

# Undergraduate Bursary Policy

**Category:** Students & Teaching

**Approval:** Senate, PVP

**Responsibility:** University Registrar

**Date:** April, 2016. Recommended to Senate for Approval by AP&B March 10, 2016

## **Definitions:**

**Bursary:** Funding provided by Trent University to a student with a demonstrated financial need.

**Award:** Funding provided by Trent University to a student with a demonstrated financial need that includes additional merit-based eligibility criteria such as community service, athletic involvement or academic achievement. The term 'bursary' may be used to describe bursaries and needs-based awards.

**Student with a disability:** A student who has been identified by the Student Accessibility Services office (SAS) as having a permanent or temporary disability.

**Full course-load:** A 100% undergrad course load is 5.0 Trent University credits during the Fall/Winter session or 2.5 credits in any single semester.

**Full and Part time status:** The OSAP definition of full and part time studies is used for bursary purposes; students enrolled in at least 60% of a full course load (each semester) are considered full time. Students with a permanent disability who are enrolled in at least 40% of a full course load are considered full time. Students who do not meet these definitions are considered part time.

**Student Access Guarantee (SAG):** A guideline issued to public Universities and Colleges by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU). The SAG guidelines state that institutions must ensure that qualified students have access to enough aid to cover the costs of tuition, books, compulsory fees, equipment and supplies when these are above the usual range of costs covered by Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP).

**Qualified student:** For SAG purposes, the MTCU defines a qualified student as a student who meets the requirements for OSAP, or student aid from the Part time Canada Student Loan Program. Students who only receive the Ontario Tuition Grant (OTG) are not considered qualified students.

For bursary purposes, Trent University considers OSAP recipients, Part time Canada Student Loan Program recipients, students in receipt of Government aid from other Canadian provinces, and First Nations Band funded students as qualified students. Students who only receive the Ontario Tuition Grant (OTG) are not considered qualified students.

**Tuition Set Aside (TSA):** A reserved portion of additional fee revenue, resulting from tuition fee increases, used for need-based student financial assistance.

**Tuition and Book Shortfall:** A student's remaining financial need, due to the cost of tuition, compulsory fees and books, after the student's resources and OSAP funding are considered.

**Purpose/Reason for Policy:**

The purpose of this policy is to:

- provide a clear statement of the obligations of the University to administer the undergraduate bursaries and awards
- outline student requirements and responsibilities in the bursary program
- provide an appeal process
- provide a process for accommodation for students with a disability

**Scope of this Policy:**

This policy applies to Canadian citizens and permanent residents enrolled in a degree program at Trent University. This policy does not apply to Graduate students or international students. The Trent International Program (TIP) Office administers bursaries for international students, and the School of Graduate Studies administers bursaries for all graduate students.

This policy applies to all bursaries and awards administered by the Financial Aid office for undergraduate students. This includes all of the following:

- Tuition Set Aside funds (TSA)
- Ontario Trust for Student Support (OTSS)
- Ontario Student Opportunity Trust Fund (OSOTF)
- Bursary and award funds established by donors and available to Canadian Citizens

**Policy Statement:**

The bursary and award programs will follow the Ministry of Training, Universities and Colleges (MTCU) Student Access Guarantee (SAG) guidelines. These guidelines state that no qualified student should be prevented from attending Ontario's public colleges and universities due to a lack of financial support. Students should have access to the resources they need for tuition, books, compulsory fees, supplies and equipment. The guidelines also state that students are expected to first access support from their own (and their family's) resources, and from OSAP, before requesting bursary assistance.

**General Guidelines & Student Eligibility:****Student Residency and Eligibility**

Qualified students must be Canadian citizens, permanent residents or protected persons as defined by Citizenship and Immigration Canada enrolled in an undergraduate program at Trent University to access TSA and endowed bursary and award funding. To access bursary and award funds matched by the OSOTF and OTSS programs, students must meet the OSAP definition of an Ontario resident. The OSAP definition states that students must reside in Ontario for at least one year, without being a full-time post-secondary student, to be considered an Ontario resident. Students who have been in Canada for less than one year, and have only resided in Ontario, are also considered Ontario residents.

International (Visa) students are not eligible for TSA, OTSS or OSOTF funded bursaries. There are a limited number of privately funded bursaries available to international students. Students may consult the Trent International Program (TIP) Office, or the school of Graduate studies for information on bursary opportunities.

Bursaries are meant to supplement, not replace, provincial government aid programs and a student's own resources. Students must generally be in receipt of OSAP, another provincial student aid program, or First Nations band funding to qualify for a bursary. Out-of-province students must provide the assessment notice from their province's student aid program.

### **Bursary Application**

To access bursary funding, students must complete and submit a Trent University bursary application by the advertised deadline.

### **Registration status & course load**

To qualify for assistance, students must be registered as a degree seeking student in their program of study. Students may be registered either full time or part time in their program.

### **Academic standing**

All students that are qualified to attend Trent University in a degree, diploma or certificate program, that is eligible for MTCU funding, are eligible to receive bursary and award funding.

### **Bursary Award Amounts**

The SAG guarantee requires institutions to satisfy the tuition and book shortfall for each qualified student. The minimum amount for a bursary is the tuition and book shortfall amount as defined by OSAP or \$100, whichever is more. Bursary assessments will be rounded to the nearest \$50.

The Financial Aid office will set maximum bursary awards each year based on the needs of students and funds available.

### **Student Resources**

Students must declare all resources when applying for a bursary. This includes, but is not limited to, money received from parents, scholarships, awards, and employment earnings. All student resources and parental contributions will be compared against the student's current OSAP application.

### **Allowable expenses**

Allowable expenses include all direct educational costs, including tuition, books, and living expenses. No living costs will be considered for part-time students.

The Financial Aid office will maintain a list of reasonable living and education costs, based on costs allowed by OSAP. Students with extra costs because of special circumstances must use the bursary appeal process to access additional funding.

Gas expense may be allowed, if public transit is not available, and the student must travel by car for their program of study. Only gas costs will be considered; car payments, repairs and insurance will NOT be considered in the bursary process. Costs for household items such as furniture and computers will also NOT be considered.

Students with dependent children may include additional living and child care costs on the bursary application.

For students in professional programs, professional equipment costs may be included. The Financial Aid Office will consult with the program administrators to determine program requirements. The bursary program may not be able to address all student equipment costs.

## **Appeals**

Bursary appeals will be reviewed after all regular applications have been processed. Students must submit a completed bursary appeal form by the advertised deadline. A letter explaining the student's special circumstances, and all documentation to support the student's appeal, must be provided before the appeal can be considered. Appeals will be reviewed by a bursary committee of at least two persons and will be considered on a case by case basis.

Students may appeal for additional funds because of extra expenses, such as uninsured medical or dental expenses. Cosmetic medical expenses and expensive dental procedures such as orthodontic work or tooth replacements will not be covered by the bursary program. Students are required to claim medical and dental expenses through the University's medical coverage, or their own private medical coverage, and provide a statement outlining their claim. Only the uninsured portion of the expense will be considered.

Bursaries are not designed to cover all of a student's expenses. The Financial Aid office will set reasonable limits for additional expenses (such as medical and dental costs).

Students may face hardship because of difficult family circumstances and require additional support for living expenses, etc. Special situations will be considered on a case by case basis.

Although students are required to apply for government aid before applying for any bursary, there may be situations when government aid is not available to the student. If students can demonstrate a legitimate reason why they cannot access government student assistance, then they may be considered for aid. Reviews will be on a case by case basis.

Appeals for additional aid cannot be considered if bursary funds are exhausted.

### **Responsibilities:**

The Financial Aid office:

- Determines student financial need and bursary eligibility based on MTCU guidelines and bursary application
- Allocates bursary amounts to undergrad students based on financial need

The Student Accessibility Office (SAS)

- Determines the disability status of a student.

### **Contact Officer:**

University Registrar

### **Date for Next Review:**

April, 2019

### **Related Policies, Procedures & Guidelines**

- a) Guideline, Trent Work Study Program

### **Policies Superseded by This Policy:**

- a) N/A