

Accessible Learning Services Explores: FAQs about Financial Aid Bursary and Scholarship applications

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Financial Aid is a hot topic for many Seneca Polytechnic students, and rightly so! A bursary or scholarship can have a large impact on the lives of a full-time student. I can personally attest to the positive impact it had on my own experience, allowing me to work less hours at my job, while still making me feel secure (food, rent, school expenses), and I was better able to concentrate on my full-time studies.

However, it can be a challenge to know when and where to apply and know the eligibility requirements for all the bursaries and scholarships available. Because of this, we have asked a member of the Financial Aid department to answer some questions we feel will assist students in navigating through the entire process. We then explored the links ourselves to rate the accessibility and add our notes we deemed might be important.

- **Are there scholarships or bursaries that are specific to students with disabilities at Seneca? (Beyond the OSAP Bursary for Students with Disabilities)**
 - Yes, they vary year by year as to which ones are available. We also have awards available to students who are part of an equity deserving group. For awards and descriptions visit the [Scholarships and Awards website](#).
 - Upon clicking on the above link, you will be directed to the Seneca Hub containing further links sorted by types of bursaries and scholarships, such as:
 - Awards Open to Full Time Students in All Programs · Faculty of Applied Science & Engineering Technology All Schools and Programs · Faculty of Arts and Skills Upgrading · Faculty of Communication, Art and Design · Faculty of Community & Health · Seneca Business · Seneca Nanji Foundation School of Nursing · Faculty of Continuing Education · Campus Awards · Renewable Degree Scholarships · External Awards

- **Are there any common mistakes students make when submitting scholarships or bursary applications?**

- Students need to make sure they select all the terms they are enrolled; it is one application for the full year. Many students just select the current term. Students cannot come back and make changes to their application, so they need to ensure all the information is correct before they submit.
- After they submit the personal and financial information, they need to select the awards and answer the questions then submit it again. If they do not do this next step, they will have only completed the application but not applied to any awards.
- For information on how to apply please visit the [Scholarships and Bursaries website](#).
- The above website contains a helpful how-to video with step-by-step instructions for applying for bursaries and/or scholarships. To access only the video please click [here](#).

- **When is the best time to check for and apply for scholarships and bursaries?**

- "Most awards open in the fall term on the first day of classes and the deadline is October 31.
- For off-cycle awards we post information here when awards open, we recommend they check this site regularly: [Awards, Scholarships and Bursaries](#).
- Upon clicking on the link, you will find some scholarships and bursaries are still available to apply for, such as the Tuition Assistance Bursary, which has a deadline of February 15th, 2025.

Note: When filling out your expenses, make sure to include every expense, and don't underestimate. The greater your total expenses, the more likely you are to be approved for the Tuition Assistance Bursary (based on an expense vs. income ratio decision).

- **If a student is having difficulties submitting a scholarship or bursary request, what is the best way to ask for support?**

- "They should email the service hub and put award application issue in the subject line."
- Navigating through the Service Hub can sometimes seem challenging. Ensure

your subject heading clearly identifies which department and topic you are requesting assistance.

General tips that students should be aware of when accessing financial supports, whether as a domestic or international student.

- “The answers to the questions are important, we recommend doing them in a word document and reading over them to make sure you have answered the question
- We are not looking at grammar, but we do recommend you have a friend read your answers before you submit the application.
- Leadership and community involvement do not have to be volunteer work, it can be paid work, or in school where you took a leadership role. It can also be looking after siblings.
- You need to explain how your experience has shown leadership and community involvement.
- If new awards open, you will need to go back into your application and select the award and answer the questions.
- Review the awards open for application website regularly.

After reading through these helpful tips and accessing the links, you may feel a bit overwhelmed. The video provided is a great source of information and is accessible for those with hearing or visual impairments. If you have further questions, don't hesitate to reach out to the Service Hub (with the department and topic in the subject heading!) for clarification and assistance. Furthermore, those on OSAP with a verified disability should inquire about the **Bursary for Students with Disabilities (BSWD)** through their ALS counsellor. This bursary can help those awarded with assistive technology expenses and similar items.