

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT TUITION REVENUES

At the University of Lethbridge, international students are a vital part of our University community, enriching our academic environment with diverse perspectives and global experiences. We welcome students from nearly 100 countries as part of our commitment to fostering an inclusive learning environment that cultivates and celebrates a diverse community.

During 2024, the Government of Canada introduced several significant changes to the International Student Program, impacting the ability of international students to come to Canada to study. These changes included a cap on student visas for each province and each institution, a further reduction in that cap, and changes to the eligibility criteria for post-graduate work visas, among a number of other shifting policy provisions. These policy changes, as well as the uncertainty created by them, have impacted international student demand for pursuing education in Canada, and have significantly negatively impacted new international enrolment. For many institutions, including the University of Lethbridge, these changes also introduced considerable uncertainty into international student enrolment projections, and associated revenue from international student tuition fees. While declines are most pronounced in programs across Canada that are no longer eligible for post-graduate work permits, declines in applications and registrations overall suggest that Canada is becoming a less attractive destination for international students.

Prior to those changes, and in line with the University's priorities around diversification, internationalization, and access, we had been successful in growing international student enrolment from 548 students in Fall 2020 to 1,631 students in Fall 2024. This represents a shift from international students comprising 6% of total enrolment in Fall 2020 to 20% in Fall 2024.

Following the Government of Canada changes, we project that there will be approximately 1,340 international students at the U of L in Fall 2025, declining to 900 international students in Fall 2027, a 45% reduction from our peak in Fall 2024. As anticipated, there was a significant drop (61% as of July 29, 2025) in the number of new international undergraduate applicants in Fall 2025 compared to Fall 2024.

For the 2024-25 fiscal year, revenue from International Student tuition fees represented 45% of all tuition fee revenue. Declines in international student enrolment have considerable impact on the University's operating budget. Had the IRCC changes not been implemented, and our international student enrolments for 2025-26 through 2027-28 continued as originally forecasted prior to the changes, we would have expected approximately \$10-13 million more in tuition revenue in 2027-28 than we are now projecting.



A conservative approach to tuition budgeting in 2024-25 has helped to mitigate the impacts of the decline in international enrolments on the 2025-26 budget. Looking ahead, the University is focused on identifying and implementing strategies to manage the projected shortfalls, including continued conservative budgeting, careful expenditure management, and exploring opportunities to diversify revenue sources.

The University remains committed to supporting the success of international students by prioritizing recruitment, student services, and partnerships that foster retention and integration. In support of these goals, the University has joined the Canadian Bureau for International Education's Global Campaign Initiative, participating in the committee to contribute to the development of a new Canadian brand to attract international students. The University firmly believes that international students are integral to shaping a vibrant University community and culture that is based on a diversity of voices and experiences. To that end, our international recruitment efforts, along with the services and partnerships that support and sustain international student success and retention, will continue to be a priority.