

## **2011-12 Ontario Bridging Participant Assistance Program Frequently Asked Questions**

### **1. What is the Ontario Bridging Participant Assistance Program (OBPAP)?**

The Ontario Bridging Participant Assistance Program (OBPAP) provides bursaries of up to \$5,000 to cover direct education costs (tuition, books and equipment) for participants attending non-OSAP approved, current or former Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration (MCI) funded bridge training programs offered by Ontario colleges, universities and the Michener Institute for Applied Health Sciences (Michener Institute).

### **2. Who is eligible?**

Internationally trained professionals with financial need are eligible to apply for an OBPAP bursary if they are enrolled in MCI approved bridge training programs that are:

- in-session
- non-OSAP approved
- current or formerly MCI funded
- starting between April 1, 2011 and March 31, 2012.
- offered at Ontario publicly-assisted colleges, universities or the Michener Institute.

Bursary assistance is limited to program tuition, book and equipment costs reported by the postsecondary institution offering the bridge training.

The OBPAP bursary applicant must be a Canadian citizen, Permanent Resident or Protected Person living in Ontario.

### **3. What is the bursary maximum?**

The bursary covers up to \$5,000 in direct education costs.

The OBPAP bursary maximum is the lesser of \$5,000 or tuition, book and equipment costs reported by the college/university/Michener Institute for the bridge training. The maximum amount available for each bridge training project is outlined in Question 19.

### **4. How is financial need determined?**

OBPAP bursary eligibility is based on student financial need. The postsecondary institution offering the bridge training establishes financial need based on their policies regarding student financial need.

Students with assessed financial need are eligible to receive an OBPAP bursary to cover eligible educational costs.

**5. What is covered?**

The bursary covers participant bridge training costs (tuition, books and equipment) reported by the postsecondary institution (college, university or the Michener Institute) that is offering the program.

**6. How are OBPAP bursary funds issued?**

Your postsecondary institution receives funding to provide bursary assistance through OBPAP.

**7. Can I apply for an OBPAP bursary after I have completed an eligible bridge training program?**

No. Application for OBPAP bursary assistance must be made before or during the bridge training period.

**8. Does the OBPAP bursary cover day care and transportation costs? Can bursary funds be used to cover prior learning and assessments (e.g., Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR), English proficiency tests, immunizations or criminal reference checks?**

No. The OBPAP bursary only covers direct education costs (tuition, books and equipment) that participants pay for the bridge training.

**9. Can I receive OBPAP bursary assistance above what I am being charged by the postsecondary institution for my bridge training and/or mandatory books and equipment?**

No.

**10. Can the bursary be renewed?**

No.

**11. My bridge training program involves a series of courses that span a number of academic years. How can I cover my bridge training costs if I can receive only one OBPAP bursary?**

Given that participants can only receive one OBPAP bursary and some bridge training programs entail a series of courses that can take more than one year to

complete, postsecondary institutions may set aside the bursary maximum for a bursary recipient to cover his/her 2011-12 and future year education costs.

**12. Can this bursary assistance be combined with other forms of assistance (e.g., bursaries or scholarships) to offset bridge training tuition, books and equipment costs?**

Yes. However, in such circumstances, the other forms of financial assistance must first be applied to offset eligible bridge training costs prior to using OBPAP funds to cover any remaining costs.

For example, if a student with \$5,000 in eligible OBPAP bridge training costs were to receive a \$3,500 institutional bursary, that bursary would first be applied to cover these costs. The remaining \$1,500 in eligible bridge training costs could be covered through OBPAP. The OBPAP bursary cannot be combined with OSAP funding (see questions 17 and 18 for further details).

**13. If I have \$8,500 in tuition, book and equipment costs and the maximum amount for my OBPAP bursary is \$5,000 and I am also eligible to receive a \$3,500 bursary, how much OBPAP bursary assistance can I receive?**

In this case you would receive \$8,500 in combined bursary assistance. The \$3,500 bursary would first be applied to reduce eligible education costs and the balance would be covered up to the OBPAP bursary maximum established for your bridge training program (in this case \$5,000). Please see question 19 for a listing of OBPAP bursary maximums by bridge training program.

**14. What happens if I fail a course?**

If your bridge training consists of a series of courses, you will have to pay to repeat the course that you failed.

If your bridge training consists of a single course you will have to pay to repeat the course.

OBPAP bursary assistance is not renewable.

**15. What happens if I drop a course?**

If your bridge training consists of a series of courses you will have to pay to repeat the course that you dropped. If your bridge training consists of a single course you will be considered, for the purposes of OBPAP, as having withdrawn from the program and you will have to pay to repeat the course.

Participants who have their tuition fees covered through OBPAP and subsequently withdraw from their program will be required to return unused tuition fees to the postsecondary institution offering the bridge training.

**16. Can I continue to receive OBPAP bursary assistance if I wish to change bridge-training programs?**

No. OBPAP bursary assistance is intended to allow participants to access bridge training which will allow them to practice in the profession for which they were trained. As such, OBPAP bursary assistance is not intended to fund retraining in other fields/professions.

**17. I am enrolled in an OSAP-approved bridge training program; can I apply for an OBPAP bursary instead of a student loan?**

No.

**18. I had to take out an OSAP student loan to cover my bridge training costs. Why are other students receiving subsidized or no cost bridge training as a result of the OBPAP bursary?**

OBPAP bursary assistance is only available to students enrolled in non-OSAP approved bridge training programs.

While OSAP student loans are repayable, student loan recipients derive many benefits that can exceed OBPAP bursary amounts. For instance, students in two-term programs can have annual repayable loan amounts reduced to \$7,300 and \$10,950 for three-term programs through the Ontario Student Opportunity Grant (OSOG).

Students with low incomes may also be eligible to receive non-repayable provincial grants to help cover tuition costs and federal grants for living/study expenses.

OSAP student loans are also interest free while you are in school, attending bridge training.

**19. Which MCI bridge training programs will be offering OBPAP bursary assistance in 2011-12 and what are the award maximums?**

The following approved college, university and Michener Institute bridge training programs will be offering OBPAP bursary assistance in 2011-12. The bursary maximum specified for each program reflects direct education costs reported by the bridge training institution for the program. Each college and university as well as the Michener Institute is responsible for submitting timely and accurate program information to MCI.

Postsecondary Institution	Name of Program	Bursary Maximum (Based on Reported Direct Education Costs)
The Michener Institute	Medical Laboratory Science (MLS)	Education Costs up to \$4,300 (up to \$4,200 in tuition fees and \$100 for course notes and supplies)
The Michener Institute	Medical Radiological Technology (MRT)	Education Costs up to \$4,300 (up to \$4,200 in tuition fees and \$100 for course notes and supplies)
George Brown College	Enhanced Academic Pathway for Nurses Graduate Certificate	Education costs up to \$5,000 (tuition fees range from \$2,484 to \$7,203 and from \$500 to \$1,500 for books and up to \$200 in equipment costs)
Laurentian University	Professions North/Nord	Education costs up to \$5,000 (tuition fees range from \$1,917.33 to \$10,864.87 plus up to \$6,800 for books)
University of Guelph Alfred Campus	Emplois Spécialisés en Soutien à l'Ontario Rural (ESSOR) Wastewater Operator	Education costs up to \$3,000 (up to \$2,700 in tuition fees and up to \$300 for books and course notes)
University of Guelph Alfred Campus	Emplois Spécialisés en Soutien à l'Ontario Rural (ESSOR) Agrology	Education costs up to \$2,252 (up to \$2,048 in tuition fees and up to \$204 for books and course notes)
Fanshawe College	Bridge to Nursing Certification Project	Education costs up to \$1,572 (up to \$1,278.23 in book and up to \$293.49 in equipment costs)
Mohawk College	Bridging for Internationally Educated Nurses (BIEN)	Education costs up to \$5,000 (tuition fees range from \$1,300 to \$5,810.36 and up to \$1,300 for books and equipment)
Mohawk College	Internationally Educated Medical Laboratory Technologists	Education costs up to \$5,000 (tuition fees range from \$261 to \$8,600 and up to \$700 for books)

Ryerson University	International Accounting & Finance Professionals (IAFP) Program	Education costs up to \$5,000 (tuition ranges from \$514 to \$5,000 and up to \$650 for books)
Ryerson University	Internationally Educated Dietitians Pre-Registration Program (IDPP)	Education costs up to \$5,000 (\$6,925 in tuition fees and up to \$500 in book costs)
Ryerson University	International Midwifery Pre-Registration Program	Education costs up to \$5,000 (tuition fees range from \$4,560 to \$6,120 and up to \$500 for books)
Ryerson University	Workplace Communication in Canada	Education costs up to \$2,765 (up to \$2,715 in tuition fees and \$50 in equipment costs)
University of Waterloo	International Optometric Bridging Program (IOBP)	Education costs up to \$5,000 (tuition fees Bridging I \$5,000 and \$30,000 for Bridging II)
University of Toronto	Bridge Training Program for Internationally Trained Lawyers	Education costs up to \$4,855 (\$3,955 in tuition fees and up to \$900 for books and course materials)
University of Toronto	Bridge Training for Internationally Educated Pharmacy Graduates	Education costs up to \$5,000 (\$13,000 in tuition fees and up to \$600 for books)
McMaster University	Occupational Therapy Examination and Practice Preparation	Education costs up to \$350 (up to \$350 for books)
York University	Bridging Internationally Educated IT Professionals into Ontario Jobs	Education costs up to \$5,000 (up to \$7,260 in tuition fees and up to \$1,170 for book and equipment costs)
York University	Bridge Training for Internationally Educated Professionals in Business, Finance and Administration	Education costs of up to \$5,000 (up to \$7,260 in tuition fees and up to \$1,500 for book and equipment costs)

**20. How do I obtain bursary funding?**

Applications for an OBPAP bursary can be made through the Financial Aid Office of your postsecondary institution .

If you are awarded an OBPAP bursary, the postsecondary institution will take the bursary funding and apply it against tuition, book and equipment costs that you would otherwise have to pay to the college, university or Michener Institute for the bridge training. Any remaining funds will be issued to you (based on receipts submitted) to reimburse you for mandatory program book and equipment costs.

**21. My institution is charging me more fees than listed in the table above. Can the institution use its OBPAP funding allocation to increase the OBPAP bursary maximum for my bridge training program to cover these fees?**

No. Each college/university and the Michener Institute is responsible for submitting timely and accurate program information to the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration (MCI). Students in such circumstances should contact the Financial Aid Office of their institution to determine if they are eligible for other forms of financial assistance (e.g., bursaries or grants).

Alternatively, postsecondary institutions can contribute funds to increase the amount of OBPAP bursary assistance.

**22. I started a bridge training program in April 2011 for which I have paid all the fees. Am I eligible for a OBPAP bursary? If yes, given that I have already paid the program fees will the bursary be directed to me instead of the postsecondary institution?**

In-session 2011-12 bridge training programs starting on or after April 1, 2011 are eligible for OBPAP bursary assistance. If you are enrolled in an MCI approved bridge training program and qualify for an OBPAP bursary, the bursary will be directed to you to reimburse you (based on submitted receipts) for the eligible education costs that you paid.

**23. Are Second Career recipients eligible for the bursary?**

No.

**24. Are students who have defaulted on their student loans or are restricted from OSAP eligible for OBPAP bursary assistance?**

No.

**25. Am I eligible for interest-free status on my student loans while participating in a non-OSAP approved MCI funded or previously funded bridge training program?**

Contact your Financial Aid Office or the National Student Loan Service Centre at 1-888-815-4514 to determine which programs may be available to help you keep your student loans in good standing while in bridge training programs.