

Cost of Living for Western Graduate Students

An important factor in making a decision on where to attend graduate school is the quality of life that you can expect. London, Ontario is a beautiful city with a population close to 400,000 people. It is called the Forest City because it has miles of beautiful pathways and acres of rolling parkland.

So what is the cost of living in London?

There are many factors that can affect the cost of living in a particular area. Here are some statistics and charts that will help you to assess and compare the cost of living in London with other cities.

Compared to London, overall cost of living in Toronto is 33.4% higher, in Vancouver it is 18.5% higher, Montreal it is 13.8% higher, and Alberta it is 13/7% higher.

| Monthly Rent | London | Toronto | Vancouver | Mont- | Calgary |
|-----------------------------------|--------|---------|-----------|-------|---------|
| Average monthly rent for a 500sq. | \$589 | \$1,103 | \$840 | \$760 | \$810 |
| Differential | | \$514 | \$251 | \$172 | \$221 |

In order to achieve the same quality of life in other major cities as you would have in London, the universities in those other centres would have to provide more funding to their graduate students:

If Western provides you with \$20,000 annually in funding:

- The University of Toronto would need to offer you 26,600 annually in order for you to maintain the same standard of living
- The University of British Columbia would need to offer you 23,680 annually in order for you to maintain the same standard of living
- McGill University would need to offer you 22,760 annually in order for you to maintain the same standard of living
- The University of Alberta would need to offer you 22,740 annually in order for you to maintain the same standard of living

Cost of Living in Canada—International Comparison

Not only is London a great city to live in and affordable in comparison with many other Canadian cities but, on a global scale, Canada, as a whole, has a moderately low cost of living.

On the Mercer Cost of Living Survey for 2004 which surveys 144 cities based on over 200 items in each location, Canadian cities were close to the bottom of the list. With New York being the benchmark, with an index score of 100 Toronto was 71.8, Vancouver 69.6, and Ottawa 62.6. Of the 144 cities Toronto was 89th on the list, Vancouver was 96th, and Ottawa was 124th.

For further information on the Mercer Cost of Living Survey, visit:

www.mercerhr.com