



## Malaysia – Fact Sheet for Lakehead University Placements

### ***Flights***

- From Toronto to Malaysia (Kuala Lumpur), the cost of a round trip ranges from roughly \$1,000-\$1,700 Canadian.
- The flight duration is approximately 30 hours (including stops). Expect to have 2-3 stops before arriving.
- Some of the airlines that fly to Malaysia are: Air Canada, Emirates, WestJet, and Cathay Pacific.

### ***Visas***

- A visa is not required for stays of up to 90 days. For stays over 90 days, you must apply for a visa at a Malaysian Immigration office.

### ***Language***

- English and Malay are spoken by most of the country and are taught extensively in schools. Mandarin and Hokkien are also popular throughout Malaysia.
- Students shouldn't run experience many communication issues on placement, given that English is the language of the school and is generally widely spoken throughout Malaysia.

### ***Currency***

- The currency used in Malaysia is the ringgit.
- 1 ringgit = 32 cents Canadian (\$5 Canadian = 15.8 ringgit; \$100 Canadian = 319 ringgit)
- ATMs are readily available throughout Malaysia.
- Credit cards are accepted throughout Malaysian hotels, higher-end restaurants, and other businesses. Cash is widely accepted.

## ***Food***

- Malay food, Chinese food, Indian food and Thai food are all common in Malaysia. Eurasian food (“fusion food” combining European and Asian cuisine) is also available.
- Malay food is similar to Indonesian food. It is not as spicy as Thai food, but it is still spicy.
- Beef and seafood dishes are widely available. Sometimes the beef comes from water buffalo. Fish often comes with the head attached and the chicken often has a lot of bones. Seafood such shrimp, prawns, crab, lobster, clams, dried fish, squid, flounder, eels, and jellyfish, are most widely available in the coastal areas.
- Vegetarian meals are generally widely available.
- Pork, beer and alcohol are not served at restaurants run by Muslim Malays but they are served at restaurants run by Chinese Malays.

## ***Water***

- DO NOT drink the tap water.** Bottled water is readily available throughout Malaysia.

## ***Vaccines***

- The following vaccinations are recommended before travel to Malaysia:
  - Routine Vaccines. These vaccines include: measles-mumps-rubella (MMR), diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio, varicella (chickenpox), influenza and others.
  - Hepatitis A
  - Hepatitis B
  - Influenza
  - Japanese encephalitis
  - Measles
- The Public Health Agency of Canada issued a notice for travellers on July 2019 regarding measles. *Malaysia* has a history of previous *Zika Virus* transmission, but there is currently no evidence of an ongoing *Zika Virus* outbreak. Pregnant women and those considering becoming pregnant should avoid travel to Malaysia.

## ***Travel Advisories***

- Visit <https://travel.gc.ca/destinations/malaysia> for latest notifications.

-Currently, there is a Level 2 travel advisory, recommending that visitors exercise a high degree of caution with visiting due to criminality and terrorism.

### ***General Information about Malaysia and Travel Tips***

-The Time Difference is GMT + 8 hours (12 hours ahead of U.S. Eastern Standard Time).

-The Country Phone Code is: +60.

-The Capital City is Kuala Lumpur, which has a population of 1.77 million.

-The Primary religion in Malaysia is Islam.

-If you're behind the wheel of a car, drive on the **left-hand side**.

-Dress appropriately when entering cultural sights. Depending on the religion you will be asked to cover your knees and shoulders, take your shoes off before entering. Women may cover hair with a scarf. Be sure to pack some conservative clothing and to dress appropriate for the occasion.

-During the lunar month of Ramadan (the ninth month of the Muslim calendar), use discretion when drinking, eating, and smoking in public between sunrise and sunset. **In 2020, Ramadan is expected to begin on or around April 23.**

### ***Personal Safety***

-Petty crime, such as pickpocketing, purse snatching, and snatch-and-grab incidents is common in tourist areas and at the airport. Ensure that your personal belongings, including your passport and other travel documents, are secure at all times.

- Try to limit the number of valuables you carry
- Wear your purse facing away from the street and don't put the strap over your shoulder or wrap it around your arm.
- Don't leave valuables unattended in vehicles.

-**Take registered airport taxis only:** before leaving the customs and arrivals hall, obtain a coupon from the airport taxi stand near the exit. When possible, try and use the app "GRAB" when looking for a taxi. It is similar to uber and is also safer.

-Women travelling alone may be subject to forms of harassment and verbal abuse.

-Malaysians are conservative about public displays of affection. LGBTQ2 travellers should consider the risks of travelling to Malaysia as transgender individuals have been arrested and sexual acts between same-sex couples are illegal.

-Large-scale demonstrations may occur. Even peaceful demonstrations can turn violent at any time. Demonstrations are usually accompanied by a heightened police presence and traffic delays. **It is illegal for foreigners to participate in demonstrations.** Avoid areas where demonstrations and large gatherings are taking place.

-Penalties for possession, use or trafficking of illegal drugs are severe. **Convicted offenders can face the death penalty.** Possession of as little as 15 grams of some prohibited substances is considered trafficking.

### ***Cellphones and Wi-Fi***

-It is recommended to purchase a new SIM card, or to use an app that allows you to talk and text over Wi-Fi.

-**OneSimCard** is a Malaysian sim card that can be used. It allows you to keep your current number and continue to use data, text, and talk. It is best to buy before leaving so that you can use your phone as soon as you land.

-Apps such as **WhatsApp** and **TextNow** that allow you to text/call over Wi-Fi are alternatives to buying a new sim card.

-For information about plugs, adapters, and voltage in Malaysia, see <https://whatplug.info/from/canada/to/malaysia>.

### ***Temperatures in March/April***

Temperatures in Malaysia range, depending on location. The average temperatures in March and April are between 24.5°C and 33.0°C during the day, and cooler at night. You can expect rainfall approximately 10-15 days per month.

### ***Travel and Tourism***

There are countless exciting options for tourism in Malaysia, which is ranked #9 for tourism arrivals in the world. Some information about the diversity of tourist attractions is available at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_tourist\\_attractions\\_in\\_Malaysia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_tourist_attractions_in_Malaysia)

Further information to prepare students for placements and travel in Malaysia, including a packing list, will be organized through information sessions.