

Student Guide

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IMPORTANT INFO TO REVIEW:

Application deadlines

The latest you can apply for full-time assistance is six weeks before your study period ends, as long as you have provided all the required documentation.

You do not have to be accepted into your program of study before applying for student assistance; however you will not receive any funding until your institution confirms you are enrolled in full-time studies and your study period has begun.

Do I have enough money to go to school?

Completing the budget worksheet will help you determine how much money you will need during your study period.

Institution Designation

To be eligible for full or part-time student financial assistance, you must attend a designated post-secondary institution.

All public universities, colleges and institutes in B.C. are designated by StudentAid BC. However, not all private post-secondary institutions or out-of-province institutions have been designated by StudentAid BC.

To check if your institution is designated for the purposes of student financial assistance, visit www.StudentAidBC.ca.

Your institution must be designated by the first day of classes to be eligible for funding through StudentAid BC.

IMPORTANT: Have you and/or your parent(s)/step parent/sponsor/legal guardian or spouse/ common-law partner (if applicable) filed your Canadian income taxes? Income information from the Canada Revenue Agency is used to calculate your financial need when applying for StudentAid BC funding. Your previous year's Canadian income tax information will be used in the assessment of your financial need. If you and/or your parent(s)/step parent/sponsor/legal guardian or spouse/ common-law partner (if applicable) haven't filed your previous year's income taxes, processing of your StudentAid BC application may be delayed while your income is verified.

Studying Full-Time

To receive full-time student financial assistance you must:

- be a Canadian citizen, permanent resident or have protected-person status;
- have a valid Canadian Social Insurance Number;
- be a resident of British Columbia (B.C.);
- be pursuing full-time studies as your primary occupation;
- be enrolled full-time in an eligible program of study at a designated post-secondary institution; be able to demonstrate financial need;
- make academic progress and achieve satisfactory scholastic standing in each period of post-secondary study;
- have either completed Grade 12 (or equivalent), be 19 years of age or attend a program approved by the Industry Training Authority; and
- pass a credit check if you are 22 years of age or older and applying for the first time.

Residency

Are you a resident of B.C.?

To receive student financial assistance, you must be a resident of B.C.

To determine residency, students are classified either as “dependent” or “independent”.

Are you a “dependent” student?

“Dependent” students are considered to be financially dependent on their parent(s), step-parent(s), sponsor(s) or legal guardian(s) and have never been married, do not have dependent children, have not been out of high school for 48 months and have not been in the labour force for two periods of 12 consecutive months.

As a dependent student, you are a resident of the province in which your parent(s), step-parent, sponsor or legal guardian have most recently lived for 12 continuous months as of your first day of classes. If they do not live in B.C., you must apply for financial assistance from the province or territory in which they lived for 12 consecutive months as of your first day of classes. If you are a permanent resident under sponsorship, your sponsor must complete Appendix 1. Residency is based on where your sponsor lives.

Are you an “independent” student?

“Independent” students are considered to be financially independent of their parent(s), step-parent(s), sponsor(s) or legal guardian(s), have dependent children, have been out of high school for more than 48 months or have been in the labour force for two periods of 12 consecutive months.

As an independent student you are a resident of B.C. if:

- you have lived in B.C. all your life; or
- B.C. is the province where you last lived for 12 continuous months, as of your study start date, not including months of full-time post-secondary study; or
- you arrived in B.C. as a permanent resident or protected person, and will attend school in B.C., and you have not lived in any other province for 12 continuous months. If you are not a B.C. resident as defined above, you are not eligible for financial assistance through StudentAid BC. You must apply for assistance through your home province or territory.

How do I apply for full-time assistance?

1. Identify the post-secondary institution you plan to attend and determine the study period (registration period) for which you need funding
2. Determine how much money you need to attend school: Complete the budget worksheet.
3. Check your eligibility for the maximum funding limits. Remember that not all students receive the maximum amount of funding, and that your educational and living costs may exceed the amount you'll receive from StudentAid BC.
4. Look for other resources to help pay for your school and living costs (this will help reduce your debt load when you finish school) such as: family, part-time employment, bursaries and scholarships or jobs through your school.
5. Apply online. The StudentAid BC application is available through your dashboard at: www.StudentAidBC.ca. If you are a new StudentAid BC applicant, you will need to have your identity verified in order to access the application. Instructions will be provided when you click "Apply for a student loan".

Credit check

A credit check is done on all first-time, full-time applicants to StudentAid BC who are over 22 years of age on the first day of their classes. Funding will be denied if you have had at least three instances when installments on three or more loans or debts over \$1,000 were more than 90 days overdue.

Once you've been approved for funding:

Once StudentAid BC has processed your application for financial assistance, a Notification of Assessment (NOA) will be posted to your dashboard account.

The NOA will:

- Indicate the type of funding you have been approved for (loan, grant/bursary).
- Show the amount of money you have been approved for.
- Tell you when you are eligible to receive your money.
- Include a 10 digit Master Student Financial Assistance Agreement (MSFAA) number.

If you are approved for full-time funding, you need to complete and agree to the terms and conditions of the Master Student Financial Assistance Agreement (MSFAA). The MSFAA is a legal agreement between you, the Province of British Columbia and the Canada Student Loans Program about borrowing and repaying your student loans. It is a multi-year agreement, so you won't have to submit a new agreement every time you apply for funding through StudentAid BC. **If you need to complete an MSFAA, you will receive an email from the National Student Loans Service Centre with instructions.**

Confirm your enrolment

Before your student loan and/or grant funding can be released, your institution must confirm that you are enrolled in an eligible, full-time post-secondary program for the entire study period for which you have been awarded funding.

If you attend a post-secondary institution that confirms enrolment electronically, your institution will confirm your full-time enrolment directly with StudentAid BC. Your institution may ask that some, or all of the funds be disbursed directly to them to cover your tuition and mandatory fees, as reported to StudentAid BC.

Most institutions in B.C. confirm student enrolment online directly to StudentAid BC

Living Allowance

How is the living allowance calculated?

The monthly student living allowances for each category of student are intended to cover costs for shelter, food, local transportation, and miscellaneous expenses. They are standard allowances for a moderate standard of living established by the federal government. The allowances vary based on a student's living situation and the province or territory where they will be studying.

The 2020/21 allowances for students residing in B.C. are below. Allowances for other living situations can be found in the StudentAid BC Policy Manual, at www.StudentAidBC.ca.

| 2020/21 Living Allowances for Students residing in B.C. | Monthly | Weekly |
|---|---------|--------|
| Single student away from home | \$1,672 | \$389 |
| Single student living at home | \$704 | \$164 |
| Single parent (add child allowance x number of dependents) | \$2,051 | \$477 |
| Married student/spouse (add child allowance x number of dependents) | \$3,138 | \$730 |
| Child allowance | \$727 | \$169 |

Maximum funding limits

Weekly maximum loan limits for the 2020/21 program year:

- If you do not have dependent children, you can receive up to ~~\$320~~ **\$460*** per week of full-time study.
- If you have dependent children, you can receive up to ~~\$510~~ **\$650*** per week in combined loan and grant funding.
- The total amount you receive will be determined by the length of your study period. Canada Student Grants may add funding above the maximum funding limits.

Note: not all students receive the maximum amount of funding.

| Program length (weeks) | Students <u>without</u> eligible dependants | Program length (weeks) | Students <u>with</u> eligible dependants |
|------------------------|---|------------------------|--|
| 13 | \$4,160 \$5,980* | 13 | \$6,630 \$8,450* |
| 17 | \$5,440 \$7,820* | 17 | \$8,670 \$11,050* |
| 22 | \$7,040 \$10,120* | 22 | \$11,220 \$14,300* |
| 26 | \$8,320 \$11,960* | 26 | \$13,260 \$16,900* |
| 30 | \$9,600 \$13,800* | 30 | \$15,300 \$19,500* |
| 34 | \$10,880 \$15,640* | 34 | \$17,340 \$22,100* |
| 39 | \$12,480 \$17,940* | 39 | \$19,890 \$25,350* |
| 43 | \$13,760 \$19,780* | 43 | \$21,930 \$27,950* |
| 47 | \$15,040 \$21,620* | 47 | \$23,970 \$30,550* |
| 52 | \$16,640 \$23,920* | 52 | \$26,520 \$33,800* |

Grants and bursaries for full-time students

When you apply for StudentAid BC funding, ***you will be automatically considered for loans, grants and bursaries from both the Government of British Columbia and the Government of Canada.***

Students who qualify for a student loan and meet the grant eligibility requirements may be eligible to receive one or more of the following student grants:

B.C Access Grant for Full-Time Studies

This program provides up-front, non repayable financial assistance to low-and middle income learners studying at B.C. public post-secondary institutions. You must be enrolled as a full-time student in an undergraduate degree, diploma or certificate program. If you are in a Master's or PhD program, or enrolled in unclassified studies, you are not eligible. You will be automatically assessed for this grant when you apply for a student loan. Visit www.StudentAidBC.ca for more information.

Canada Student Grant for Full-Time Students

Full-time students studying in an undergraduate post-secondary program of two or more years in duration may receive up to a maximum of ~~\$375~~ **\$750*** per month of study, based on their previous year's annual income and family size.

The Skills Boost Top-up to the Canada Student Grant for Full-Time Students

Full-time students who have been out of high school for 10 years or more, and who are eligible to receive the Canada Student Grant for Full-Time Students (CSG-FT), will receive an additional \$1,600 (\$200 per month) more in top up funding.

To further support full-time students who have been out of high school for 10 years or more, those assessed as ineligible for the CSG-FT and who have, or anticipate having, a significant decrease in annual income from their previous year may request a reassessment based on their current year's income by submitting an Appendix 9.

Canada Student Grant for Students with Dependents

Full-time students who meet the eligibility requirements may receive up to ~~\$200~~ **\$400*** per month of full-time studies per child under 12 years of age at the beginning of the study period. If your child is aged 12 or over and has a permanent disability you can submit an Appeal Request for Scholarship, Bursary and Grant Programs form to be assessed for eligibility for this grant.

Canada Student Grant for Students with Permanent Disabilities

A grant of ~~\$2,000~~ **\$4,000*** per loan year is available for each year of post-secondary studies.

Canada Student Grant for Services and Equipment for Students with Permanent Disabilities

A grant of up to \$20,000 is available for each loan year to offset exceptional education-related costs associated with permanent disabilities, such as costs for a note-taker, a sign interpreter, or technical aids.

Nurses Education Bursary

This program provides non-repayable funding to qualified applicants in B.C. nursing programs. Students enrolled in eligible nursing programs will automatically be considered for a potential bursary award.

***Note: these amounts have been temporarily increased for 2020/21 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.**

B.C. Completion Grant, B.C. Completion Grant for Graduates, and B.C. Access Grant for Labour Market Priorities

Effective Program Year 2020/21, the B.C. Completion Grant, the B.C. Completion Grant for Graduates (BCCG-G), and the B.C. Access Grant for Labour Market Priorities (BCAG-LMP) have been discontinued. In place of these grants, a new B.C. Access Grant has been introduced. Students must successfully complete an eligible program on or before July 31, 2020 to qualify for the BCCG-G. The deadline to apply for the BCCG-G is one year from the study period end date (the last day of studies to earn the credential, not the date of convocation). Students must have graduated from an eligible program on or before July 31, 2020. Students who have received student financial assistance for program year 2019-2020 and are applying for the relocation component of the BCAG-LMP can apply up until their study period end date.

Youth Educational Assistance Fund

The Youth Educational Assistance Fund is for former B.C. youth-in-care between 19 and 24 years of age who are enrolled in full-time, post-secondary level courses at a designated post-secondary institution or who are students with a permanent disability and are studying with a reduced course load. To qualify for this grant, you must have been a youth in continuing care, or in the custody of a director of child welfare in B.C. or meet the adoption criteria as defined by StudentAid BC. Grants of up to \$5,500 are available to eligible applicants.

Provincial Tuition Waiver Program

Young people leaving foster care can access free tuition at all 25 of British Columbia's public post-secondary institutions, Native Education College or one of 10 eligible union trade training centres. This program provides tuition waivers to former youth in care, who are less likely to have access to post-secondary education or training than young people who grew up with family supports. To be eligible for this program, students must have spent at least 24 months (730 days) in care of the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD), a Delegated Aboriginal Agency (DAA) or the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction's 'Child in Home of a Relative' program, and be aged between 19 to 26 (inclusive). Students who are 17 or 18 years old, have graduated from high school, and are no longer in care of the MCFD are also eligible. Both full-time and part-time students qualify for the program. Visit www.StudentAidBC.ca.

The following grants are available for students with permanent disabilities.

B.C. Assistance Program for Students with Permanent Disabilities

B.C. Access Grant for Students with a Permanent Disability

Canada Student Grant for Students with Permanent Disabilities

Canada Student Grant for Services and Equipment for Students with Permanent Disabilities

Learning Disability Assessment Bursary

B.C. Supplemental Bursary for Students with a Permanent Disability

B.C. Access Grant for Deaf Students

For more information on these programs visit www.StudentAidBC.ca.