University of Guelph Visiting International Research Student

Procedures and Responsibilities

# Preamble

The University of Guelph encourages student mobility to foster the exchange of ideas, specialized training, and research collaboration. Students pursuing post-secondary studies at institutions outside of Canada are often looking for opportunities to enhance their skills, conduct research relevant to their home degrees and/or benefit from the expertise of our faculty. These visiting students contribute to collegial academic exchange often based on collaboration between faculty members at like-minded institutions. To facilitate this mutually beneficial collegial activity, Visiting International Research Students (VIRS) will not be required to pay tuition to the University of Guelph but will be charged other administration and student fees related to their stay (Appendix 1). Visiting International Research Students will be registered as full-time students through the office of Open Learning and Educational Support (OpenEd), and enrolled in the graduate level course, *Experiential Learning for* Visiting International Research Students.

The Visiting International Research Student procedures apply to any visitor to the University who is registered as a student in their home country and is visiting the University of Guelph for a period of one month or more for training, research or other experiential learning activity. Normally, Visiting International Research Students will not be at the University for more than one year. This procedure does not apply to Post-docs, paid employees or non-student visitors such as guest lecturers or sabbatical stays.

# Eligibility

A Visiting International Research Student shall:

1. Be registered as a fulltime degree-seeking student in good standing at an accredited post-secondary institution outside of Canada (referred to as the *Home Institution*)
2. Have written permission from their home institution and acknowledgement that their proposed activities at the University of Guelph are an integral part of their academic program at home.
3. Be visiting for the primary purpose of participating in an experiential learning opportunity (research, field research, training etc.) deemed relevant to their home institution degree.
4. Have written acknowledgement from a University of Guelph faculty member agreeing to act as their academic supervisor for the duration of their stay.
5. Meet the English language proficiency requirements as set out by the hosting department.
6. Be visiting the University of Guelph for a period of one month to **a maximum of 6 months**
7. Have appropriate funding to cover costs for the duration of their stay and be eligible to enter Canada as per Citizenship and Immigration Canada requirements

# Terms of Stay

*Visiting International Research Student*:

1. Must abide by the University of Guelph’s policies and protocols, including intellectual property, environmental health and safety, human rights and research ethics.
2. Will be required to purchase the Guard.me International Health Insurance to cover them for the duration of their stay.
3. Must be registered each month as a Visiting International Research Student through the University of Guelph Open Learning and Educational Support for the duration of their stay.
4. Will not be allowed to register in regular academic classes[[1]](#footnote-1) but will be registered full-time in the course Experiential Learning for Visiting International Research Students through Open Learning and Education Support.
5. Must be pursuing activities related to the *Experiential Learning for Visiting International Students* course on a full-time basis as their primary activity in Canada.
6. Recognize that acceptance as a Visiting International Research Student is at the discretion of Open Learning and Educational Support and is contingent on obtaining the appropriate entry permit from Citizenship and Immigration Canada. Because VIRS stays are limited to 6 months, students are not required to obtain a study permit and will not be issued with the Provincial Attestation Letter (PAL) required to obtain a study permit. VIRS students should not attempt to apply for a study permit.
7. Will be responsible for ensuring that their Canadian Immigration status is valid for the duration of their stay.
8. Understand that admission as a Visiting International Research Student through Open Learning and Educational Support does not constitute admission to an academic degree program at the University of Guelph.
9. Understand that their registration may be terminated at any time with written notice by the University of Guelph, Open Learning and Educational Support should the Visiting International Research Student be found in violation of any of the above or any other University policy governing University of Guelph students.
10. Are advised that fees are paid to the Open Learning and Educational Support on a month by month basis regardless of the length of stay or the international research student’s arrival date. Whenever possible, visits should be timed to correspond with the start and end of a month in order to avoid incurring extra fees especially for stays which straddle two months.

# Supervisor Responsibilities

The University of Guelph Supervisor will:

1. Upon agreeing to a requested visit from a student abroad, complete the appropriate documents (See Section IV Process and Administration) and ensure the student receives a completed copy .
2. Develop a learning/work plan with the student and agreed upon by their home supervisor
3. Work with the student and their home supervisor on the terms for intellectual property and ethics approval as appropriate.
4. Ensure the Visiting International Research Student receives the appropriate orientation to departmental policies and procedures (especially with respect to safety and security), personnel and other students.
5. Immediately inform OpenEd (register@uoguelph.ca )if the visiting student ceases to fulfill their activities as determined in the learning/work plan including but not limited to, prolonged absenteeism without reason, early return home or abandonment of their experiential learning activities or extension of their stay (total stay not to exceed 6 months)

# Process and Administration

Normally, the initial contact for a proposed Visiting International Research Student visit will be between the student and/or their home institution supervisor (or equivalent) and the potential supervisor at the University of Guelph. While the University is supportive of this type of collegial cooperation, Guelph supervisors should be mindful of the commitment and extra workload involved and determine the availability of time and resources in consultation with the appropriate members of their department including the departmental chair.

## Process:

1. The supervisor at the University of Guelph will submit the following document to their departmental Graduate Program Coordinator and/or Chair:
	1. A letter of invitation co-signed by the University of Guelph supervisor and Graduate Program Coordinator and/or Chair to the Visiting Student and their home institution supervisor agreeing to supervisory arrangements and all aspects of the visit (including intellectual property, any stipend and benefits, travel costs, access to research equipment and supplies, research ethics, and space). This letter must be countersigned by the student and the supervisor at the home university
2. Once a completed and fully signed copy of the letter has been received, the student will [login through Open Learning and Educational Support here to register and make payment](https://courses.opened.uoguelph.ca/portal/events/reg/participantTypeSelection.do?method=load&entityId=43000188). The student will be prompted to upload a PDF copy the signed letter of invitation, in order to complete registration. Notification of acceptance will be sent to the Visiting International Research Student and copied to the supervisor at the University of Guelph.
3. The official acceptance document can be used by the student to obtain the appropriate permit to enter Canada.
4. Visiting International Research Students will be registered as full-time students in the course *Experiential Learning for Visiting International Research Students* through Open Learning and Educational Support.
5. The Visiting International Research Student will be registered for the length of time requested in Open Learning and Educational Services registration process (not to exceed 6 months). In extenuating circumstances, extensions beyond 6 months must be approved by the AVP (Graduate Studies) with a letter of request from the student’s supervisor. Students extending beyond 6 months must be able to obtain the appropriate immigration document allowing them to remain in Canada.
6. Normally, the start and finish of the visit would coincide with the start and end of a month(s). The administration, student fees and Guard.me International Health Insurance fees for the entire month will be charged regardless of the start date. Note: applications should be received no later than one month in advance of a visit/start (e.g., no later than July 31 for a September). Refunds for early departures will be based on existing Open Learning and Educational Support refund policies.
7. Upon arrival the *Visiting International Research Student* should receive orientation, safety training and support as per regular international graduate students by the department.

# Appendix 1: Forms and Document Templates

# Letter of Invitation

Although the details of letters are expected to vary (see template), they should meet the following specifications:

* On Letterhead of the hosting academic unit, University of Guelph

**Must Include:**

* Name of visiting research student
* Email address of visiting research student
* Student’s home department and institution
* Student’s academic program and level at home institution
* Name of home Supervisor, department, and institution
* Name of U of G Supervisor and department
* Name of U of G Supervisor’s Chair of Department
* Dates of visit (not to exceed 6 months)
* Purpose of visit
* Arrangements for supervision during visit
* Arrangements for intellectual property
* Arrangements for research ethics approvals if required
* Financial details: self-funded; or stipend; travel costs; research expenses if applicable
* Clause outlining GuardMe requirement
* Clause indicating the letter does not constitute official acceptance as a *Visiting International Research Student*
* Research resources available to the visiting student: equipment; space; supplies
* Other documents may be attached if required
* Signatures of U of G Supervisor and Department Chair
* Signing space for home institution Supervisor, Department Chair and visiting research student.
1. Visiting International Researcher Students who wish to enrol in courses must also apply for admission as Special (Non-Degree) Students (full-time or part- time) and pay applicable tuition fees. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)