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# SEMINARY OF CHRIST THE KING

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2025-2026 Formation Year

**Philosophy and Theology**  
**International Student Guide**

SEMINARY OF CHRIST THE KING  
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## MESSAGE FROM THE RECTOR

Welcome to the Seminary of Christ the King. The Benedictines of Westminster Abbey have had the responsibility of guiding the discernment and formation of men for the Catholic priesthood at the Seminary of Christ the King since September 1939. Our monastic charisms of community life and daily celebration of the Eucharist and the Liturgy of the Hours in common introduce our seminarians into community life and the liturgy and form them as men of communion united in the Church's worship of the Father.

With our strong emphasis on community life and a daily rhythm shaped by the liturgical cycle, seminarians experience, often for the first time in their lives, the richness of the Catholic Faith in all its intensity and beauty. The splendour of our natural surroundings, as we are located on a hilltop above the Fraser Valley, in no small way enhances the sense of wonder that we hope to instill in our seminarians here at SCK.

Committed to the four pillars of priestly formation, human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral, the formators and professors at the Seminary of Christ the King accompany the seminarians throughout their years of formation and assist them to integrate these facets of the whole man into their lives so that our ordained alumni are capable and zealous priests after the heart of Jesus.

Our Seminary offers both a four-year program in Philosophy, leading to a B.A. degree and a four-year Theology program with B.Th. and M.Div. degrees for those who meet the graduation requirements. Intellectual formation at SCK draws upon the fonts of Scripture, the Magisterium, Conciliar teaching and St. Thomas Aquinas. Our hope is that our seminarians will be men who think with the Church and are able to appreciate and appropriate into their hearts and minds that which is true, good and beautiful in both classical and contemporary thinking, literature and art.

Human formation at SCK occurs in formal settings such as lectures, conferences and personal direction and in informal ways such as are part of life in community. Students take responsibility for many household chores and share in the work of preparing and celebrating the liturgy.

We welcome inquiries from Catholic men who are interested in discerning a possible call to priesthood or consecrated life. We have three or four weekends each year for men to stay with us and find out something about seminary life and the joys and challenges of following Jesus' call to come and follow Him and be fishers of men.

Rev. Matthew Gerlich OSB  
Rector

The official point of contact for international students is the Rector, Rev. Matthew Gerlich OSB.

## CANADIAN GOVERNMENT REQUIREMENTS

The Canadian government provides many resources for international students to help with their applications. Always refer to [Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada \(IRCC\)](#) for the most accurate and up-to-date information. Learn about the immigration documents and information you may need during your studies at [Government Resources](#).

### **What documents do you need to provide prior to studying in Canada?**

You will need to provide:

- Valid passport to apply for a study permit
- Letter of Acceptance and Attestation Letter from the Seminary of Christ the King
- Proof of funds adequate to support you in Canada,
- Valid study permit, and
- Temporary resident visas (TRV) and electronic travel authorization (ETA).

### **LETTER OF ACCEPTANCE (LOA)**

Once the Rector has received your [SCK application](#) and SCK has done a preliminary evaluation, you will be sent your official Letter of Acceptance (LOA) from SCK. You must include the original **or** electronic copy of your letter with your study permit application.

[Learn more about the Letter of Acceptance.](#)

### **PROVINCIAL ATTESTATION LETTER (PAL)**

As of Jan 22, 2024, all students submitting a study permit application from outside Canada must include a valid Provincial Attestation Letter (PAL) in their study permit application. A Provincial Attestation Letter (PAL) is a document which confirms an international student has a spot in the provincial allocation for study permits and is included in the yearly federal cap to submit a study permit application. SCK has received a limited number of PALs for graduate degree-seeking seminarians.

Once international students have completed the [SCK application](#) and SCK has done a preliminary evaluation, you will be sent your official Provincial Attestation Letter (PAL) from SCK. You must include the original **or** electronic copy of your letter with your study permit application.

[Learn more about the Provincial Attestation Letter \(PAL\).](#)

## STUDY PERMITS

Once you have received the official Letter of Acceptance (LOA) and Provincial Attestation Letter (PAL) from SCK, admitted seminarians should apply for a study permit. All international students in programs longer than 6 months need a valid study permit.

The study permit is a document issued that allows [foreign nationals](#) to study at [designated learning institutions](#) (DLIs) in Canada. Most foreign nationals need a study permit to study in Canada. Make sure you have all the documents you need before you apply. You should apply before you travel to Canada.

[Learn more about the study permit.](#)

Given the processing times, we strongly recommend accepted applicants apply for their study permits as soon as possible. Applications for a study permit can take up to 3 months, so apply as soon as possible. You are responsible for ensuring your study permit is valid at all times.

Find [IRCC study permit processing times](#) and [required documents](#) for your study permit application online.

[Learn more about after you apply.](#)

## CONFIRM YOUR PERSONAL DETAILS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

Please ensure your personal details (name, date of birth, and address) in SCK's application are correct. If needed, you must request a change before you accept your offer, since this information will be included on your PAL. Once issued, the details on your PAL cannot be changed and the PAL cannot be reissued.

### Your Address

When you are considering whether to use a current address at the time of application or your permanent address, you should be consistent and use the same address which you will have continued access to. The address on your Letter of Admission, PAL and study permit application should be the same.

Not all address details you provide to SCK will appear on the PAL. The information from address line 2, the postal code, and the province/state will not be included on the PAL. This will not impact your application.

### Your Name

Make sure the name that you provided in your SCK application matches your full legal first name and last name as they appear on your passport. Your name on your SCK Acceptance Letter, PAL and study permit application form should be the same.

If your passport has a separate field for middle name(s) and you enter your middle name separately in your SCK application, it would show up on your SCK Letter of Acceptance, but not on your PAL since PALs do not include middle names. This will not impact your application.

## **MAINTAIN A VALID STUDY PERMIT**

Study permits become automatically invalid in one of three ways, whichever comes first:

- The expiry date on the study permit, OR
- 90 days after written confirmation of program completion first becomes available, OR
- As of Nov 8, 2024, the day you are no longer enrolled at the Designated Learning Institution that is named on your study permit (other than as a result of completing your studies).

If you do not submit an application to extend your study permit before it becomes invalid, you must stop studying immediately.

## **DLI STUDENT TRANSFER**

As of Nov 8, 2024, you must be enrolled at the Designated Learning Institution (DLI) named on your study permit. If you [change institutions](#), you must apply for a study permit extension for your new institution. Most students need to receive the new study permit before beginning studies at your new institution.

As of Jan 22, 2025, students changing institutions must submit a Provincial Attestation Letter in their study permit application.

## **TRAVEL DOCUMENTS: TEMPORARY RESIDENT VISA (TRV) AND ELECTRONIC TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION (ETA)**

A Temporary Resident Visa (TRV), also referred to as a “visitor visa” or “entry visa”, is a travel document that is placed in your passport and is used to enter or re-enter Canada. If you apply for a study permit from outside Canada, a TRV or eTA is issued automatically when the application is approved. It does not give you any status inside Canada and is usually issued for the same length of time as your study or work permit. A TRV allows you to travel to Canada (that is, to the border) while a study permit allows you to stay and study inside Canada. A study permit is the document showing your status inside Canada, but you must have a valid TRV in order to enter Canada if you are a citizen of a visa-required country.

Only citizens of certain countries require a TRV. Check the [IRCC website](#) to see if you need a valid TRV to travel to Canada. If you are from a TRV-exempt country, you may need to apply for an [eTA](#) before you can travel to Canada.

[Learn about Temporary Resident Visa](#)

## **WORKING IN CANADA AS AN INTERNATIONAL STUDENT**

The Seminary of Christ the King does not offer work permits for postgraduate studies (PGWP).

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS<sup>1</sup>

English is the official language of instruction at SCK. Consequently, any student who lacks proficiency in the English language will have difficulty studying at SCK. In the interest of ensuring that all students of SCK have sufficient English language skills to cope with the rigors of the academic curriculum, SCK has adopted the following English Language Proficiency policy:

All applicants are required to demonstrate proficiency in both spoken and written English before their acceptance to SCK.

### Acceptable Tests

**BC English 12** or equivalent (minimum grade: 60%)

**TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) or TOEFL iBt Home Edition**

The minimum TOEFL score of 90 for the internet-based exam (with minimum component scores of 22 [reading, listening] and 21 [writing, speaking]) or 55 each for reading, listening, and writing in the paper-based test, with 4.0 on the Test of Written English (TWE).

**IELTS (International English Language Testing System)**

A minimum overall band score of 6.5 with a minimum score of 6.0 in each component of the academic (NOT general) IELTS test.

**CAEL (Canadian Academic English Language Assessment) or CAEL Online**

A minimum overall score of 70 is required with 60 on the speaking sub-test.

**PTE (Pearson Test of English – Academic)**

A minimum overall score of 65 on the academic (NOT general) test is required with minimums of 60 reading, 60 writing, 60 listening, and 60 speaking.

**DET (Duolingo English Test)**

A minimum overall score of 125. Video and writing sample should also demonstrate a strong command of English language. Please note that we will only accept the Duolingo English Test from students in countries where no other English proficiency test is available.

### Submitting your Test Results

Tests must have been taken within the last 24 months at the time of submission of your application. Some testing agencies are able to send your results to [rector.majors@sck.ca](mailto:rector.majors@sck.ca) electronically. Please contact the test centre and select this option if it's available. If that option is not available to you, then please make arrangements for your transcripts to be sent directly to the Rector at SCK.

All students are expected to maintain an acceptable standard of English language proficiency in all their coursework at SCK. A student who consistently demonstrates deficient skills in English may be advised to discontinue their studies until they receive remedial help in the language. Such

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<sup>1</sup> Related Policies: *SCK English Proficiency Policy*

a student may resume studies at SCK upon receipt of official documentation attesting to improvement (i.e. official transcripts, acceptable TOEFL scores, etc.)

Please note that SCK reserves the right to use discretion in determining English language proficiency.

## **ACCESSING HEALTH CARE IN BC**

### **Health Insurance**

All international students are required to have basic health insurance for the duration of their studies at SCK, as health care in Canada can cost thousands of dollars per day if you do not have valid health insurance.

The British Columbia (BC) Medical Services Plan (MSP) is the BC-government run public health insurance plan. You will need MSP, which covers most medically-required services, from your 4th month in BC until the expiry of your study permit.

[Apply for the British Columbia Medical Services Plan \(BC MSP\) online](#), as soon as you arrive in British Columbia. The waiting period to receive MSP coverage is approximately three months.

### **Walk-In Clinics**

If you are having non-emergency health issues, please call a local walk-in clinic to enquire about accessing their services. Many walk-in clinics limit the number of patients that can enter their facilities and instead are providing virtual appointments. Whether you meet in person or virtually, the doctor will ask questions about your health concerns and provide the appropriate advice. To find walk-in clinics near you, [click here](#).

### **Hospitals**

If you are having a medical emergency, you should go directly to the emergency room (ER) at your local hospital or call 9-1-1. A walk-in doctor may also refer you to the hospital for various medical services, such as diagnostic services or surgical services. Each community has their own hospital. For more information regarding hospitals in the Fraser Health region, [click here](#).

If you are unsure whether you need to visit a doctor or the hospital, you can call HealthLinkBC at 8-1-1 to talk to a nurse.

### **Pharmacies**

To purchase medication or personal hygiene items, you can visit a local pharmacy. Some medications may require a prescription, which is a special note of permission that doctors give you so that you can get certain types of medicine. If you need medication that requires a prescription, please meet with a walk-in clinic doctor to request a prescription.



## **STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**

### **ACADEMIC SUPPORT**

The Major Seminary Policies are available on the [SCK website](#) and contain all policies regarding Admissions, Seminary Rules, Safe Environment, Tuition and Fees, Refunds and more. Students are expected to inform themselves of all academic policies.

Academic Support desires to better equip students for academic success by creating an open, friendly place for students to learn. We seek to better equip students of all aptitudes, learning styles, educational backgrounds, and life experiences for academic success by creating an open, friendly place to learn SCK's academic expectations, discuss learning challenges, and receive help so that they can be confident and efficient in their work.

If you have any questions about how to continue your academic success during your time at SCK, Academic Support would love to assist you.

### **RESIDENCE LIFE**

The beautiful 80-hectare campus provides residence accommodations along with recreational and community facilities of many kinds.

#### **Student Chapels**

The Student Chapel are located in both the College and High School seminaries. Here seminarians nourish their relationship with the Lord Jesus, who looks upon them with a tender and merciful heart. Often seminarians will use these chapels for private prayer and spiritual reading, but the chapels are also used for public prayer, such as praying Divine Office, the Rosary, Stations of the Cross etc.

#### **Mary Shrine**

In 1968 the shrine dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary was built as a haven for monks, faculty and seminarians to take refuge in their Mother. "Here they find strength from God to bear the weariness and the suffering in their lives. As she did with Juan Diego, Mary offers them maternal comfort and love, and whispers in their ear: "Let your heart not be troubled... Am I not here, who am your Mother?" (Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, 286).

#### **Library**

The library contains 55,000 books as well as current periodicals. Monks, faculty and seminarians also have ready access to the holdings of the local University College of the Fraser Valley and of the Fraser Valley Regional Library.

#### **Classrooms**

Classrooms are located in the college residence and high school building, which are each equipped with a computer, projector and chalkboard.

**Bookstore**

The seminarians have access to our small bookstore three days a week. The bookstore has textbooks, school supplies and personal items.

**Dining room**

The college and high school seminarians each have their own dining room, where they take community meals. Meals are provided by the monastery kitchen and are included in the cost of room and board.

**Dormitories**

Seminarians each have their own room, with a private bathroom attached. Basic furniture is provided as well as a weekly change of fresh sheets. Some bedding is provided but it is recommended that seminarians bring their own (See [Required Personal Items \(College\)](#)). There is a common recreation room with a foosball table, piano, and assorted games where seminarians gather for community activities.

**Gymnasium**

The gymnasium houses a full-size basketball court, with volleyball and badminton nets, and some gymnastic and track and field equipment. The space also doubles as an auditorium, with a stage and curtains for school productions and community events.

**Hockey Court**

Fenced-in outdoor hockey court, which doubles as a basketball court, is used extensively both for formal physical education and impromptu pickup games.

**Sports Fields**

Two soccer fields used for formal physical education and impromptu pickup games.

**Forested Trails**

There are several well marked trails on the property, the most popular one leading to the cliff lookout, which overlooks the Fraser Valley.

**COUNSELLING SERVICES**

If you are starting at the Seminary of Christ the King for the first year or if you are a returning seminarian, counselling is available for you. There are a lot of adjustments and changes that you need to navigate when you attend the seminary. Don't underestimate the adjustments and possible need to talk to someone, even if you have never needed to talk before. The counselling center is here for any difficulties you are having.

## **COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES**

### **COUNSELLING SERVICES**

#### **Crisis Centre**

The Crisis Intervention and Suicide Prevention Centre of BC (Crisis Centre) is a non-profit, volunteer organization committed to helping people help themselves and others deal with crisis. The Centre offers the following services:

#### **24/7 Distress Phone Services**

In addition to four regional distress lines, the Centre also provides two provincial 1-800-SUICIDE lines and two Mental Health Information lines. The provincial 1-800-SUICIDE lines and Mental Health Support Lines are available in over 140 languages using a language service.

#### **Online Distress Services ([YouthInBC.com](http://YouthInBC.com), [CrisisCentreChat.ca](http://CrisisCentreChat.ca))**

Provides adults with an opportunity to talk openly yet confidentially when in distress, or crisis, seek emotional support, and locate referral services in their community.

#### **Foundry**

Foundry is a province-wide network of integrated health and social service centers for young people ages 12-24, providing a one-stop-shop for young people to access mental health care, substance use services, primary care, social services, and youth and family peer support.

#### **Phone & Online Chat**

Whether it's by phone, online chat or text, connect with a counsellor or trained volunteer to ask questions, help you understand what's going on for you and find resources online or in your community.

### **SETTLEMENT SUPPORTS**

#### **Learn Live BC:**

Information about learning, living and working in BC

#### **BC Newcomer's Guide:**

Comprehensive information guide includes information on pre-arrival, legal, housing, banking, medical and more – 15 languages available

### **HOUSING SUPPORT**

#### **Residential Tenancy Branch Metro Vancouver:**

Tenants can find information to guide them from the start of a tenancy to the end.

## **LIVING COSTS<sup>2</sup>**

[Cost-of-living financial requirement](#) for study permit applicants

## **TENANCY RIGHTS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA**

[Tenant Resource & Advisory Centre \(TRAC\):](#)

Online guide to better understanding tenant-landlord law in BC.

## **LOW-COST LEGAL SUPPORT**

[ClickLaw:](#)

Provides legal information, education and help for British Columbians from trusted organizations

[BC Human Rights Clinic:](#)

Free legal services to people who need help with a provincial human rights complaint

[BC Human Rights Tribunal:](#)

Responsible for accepting, screening, mediating, and adjudicating human rights complaints.

[Canadian Human Rights Commission:](#)

Find help on discrimination and harassment, complaint rules, accessibility, housing, pay equity matters, as well as information on emergency support services and provincial and territorial human rights agencies.

## **EMPLOYMENT SAFETY, RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

[BC Employment Standards:](#)

The Employment Standards Branch set minimum standards for wages and working conditions in most workplaces. Learn more about who this applies to, answers to common questions and general information and forms

[Complaint Process:](#)

Steps to take when you have an Employment Standards problem.

[Workplace Rights:](#)

Employees in Canada are protected by laws and regulations. Employers have obligations to their employees on topics such as pay, hours of work and safety.

For more information on topics such as healthcare, emergencies, education, learning English, driving, public transportation, managing your money and mail see:

[Daily Life in British Columbia](#) and [B.C. Newcomers' Guide](#)

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<sup>2</sup> Related Policies: *Student Fees 2025-2026*, [Tuition/Room and Board Fees Policy](#), *Current Fees*, *Financial Aid Application*, [Fees Payment/ Refund and Transfer Assistance](#), [Student Association Fees](#)