



POST SECONDARY EDUCATION PROGRAM POLICY MANUAL

2024

SNUNeyMUXW FIRST NATION | APRIL 2024

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Introduction

Snuneymuxw First Nation prioritizes higher education for all members, always striving to empower students to share their unique gifts with the world and ultimately be of help.

We are sensitive to the social and economic dynamics of our community and are committed to creating an educational environment that recognizes and affirms the dignity and worth of the individual.

In formulating the Snuneymuxw Education Policy Manual for post-secondary education, we draw inspiration from the wisdom imparted by our Snuneymuxw Elders. They underscore the profound significance of advanced learning for our youth, considering it a sacred journey that connects the teachings of our forebears with the challenges of the present and future. Post-secondary education is envisioned as a vessel that empowers our youth to uphold our heritage, assume leadership roles, and make positive contributions to our community and beyond.

This policy is aligned with the Snuneymuxw First Nation Strategic priorities. Specifically, safeguarding our Snuneymuxw rights, enhancing quality of life, and creating opportunities for social and economic growth.

Your Responsibility

To ensure the effectiveness of this policy, policy changes are necessary, and every attempt is made to notify the student of changes, however; it is ultimately your responsibility, as a student, to ask for current information and/or clarification regarding your educational assistance. We invite you to contact the Snuneymuxw First Nation Education department. Our experts are here to share their knowledge and be of help.

1.0 PURPOSE OF POLICY MANUAL

- 1.1 Snuneymuxw First Nation prioritizes higher education for all members, always striving to empower students to share their unique gifts with the world and ultimately be of help.

2.0 OBJECTIVES OF SFN POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION PROGRAM

The objective of the SFN Post-secondary Education Program is to encourage and support eligible SFN The members:

- 2.1 To ensure that a maximum number of Nation members can achieve their academic and vocational goals through the program funds available.
- 2.2 to pursue a degree of their choice: University undergraduate/ graduate degree; college or technical training.
- 2.3 To help members reach their fullest potential.
- 2.4 When possible, aligning program selection with the SFN strategic plan, current and future economic opportunities and to further Chief and Council priorities.
- 2.5 To become major contributing members of families and community.
- 2.6 Ensure a fair and transparent process for the administration of the Snuneymuxw First Nation's Post-Secondary Education Program.

3.0 DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this Policy Manual, the following words and phrases shall have the meaning ascribed to them below unless the context defines otherwise:

- **“Academic Year”** means the time during which a school, college, institute, or university holds classes and may be divided into “quarters”, “sessions”, “semesters”, “terms” or “trimesters” depending on the institution.
- **“Deferred Applicant”** means an applicant who has either missed the deadline for applying for post-secondary assistance or for whom there was insufficient funding and whose application is held, at the request of the student, until the next intake process when it will be considered on its merits.

- **“Dependent”** means:
 - a. a person other than a spouse to whom the student is parent or guardian of; *AND*
 - b. continuously always resides with the student during completion of the student’s program of study; *AND*
 - c. for whom no financial support is received from any other source except for the child tax benefit, GST credit or universal tax benefit; *AND IS EITHER*:
 - i. 18 years of age or younger; *OR*
 - ii. A copy of GST Credit remittance (July) may be requested to verify dependents.
- **“Full-time Student”** means a student who is carrying a minimum of 4 courses per semester where the value of course credits totals either:
 - a) 12 credits during the Academic Year at a College or University where each class is 3.0 credits: or
 - b) 6 credits during the Academic Year at University of Victoria where each class is 1.5 units.
 - c) And/or as deemed by the institution.
- **“Part-time Student”** means a student who is carrying a minimum of 2 courses per semester where the value of course credits totals either:
 - a) 6 credits during the Academic Year at a College or University where each class is 3.0 credits: or
 - b) 4.5 credits during the Academic Year at University of Victoria where each class is 1.5 units.
- **“Post-secondary Institution”** means an institution which grants degrees, diplomas, or certificates and which is licensed by provincial or state authorities as a post-secondary institution and includes educational institutions affiliated with or delivering accredited programs by arrangement with a post-secondary institution. The SFN Education Department maintains a list of eligible post-secondary institutions. You can also check out http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/learning/canada_student_loan/mldei.shtml for institutions eligible in Canada.
- **“Post-secondary Education Program”** or **“PSEP”** means Snuneymuxw First Nation’s Post-Secondary Education Program as set out in this Policy Manual;
- **“Program of Studies”** means a post-secondary education program, which is at least one academic year in duration and leads directly to a certificate, degree or diploma or is required for admission to a professional certificate or degree program.

4.0 Application Process

- 4.1 Applications for funding must include all the required documentation as set out herein and received by the Education Department no later than April 30th for the Academic Year, commencing in the autumn of the same year. See Appendix B for a checklist of documentation to be submitted with your application.
- 4.2 Please be aware that incomplete applications will cause delays and may result in an application being deferred.**
- 4.3 The Education Department will notify NEW applicants (by email and/or phone call) who are eligible for funding on/or before July 30th.
- 4.4 Continual students must send in an application by April 30th and MUST include their transcripts for the past year. If possible, students should include their registration for the new year as well.
- 4.5 As per section 9 of this Policy Manual, any appeals to the decisions made by the Education Department must be formally submitted within 2 weeks of receiving notice of the decision.

5.0 Eligibility

- 5.1 Must be registered with Snuneymuxw First Nation for a period of at least four years.
- 5.2 Students must meet the entrance requirements and been accepted for enrollment in a Program of Studies at a recognized post-secondary institution that grants certificates, diplomas and/or degrees. A letter of acceptance must be submitted with a student's application. ***The Snuneymuxw First Nation Education Department will only fund courses that are included in the program in which you are enrolled. Please note on your application so that funds can be secured.***
- 5.3 Students must be enrolled in a Snuneymuxw First Nation-approved post-secondary institution. To see a list of eligible Canadian post-secondary institutions, please see: http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/learning/canada_student_loan/mldei.shtml
The SFN Education Department is not able to fund students enrolled in private post-secondary institutions.

- 5.4 New students must submit a short essay using Appendix C to outline their educational and career goals keeping in mind the objectives set out in section 2 of this Policy Manual.
- 5.5 Applications must be received with all the necessary documentation, as set out in Appendix B, no later than **April 30th** for the Academic Year commencing in the autumn of the same year.
- 5.6 Students must sign and adhere to a **student contract** with the SFN Education Department as set out in Appendix D.
- 5.7 For continued eligibility, returning students must submit all official transcripts from the previous Academic Year within 2 weeks of becoming available; have a minimum of a C+ average; and meet the other criteria as set out in this Policy Manual.
- 5.8 Applicants cannot receive funding from other SFN programs while in receipt of SFN Post-Secondary Education Funding (i.e. social assistance) HOWEVER may receive funding from other SFN Programs (i.e. social assistance) in between academic sessions (i.e. during the summer months) if they are not enrolled in post-secondary education programs.
- 5.9 Applicants employed by SFN must first use their professional development funding, if available, to fund their post-secondary education. Applicants employed by SFN may only apply when professional development funds are exhausted. Applicants employed by SFN must provide a letter of support from their supervisor approving education leave if applicable, or a letter explaining why supervisor denies approval to use professional development funding.
- 5.10 If a student violates any terms of the SFN Student Contract, they will become ineligible for post-secondary education funding from Snuneymuxw First Nation for a period of 12 months. This ineligibility period will begin from the date the breach is confirmed.

6.0 Priorities for Approval of Applications

- 6.10 Post-secondary Education funding will be provided in accordance with the terms set out herein and if the demand for funding exceeds the availability of funds, applications will be accepted according to the priorities established in this Policy Manual; and those applicants that are not accepted shall be deferred.
- 6.11 The following 150-point system will serve as an objective guideline in assisting the selection committee to choose the most eligible applicant in an unbiased manner. Points are based on "yes or no"; no partial points are awarded.

DESCRIPTION	POINTS
Members who graduated from secondary school in the current year with a feasible academic plan and beginning a program at a post-secondary institution	35
Members who graduated from secondary school with a Dogwood Diploma	30
Members who are high school graduates with honours, or a 3.0-4.0 GPA (70-100%)	25
Members who are high school graduates who have shown Snuneymuxw First Nation community involvement through volunteering or work in service of the community (20 hours and over).	20
Members who are continuing in a graduate studies program	15
Members with alternative financial aid	10
Members enrolled in programs aligned with Chief and Council priorities ¹	10
Members enrolled in post-secondary institutions in BC	5

¹ Public Administration and Management; Urban Planning and Development; Environmental Science and Sustainability; Public Health and Healthcare Management; Information Technology and Data Analytics; Education Policy and Administration; Economic Development and Business Management; Public Policy and Advocacy; Infrastructure Engineering and Management

7.0 TIME LIMITS ON FINANCIAL SPONSORSHIP

- 7.1 There are limits to funding based on the post-secondary education students are pursuing.
- 7.1.1 UCEP program to upgrade academics to meet post-secondary entry requirements.
 - 7.1.2 Diploma
 - 7.1.3 Certificate Program
 - 7.1.4 Degree
 - 7.1.5 Masters
 - 7.1.6 PHD
- 7.2 Students who become eligible for support AND who have previously completed a portion of post-secondary studies without support from the SFN Post-secondary Education Program may receive support for the balance of their Program of Studies provided they meet the terms set out herein.
- 7.3 Sponsorship will align with a university Academic Year.
- 7.4 June-August courses may only be funded (TUITION ONLY) if required and/or the budget allows.
- 7.5 If a student changes programs or temporarily pauses their studies, the number of academic years or semesters used 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.
- 7.6 Students who are enrolled in correspondence, on-line or distance education courses may also qualify for additional support.
- 7.7 SFN Education Department does not financially assist students with childcare costs. However, students who are residents of BC may be eligible for assistance from BC's Ministry of Children and Family Development. For eligibility criteria go to the following link:
http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare/subsidy_promo.htm.
Students studying outside of BC are encouraged to inquire with the local provincial government for possible childcare subsidies.
- 7.8 Applications for Master's or PhD programs will be accepted one year after you complete your graduate degree. This waiting period is in place to give you the opportunity to enhance your work skills, gain valuable experience, and better prepare for successful graduate studies.

- 7.9 Time Limits on Financial Sponsorship shall be based on the following 4 categories of programs. Please note, tuition is fully covered to the end; it is the Living Allowance that is capped, see table below. The maximum living allowance includes prep/diploma/degree (44months in total).

Diploma and Certificate Programs	16 Months
Degree	44 Months (including 16 months from diploma or certificate)
Masters	16 Months
PHD	Based on employment

8.0 Full-Time or Part-Time Student Status & Funding

- 8.1 Students who withdraw or audit course(s) and no longer meet the minimum requirements for full-time student status must notify the Education Department in writing within 2 weeks and include a copy of their updated registration. A student who drops to part-time status will have their funding levels adjusted to be effective on the date of withdrawal. THIS IS THE STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY.
- 8.2 12 credits during the Academic Year at a College or University where each class is 3.0 credits: or
- 8.2.1 6 credits during the Academic Year at University of Victoria where each class is 1.5 units.
- 8.3 As outlined in this Policy Manual **Full-Time Students** will be supported with the following:
- 8.3.1 Tuition fees.
 - 8.3.2 Textbooks.
 - 8.3.3 Living Allowance for those in College PREP, Level I and Level II Programs.

- 8.3.4 Tutoring; and
- 8.3.5 Christmas Bonuses.
- 8.3.6 Graduation incentives when budget allows (Certificates/Diplomas-\$350) (Degree/masters)-\$750.00

8.4 Students designated as **Part-Time Students** are those students taking a maximum of 3 courses per session/semester where the value of course credits totals either:

- 8.4.1 9 credits during the Academic Year at a College or University where each class is 3.0 credits: or
- 8.4.2 4.5 credits during the Academic Year at University of Victoria where each class is 1.5 units.

8.5 **Part-Time Students** will be supported with the following:

- 8.5.1 Tuition fees
- 8.5.2 Textbooks
- 8.5.3 Tutoring; and
- 8.5.4 Christmas Bonuses

8.6 Students, whether Full-Time or Part-Time, may choose to hold employment while immersed in their Program of Studies, but students are expected to maintain their grades and attend classes regularly. Students will need to be diligent in managing their time effectively.

TUITION AND TEXTBOOKS

8.7 Includes fees for one (1) registration/application fee, tuition fees in accordance with the BC Government's established tuition rates for Post-secondary Institutions. It is the student's responsibility to FILL out and complete THIRD-PARTY SPONSORSHIP FROM the institute they are enrolled in. Please note this MUST accompany SFN application.

- 8.7.1 Full-Time Students are funded to a maximum of \$7500 CDN/year for tuition and a maximum of \$1200 CDN/year for textbooks.
- 8.7.2 Part-time Students are funded to a maximum of \$2500 CDN/Year for tuition and compulsory textbooks.
- 8.7.3 Students in Level III advanced or professional degree programs are funded to a maximum of \$11,000 CDN/Year for tuition and textbooks.

8.7.4 All students are required to opt out of the Health and Dental plan provided by the Post-secondary Institution. SFN will not pay for this service. Dental and Health supports for Snuneymuxw members are available through Health Canada. It is a student's responsibility to opt out of post-secondary health coverage.

8.8 Students enrolled in foreign institutions [i.e. outside of Canada] may be eligible for financial support for tuition and compulsory fees at a rate charged by the Canadian institution nearest to the student's place of residence (at the time of application) offering a comparable program. If no comparable program is available at an institution in Canada, students enrolled in a foreign institution may receive the actual tuition rate and other compulsory student fees charged by the foreign institution. **The maximum financial assistance available for an Academic Year is \$5000 USA for tuition and \$1000 USA for books.** This is to ensure SFN can fund as many students as possible. Any amounts which exceed the SFN funding for tuition, books and living allowances are the student's responsibility.

8.9 Continuing students' tuition will be paid directly to the Post-secondary Institution by Snuneymuxw First Nation. New Students may be required to pay any initial deposits with the Post-secondary Institution such as the application fees. Once the student's enrollment has been accepted and funding is guaranteed, deposits will be reimbursed to the student upon the submission of official receipts. Students who receive scholarships or bursaries to attend post-secondary institutions BEYOND those scholarships and bursaries offered by the SFN Education Department will be eligible for funding only to the amount required to meet the cost of tuition, travel or living expenses that are not fully covered by the scholarship or bursary. All terms and conditions governing priorities, eligibility and funding levels must be met. Each case will be considered individually.

LIVING ALLOWANCE

8.11 Living allowance is provided to Full-Time Students in approved post-secondary programs. Part-Time Students are now eligible for \$500 a month for transportation if enrolled in 2 classes.

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

LIVING ALLOWANCE (monthly) RATES ARE AS FOLLOW:

Student, 0 Dependents	\$980
Student, 1 Dependent	\$1180
Student, 2 Dependents	\$1380
Student, 3 Dependents	\$1580
Student, 4 or more Dependents	\$50 per Dependent

8.13 Student's shelter \$450

8.14 Transportation \$100

8.15 If a student resides in Snuneymuxw First Nation-owned housing, they will be required to sign an agreement allowing rent to be deducted from the housing subsidy at the rate identified in the Snuneymuxw Housing Policy.

DAMAGE DEPOSIT

8.16 Students may receive one-time only assistance to cover their damage deposit to a maximum amount of \$500. To attain this one-time only assistance the student must provide a copy of the signed rental agreement clearly identifying the terms of the agreement, the damage deposit amount, and the student's name. SFN Education Department confirms the rental agreement and makes the cheque payable to the landlord. Should a student move during their studies the deposit is to be refunded to them and is expected to cover the new damage deposit.

CHRISTMAS BONUSES

8.17 Funding permitting, all students, both full time & part time, are eligible to receive a Christmas bonus of a \$100.00 per student and \$100.00 for each eligible dependant.

TUTORING

8.18 Students who require extra tutorial assistance for convocation will be financially supported to a maximum of \$450 per Academic Year.

8.19 An invoice from a qualified tutor providing his or her name and address so the tutor may be paid directly; OR a receipt from the student if the student paid the tutor directly.

9.0 Full-Time or Part-Time Student Status & Funding

9.1 The Nation will not entertain an appeal when failure to fund because of insufficient funds or where funds have been fully committed or the student has used the allotted funds for their degree/master's or where a student's errors, omissions or failure to perform have resulted in the student being expelled or required to discontinue.

9.2 There may be an appeal if the Education Department fails to follow the terms and conditions set out in this Policy Manual.

9.3 Upon receipt of a notice of appeal by a student, a staff member of the Education Department will meet with the student to discuss and attempt to resolve the matter. If a successful resolution cannot be achieved to the satisfaction of both the student and staff member, the matter will be referred to the Chief Operation Officer of Snuneymuxw.

9.4 All decisions of Education Committee are final and binding upon the student and Education Department. The student shall be notified of the final decision in writing immediately following a decision made by Education Committee. There shall be no further recourse to the Appeal Process.

9.5 The Appeal Process is intended to deal with appeal a decision made by SFN Education Department. Appeals regarding the decisions of a Post-secondary Institution shall be submitted to through the institutions own appeal process. However, the Education Department may assist the student in this process, when possible.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Application for Sponsorship Form

Appendix B: Student File – Documentation Checklist

Appendix C: Student Essay on Educational and Career Goals. Submit a 1–2-page essay outlining your educational and career goals, keeping in mind the objectives set out in Section 2 of this Policy Manual.

Appendix D: Student Contract with SFN Education Department