

# Frequently Asked Questions: Scholarship Eligibility

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## **Who's eligible for scholarships?**

You are! There are scholarships out there for everyone. Any program of study, any discipline, whatever your background or grades — there are awards for you.

Most awards will need a full application, but some will be labelled "automatic consideration," so if you qualify, when you accept your offer of admission, you'll get the award.

The criteria to qualify will vary — it's not all about academics. If you take part in school or community activities, you might be eligible for awards. Same story if you have particular talents, hobbies, club affiliations... Think about your own unique qualities. They may be just what the scholarship administrators are looking for!

## **Do I need to meet all the requirements to be eligible?**

Requirements for awards depend on the type of students scholarship admins are seeking. You should read the expectations carefully so you understand the award.

Certain criteria will be hard-and-fast. If an award is for a person of Aboriginal ancestry, and that's not you, you're out of luck.

Other criteria is more flexible. If an award is looking for someone who shows leadership in their community, or has volunteer experience, you may at first feel like you haven't clocked enough hours to qualify. Instead, you should think about any experience you do have, reflect on the lessons you learned along the way, and apply. Leave it to the admins to decide what's enough.

### **What do I need for scholarships with automatic consideration?**

The conditions vary by school. When you apply for admission, you'll be added to the list for any automatic consideration awards that you qualify for.

You can reach out to the school's financial aid or student awards department to get up-to-date information if you need it.

### **Are scholarships with automatic consideration given in my acceptance letter from a school?**

Yes, you'll be notified in your acceptance letter which automatic scholarships you qualify for. If there are any changes to your eligibility, or additional scholarships, you may be notified again later.

### **Will my grade 12 average affect my applications?**

Your grades, in grade 12 or otherwise, are only relevant for scholarships that explicitly say so. Listings on [ScholarshipsCanada](#) clearly list the requirements, so if academic average isn't there, you have nothing to worry about!

### **Will scholarship administrators look at my grade 11 and 12 grades?**

Typically, if the admins care about your average at all, they'll be looking at your marks in grade 12. If you're applying early (and you should be!) then you may not know your final grades. No problem — so long as you meet the minimum requirements, you're eligible.

Scholarships based on "automatic consideration" may be interested in your grade 11 scores to get a sense of your overall performance. You may even be offered a conditional scholarship — which you'll receive in full if you continue to qualify. Read the documents you're sent carefully, so you know what you're up against.

If you have questions about your eligibility, the best thing to do is ask the scholarship administrator directly. As with anything, when in doubt, ask.

### **When applying for awards based on academics, will my summer school marks count?**

Scholarship admins will usually look at your overall GPA. If your summer marks are included in your GPA, then yes, they'll count. Some scholarships will even want to see a transcript of your grades, meaning they'll be able to consider your performance in all your courses. Again, ask the admin if you're unsure what will count.

### **When a scholarship asks for a GPA of 3.0 or 4.0, what percentage grade is that?**

Grade Point Average (GPA) is usually based on a 4 or 5 point scale. A 3.0 is equivalent to a 'B,' and a 4.0 an 'A,' which means your marks should be somewhere in the 75-85% range. Different schools and institutions use different numbering schemes, so if you think you've got a shot, you should just apply. If you want to go the extra mile, there are [GPA calculators](#) online. Of course, if you're concerned, you should ask the scholarship admin directly.

### **What's the average income for scholarships and bursaries based on financial need?**

"Financial need" is a broad term — the definition will depend on the scholarship administrator. You may be asked to submit a budget, or accounts of your finances (including household income, expenses, etc), so admin staff can make decisions about which applicants have the greatest need.

To get a leg up, contact the scholarship admin directly to learn just what "financial need" means to them.

### **If I don't know what school I want to attend, does that affect my applications?**

Not necessarily. There are lots of ways to search ScholarshipsCanada for awards, like your field of interest, cultural background, extracurriculars, affiliations, special needs and so on. Generally only scholarships offered by schools themselves are concerned about where you attend. Many awards from companies or organizations may not be concerned with which school you choose.

### **If I won't be graduating high school next year, can I still apply for scholarships?**

Most of the awards on [ScholarshipsCanada.com](https://www.scholarshipscanada.com) are for those going into post-secondary education, but there are some available to people in grades 10 and 11. Take time to ensure that you're eligible for the awards you apply for.

Kudos to you for beginning your search early, though. The more research and prep you're able to do, the better your odds at getting great scholarships when you graduate.

### **Should I still apply for scholarships if I'm thinking of taking a gap year after high school?**

You should definitely check out your matching awards to find what you qualify for. Sure, a lot of the awards on [ScholarshipsCanada.com](https://www.scholarshipscanada.com) are for students entering their first year of college or university, but there are all kinds of awards. Some aren't even school related!

### **Can I apply for scholarships before being accepted to a school?**

Generally not, unless the award says otherwise. Most of the time, you must have applied and been accepted before you can pursue awards. If you're looking at an award with automatic consideration, then you needn't apply at all — you'll receive the award when you accept your offer of admission.

### **Can I apply for scholarships from schools without accepting their offer of admission?**

You can apply, sure, but only registered students will be able to win. Many scholarships come at time of enrolment, and may act as a credit against your tuition. If you're not going to attend a particular school, you'd be better off focusing your attention elsewhere.

### **Do schools look at what kind of high school I attended?**

In some rare cases, awards will be based on your particular high school, or the region you grew up in. This will be clearly stated in the scholarship listing. Most of the time, though, schools won't care which school you attended so long as you qualify for the award.

### **Are scholarships available for my academic and career interests?**

Absolutely. You can search awards based on your field of study or your future career on [ScholarshipsCanada.com](https://www.scholarshipscanada.com). If you're logged in, you'll automatically be matched with awards that fit the interests listed on your profile.

### **Can I apply for awards that have nothing to do with my field of study?**

Yes. Some scholarships are based on your school, cultural background, club affiliation, etc. There are even some that are totally open. You should apply for every award you can!

### **Do I need a lot of community service hours to apply for scholarships?**

Not at all! There are lots of scholarships out there, and only a handful demand lots of community service. Unless the award listing explicitly asks for a certain amount of hours, you're good.

### **Do scholarships exist for people with work experience?**

Yes. Some awards require leadership skills or direct work experience. Your employer may even offer scholarships directly. It never hurts to ask around.

### **Are there scholarships for people with hardships?**

Absolutely. Many awards target those in financial need, and many more seek applicants with disabilities, illness, or other difficulties.

### **I've searched ScholarshipsCanada and can't find scholarships right for me. I'm not in financial need — I just don't want lots of student debt!**

Take a look at your profile and be sure you've got it as accurate as possible. Same with the fields when you search. There are so many scholarships out there for students attending any school, in any field of study, that you're bound to find a few that fit. Don't discount smaller scholarships, either. You could win multiple awards, and use them all to help pay for your education.

### **Do I need to participate in activities with an official organization, or are other hobbies and pastimes enough to show my interests?**

[ScholarshipsCanada.com](http://ScholarshipsCanada.com) lists awards based on specific, organized activities, and many others around looser hobbies and interests. Few scholarships require you to be an official member of an organization to apply.

**If I'm not too involved with my community, but I do well in sports and academics, how can I stand out?**

You don't need to be a community ambassador to be eligible for scholarships. There are awards on ScholarshipsCanada for every type of person. Don't worry about standing out. Apply to awards you qualify for. If you meet the eligibility requirements, apply! If the award has an essay or personal statement component, that's where you can plead your case. Always be honest and straightforward about who you are!

**I've lived in Canada for a few years and I'm applying for citizenship. Should I apply for international or Canadian citizenship awards?**

Take some time to consider all of your options, but don't forget there are millions of dollars in awards that don't ask about citizenship at all. You should apply for any award you're eligible for. If a listing states it's for Canadian citizens only, and that isn't you, move on for now. You can always come back to the award once your citizenship papers arrive!

**Many awards seem to require essays or other info about my community involvement. How many scholarships don't?**

Only about 15% of the awards listed on [ScholarshipsCanada.com](https://www.scholarshipscanada.com) require community involvement. That means 85% do not! As for essays, many scholarship admins ask similar questions, so you should be able to work up a solid draft, and re-use it, with tweaking, for multiple applications. Always target the particular scholarship you are seeking, and be sure to actually answer the questions the admin asks, but beyond that, no one will mind if you recycle a personal statement or essay from one application to the next.

**What's the best way to research which scholarships I'm eligible for?**

Your account on [ScholarshipsCanada.com](https://www.scholarshipscanada.com) is a great place to start. The site automatically matches you with bursaries and scholarships based on your profile. Beyond that, try searching corporate websites, as businesses and organizations will often offer a scholarship or two. Talking to a guidance counsellor is also a great way to learn about the resources available to you.

## **Are students who have taken a gap year (or two!) still eligible for scholarships?**

Absolutely. In fact, your experiences during your gap year(s) may make you an even more valuable candidate for an award. Think about how your gap year helped you develop leadership skills, engage with a community, volunteer, etc.

## **I have questions about scholarship eligibility that aren't addressed here!**

We live to serve! [Reach out to us via email](#) with your questions and we'll do our best to help you out.

We may even add your question to this list!

Thanks for reading, and happy hunting!