

Thinking About Independent Study Abroad

What is independent study abroad?

It is an independent process of finding, applying, and securing a place at an international accredited institution of your choice. Students need permission from the Faculty of Arts and Science to pursue this option.

What is an International Letter of Permission?

An International Letter of Permission (ILOP) is a document that enables students taking courses at international institutions to transfer credits toward their Queen's degree. Students apply for an ILOP prior to their period of study abroad. The International Programs Office assists students with their ILOP applications and transfers the credits after their term abroad.

How is independent study abroad different from exchange?

Students on exchange can only study at selected universities that have agreements with the Faculty of Arts and Science at Queen's University. Additionally, exchange students pay their tuition to Queen's.

How is the International Programs Office involved in independent study abroad?

The IPO will not assist you with finding an institution nor will we assist you with the Arts and Science petition process. Our office is involved with processing and approving International Letters of Permission and transferring the credits. Student information is also forwarded to the Environmental Health and Safety Department for safety abroad training.

We recommend following the outlined steps toward an independent study abroad below:

Brainstorming

- Consider where you want to go.
 - o Verify that the institution is accredited and accepts 'fee-paying students' (also known as 'visiting students' or 'freemovers').
 - o **Important:** you are **not** an exchange student.
- Ensure that your degree plan and academic progress allow you to study abroad. Consult with an Academic Advisor in your home department or the Faculty of Arts and Science.
- Carefully review the [academic regulations](#) for Arts and Science students studying abroad at another institution.

Administrative Tasks

- Academic Petition
 - o If you wish to take more than 6.0 units of your 3rd or 4th year of an Honours program on an ILOP during the Fall and/or Winter semester, you must submit a petition to the Associate Dean (Academic). [View the petition process here.](#)
 - Students wanting to do an independent study abroad in the Queen's summer term are exempt from the petition process.

- If you are planning to take courses for your Academic Plan, you must also obtain approval from the Undergraduate Chair of your department and submit with your petition.
- If your academic petition is granted, you may begin the process of applying to your host university. You are responsible for following the host university's deadlines, regulations, and policies.

Pre-Departure Preparations

- Familiarize yourself with previous ineligible programs and non-transferrable courses [on our website](#).
- After receiving the offer of admission from your host university, you may apply for an International Letter of Permission (ILOP).
 - Students can only apply for an ILOP one term prior to the term that they are studying abroad. Please note that processing times can be lengthy at peak periods.
 - Follow the ILOP instructions and guide [on the IPO's website](#).
- Follow all pre-departure steps as outlined by your host university (visas, tuition, housing, health insurance, etc.).

Post Study Abroad

- Ensure that your transcript is issued to the International Programs Office.
 - The IPO's email and postal address [can be found here](#).
- Once the IPO has your transcript, our team will process your transfer credits so that they appear on your Queen's transcript.