



Upper Similkameen Indian Band

POST SECONDARY

EDUCATION Local Operating Guidelines

Upper Similkameen Chief and Council have approved this policy on

Signed: 2025-03-26

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DEFINITIONS

The following definitions for terms used in this policy are provided for the information of all applicants.

Academic Program – a period of time during which a student is under strict academic guidelines, usually because of low or failing grade.

Academic Year – the academic year normally refers to two semesters with an approximate duration of eight (8) months.
Band Member – a person who had met the requirements to become a member of the Upper Similkameen Indian Band and whose name has been entered on the INAC Band List.

Canadian Public Institution – is a post-secondary institution which receives the majority of its funding from federal and provincial governments.

Contingency Funding – financial support provided to students for costs related to emergency situations. Emergency situations eligible for contingency funding include individual or family illness, accident, or bereavement.

Course Credit Equivalencies – the following course credit equivalencies apply in this policy:

- A one-semester course is normally equivalent to 1.5 units or 1.5 credit hours
- A two-semester course is normally equivalent to 3 units or 3 credit hours

Daycare Subsidy – is funding designed only to top up any provincial daycare fund.

Dependent Spouse – a person who is married to the student or a person who has lived with the student as a partner for a period of at least one year prior to application for educational support. This person is dependant upon the student and does not receive an annual income in excess of \$6,500.00.

Dependent(s) – any person who relies on a student for support and is living full-time with that student under 18 years.

Full-Time Student – a student, who in each term or semester of the first year of a degree or diploma program, takes a minimum of three (3) courses of the equivalent number of credit hours and in each subsequent term or semester take a minimum of four (4) courses or the equivalent number of credit hours.

Medical Release – a student who is required, for medical reasons, to be absent from classes for more than one week, is required to provide the USIB Education Coordinator within 10 days of the onset of the illness or reason for absence from classes. Failure to do this may result in the student being required to reimburse the Band for all educational funds that have been provided to the student in the semester during which the absence took place.

Part-Time Student – a student who takes less than 3 courses (first year) or 4 courses (second and subsequent years) of study in a term.

Post-Secondary Institution – a public post-secondary institution that offers diploma or degree programs which is recognized by a province or territory in Canada,

Private Institution - a private post-secondary institution that offers certificate, diploma or degree programs which is recognized by a province or territory in Canada.

Selection Committee – consists of the Education Committee, see Education Committee “Terms of Reference” for further information.

Semester – the time covered by one semester is approximately four months.

Sponsorship – when a student is provided financial support to attend a post-secondary institution. This support may include tuition, books, living allowance, tutoring, and travel allowance as applicable.

Student Success – when a student successfully meets the course requirement of the learning institution.

Trades Training – funding can be applied to support trades training if the program and institution meet eligibility requirements. Trades training may be referred to OTDC for funding.

U.S. Student – a band member student attending a Post-Secondary Institution in the United State is only eligible to qualify for tuition and book subsidy, in Canadian currency.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This document has been developed to ensure that students understand the full scope of the Upper Similkameen Indian Band (USIB) Post Secondary Education Program and to assist the administration of the program. The Post Secondary Education Program is available to all registered band members of USIB.

The Post Secondary Education Program provides financial assistance to all eligible, registered Upper Similkameen Band members towards the cost of their post secondary education. This document outlines the criteria, incentives, type and levels of allowance, books, tuition, and the maximum duration of assistance that may be provided to eligible students by the Post Secondary Education Program.

This document has been developed to administer the Post Secondary Education Program equitable for all eligible USIB members.

Your application for funding will be reviewed with the following being taken into consideration:

1. If you owe the Band money for previous or present education sponsorship, you will be required to pay this debt off before being considered for further funding.
2. If you have failing marks or incomplete courses, or you did not write a final exam, you may not be considered for further funding.
3. If your academic record indicate that you have a history of not completing programs or courses, your application will not be considered until all other applications have been reviewed and only then if there are funds available the current fiscal year.
If approval is granted, you will be under probation. Your grades and attendance will be closely monitored.
4. Students must follow their goals and schedule as goals and visions are important to stay focused. Students can only transfer once into another related academic program. Students must take courses that relate to their programing.
5. Courses that are not in line with their goals must be paid for by the student and are not eligible to be sponsored by the Band.
6. That the funding support will be based on the duration of the student's academic goal i.e. certificate, diploma, degree or doctorate. Students who have completed the program at Level 1, 2, or 3 are now eligible to receive funding for the same or lower level, if funding is available as per Priority Selection Criteria.
7. Once you have received sponsorship and are attending classes, you must request another application package each year by April 15th for the upcoming year. Every student will be required to re-apply for sponsorship and attend an interview with the Education Review Committee and or Education Coordinator each June.
8. Applications will be approved once funding from ISC has been confirmed by the Finance Manager, preliminary budgets will be issued in July and may be adjusted if more funding becomes available .
9. All grade 12 graduates are required to attend the University and College Entrance Preparation Program (UCEP) for their first year and at least one year at a community college before transferring to a university if they require upgrading before entering into the program of their choice.

2.0 MISSION STATEMENT

- To build capacity within USIB through education and provide learning opportunities.
- To instill pride and inspire success to the membership.

3.0 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the USIB Post Secondary Education Program are to provide the sufficient financial support to eligible registered status members of USIB, to:

- gain access to post secondary education.
- to graduate with qualifications and skills needed to pursue individual careers.
- to contribute to the achievement of self-determination and economic self-reliance.
- to build capacity in the community.

4.0 ADMINISTRATION: Roles and Responsibilities

Every effort has been made to ensure consistency and transparency of the policies contained within this document.

Students:

The students are responsible for the pursuit of their own post-secondary education. Sponsored USIB members are responsible and accountable to themselves for doing everything possible to ensure that their educational goals are being met in a satisfactory and effective manner.

Note * students are required to apply for additional scholarships, bursaries and student loans.

Staff:

The Education Coordinator is responsible to ensure that the education program is administered according to existing policies.

Education Review Committee

The education review committee will ensure that the Education Coordinator is working for the community and that the education services are made available to all eligible USIB members. The Education Committee will review appeals to this policy when required to do so.

- Adjudicate any disputes that may arise as a result of the implementation of these policies by education staff.
- Review all applications for funding and make recommendations to the Education Coordinator.

4.1 Make-up of Education Review Committee

The committee shall consist of the Education Coordinator and two community members if there is no real or perceived conflict of interest between a committee member and the student in dispute.

In the event of a conflict of interest the Education Coordinator may approach other USIB members to make a decision on that particular dispute.

4.2 Appeals procedure

Any appeal of a decision made by the review committee may be submitted to the Education Review Committee who will make a final and binding decision.

4.3 Chief and Council:

The Chief and Council are responsible to review and approve the annual budget regarding the Post Secondary Education fund. All decisions made by Chief and Council are final.

5.0 ELIGIBILITY FOR FUNDING

Funding is limited and not all students may be funded. Partial funding may be provided. Applications are only valid for one school year.

To be eligible for Post Secondary Education funding as per National Program Guidelines, the applicant must:

- 5.1 Be a registered member of USIB by December 31 of the prior fiscal year. Fiscal years start April 1st and end March 31st of the following year.
- 5.2 Registered or have been accepted by an eligible post-secondary institution pursuing either a Certificate, University College Entry Program, Diploma or Degree.
 - Eligible post-secondary institutions are degree, diploma, or certificate granting institutions which are:
 - Recognized by a province or territory (in Canada or abroad); or
 - Educational institutions recognized to deliver post-secondary programs by arrangement within an eligible post-secondary institution.
 - Before applying to a post-secondary institution, the student should check with the Upper Similkameen Education Department to determine if the institution is eligible according with the National Guidelines.
- 5.3 The grade 12 or equivalent requirement applies to the student's program of study, not the student. The program must also be delivered by an eligible institution.

Equivalent - the institute may consider any of the following in the program's entrance requirements:

- The student is able to pass an entrance test administered by the institute,
 - The student is 19 years of age,
 - The student has mature student status; or
 - Completion of Grade 12 is preferred.
- 5.4 Complete in full a USIB Application for Funding including the additional documents to be attached on the cover page of the Post-Secondary Application.
 - 5.5 Academic Achievement: Students applying for sponsorship for the first time, it is important that High School Grade Point Average (GPA) is at a C grade or higher. *This may be a determining factor when the final decision is made regarding who will receive sponsorship.*

6.0 APPLICATION PROCEDURE & DEADLINES:

Obtain an Application Package from the Education Coordinator at the USIB Office. The package includes forms that must be completed, signed, and sent to the Education Coordinator by email or fax by the **deadline date of April 31st** of each year.

Students are responsible for ensuring that their application form is complete, signed, and received by the deadline. Incomplete applications will cause delays.

The Application Must Include the Following Documentation:

Letter of Intent/Education Plan – The potential student must show commitment to clear education goals by providing a Letter of Intent that outlines definite plans for the next academic year. The Letter of Intent must include your current level of education, what your intended course of studies are, and how long it will take you to reach your goals. You must also include an outline of your Education Plan and the intended courses for the first two years of the program of studies you intend to register for.

Student Authorization/Waiver:

A signed copy of the Institutes Student Authorization/Waiver must be sent to the Education Coordinator. There are no Exceptions (See form in the PSE application). Please contact your learning institute to obtain their waiver.

This document is necessary to permit the Education Coordinator access to student records. It is important for funding purposes and on occasion the waiver is needed to verify that all students are attending classes. If this document is not signed, your application will not be approved.

Personal Data/Information

Personal Data/Information: Address while at school, banking information, career counsellor or advisor contact information.

See Appendix

Transcripts

All previous training must be submitted including but not limited to High school, UCEP, College, and University.

Acceptance Letter from the College/University:

A Letter of Acceptance from the institution you plan to pursue your education. You must meet the admission requirements of the academic institution you plan to attend, and a letter or email must be sent from an advisor or counselor of that institution stating that you meet the academic requirements for admission.

- Copy of your application to the institution.

- Copy of your registration, class schedule, and a class syllabus with a list of required texts for each semester.

USIB/Student Funding Contract:

You will be provided with an outline of your funding budget and contract for the current year, upon signing it, you acknowledge your budget allocation and your contractual responsibility.

Application for Funding – It is essential that all required information is included on the form. Failure to provide sufficient information, in particular current email, and address and telephone number may result in delays in funding. Once your application has been approved and sponsorship confirmed, a signed email confirming sponsorship and its details will be emailed to the student.

The **deadline date of April 30th** includes September, January, and summer sessions start dates.

7.0 PRIORITY SELECTION CRITERIA

The USIB wishes to support as many students as possible who demonstrate the greatest chances of success, who will use their skills and knowledge for the betterment of the USIB as a whole, or who demonstrate readiness, ability, and a clear potential to support capacity development within the community.

The USIB receives limited funding from ICS for the delivery of the PSSP and UCEPP. In the event there are more applications for funding than available money the PSSP and ICEPP budget, the selection of applicants will be based on the following priority selection criteria:

As stated in “Student’s Responsibilities”, Students must access other funding options. Such as Canada student loans, bursaries, and scholarships to be eligible for funding from Upper Similkameen Indian Band and must provide proof of applications to other funding sources.

1st Priority: Continuing Studies – Students who are currently funded PSSSP and are in Good Academic Standing and meet the requirements of the application.

2nd Priority: New Graduates – 2nd priority - Students who are scheduled to graduate from grade 12 in the year of their application will be given second priority. Within this category, preference will be given to those who receive a "Dogwood" certificate or an equivalent graduation diploma from a secondary school and are planning to pursue a full-time course load as per the institute's requirements.

3rd Priority: New Students – Mature Students who may be applying for the first time or who have been out of school for at least four years. This includes students who have graduated previously and/or are first time students that are returning to complete a credential at a higher level.

4th Priority: Masters and Doctoral – Students will be considered subject to availability of funding.

5th Priority: Applicants with a history of not completing or failing courses.

Review Committee:

The USIB Education Committee is responsible for the reviewing completed Post Secondary application packages using the criteria outlined in the Post Secondary policy.

The Education Coordinator will provide the draft budget for each applicant prior to this meeting. The committee will select students for sponsorship (depending on budget) and select and compile the wait list, if necessary.

The Education Coordinator will contact all students and arrange interviews by June 15th of each year.

Student Interview:

All students must meet with the Education Review Committee when funding has been approved. The committee will review your course outline, your plan, give you feedback, and answer any questions you may have.

Continuing students must update the Education Coordinator prior to returning to full time studies every semester and ensure that all transcripts are up to date.

1. *Other considerations.*

Academic success will be factored into the approval process on an annual basis. Students with high scholastic standing will be granted a higher position on the priority list than other students in the same category.

2. *Emergency/Contingency Funds*

In the event that a person who was approved for funding no longer requires or qualifies for funding mid-year (e.g., withdraws from school), or does not use all the funding allocated to them (e.g., books and supplies cost are lower than budgeted), the Education Coordinator may use such funds to satisfy emergency requests for additional funding by applicants who are already receiving funding.

If practical, the Education Coordinator may offer funding to an applicant who did not receive any allocation of funding in the initial selection process.

Generally, there isn't a fund set aside strictly for family emergencies. The student can apply to the Chief and Council to request emergency funds if needed.

8.0 DEFERRED STUDENTS

Deferred students are students who met all eligibility requirements for post-secondary support with USIB but were unable to be funded due to financial constraints, Deferred students will be placed on a waitlist in the order of priority selection criteria in the order in which applications were received. As additional funding becomes available, waitlisted students will be funded in the sequence in which they were waitlisted.

9.0 TYPES OF SPONSORSHIP/FUNDING

9.1 Full-time Student:

- 9.1.1 Registered in a minimum of four (4) classes or twelve (12) credit hours per semester or the minimum course load required by the learning institution to be considered a full-time student. Student must submit letter from learning institution confirming course load is full-time.
- 9.1.2 Only in special circumstances such as a disability, a student may be funded with less than what is the minimum full-time course load.

9.2 Part-time Student:

- 9.2.1 A part-time student must be registered in at least four credit hours or one class per semester.
- 9.2.2 Funding will be allocated for tuition, books/supplies as noted on the course syllabus.
- 9.2.3 Funding may be provided for one semester, including summer session if that is that is required for the upcoming school year.
- 9.2.4 Part-time students will not receive a living allowance.

SPONSORSHIP LETTER:

Upon receipt of the registration at the chosen institute, and if the student has been chosen by the Education Committee to receive funding, the USIB Education Coordinator will send a sponsorship letter or third-party billing form for the following: Tuition (course fees per credit, student fees) and other required fees i.e., commitment, deposits, and practicum fees.

The Education program will cover the cost of two application fees and the costs of any tests required for application to the academic institution.

The Education program will also include a stipend for practicum placement as required by the institution.

OPT – Out of medical and dental services:

USIB will not provide funding for any medical or dental plan offered by a post-secondary institution, or a student's association. If the student does not opt-out of these fees, the student is responsible to pay for the fees at their own expense.

Out-Of-Province Canadian Sponsorship:

Tuition will be paid up to a maximum amount of the allowable tuition fees as if you were attending the closest public institution to your normal residence.

International Students:

Tuition fees will be paid to the maximum allowable amount to that of the closest Canadian public institution (in Canadian Funds). It then becomes the student's responsibility to pay any additional costs.

Wait List:

A wait list will be made each year beginning June 15th. Students whose name is on the waitlist will be notified of their position.

This waitlist is affected by varying factors such as, the number of returning students, number of graduating students, student success, and the amount of funds available to the Band. Students on the waitlist will be contacted should funding become available.

10.0 LEVELS OF FUNDING:

Tuition Fees:

The Band will sponsor up to \$4,000.00 to \$9,000.00 per year in tuition costs for qualified students subject to the availability of funds. Students are encouraged to attend a post-secondary institution close to home that offers their intended course of study.

*Tuition for next semester will not be paid until prior semester’s transcripts are submitted to the Education Coordinator.

If a student wishes to attend a post-secondary institution that does not meet the above requirements, the student must pay the difference in tuition.

For example: Fees will be paid to the maximum amount of:

UCEP per academic semester	\$2,000.00
College Tuition Fees per academic semester	\$4,500.00
University Tuition Fees (e.g., Bachelor of Art)	\$9,000.00 per academic year

Books/Supplies:

A stipend will be provided for each semester in the amount of \$400.00. The student must provide a class syllabus that lists required texts for each course. Funds permitting, students may be reimbursed with original receipts in the case that books/supplies exceed the given budget.

Special Fees: Field Trips, Practicum

Any expenses over and above the regular tuition must be provided at the time of the application to be included in the over-all budget. May be considered on an individual need base subject to availability of funds. Failure to do so, students will have to incur the expense.

Tutoring:

Should students require tutoring in order to successfully complete their course of study; the USIB Education may provide up to \$500.00 per semester if funds are available. The student can either pay and get reimbursed or the Band may pay the tutor directly.

Travel:

Students who must travel over 100 kms and are living away from home/their usual place of residence may be eligible for moving expense subsidy of \$200.00 during the course of their studies if the funding is available and allows for this expense.

Daycare Subsidy:

Full-time students are eligible for financial support for childcare. Students must demonstrate need and financial need to obtain funding for childcare services. Students must also demonstrate that they have applied for the provincial childcare subsidy to obtain funding for childcare services.

Invoices for such services must be submitted by the service provider directly to the Education Coordinator and must set out the date, time, hours of service and services provided to the student.

Part-time students, correspondence students and students employed full-time are not eligible for financial support for child-care services.

Parking & Bus Passes:

Students are expected to purchase their own bus and parking passes. USIB Band Education Program can not assist students due to funding constraints. However, should funds become available; students may be given a subsidy.

Living Allowance:

Living allowance is designed as a means of support for students to succeed. Financial assistance will normally be provided up to a maximum of eight months in any given calendar year.

The following chart is the level of support provided for living expenses for full-time students only. Full-time students who are employed and make more than \$8,000.00 per year are not eligible to receive living allowance.

Part-time students are eligible to receive a living allowance if funding is available at a pro-rated amount equal to the proportion of courses, they are taking relative to a full-time student's based on the learning institutes course load to be considered full-time.

CODE	MINIMUM MONTHLY ALLOWANCE
Single Living w/Parents	\$490.00
S1 – Single Student	\$1,600.00
S2 - Single Parent w/ 1 Dependent	\$1,700.00
Each additional dependant add	\$100.00
Married w/employed spouse	\$900.00
Each additional dependant add	\$100.00
M1 – Married Student with dependant spouse	\$1,600.00
Each additional dependant add	\$100.00

The chart above is the minimum monthly allowance. This may be adjusted depending on funding and number of students per year. *NB. Living Allowance/cost of living rates will be reviewed annually by the Education Committee and any adjustments approved will take effect at the beginning of the next fiscal year.*

The monthly living allowance will be direct deposited into the student's bank account during the 4th week of each month. Requests for advances on living allowance will not be accommodated. Part-time Students: Summer/Distance Education/Correspondence/On-line Students will not be sponsored for living allowance. The Band will only cover costs for tuition and books.

11.0 FUNDING LIMITATIONS

College Prep Program (UCEP):

USIB can sponsor students for up to two (2) academic years of College Prep. For full sponsorship, students must take 3-4 courses or 15-18 credit hours per semester at the closest public institution. At the end of the first semester ongoing financial support will be subject to confirmation from the institution that the student is in satisfactory academic standing. If a student chooses to attend another institution, it is the student's responsibility for any additional costs incurred.

Colleges and Universities:

Students will normally be fully funded to a maximum period of time depending upon the length of the intended course of studies in accordance with the following:
Students who have completed a Level 2, 3, or 4 are now eligible for PSSSP funding at lower levels if funds are available and as per Priority Selection Criteria.

<u>Levels</u>	<u>Maximum Length of Sponsorship</u>
Level 1 - Certificate/Diploma	2 years
Level 2 - Undergraduate Degree Program	4-5 ½ year or 11 terms or semesters
Level 3 - Master's Degree/Advanced or Professional Degree	4 semesters beyond Undergraduate Degree
Level 4 - Doctoral Degrees	4 semesters beyond Master's degree

NB for Master's and Doctoral Degrees, USIB will pay tuition, books, and supplies only if funds are available and as per Priority Selection Criteria as students are expected to be working or doing an internship.

12.0 ACADEMIC STANDING

Eligible students are members of USIB, who are enrolled in an eligible program at an eligible institution and maintain satisfactory academic standing.

- Satisfactory academic standing is defined as per the institution's definition of the satisfactory academic standing or the most equivalent term.

12.1 WITHDRAWAL(S):

If the student drops out or withdrawals from a program after the Institution fee reimbursement deadline, the student is required to repay tuition, books/supplies and living allowance back to the USIB Education Program.

Payment options can be discussed with the Education Coordinator. All Post Secondary sponsorship will be withheld until arrangements are made with the USIB Education Program.

Acceptable Withdrawal(s):

- Student's illness, unable to attend class
- Death in the immediate family
- Accident
- Serious emotional problems

Required Support Document(s):

1. A letter of approval of late withdrawal with out academic penalty from the Dean of instruction and Instructors(s).
2. A letter from your doctor giving detailed information regarding your ill health and concerns.
3. A letter from the student to the USIB Education Committee stating illness and reasons for not being able to continue with post secondary education.

Non-repayment of tuition, books, and living allowance will be considered and reviewed by USIB Education Committee. The student may re-apply without penalty once the situation is rectified.

Personal Challenges:

Students must be aware that should their studies be seriously affected by personal crisis, (such as an accident, health, sickness, or death in the immediate family) it is your responsibility to notify the Education Coordinator advising them of their situation. Students are encouraged to seek counselling for support.

13.0 ACADEMIC PROBATION:

1. Students placed on academic probation by their educational institution will also be on probation with USIB Education in accordance with the Education Policy.
2. Students who receive failing or (INC) incomplete marks on 50% or more of their courses will be placed on academic probation by the Education Coordinator
3. Students who are placed on the Band imposed academic probation and in the same courses the following semester, may be removed from full sponsorship until they successfully complete courses (or their equivalents) which they failed to complete. Students placed on academic probation may also be required to participate in a study skills program offered by their educational institution.

Study Skills:

Students on academic probation must attend a Study Skills program offered by their institution to ensure continued funding.

14.0 REPAYMENT:

1. A student is allowed to fail or audit one course without penalty within each level of funding: Level 1, 2 & 3.
2. If two courses are above a fail (F) but below the USIB requirement (3.5 GPA) the student will be placed on probation for one semester and encouraged to seek assistance in order to succeed. No repayment is required. The student must repeat the course at his/her own expense if a higher mark is required.
3. If the student failed all or the majority of courses, due to non-attendance and without informing the USIB Education Coordinator, the student would be expected to:
 - a) Self-sponsor for one semester before funding is continued: or
 - b) Repay the cost of tuition, books, and the living allowance.
4. If the student completes this within one fiscal year the student will be allowed to continue as a continuing student.

15.0 POST SECONDARY EDUCATION INCENTIVE POLICY:

In order to encourage students to engage in studies that directly contribute to enhancing their education, the USIB may award a one-time incentive scholarships if funding is available

Students enrolled in a full-time certificate, diploma, or bachelor's degree program or in a full-time or part-time Master or Doctoral Degree program may receive an incentive from USIB.

This incentive will be awarded ONE TIME ONLY for each student, for their intended highest level of academic achievement originally indicated on their PSSSP Application. Students will be eligible for this incentive their final year of the certificate, diploma, or degree and upon successful completion of the certificate, diploma or degree and will receive their incentive once proof of completion is submitted to the Education Coordinator.

Incentives:

The post-secondary education incentives, which include three categories of post-secondary education, are based upon the following guidelines:

1. Certificate
 - Grade average of "B" or higher
 - Full-time student
 - At commencement of final year program
 - Maximum of \$300.00
2. Diploma - Academic Achievement Scholarship
 - Grade average of "B" or higher
 - Full-time student
 - At commencement of final year program
 - Maximum of \$400.00

3. Bachelor's degree - Academic Achievement Award
 - Grade average of "B" or higher
 - Full-time student
 - At commencement of final year program
 - Maximum of \$500.00

4. Masters/Doctoral Degree - Post-Graduate Incentive
 - Grade average of "B+" or higher
 - Part/Full time student
 - At commencement of final year of program
 - Maximum of \$1,000.00

NOTE: Amounts awarded may be altered by Education Committee.