



Gitxaala Nation

Post Secondary Education Policy

Revised December 01, 2014

Vision Statement:

The Gitxaala Nation Education Department recognizes and holds a high value for education. We work diligently in support of Gitxaala Nation members who wish to further their education and who are eligible for Post Secondary funding. Based on the availability of funds, every effort and provision will be made to assist eligible members to successfully pursue and complete their education.

Purpose of the Gitxaala Nation Policy:

The post-secondary sponsorship program is designed to assist registered Band Members to acquire university/college and professional qualifications. It is the desire and goal of the Nation that such an individual becomes financially self-sufficient and realizes their individual potentials for contribution to Gitxaala Nation, to other First Nations or to society at large.

Objective of the Gitxaala Nation Policy:

The objective is first to encourage and support eligible Band Members to gain access to post-secondary education and to graduate from their respective programs. The goal is to have graduated students use their acquired skills and learning to contribute to Gitxaala Nation with their career path helping to build and develop capacities for community and its members.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

POLICY:

Members of Gitxaala Nation who wish to receive sponsorship for Post Secondary Programs must make an application to the Gitxaala Nation Education Committee.

PROCEDURE:

1. To be eligible for funding under the Post Secondary Program, students must meet the following criteria:
 - Registered as a Gitxaala Nation member for a minimum of 2 years.
 - Have been residents of Canada for the past 12 months prior to the date of application.
 - Meet the College/University requirements before enrolling in a program of studies.
 - Be accepted into an eligible post-secondary program and an approved institution.

2. Applicant must complete an application for Financial Assistance and send it into the Education Coordinator. The following documents must accompany the application form:
 - A course description, length of program, and # of credits for completion, including pre-requisites for the program, tuition, cost of books, and any other expenses.
 - An acceptance letter from the educational institute **MUST** accompany your application in order for your application to be considered.
 - A copy of your most recent transcripts.
 - Applicants **MUST** provide a letter of recommendation from an academic counsellor or educator.
 - A letter of introduction about self, containing information on their career goals, your reason for attending post-secondary, your reason for choosing the program that you chose.
 - The applicant is requested to include a breakdown of their cost of living expenses (accommodation, monthly travel, etc.). Travel is available only if the courses are not available at an institute that is closest to your current address.
 - For applications to be considered they **MUST** be received before the deadline of May 25th. This is to start in September of the following school year. If you are applying for a program beginning in January your application must be received a minimum of 2 months prior to the start of your program.

3. The Gitxaala Nation Education Screening Committee and the Education Coordinator prior to the May 25th deadline each year will review the applications. The students will be funded in accordance with the priority list for funding.
 - Continuing students – provided they are in good standing and have not violated any areas of the sponsorship agreement.
 - New Student Graduates with complete entrance standards to University programs
 - Deferred Students from prior applications
 - Masters/Doctorate students
 - All other students will be funded based on their completion of applications prior to the deadline and on their success in prior education endeavours.

NOTE: Due to funding limitations we will maximize and accept as many eligible students who apply before May 25th each year. Any applications that do not get accepted due to funding limitations will be deferred until funding becomes available.
4. The Education Coordinator will notify those students, by email or letter, to those approved for sponsorship of their Living Allowance, books and supply rate.
5. Students who have not met the deadline for applying for funding will be notified, in writing, and will be deferred for the next funding date.

The deadline for applications is May 25th Annually. However, Applications that are sent into the coordinators office at least 3 months prior to the start date of your program will be considered based on funding availability.

Policy:

There are a number of programs that are eligible for funding through the Post Secondary Program. ***NO SWITCHING FROM PROGRAM TO PROGRAM.***

Procedure:

Students applying for sponsorship under the PSSSP (for post-secondary programs) may only be eligible for sponsorship if the program meets ALL THREE of the following criteria:

1. You will be attending a degree, diploma, or certificate granting institution recognized/accredited by a province as a post-secondary institution. This includes institutions affiliated with or delivering accredited post-secondary programs by arrangement with a recognized post-secondary institution. **Eligible institutions must be on the INAC approved post-secondary institutions list. (The list can be located online at: <http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/studentaidbc/ila/#eligible>)**
2. Your program of studies is offered by a recognized post-secondary institution and has completion of Grade 12 as a mandatory entrance/admission requirement.
3. Your program of studies is at least one academic year (eight months) in length and leads to a certificate, diploma, or degree.

UCEP Eligibility

UCEP stands for University and College Entrance Preparation Program. These upgrading programs are offered by post-secondary institutions to enable students to gain the academic level required for entrance to degree and diploma programs. FFWS recognizes that some programs are not specifically referred to as UCEP when they provide the same results. Academic upgrading-type programs may also fall under the UCEP category.

To be eligible to receive support for a UCEP program:

1. Students must qualify for admission to the UCEP/upgrading program under the mature student admission requirements of the post-secondary institution.
2. Students must be able to achieve, through the UCEP/upgrading program, the academic level required for entrance to a post-secondary program (Grade 12 equivalency) within one academic year. This will need to be confirmed, in writing, by a program advisor at the selected institution.
3. Students may not receive funding for an UCEP/upgrading program if they have previously or are currently enrolled in a post-secondary program of studies.

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Section 2

PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY (continued)

Tuition Only Reimbursements:

Correspondence courses are usually not funded. Exceptions would be if the student successfully completes his/her course(s) through the Open Learning Agency within four months. He/she may apply to the Education Coordinator for tuition reimbursement. If there are any additional funds available, then the student may receive reimbursement.

Students enrolled in **three** or less courses, which will contribute toward a Diploma or a Degree at a College/University may apply for reimbursement of tuition ONLY, upon successfully completing these courses. Reimbursement will be made **IF** there is any surplus funding available in the Post Secondary Program.

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Section 2.01

PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY – LOCATION (out of Region)

Policy:

Students who wish to attend programs out of the province/country will receive their funding in Canadian funds.

Procedure:

1. Students who wish to enrol in a program offered outside of British Columbia will only be eligible for transportation if the program is not offered in British Columbia.
2. Eligible students may receive transportation up to a maximum of \$500 at the beginning of the 1st year and at the end of the program.

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 Section 3
ALLOWANCE ELIGIBILITY

Policy:

Students will be funded in accordance with a Rate Schedule established by the Gitxaala Nation Education Committee. Living allowances will be reflected by current Gitxaala Nation membership list.

Procedure:

1. Upon successful application for Post Secondary Sponsorship, students will be funded according to the following rates:

| <i>Living Allowances</i> | <i>Per Month</i> |
|---|-------------------------|
| a. single students | \$ 1062.00 |
| b. Living with working spouse | \$ 1062.00 |
| with one dependant | \$ 1260.00 |
| with two dependants | \$ 1463.00 |
| with three dependants | \$ 1659.00 |
| <i>Add \$50 per additional dependant(s)</i> | |
| c. Living with dependant spouse | \$ 1310.00 |
| with one dependant | \$ 1479.00 |
| with two dependants | \$ 1659.00 |
| with three dependants | \$ 1829.00 |
| <i>Add \$ 75.00 per additional dependant(s)</i> | |
| d. Single parent: | |
| with one dependant | \$ 1479.00 |
| with two dependants | \$ 1659.00 |
| with three dependants | \$ 1879.00 |
| <i>Add \$100 per additional dependant(s)</i> | |
| e. Married/common-law. When both persons being sponsored by Gitxaala, the spouse claiming the dependants will be categorized as living with working spouse. | |
| f. Financial review. Special needs: Students can state their case for more funding: Students considering applying for extra funds must submit all receipts (rent, utilities, phone, etc.) on a monthly basis. | |

- d. If student is absent from classes for no reason, the number of days will be deducted from their next cheque. A letter must be provided.

- e. If there is an addition (birth) to the family, the mother would forward her request for an increase in allowance (letter form), a birth certificate should be forwarded ASAP.

- f. Financial probation will be imposed until such time as improvement is shown to the satisfaction of the Education Coordinator (ie. Progress reports, or letter from an academic advisor showing a proof of improvement.)

- g. Direct Deposits will occur on ***second last Friday*** of every month.

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Rent Subsidy

Policy:

Students will be funded in accordance with the Rate Schedule established by the Gitxaala Nation Education Committee.

- Students living with parents or grandparents are ineligible for rental subsidy.
- One subsidy per household.

Those students who are living off reserve outside the Prince Rupert area to attend College/University will receive the following adjustments to their allowance.

Category 1: Major Cities (Prince George & Beyond) Up to 15% of the average rental cost determined by CMHC

Category 2: All other areas: Up to 10% of the average rental cost
(Prince Rupert and determined by CMHC
Surrounding areas)

Procedure:

1. The education coordinator will contact Canada Mortgage & Housing Corporation to determine what the average rental cost is for the required dwelling where the student will be residing. Rental receipts (with applicants name on receipt) -are to be submitted to the education coordinator.

2. If the student will be residing in **Category 1** area, the average rental cost will be multiplied by 15% to determine the rental subsidy.

Eg. $\$600 \times 15\% = \90

The student will receive an additional \$150 included in their living allowance.

3. If the student will be residing in **Category 2** area, the average rental cost will be multiplied by 20% to determine the rental subsidy.

Eg. $\$600 \times 10\% = \60

The student will receive an additional \$90 included in their living allowance.

4. If the student is residing in **Campus housing**, the average dormitory cost will be multiplied by up to 10% to determine the rental subsidy.

Policy:

Students will be funded in accordance with a Rate Schedule established by Gitxaala Nation Education Committee.

Procedure:

1. Books:

College Programs \$700/year or \$350/semester

University Programs \$800/year or \$400/semester

2. Supplies

College Programs \$100/semester

University Programs \$100/semester

3. If student exceeds the amount allotted for the books & supplies, she/he must provide ALL receipts to the Education Coordinator before they can be considered eligible for any reimbursement.

The Educational Institute will be authorized to invoice the Band for the amounts specified. If the Institute does not provide the service of invoicing for Books & Supplies, then the amount will be added on to the student cheques.

Receipts will be required from the student; this is to ensure that funds have been used for the appropriate area. And if the cost of the material is greater than the amount allotted, then reimbursement will be reviewed by the Education Coordinator and can only be allotted based on availability of funds.

Clothing

Policy:

Students will be funded in accordance with a Rate Schedule established by the Gitxaala Nation Education Committee:

Procedure:

1. Clothing Allowance

The clothing allowance is only available to students enrolled in Co-op Programs or other programs where practicum is required, provided that surplus funding is available in the Post Secondary Program.

a. ONE time ONLY.

b. Maximum allowance available: \$300/student

2. Student must ensure that this is included when the application is submitted to the Education Coordinator. This is to ensure that funds are allotted for the clothing allowance.

Policy:

Students will be funded, if approved, in accordance with a Rate Schedule established by the Gitxaala Nation Education Committee.

Procedure:

1. Student Tutor:

If funds have been allocated through the Post Secondary Program, students can apply to the Education Coordinator for funding, if they are expecting difficulty in their studies.

2. Once the funding has been approved, students will be required to hire a tutor and invoices will be required by the tutor before payment is made. Acceptable rates for tutoring are in the range \$15 - \$20/hr.

Policy:

Students will receive funding in accordance to the Rate Schedule established by the Gitxaala Nation Education Committee.

Procedure:

1. Students are provided travel if he/she (and family) had to relocate to continue their studies at the educational institute. This is provided that this program is ***NOT*** offered at the nearest/local educational institute.
2. Travel is requested at the time of submission of the application, then and only then will be approved.
3. Travel arrangements will be made by the student and it is the students' responsibility to forward the information to the Education Coordinator.
4. Travel is provided to students on the following occasions:
 - Beginning of semester (to the location of the institute).
 - Year end of program (trip home)
 - If student withdraws from the program for emergency or legitimate reasons.
5. The applicant's permanent place of residence will be defined in conjunction to their initial place of residence at the time of submission of the application for sponsorship, or at the time to which the Gitxaala Nation has taken over control of the sponsorship.

Policy:

Students may receive monthly travel based on the rate set by the city transit (bus) subject to the discretion of the Education Coordinator.

Procedure:

1. Student is required to make the request at the time of submission of the completed sponsorship application.
2. If the city transit offers a bus pass for college students, students are permitted to purchase the pass, and the funds that they receive will be all that they receive for that term. The student will receive the funds again for the second term and so on.
3. The student should also forward the information on the transit, such as phone numbers or if possible a pamphlet from the transit company.

Policy:

The Education Coordinator is authorized to provide students with additional contingency funds in consultation with Education Committee, if surplus funds are available.

Procedure:

1. Other funding information

Application forms for student loans, bursaries, and scholarships can be sent to students upon request by the Education Coordinator. Students who wish to apply may do so on their own initiative.

2. Contingency Funds

Emergency funds for students: a letter from the student requesting the funds would be forwarded to the Education Department. This letter would include the reason for the funds. The education committee will make the decision. If the committee cannot meet, the education coordinator will be authorized to make the decision provided all the information is present.

Policy:

Students receiving Post Secondary funding are required to maintain a certain level of academic standard in order to have their program funded on a continual basis.

Procedure:

1. Upon acceptance of funding, students are required to sign a WAIVER form, which will authorize the educational institute to send official transcripts to the education coordinator (if necessary), monitor students' progress and attendance.
2. All transcripts will be reviewed by the Education Coordinator to ensure all students maintain a C letter grade or better.
3. Students' whose grades drop below C+ will receive a Warning Letter from the Education Coordinator. They will be informed that future funding is in jeopardy. If improvement is not made by the next report the students will be put on Financial Probation. If still no improvement has been made by the next report or end of the term: the students funding will be SUSPENDED. Should they re-apply for funding in the next fiscal year, they will not be considered as a priority.
4. First year students may be given more lee-way because of the difficulties experienced in year one. If a first year student has been placed on Academic Probation by the Educational Institute, they will automatically be placed on Financial Probation by the education coordinator. The student will remain on Financial Probation until improvement is noticeable. If the student neglects to make the improvement, Financial Probation may continue into their second year of College/University. When the Education Coordinator receives their grades for the First semester, and there is still no improvement, funding will be terminated. Should the student re-apply in the next year, she/he will not be considered as a priority.
5. Students who have been attending Post Secondary for more than one year will be placed on Financial Suspension upon notification of grades, because they should be aware of this requirement from their first year.

Policy:

If student who sends a **completed application** is not approved for funding, they will be notified in via email within 10 days of the decision. The reason why he/she is not approved will be mentioned and they may appeal the decision. (Students who have not submitted an application in full are ineligible for an appeal)

Procedure:

1. The student will be notified by the education coordinator within 10 days of being turned down. The notice will indicate why she/he was not approved.
2. The student can appeal this decision to the Appeals Committee in writing. The Appeals Committee will consist of applicable members of the Band Council.
3. The Appeals Committee will review the original application, the decision for turning down the application, and then decide whether or not to change the funding decision.
4. The deadline for the Appeals is as follows:

| | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| Fall Semester | October 1 st |
| Winter Semester | February 1 st |
| Spring Semester | June 1 st |
| Summer Semester | August 1 st |
5. Immediately after the Appeals Committee determines the appeal, the Education Coordinator will notify the student, in writing, stating the outcome of the decision.

Student Responsibilities

Student Responsibilities:

1. The student maintains a respectful relationship with Gitxaala Chief & Council and Gitxaala Administration in all communications.
2. To provide current mailing addresses, phone numbers and notify the Education Coordinator of any changes immediately.
3. The students take full responsibility to attend classes at all times. If a student cannot attend classes for what ever reason they should notify their instructor and Education Coordinator immediately. A ***note*** from their Doctor must be faxed within 48 hours of onset of illness.
4. To maintain a full course load of 4 courses or 12 credits/semester at all times. Self paced courses will be scrutinized on an individual basis by the Education Committee.
5. To provide written notice of course or program withdrawal. Failure to do so will result in permanent exclusion from future sponsorship. Withdrawal must be made prior to fee reimbursement deadline and if withdrawal occurs after the deadline, the student assumes full responsibility for the tuition costs.
6. To provide official transcripts to the Education Coordinator at the ***beginning*** and ***conclusion*** of each semester.
7. Students take full responsibility for setting and achieving their Post Secondary Educational goals.
8. Students seek to access additional financial assistance through Bursaries, scholarships and work study programs. Seek advice from Academic Advisors.
9. That Post Secondary assistance is not intended to cover personal debts before, during or after attendance at a Post Secondary Institution. This includes but is not limited to credit card payments, vehicle loans and student loans.

Termination for Educational Assistance

Conditions for Termination of Assistance

- Dishonesty or fraud
- Misuse of funding
- Substantial evidence of intoxication or substance abuse adversely affecting student's achievement as confirmed by the Educational Institute.
- Poor class attendance: a student who is regularly absent from one or more of the minimum number of courses for no legitimate reason.
- Change of status at any time from Full Time to Part Time without informing the Education Coordinator in writing (ie. Course withdrawal)
- Failure to maintain a minimum average of a C+ in all courses (all decisions will be reviewed by the Education Committee on an individual basis).