



# A Guide For Parents: Student Financial Planning and Support

## Introduction

When you receive this information, your son or daughter may still be in the process of deciding which university to attend, or may already have chosen the University of Toronto. The purpose of this guide is to tell you what the costs may be and to outline the sources of financial assistance available. We hope this information will help parents and students to plan.

We believe that an investment in a University of Toronto education is a valuable investment in the future of your son or daughter. Furthermore, for families which lack the resources to fund that investment, the University is committed to providing assistance. In 1998, the Governing Council of the University approved a Policy on Financial Support, which states that no student admitted to a program at the University should be unable to enrol or complete the program due to lack of financial means.

Our commitment is based on the assumption that students will first access the government aid for which they are eligible. We assess financial need on the same basis as the Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP), because that provides a consistent and verifiable method. For a student who qualifies for the maximum OSAP assistance, and who has further assessed need not covered by OSAP, the University will provide the additional assistance **in the form of a non-repayable grant** for undergraduate students. The grant is delivered through a U of T program called UTAPS, University of Toronto Advance Planning for Students.

The University of Toronto is also committed to the principle that each entering student should know, at the time of entry, the level of fees to be charged over the normal course of the full-time program of study.

## The Cost of University

The cost of university study includes direct costs (tuition and other fees, books and equipment) and living costs while the student is enrolled.

Tuition fees vary depending on the student's program of study. In 2015-2016, tuition fees for students entering Arts and Science, and Business programs was \$6,220 for a normal full-time course load. In addition to tuition fees, students pay incidental fees which vary by college, but average about \$1,300.

The cost of books and supplies varies depending on the program of study. An average figure for an undergraduate student is \$1,000 per year.

The cost of room and board depends, of course, on whether the student lives at home, in residence or off-campus while attending university. Residence fees, including a meal plan, are approximately \$11,700 – \$15,700 per year, and increase annually. Whether your son or daughter lives at or away from home, spending money and funds for transportation will also be needed.

## University of Toronto Advance Planning for Students

Students who are concerned about the financial cost of attending university may obtain an assessment of the amount of funding they can expect to receive from government programs and other forms of financial assistance, by completing an on-line UTAPS application. These applications are available to all Canadian citizens, permanent residents and protected persons (recognized convention refugees) who have applied for admission to full-time studies at the University of Toronto. Students may do a self-assessment using our web-based assessment program: <http://www.future.utoronto.ca/finances/financial-aid>. The UTAPS application is simply a mechanism to provide early information to students. For every new and returning student, the University examines the OSAP assessment, which we receive from the provincial government in September, and identifies all students who qualify for UTAPS grants. We then write directly to the students to notify them of their eligibility.

## Government Financial Aid

Students in Ontario are fortunate in having access to a good program of financial aid. OSAP provides a Canada-Ontario Integrated Student Loan and Access Grants for full-time students. Although the loans must be repaid after graduation, they are interest-free and non-repayable as long as the student is enrolled in full-time university study.

The Ontario government also offers the Ontario Tuition Grant (30% Off Ontario Tuition program) to certain eligible students. This grant is not repayable. Information can be found at [www.ontario.ca/osap](http://www.ontario.ca/osap)

As a parent, you are **not** responsible for your son or daughter's student loans, even if he or she is unable to make repayment when the loan comes due. Repayment assistance programs can assist borrowers in this situation. Other programs which may be of benefit to some students during their studies include the Work Study Program, and the Bursary for Students with Disabilities. Detailed information is available at the following web site address:

<http://www.future.utoronto.ca/finances/financial-aid>.

It is a basic assumption of the OSAP program that parents will assist their children during the first four years of university study if they are financially able to do so. The OSAP application must be completed by both you and your son or daughter. The form asks that you declare information about your income, and about the number and ages of children in the family. The student is asked to provide details of summer earnings, assets and other income. The amount and the kinds of assistance for which your son or daughter qualifies is then based on this information. Completing the application does **not** obligate you to provide financial support.

Because OSAP assessments are based on many factors, it can be misleading to provide estimates of the level of assistance which might be expected. We know, however, that planning is difficult if parents have no idea of how much aid might be available. The following are intended only to give you a general sense of how the OSAP program operates:

**Four-person family with two children, one of whom attends university full-time, Arts and Science from September to April with no student assets or income during the school year:**

	Gross Parental Income	OSAP (Living at home)	OSAP (Living away from home)
Up To	\$50,000	\$10,000	\$15,200
	\$70,000	\$10,000	\$15,200
	\$90,000	\$8,500	\$13,000
	\$110,000	\$7,800	\$8,800
	\$130,000	\$5,800	\$8,800
	\$150,000	3600	\$6,900

For qualifying students, funds are released at the beginning of the school year (in September). The government pays interest on the loan while the student remains in school full-time. This explains why collateral or a co-signer is not required and why interest-free loans are needs tested and not available on demand.

Some parents may be unhappy about revealing the financial information required on the OSAP application. You should know that it is strictly confidential. You will be asked to sign a personalized Consents, Declarations and Signatures form which allows the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities to verify the income information against your tax return. You will appreciate that it is very important that the OSAP program, which is supported by your tax dollars, be safeguarded against abuse.

Completing the OSAP application accurately takes time, but it is important. If your income is such that you cannot afford to pay for your son or daughter's university education, OSAP can provide valuable assistance. For qualifying students, OSAP covers tuition and other fees, books and equipment, and provides a living allowance which is modest. Many students find that they need to supplement their OSAP funding through summer employment, part-time work or other means.

When you review the information on the OSAP web site, you may receive the impression that the program's expectations are inflexible and ignore individual circumstances. This is not accurate; appeals may be made for a variety of reasons. For example, parents whose income decreases as a result of retirement or job loss may have this factor considered in their son or daughter's assessment. If you are concerned about your situation, or if you have questions, you and your son or daughter are welcome to contact Enrolment Services (416-978-2190) for advice.

**Other Sources of Financial Assistance**

**Scholarship**

The University of Toronto, its colleges and faculties award approximately 3,600 admission scholarships and 5,000 in-course scholarships each year. For more information refer to <http://www.future.utoronto.ca/finances/scholarships>.

In addition to scholarships offered by the University of Toronto, there are many outside awards. One important, and often overlooked, source is scholarships offered by employers to the children of employees. Many Canadian companies offer such scholarships. If you are uncertain whether your employer offers this benefit, you should check with the human resources office.

**Grants**

Grants, which are also sometimes called bursaries, are non-repayable sums of money provided by colleges and faculties of the University to assist students who encounter financial difficulties. These grants are of modest value in comparison to the funding available through OSAP and UTAPS. They are awarded on the basis of financial need, often in situations where a student experiences a temporary financial setback during the course of their academic program.

**Work-Study**

Many students supplement their finances by working part-time. Work-Study is a University employment program which provides part-time jobs in academic and administrative areas on the campus. The majority of Work-Study jobs have academic or career-related benefits. Information about Work-Study is available at Enrolment Services and the Career Centre web site: <http://www.careers.utoronto.ca>

**Financial Counselling**

The University of Toronto is committed to ensuring that every student has access to a financial counsellor who can assist in planning and managing their finances. In Arts and Science, this

counselling is provided through the Registrar's Office of the student's college. A counsellor will help your son or daughter to plan a budget for the school year and assist in ensuring that there is access to the appropriate sources of financial support.

### **Income Tax and Students**

Tuition fees are a tax credit when the student files a tax return. Unused credits may be transferred to a supporting parent.

### **International Students**

In order to receive a student authorization from the Canadian government, international students are required to demonstrate that they have the resources needed to cover their costs at university. For this reason, the University does not normally provide financial assistance. International students are, however, fully eligible to be considered for merit-based scholarships on the same basis as Canadian students. Our financial aid counsellors are pleased to discuss financial management and any concerns with our international students.

### **Additional Ways to Help**

Whether or not your finances will allow you to provide funds to your son or daughter at university, there are other ways in which families can offer support. Most importantly, you can co-operate in completing the OSAP application. You can also help by allowing the student to live at home during the summer so that summer earnings can be saved to meet university costs.

If your son or daughter lives at home while attending university (or comes home fairly often), you can provide such things as laundry facilities. Students who live away from home often find that the little things are hard on their budgets – shampoo, detergent, snacks. A “care package” never hurts!

Above all, you can help by speaking candidly to the student about what you can, and cannot, afford to provide. Students deserve to be able to plan realistically; it is important they know ahead of time if they should be expected to work part-time or to buy used text-books.

### **Further Information and Web Site Address**

If you or your son or daughter requires more information about financial planning for university, we invite you to speak with a counsellor at Enrolment Services (416-978-2190).

The University of Toronto has a comprehensive web site dealing with student financial aid:

<http://www.future.utoronto.ca/finances>.

It provides information about costs, sources of assistance, loans, awards, budget-planning and financial management for students in all programs