



### **Grouse Mountain**

A year-round destination for snowboarding, skiing, hiking, and zip-lining. The Skyride gondola offers incredible views of Vancouver and beyond.

**Distance:** 1 hour by car from central Surrey.



### **Lynn Canyon Park**

Known for its free suspension bridge, forest trails, and waterfalls, this park is perfect for nature lovers looking for an outdoor adventure.

**Distance:** 50 minutes by car from central Surrey.



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## CONTACT US

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