

TOOLKIT

First Nations

Post-Secondary Education

Local Operating Guidelines

DRAFT

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Prepared by the Post-Secondary Education Sub-Committee
of the First Nations Education Steering Committee



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BACKGROUND

The First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNEESC) was founded in 1992. FNEESC works at the provincial level to provide services in the areas of research, communications, information dissemination, advocacy, program administration and networking. FNEESC also strives to share up-to-date information about available programs, government policies and initiatives, and local, provincial and national education issues that affect First Nations learners. In addition, FNEESC strives to build partnerships with federal and provincial government agencies and other relevant stakeholders in order to communicate the issues and concerns of BC First Nations and to ensure that they are addressed in a meaningful way.

For many years, FNEESC has benefited from an active Post-Secondary Subcommittee (PSSC) that works to advance issues related to First Nations post-secondary education (PSE) and to develop united responses to provincial and federal PSE policies and programs. The overall goal of the work done to date has been to ensure that all BC First Nations students have access to high quality post-secondary opportunities. The PSSC is comprised of Board members who are selected based upon their experience and knowledge of First Nations PSE. The role of the PSSC is as follows:

- To participate in and contribute to discussions about PSE
- To identify areas requiring specific attention in the long and short term
- To advocate for post-secondary initiatives and services as necessary
- To seek community input to identify and prioritize postsecondary issues
- To develop unified responses to provincial and federal PSE issues

The PSSC meets regularly to discuss relevant issues, and reports to the FNEESC Board regarding PSE matters.

PURPOSE

This toolkit was created by the First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNEESC) to support First Nations communities in developing local operating guidelines and meeting program requirements. It also addresses further areas that First Nations may wish to incorporate into their local operating guidelines.

Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada's (INAC) Post-Secondary Student Support Program (PSSSP) and University and College Entrance Preparation Program (UCEPP) National Program Guidelines recommend the development of local operating guidelines to assist with the administration of PSE funding, as highlighted in the box below. Please note, local operating guidelines must comply with INAC's National Program Guidelines which may be updated on a yearly basis.

Relevant Excerpts from INAC's Post-Secondary Student Support Program and University and College Entrance Preparation Program - National Program Guidelines 2016-2017¹

5. Program Requirements

When locally administering the PSSSP and the UCEPP, recipients must meet the following minimum standards:

- Provision, administration and distribution of funding, within the recipient's budgetary envelope, to eligible post-secondary education students as per the maximum amount payable outlined in section 6.2, Maximum Amount Payable to Students;
- Development and implementation of local operating guidelines in accordance with National Program Guidelines (Note: Until local program guidelines are in place, National Program Guidelines will apply);
- Implementation and administration of a selection priority criteria that is publicly available;
- Development and implementation of rules for deferring applications in situations where there are more eligible students than funds available; and
- Implementation and administration of an appeal process that is publically available.

5.1 Local Operating Guidelines

Recipients may issue local program guidelines for the administration of the PSSSP and the UCEPP provided that they are consistent with the guidelines set out in this document. These guidelines must include priority selection criteria, and rules for deferring applications in situations where there are more eligible students than funds available. All prospective student applicants must have access to these guidelines, along with a formal process to appeal and to gain additional information on funding decisions.

NOTE: Local guidelines may also include rates and allowances for amounts payable to students, provided that they do not exceed the maximum amount payable set out in section 6 Eligible Expenditures and section 6.2 Maximum Amount Payable to Students.

TEMPLATE LOCAL OPERATING GUIDELINES

¹ 2016-17 PSSSP and UCEPP Guidelines Available online <http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1450118747581/1450118780992>. Accessed January 25, 2016.

[FIRST NATION NAME]
Post-Secondary Education Local Operating Guidelines

[DATE APPROVED]

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1 INTRODUCTION

The *[insert First Nation name]* is responsible for the development of operating policy and guidelines to guide the administration of the Post-Secondary Student Support Program and University and College Entrance Preparation Program for the First Nation (the “First Nation Post-Secondary Education Assistance Program”).

This Policy guides the First Nation Education Department in assessing the eligibility of students to receive financial assistance to attend accredited post-secondary institutions in an eligible program of study.

This Policy has been ratified by Chief and Council and applies to all students seeking financial assistance from the First Nation. This Policy has been designed to be consistent with the Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada National Program Guidelines.

2 PROGRAM OBJECTIVES & ADMINISTRATION

2.1 [INSERT FIRST NATION NAME] VISION STATEMENT

- ❖ **Drafting Instruction: Insert a description of your community's vision regarding the education of community youth/members in this section. This is not a mandatory element, but can be useful to provide overarching guidance. Examples have been included below for your convenience.**

Examples:

- The [Insert First Nation Name] seeks to support the increased participation and success of its members in recognized post-secondary education programs. Such participation and the completion of post-secondary education increases the employability of individuals and helps to develop the governance capacity of the First Nation.*
- The objective of the [Insert First Nation Name]'s PSE program is to support eligible students to gain access to post-secondary education and to graduate with the skills and competencies for gainful employment and individual growth.*
- The [Insert First Nation Name] seeks to provide the best level of support possible to its students for PSE, with the goal of assisting to achieve high student retention, success and graduation rates.*
- The [Insert First Nation Name] seeks to encourage, support and assist its members to access post-secondary education opportunities and to graduate from their respective programs of study with the skills, qualifications and competencies to pursue their chosen careers or employment and to realize their full potential.*

2.2 OBJECTIVES

- ❖ **Drafting Instruction: Objectives are not mandatory; however, many communities choose to include them. An example is provided below**

Example:

To support as many eligible First Nation students as possible to access post-secondary education and graduate from their respective program of study with the skills, qualifications and credentials required to pursue their chosen career path and to realize their individual potential to contribute to the community and society.]

2.3 ADMINISTRATION

The Education Department is mandated by Chief and Council to administer the PSE Assistance Program.

First Nation members seeking PSE funding will be provided a copy of these Guidelines. They may submit their applications in accordance with these Guidelines. The *[PSE Director/Committee]* will review completed applications and assess whether they meet the terms and requirements set out in these Guidelines. The *[PSE Director/Committee]* will advise applicants as soon as practicable as to whether his or her application for sponsorship has been approved.

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Where an application is not approved and the applicant wishes to appeal the decision, s/he may follow the appeal process set out in these Guidelines.

All enquiries about the PSE program should be directed to:

Name:
Title:
Address:
Phone:
Email:
Fax:

- ❖ **Drafting Instruction: The contact information will need to be kept up to date where there is a change in personnel.**

3 LOCAL OPERATING GUIDELINES

3.1 DEFINITIONS

❖ **Drafting Instruction:** Definitions can be useful to ensure the First Nation Administration, students and parents all have the same understanding of terminology and how terms apply throughout the Guidelines. Below are commonly used terms. Please note, these definitions come from PSE institutions, BC Student Loan program administration guidelines, First Nations' local operating guidelines, as well as INAC. No definitions are mandatory; your First Nation may wish to revise these, or add further definitions to this section.

“Academic year” means the length of an academic year for a Program of Study as defined by the Post-Secondary Institution.

“Band Member” means a person whose is lawfully registered to the Band List and is a full member. Only full, registered members of [] *First Nation* are eligible for PSE support through the Band. Status First Nations individuals who are affiliated with [] *First Nation* but do not have Band Membership are encouraged to apply for PSSSP/UCEP funding through the BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres at 1-800-990-2432.

“Dependent” means a person who is i) under 19 years of age; ii) relies on the student for support, and iii) resides with the student on a full-time basis.

“Dependent Spouse” means a person who is married to the student or has lived with the student as a partner, in a marriage-like relationship, for a period of at least one year prior to the student's application for post-secondary education support. This person is dependent upon the student and does not receive an annual income in excess of the level of income allowed for a dependent spouse by Canada Revenue Agency.

“Full-time student” means a student who is enrolled in at least [60] percent of a full course load for a Program of Study at an eligible Post-Secondary Institution.

“Full-time studies” means at least [60] percent of a full course load for a Program of Study offered by an eligible Post-Secondary Institution.

“Good Standing” means successful attendance and completion leading to credit towards a formal credential, certificate, diploma or degree for each period of study. [] *First Nation* has high expectations for all students. Satisfactory academic standing is a requirement of PSE funding.

“Part-time student” means a student who is enrolled in less than [60] percent of a full course load for a Program of Study at an eligible Post-Secondary Institution.

“Part-time studies” means less than [60] percent of a full course load for a Program of Study offered at an eligible Post-Secondary Institution.

“Permanent Disability” refers to a functional limitation caused by a physical or mental impairment that restricts the ability of a person to perform the daily activities necessary to participate in studies at a post-secondary level or in the labour force and is expected to remain for the person's expected natural life. The student shall provide, with their loan application, proof of their permanent disability in the form of:

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- a medical certificate;
- a psycho-educational assessment; or
- documentation proving receipt of federal or provincial disability assistance.

“Post-Secondary Institution (or “school”) means an accredited Institution that grants certificates, diplomas and/or degrees and is a post-secondary institution recognized by provincial or territorial Minister of Education, or recognized to deliver post-secondary education programs by arrangement within an eligible post-secondary institution. See Appendix ___ for more information.

“Practicum” means a supervised and mandatory (required for graduation) portion of an educational program emphasizing the practical application of previously learned theory, methods, skills, professionalism, orientation and ethics in a specialized area of study which does not exceed more than 20 percent of the total program. Students must be supervised and evaluated by the employer while doing productive work (not merely observing) where no remuneration is received.

“Program of Study” or “Program” means a program that:

- is delivered by an eligible Post-Secondary Institution;
- requires the completion of secondary school studies or the equivalent as recognized by the post-secondary institute; and
- is least one academic year of duration (as defined by the Institution).

“Semester” means a distinct study period, lasting at least 12 to 17 weeks which forms part of a longer program, as defined by a Post-Secondary Institution.

3.2 ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

3.2.1 Student Funding Eligibility

The [] *First Nation* can only provide funding support for eligible students as described in detail in the National Program Guidelines. Students that are not eligible can either seek to remedy that, if possible, or may need to seek other funding sources.

3.2.2 Eligible Post-Secondary Institutions

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 [] *First Nation* Education Department to determine if the institution meets the eligibility requirements as required by INAC.

3.2.3 Eligible Programs

Eligible programs are described in section 4.3 of the National Program Guidelines. In general, to qualify for PSSSP funding, post-secondary programs must have a Grade 12 entry-level requirement (or equivalent) and must be considered to be one year in length. For UCEPP funding, the student must already be at a level that would allow for the attainment of their necessary post-secondary entry-level requirements within one year. Please review the National Program Guidelines and speak with the *Education Department* to determine if the program you are hoping to attend meets the eligibility requirements as required by INAC.

3.3 PRIORITY SELECTION CRITERIA

❖ **Drafting Instruction: The priority selection criteria is mandatory and may include a general statement. Examples are provided for your convenience:**

Example:

- The [] First Nation wishes to support as many students as possible who demonstrate the greatest chances of success"...or "who will use their skills and knowledge for the betterment of the [] First Nation as a whole"...or "who demonstrate readiness, ability and a clear potential to support capacity development within the community.*
- The [] First Nation receives limited funding from INAC for the delivery of the PSSSP and UCEP programs. In the event that there are more applications for funding than available money in the PSSSP and UCEP budget, the selection of applicants will be based in order of priority that considers the following factors:*

❖ **Drafting Instruction: Priority selection criteria should be listed in order of preference below.**

Examples include:

- Continuing students that are in good academic standing(e.g. students already being supported with PSE funding); Recent high school graduates with high academic achievement and clear goals that demonstrate readiness;*

- b. Students [or applicants] that were deferred in the recent past due to lack of available funds (eligible but not funded in the past due to funding limitations);*
- c. Mature students that demonstrate readiness;*
- d. Graduate students (or students that want to enter Masters or Doctoral Degree Programs);*
- e. Returning students (i.e. students who have stepped out of their post-secondary studies and have a clear plan of how to resume their studies);*
- f. Part-time students;*
- g. Students who have demonstrated determination by beginning their studies without support from the [] First Nation and plan to attend whether they receive support or not.*

Note: This list is not exhaustive nor is it in order of importance. These are examples of factors that can be considered when selecting students. If there is a clear order of applicants that will be selected first above all other eligible applicants, such as continuing students and students near completion, this should be outlined. The point of this section is to provide clarity to students as to how decisions will be made.

When possible, the First Nation should identify which factors will affect funding priority and what the order of priority will be.

Example:

Priority 1 Continuing Students: Students who were provided PSE funding in the most recent academic year, have successfully completed the year and are continuing in their same approved program.

Priority 2 Students who demonstrate clear academic achievement and readiness and are able to contribute to capacity development within the community

*Priority 3 Deferred students
Mature students
Students who were previously sponsored but either withdrew or were unsuccessful*

3.4 DEFERRED STUDENTS

- ❖ Drafting Instruction: Procedures for wait listing deferred students are mandatory under INAC's 2016-2017 National Program Guidelines. An example is provided below for your convenience.**

Deferred students are students who met all eligibility requirements for PSE support with [] First Nation, but were unable to be funded due to financial constraints. Deferred students will be placed on a waitlist in the order in which their application was received. As additional funding becomes available, waitlisted students will be funded in the sequence in which they were waitlisted.

3.5 APPLICATION PROCESS & DEADLINES

- ❖ **Drafting Instruction: Deadlines and instructions for completing applications can be included in this section. There can be timelines for Education Department processes and amending incomplete applications.**

Students must complete and submit the “_____ First Nation Post-Secondary Education Application Form” in Appendix A, including all required supporting documentation, to _____ (e.g. Education Coordinator) by the deadline: _____.

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

Late applications will only be considered if there are sufficient funds available after processing completed applications received on time.

Any application that misrepresents the student’s circumstances, or a spouse’s circumstances (where the student is claiming living allowance in relation to a spouse), will result in denial of funding or cancellation of funding.

Required Documentation

- ❖ **Drafting Instruction: The community may choose additional documentation to assist with the application process and monitor a student’s progress. These documents can be described here. The Application Form and checklist should be updated to reflect these.**

Please note that INAC’s PSSSP and UCEPP National Program Guidelines require the following documents in order for your Application to be considered complete:

- Copy of Status Card (both sides);
- Copy of acceptance letter from an eligible post-secondary program that will be delivered by an eligible post-secondary institution;
- Official Transcripts from all institutions attended (official transcripts are signed and sealed by the institution and have not been opened. Photocopies, scanned and emailed copies and faxes of official transcripts do not meet the reporting requirements for PSE funding).

The [] *First Nation* also requires the following documentation to assist with the administration of PSSSP and UCEPP:

- Signed release form(s)
- Other?

Note for Students applying for assistance through UCEPP:

Students applying for assistance through UCEPP must obtain a statement from the relevant institution (i.e. college or university), which attests that:

- The UCEP program will provide the student with the necessary courses to attain the academic level for university or college entrance; **and**

- The student will be eligible for admittance as a student of a regular university or college credit program upon successful completion of the UCEP course of studies.

3.6 PSE FUNDING

[] *First Nation* receives limited PSE funding from INAC for the delivery of PSSSP and UCEPP. This funding may be below the level required to support all eligible students, and is not sufficient to cover 100% of approved students' costs to attend PSE programs. In the event that there are more applications for funding than that which is available, selection of applicants will be based on the order of priority set out in section three.

The National Program Guidelines refer to maximum amounts of funding that can be provided to students and describe how no students are entitled to these amounts. The actual amount of funding available to eligible students will depend on the overall amount of funding available to the [] *First Nation* during a given fiscal year (April to March). Funding must be expended according to eligibility guidelines as shown in the National Program guidelines and cannot be backdated to cover a period of time before a student has been approved for support.

3.6.1 Eligible Expenses

Generally, the following types of expenses may be eligible:

- Tuition and mandatory student fees;
- Books and supplies;
- Living allowance and, in some cases, travel;
- Costs for guidance and counseling may be considered eligible and may or may not be considered, based on available PSE funding, need and access to services

Limits to and approval of expenses are subject to available funding and to the limits of assistance set out in the National Program Guidelines. Students are responsible for making sure they pursue other sources of funding if the PSE funding is not going to be enough to meet their financial needs.

3.6.1.1 Tuition & Mandatory Fees

- ❖ **Drafting Instruction: While the National Program Guidelines allow the payment of actual tuition amounts with documentation comparing costs, the First Nation may wish to set maximums in order to support a larger number of students. This section may also describe other limitations both set by the community and according to the National Program Guidelines.**
- ❖ **Drafting Instruction: Maximum amounts may vary according to the Program of Study; for example, a nursing program may normally cost more than a certificate of administration program.**

[] *First Nation* will pay approved tuition amounts directly to the post-secondary institution upon receiving an invoice. In the case that a post-secondary institution does not bill the [] *First Nation* directly, students are responsible to forward invoices directly from the institution to the [] *First Nation* along with any necessary supporting documentation, information and deadlines.

3.6.1.2 Books and Supplies

Full-time and part-time students may receive assistance for books and supplies that are required for their program of study. Students must submit a copy of the course calendar and book list.

An allowance of \$_____ for books and supplies will be issued at the beginning of the school year after the course calendar and book list have been received.

No books or supply expenses will be [covered][reimbursed] without the original paid receipts. Arrangements may be made for payments to be made directly to the bookstore.

- ❖ **[Drafting Instruction: Insert the amount your First Nation will provide for books and supplies. your First Nation may wish or need to consider a lower amount in order to stretch the PSE budget as far as possible. Consider whether your First Nation will have different amounts and/or rules that apply to full-time versus part-time students.]**
- ❖ **Drafting Instruction: If your First Nation wishes to be invoiced directly by the Institution (e.g. bookstore), amend this section accordingly.]**

3.6.1.3 Travel and Living Allowance

Full-time funded students who must travel [more than _____ km] from their place of ordinary residence to attend their Post-Secondary Institution may be eligible to receive financial support for the cost of [one][two] return trip(s), up to a maximum of \$_____ per academic year. The student may be eligible to receive travel allowance for his/her dependents as well.

In applying for travel assistance, students are expected to use the most economical means of travel possible. Students wishing to apply for travel assistance must complete a Travel Assistance Request Form [at least 4 weeks] prior to the expected date of travel.

- ❖ **Drafting Instruction: Your First Nation should decide whether it will provide funding for travel and living allowance. The National Program Guidelines provide that travel allowance may cover the actual cost of one return trip to the student's permanent place of residence from the nearest Canadian post-secondary institution which offers the least expensive comparable program that offers the program of studies selected by the student. Your First Nation will need to decide if it will:**
 - **cover the actual cost of travel or up to a maximum amount;**
 - **cover the cost of travel for dependents; and**
 - **cover travel costs for 2 round trips per academic year (or only one round trip),**
- ❖ **and adjust this section accordingly. If the First Nation will not provide financial assistance for travel, this section should be amended to specify that funding for travel is not available at this time.**

Students taking classes through distance education or e-learning who are required to travel to another location to complete their required exams can be eligible for travel support. Where possible, students should request accommodation (such as taking the exam in the local school under the supervision of a teacher or school principal) to minimize need for travel.

- ❖ **Drafting Instruction: Your First Nation should decide if it will cover travel required for distance education e-learning and adjust this section accordingly.**

Full-time students may receive financial support in the form of a living allowance to be used toward living costs such as food, shelter, clothing, daily transportation, utilities, daycare, and other personal items. The amount a student may receive will be determined by the Education Department in accordance with the chart set out in Appendix “___”.

Full-time students who are employed are not entitled to receive living allowance.

- ❖ **Drafting Instruction: If your First Nation will not provide funding to full-time students who are employed, it should be set out clearly. If there will be a threshold (e.g. where the student makes more than \$5,000 in income), then the threshold should be set out. For example, “Full-time students who are employed and earning more than \$5,000 per year are not entitled to receive living allowance.**

Part-time students are not eligible for travel or living allowance.

3.6.1.4 Tutorial, Guidance and Counseling Services

Funding may be available for tutorial, guidance and counseling services for students enrolled in eligible programs and for individuals intending to apply to a Post-Secondary Institution.

Given limited funding availability, students are encouraged to take advantage of any complimentary tutorial services available to them.

- ❖ **Drafting Instruction: Your First Nation needs to decide whether funding will be provided for any, all or none of these purposes. If it will not fund any of them, then remove this section from the guidelines. Where you will provide such funding, set out which services funding will be provided for (tutoring, guidance and/or counseling). Also, set out what will constitute eligible tutoring, guidance and/or counseling expenses.**

Example:

“Students may apply for financial assistance for tutoring up to a maximum of \$_____ per [semester][academic year]. Invoices for such services must be submitted by the service provider directly to the PSE Advisor and must set out the date, time, hours of service, and services provided to the student.

3.6.2 Limits of Assistance

PSE funding has limits set out in the National Program Guidelines; some of the main limits are described here:

3.6.2.1 Post-Secondary Student Support Program (PSSSP)

PSE funding is meant to assist eligible [] First Nation students to pursue post-secondary programs that are at least one academic year in length.

PSSSP funding can normally be utilized for tuition, mandatory fees, books and supplies, living allowance and travel, if this is one of the services the community can afford and chooses to provide. Please see eligible expenses in Section 5.a of these local operating guidelines and/or speak with the education department if you require more information on how amounts for eligible expenses are budgeted.

As described in the National Program Guidelines, assistance through PSSSP can be provided at four different levels or stages of post-secondary education. The duration of assistance must align with the official length of a program as defined by the post-secondary institution; assistance for up to one additional

academic year can be provided if an extension is needed and the necessity of a student to do that must be provided in writing by the post-secondary institution's dean or program department head.

Level 1	Diploma or Certificate Programs
Level 2	Undergraduate University Programs
Level 3	Advanced or Professional Degree Programs/Masters Programs
Level 4	Doctoral Programs

3.6.2.2 The University College Entrance Preparation Program (UCEPP)

For UCEPP, the maximum length of time supports can be provided is for one (1) academic year.

At the end of the first semester ongoing financial support will be subject to confirmation from the institution that the student is in good academic standing.

3.6.2.3 Limits at each Level

PSE funding may be available only once at each Level unless a student has already achieved completion at that level, even if they did not receive assistance during that time. In addition, assistance can only be provided for a student to achieve a higher level of post-secondary education than they already have. For example, a student who has achieved a Master's Degree cannot be funded again at that same level (Level 3) and cannot be funded at a lower level, even if they had never received PSE funding at one of those levels before.

The only exception is at Level 2 (university degree programs); PSE funding may be available for an additional degree in a bachelor program which requires an undergraduate degree as a prerequisite.

3.6.2.4 Changing or pausing a Program of Studies

If a student changes programs within one of the Levels or temporarily pauses their studies, the number of academic years or semesters used at that Level are still counted for reporting purposes and must be considered when calculating the amount of time that may be available for assistance. Therefore, students must be aware that such changes may affect the overall funding available and how this may affect their ability to complete their program.

Before making any changes, students must discuss this with the Education Department to ensure they will still be eligible for PSE funding or not.

Students who become eligible for assistance and have already completed a portion of their post-secondary studies without assistance may receive assistance for the balance of their program of studies, but cannot be reimbursed for previous expenses as according to the National Program Guidelines.

3.6.2.5 Part-time students

Part-time students may receive assistance for tuition and compulsory fees, and the actual cost of required books and supplies.

Part-time students are not eligible to receive living allowances.

3.6.2.6 High cost programs

Programs that differ a great deal in terms of cost or delivery in comparison with programs that are available locally can only be approved if all supporting documentation is in place, as described by the National Program Guidelines. Approving high cost programs or those that are offered at an accelerated

pace can significantly reduce the number of applicants who can be sponsored through PSE Funding in a fiscal year.

The National Program Guidelines describe the maximum payable per full time student under PSSSP or UCEPP as \$35,000 per year. All costs over \$35,000 must be preapproved by INAC, BC Region before approval can be granted.

3.6.2.7 Summer Programs

- ❖ **Drafting Instruction: The National Program Guidelines acknowledge summer program funding and it is the community's discretion as whether they can provide PSE funding for courses during the spring and summer months. If there are circumstances in which summer courses can be funded, this should be described here.**

Example:

"May-August courses may only be funded if required and/or the budget allows. Priority will be given to students enrolled during the September – April academic year. The student must fill out an application form, supported by required documentation. The deadline for submission of the application is February 28th. The student must be enrolled as a full-time student."

"Consideration will be given for summer program funding on a case-by-case basis and will include a review of institution requirements."

"Summer program funding will only include tuition and books and supplies." OR living allowance can only be provided if full time attendance during a pre-approved program is required in late spring or summer.

ix. Expenses NOT covered

- ❖ **Drafting Instruction: The First Nation may wish to set out specific items for which it cannot provide PSE funding. Setting these out in the Guidelines would help to address questions that students may have. Travel can be listed here if it is an expense the community chooses not to cover due to budget limitations.**

Example:

PSE funding cannot be provided for the following: [insert a list of specific items not funded, e.g.: parking, deferred examinations or rewrites, GMAT, GRE, clothes, backpacks etc.]

3.7 STUDENT INCENTIVES

- ❖ **Drafting Instructions: If the First Nation chooses to provide scholarships and/or incentives, the National Program Guidelines limit the number that can be provided to only 5% of the total number of students supported with the PSE funding in a given year, so this limitation should be clearly described here. A description for which scholarships and/or incentives may be available and a process for selecting the successful student(s) should be described. The National Program Guidelines must be referred to when deciding which scholarship or incentive might be applicable for a selected student.**

[] *First Nation* is only able to provide incentives to 5% of the total number of students receiving support through PSSSP and UCEPP. In providing any of these scholarships or incentives, the following categories and their appropriateness according to student population and available funding will be considered:

- a) Academic Achievement Scholarship (Levels 1 and 2)
- b) Strategic Studies Scholarship (Level 2), and
- c) One-time degree program incentive (Level 3 or 4).

Note: only one scholarship or incentive can be provided for every (20) students, if there are less than 20 students, only one (1) scholarship or incentive may be considered.

Incentive Name	Eligible Students	Eligible Programs	Minimum G.P.A.	Award Amount	Award Dispersal Date
Academic Achievement Scholarship	Level 1 and Level 2 students	Any full-time programs	B average	\$1000 (maximum)	May
Strategic Studies Scholarship	Level 2 students entering their 2 nd , 3 rd or 4 th year of a program	Full-time programs of studies determined to be in demand locally, regionally or nationally	<i>Set GPA</i>	\$3500 (maximum)	September (for upcoming year)
One-time degree program incentive	Level 3 and Level 4 students, entering year 2 of program	All full-time programs	<i>Set GPA</i>	\$1500 (maximum)	September (for upcoming year)

This Student Incentives section is not subject to the Appeal Process set out in Section 9 of these Guidelines. The Appeal Process is meant to ensure students receive fair access to apply for PSE funding.

3.8 STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- ❖ **Drafting Instruction: This section is not mandatory, under the INAC PSSSP/UCEPP National Program Guidelines. However, maintaining satisfactory academic standing is required and your First Nation may wish set out expectations of the students, such as maintaining a certain average, attending class, accounting for prolonged or regular absences, submitting transcripts by deadlines, etc. Consider whether you would like to have a “funding contract” and/or “academic plan” with each student that sets out expectations, roles and responsibilities of the student. Alternatively, you may choose to set out expectations and requirements of students in these Guidelines, as well as such things as circumstances that may result in the termination or suspension of funding.**

Examples:

Students must comply with these Guidelines.

Students must maintain good academic standing, as defined by the institution at which the student is enrolled in a Program of Study and a minimum grade point average (GPA) of [2] [or letter grade of “C+”]. Where a student does not maintain good academic standing, his or her funding may be suspended or terminated, or the student may be placed on funding probation.

Students must submit to the First Nation all pertinent documents demonstrating the student’s enrollment and progress in his or her program of study, including: admission letter, course timetables, official transcripts, progress reports, etc. (as the case may be). Registration enrollment documents indicating course titles and credit allocation must be submitted to prior to the commencement of classes.

Students are responsible for registering for courses as required by the post-secondary institution and provide a copy to the Education Department. Late registration fees are the responsibility of the student.

Students must inform the Education Department of any changes in the their enrollment status from full-time to part-time student in advance of any such change (this will affect the student’s eligibility for certain types of assistance (e.g. travel and living allowance)).

Students who intend to drop or add courses must notify the Education Department in advance of any such change. Course selection is very important for determining funding eligibility and students may be required to reimburse the First Nation for courses dropped without a valid reason. Students adding courses may be eligible for additional funding assistance.

Students are responsible for ensuring that the funding received is used for the intended educational expenses, as set out in these Guidelines.

A student must pay back any monthly living allowance provided to him or her where the student does not attend or quits his or her program of study after receiving the living allowance.

Students must not work for pay in excess of ____ (e.g. 20 hours) per week.

Students must keep their contact information, including home address, home phone, cell phone and email current with the PSE Advisor. The student must notify the PSE Advisor of any changes immediately.

3.9 TERMINATION OR SUSPENSION OF FUNDING

- ❖ **Drafting Instruction: This section is not mandatory under the INAC PSSSP/UCEPP National Program Guidelines. However, your First Nation may choose to set out all circumstances in which it may terminate or suspend funding to a student. Also set out the consequences of a suspension or termination of funding (e.g. repayment of amounts by the student, funding probation). These may also be set out and clarified in the Student Contract. The First Nation may wish to set out procedures for a student to remedy the situation and become eligible again for funding.**

Examples:

The First Nation may terminate funding granted to an eligible student in accordance with these Guidelines for any of the following reasons:

- *The student makes a misrepresentation or false statement on his or her Application Form;*
- *The student's academic status changes from full-time to part-time without the student first notifying the Education Department;*
- *The student withdraws from or changes his or her Program of Study without first notifying the Education Department;*
- *The student withdraws from the Post-Secondary Institution;*
- *The student is successful, without good reason, in fewer than [60 or 75%] of the courses in which the student is registered;*
- *The student has [10 or more] absences from classes that are unexplained or without good reason;*
- *The student does not maintain Good Standing at a Post-Secondary Institution in accordance with these Guidelines;*
- *The student is in breach of, and has not taken acceptable steps to rectify, a breach of his or her Student Contract.*

Where a student has his or her funding suspended in accordance with these Guidelines, the student must work with the Education Department and take all necessary steps to rectify the breach that caused the suspension of funding. Once steps have been taken to the satisfaction of the Education Department, the student's funding may be reinstated.

Where a student has had his or her funding terminated in accordance with these Guidelines, he or she will not be eligible for further financial assistance unless and until the student repays the full amount of the funding provided to the student to the First Nation. Where a student repays the full amount, he or she will be considered to be in good standing with the First Nation PSE Financial Assistance Program and may apply for funding in accordance with these Guidelines.

3.10 APPEAL PROCESS

Drafting Instruction: A formal process to appeal and to gain additional information on funding decisions is mandatory under INAC's 2016-17 PSSSP/UCEPP National Program Guidelines. Students have the right to an appeal process that is accessible and publicly available. There is no appeal against refusal of assistance because funds are not available.

- ❖ **The following offers one possible appeal process. Your First Nation should adjust this process (and entities) as appropriate to ensure it works for your administration. For example, you may wish only three levels of review instead of four as set out below.**

Where a student believes s/he has been unfairly denied access to post-secondary education funding opportunities by the First Nation and is convinced that the local or national program guidelines are not being fairly applied to his or her situation, the student has the right of appeal in accordance with the following process:

- a) The student must discuss the recommendation with the Education Department in an attempt to resolve any disagreement that may have arisen in respect of the recommendation, including disagreements regarding the application process or interpretation of a provision of the Guidelines;
- b) Where the student and Education Department are unable to resolve the disagreement, the student may file a formal written Appeal Letter, including all relevant documents, with the [Education Committee][Senior Administrator] of the First Nation within [20] days of the funding decision. The Appeal Letter must clearly state the reason for the appeal.
- c) The [Education Committee][Senior Administrator] will review and respond to the Appeal Letter within 10 business days.
- d) If the [Education Committee][Senior Administrator] rejects the Appeal, the student has the option of forwarding his or her Appeal Letter to the Appeal Committee.
- e) The Appeal Committee will review the Appeal and all related documents and information. The student will be notified in writing of the date and time of the Appeal Committee meeting at which the student's Appeal will be presented. The student will have the option of being present or having a representative there on his or her behalf. The student appellant should present his/her position directly to the Appeal Committee if attending the meeting in person. All attempts to accommodate the student to present their case will be made (i.e. an out of province student may request a conference call, or communication video conference or other electronic method compatible with the First Nation's available technology).
- f) The appeal will then be reviewed by the Appeal Committee and a decision that is consistent with the 2016-17 National Program Guidelines will be made. The decision will be final and carried out as soon as possible.

INAC will not accept appeals from students based on decisions made by the _____ First Nation.

APPENDIX A: POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION FUNDING APPLICATION FORM

[] FIRST NATION Post-Secondary Education Funding Application Form					YOUR LOGO HERE				
					Office Use Only				
					Student <input type="checkbox"/> Continuing <input type="checkbox"/> Graduate <input type="checkbox"/> Returning <input type="checkbox"/>				
APPLICANT INFORMATION									
Last Name		First Name		M.I.		Date			
Registration #					Date of Birth				
Street Address					Apartment/Unit #				
City					Prov.		Postal Code		
Phone				E-mail Address					
Years lived at address		Social Insurance Number (SIN)				Emergency Contact			
Marital Status	Single <input type="checkbox"/>		Married <input type="checkbox"/>		Common Law <input type="checkbox"/>		Separated/Divorced <input type="checkbox"/>		
Are you currently employed?	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	Employer						
If yes do you plan to continue employment?	YES <input type="checkbox"/>		NO <input type="checkbox"/>		If yes, how many hours per week				
SPOUSE'S INFORMATION									
Last Name					Given Name				
SIN#					Employer				
Unemployed	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	Receiving other benefits?	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	State Benefits (WCB, Pension, etc.)				
DEPENDENTS									
Dependents are: (insert your First Nation's definition here)									
Last Name		Given Names			Date of Birth		Relationship		

PROGRAM INFORMATION						
Institution Name				Student Number		
Program Name						
Length of Program		Start Date		End Date		
Occupational Field						
Full Time	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	Part-time	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	Current year of program		
EDUCATION AND TRAINING HISTORY						
	Name of School	Location	Duration	Completion	Certification	Band Funded?
High School						
College						
University						
Graduate School						
Other						
STUDY PLAN (COMPLETE USING YOUR SCHOOL'S CALENDAR)						
	Fall Session	Winter Session	Spring Session	Summer Session		
Duration						
Number of Courses						
Number of Credits						
FT/PT						
List months for which living allowance requested:						
Total number of months of living allowances requested:						
PROJECTED COMPLETION PLAN						
Year 1	Number of Courses:			Number of Credits:		
Year 2	Number of Courses:			Number of Credits:		
Year 3	Number of Courses:			Number of Credits:		
Year 4	Number of Courses:			Number of Credits:		
Year 5	Number of Courses:			Number of Credits:		
Year 6	Number of Courses:			Number of Credits:		
TOTAL NUMBER OF CREDITS REQUIRED FOR COMPLETION:						
I have consulted with an academic/career counsellor: YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>						
I have made contact with the Aboriginal support worker at my institution: YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>						

FINANCIAL PLAN		
Financial Projection		
Estimated Costs	Current Year	Next Year
Tuition		
Books/Supplies		
Living Expenses		
Transportation		
Travel		
I have additional applications for funding. They are: (please list)		
SCHOLARSHIPS <input type="checkbox"/> :		
BURSARIES <input type="checkbox"/> :		
AWARDS <input type="checkbox"/> :		
PROVINCIAL/FEDERAL STUDENT LOANS <input type="checkbox"/> :		
I have spoken with the financial aid department at my institution about funding: YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>		
DECLARATION OF RESIDENCY		
I _____ certify that I have been a resident in Canada for twelve months prior to this date.		
Signature		Date
CODE OF CONDUCT AND SIGNATURE		
I certify that my answers are true and complete to the best of my knowledge.		
Signature		Date

OFFICE USE ONLY		
Request	Approved	Denied
(reasons attached)		
Application received:		
File Number:		
Total # of months living allowance:		
Total tuition:		
Total books/supplies:		
Travel		
Sponsored to date:		
Approved by (title)		Approved by (title)+

APPENDIX B: STUDENT SUPPORT FUNDING AMOUNTS

<p>Tuition: (Full-time and Part-time students)</p>	<p>Actual cost + compulsory student fees</p> <p><i>[Drafting Instruction: your First Nation may wish or need to consider a tuition cap (maximum) in order to stretch the PSE budget as far as can possible. If so, change "Actual cost" to the maximum amount the First Nation may provide.]</i></p> <p>Tuition includes tuition and mandatory student fees for students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attending Canadian public Post-Secondary Institutions, at the normal tuition rate [or maximum of \$_____], including any compulsory student fees charged by the institution for a Canadian student; • Attending private or foreign Post-Secondary Institutions, at the same tuition rate [or maximum of \$_____], including any compulsory student fees, charged by the public or private Canadian institution nearest to the student's place of residence (e.g. residence at the time of application) which offers the least expensive comparable program; or • Enrolled in a foreign institution at the actual tuition rate [or maximum of \$_____], including other compulsory student fees charged by the foreign institution, when it is demonstrated that there is no comparable program available at an institution in Canada and where the prior approval of INAC (BC Region) is acquired.
<p>Books and Required Supplies: (Full-time and Part-time students)</p>	<p>\$_____/year</p> <p><i>[Drafting Instruction: Insert the amount your First Nation will provide for books and supplies. Your First Nation may wish or need to consider a lower amount in order to stretch the PSE budget as far as possible.]</i></p>
<p>Travel: (Full-time students only)</p>	<p>Actual cost of one return trip to the student's permanent place of residence from the nearest Canadian post-secondary institution that offers the program of studies selected by the student, every 16 weeks (not more than two trips per academic year) for the student and for each dependent</p> <p>Students taking classes through distance education or e-learning who are required to travel to another location to complete their required exams can be eligible for travel support.</p> <p>Requests for accommodation, such as taking the exam in the local school under the supervision of a teacher or school principal, should be examined to minimize costs.</p> <p><i>[Drafting Instruction: If your First Nation will not cover actual travel costs and will only cover a set amount, or up to a maximum amount, this table should be amended accordingly.]</i></p>
<p>Living Costs/ Allowance: (Full-time students only)</p>	<p>The living allowance established by the Canada Student Loan Program, as amended from time to time. Rates are based on the Canada Student Loan Need Assessment Living Allowance and what category you fall under as a student. (i.e: single living away, single with dependents, married etc.) Maximum rates are available theCanada Student Loans.</p> <p><i>(See Appendix C for current living allowance rates)</i></p> <p><i>(Drafting Instruction: If your First Nation is not following the Canada Student Loan amounts, amend this Appendix accordingly.)</i></p>

APPENDIX C: SAMPLE CURRENT LIVING ALLOWANCE RATES

(____ SCHOOL YEAR)

The living allowance established by the Canada Student Loan Program, as amended from time to time. Rates are based on the Canada Student Loan Need Assessment Living Allowance and what category you fall under as a student (i.e.: single living away, single with dependents, married etc.). Maximum rates are available through Canada Student Loans.

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHIC	MONTHLY ALLOWANCE
Single Student	Up to a maximum of \$____
Single Student with: 1 Dependent 2 Dependents 3 Dependents \$__ per month for each additional Dependent	\$
Married student with employed spouse	\$
Married student with spouse: With 1 Dependent With 2 Dependents With 3 Dependents \$__ per month for each additional Dependent	\$ \$ \$ \$

APPENDIX D: DOCUMENT RELEASE FORM

PSE Institution Name & Address:

Attention: Office of the Registrar

To Whom It May Concern:

As a student assisted by _____ First Nation, I hereby authorize the above named post-secondary education institution to release all transcripts, attendance records and other documents indicative of my progress to the _____ First Nation.

Student Name:

Student Number:

Program of Study:

School Year:

Please forward the above mentioned documentation as they become available to:

_____ First Nation
[address]

Attention: [contact name]

Student signature

Date

APPENDIX E: FINDING INFORMATION ON ELIGIBLE POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS

For information or to find lists of Post-Secondary Institutions, please visit INAC's website:

Important note: the presence of an institution on a list does not automatically imply that the program of study offered is eligible. A program must also meet eligibility requirements.