

OSAP FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is OSAP?

The Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) is a combination of grants & loans for students that both the Ontario & Federal government provide money towards. Through one application, and depending on your circumstances, you may have access to this government funding. (A student loan will need to be repaid; a student grant does not require repayment).

The objective of OSAP is to assist students with limited financial resources to help meet the costs of postsecondary education.

How do I apply for OSAP?

The recommended method to apply for OSAP is on-line at www.ontario.ca/osap. If you cannot access an online application, please contact your Financial Aid Office.

When can I start applying for OSAP?

This depends on when you are starting your program. Typically, if you are starting in the Fall, new OSAP applications become available mid-Spring of that year.

Otherwise, you can apply for full-time OSAP no later than 60 days before your study period ends and submit your supporting documents no later than 40 days before your study period ends. However, the later you submit your application and supporting documents, the later you will receive your funds.

If you are a part-time student, your deadlines will depend on your study period end date. Part-time will follow the same deadline policy as above.

After applying for OSAP, please see <https://www.ontario.ca/page/after-you-apply-osap> for further information.

Where do I submit my signature pages and other supporting documentation?

It is highly recommended to upload your signature pages & other supporting documentation online through the OSAP website.

If you cannot upload your documents, you can submit them to your Financial Aid Office ... in Windsor: Room 166 or fax to 519-972-2797; in Chatham: Room 134A or fax to 519-354-6941 or by email to financialaid@stclaircollege.ca.

Signature pages (and most supporting documents) only need to be submitted with your first OSAP application.

They will remain valid for your entire academic career, unless there is a break of two years or more in your studies.

If you previously submitted signature pages and/or supporting documents for a full-time OSAP application, and are now applying for part-time OSAP, a new application with new documents is required.

What is the Master Student Financial Assistance Agreement (MSFAA) and what do I do with it?

The MSFAA is a document added to the OSAP process to allow for OSAP funding to be directly deposited into the student's personal banking account. The MSFAA must be processed in order to receive OSAP funding.

Your OSAP Notice of Assessment includes your 10-digit MSFAA number. Once you receive an email from the National Student Loans Service Centre, it is important to follow the instructions & register your MSFAA. Your OSAP will not proceed until this is completed.

The Master Student Financial Assistance Agreement (MSFAA) is your lifetime loan agreement.

How do I change my bank information?

You can update your bank information by logging in to your secure NSLSC account at www.nslsc.ca. You may also complete the Bank Account Change Request Form found on the NSLSC website, or at our Financial Aid office. Once completed, this form needs to be faxed to 1-866-658-8801.

What percentage of a full course load will you be taking?

Your course load refers to the number of courses you are taking. Most students are enrolled in 100% of a course load. The minimum course load to apply for full-time OSAP is 60% (or, if you have identified as having a permanent disability, the minimum course load is 40%).

Do I have to apply for OSAP each year?

Yes, the online application, which is shorter for continuing students, should be available in the Spring each year on the OSAP website.

How do I get my OSAP OAN (OSAP Access Number) reset?

If you forgot your password, you can either:

Obtain a temporary password in person at a Financial Aid Office of any college or university. Make sure you bring your Social Insurance Number card **and** one piece of valid government-issued photo I.D. to confirm your identity at the Financial Aid Office, OR

Use your Challenge Questions and Answers that you created in your OSAP application to log in to the OSAP website.

How do I make a change to my OSAP application after I have submitted it for processing?

If you need to make a change to your OSAP application after you have submitted it for processing, you will need to put your change in writing (be sure to sign and date your letter and to include your student number) and mail, fax or drop off your changes to your Financial Aid Office.

How and when will I know if I am entitled to OSAP?

At the time you submit your online application you may view an estimate of your entitlement. This is an *estimate only* and should not be considered as your actual entitlement. Once your application is complete and all supporting documentation processed, you may view your actual entitlement by logging on to your OSAP account and clicking "Check Status". It is *your responsibility* to monitor the status of your application and to submit all required documentation in a timely manner.

Does OSAP cover all expenses associated with post-secondary studies?

No. OSAP is an assistance program. OSAP is designed to supplement the expected contributions of student and parents. A student's decision to pursue post-secondary studies comes with financial obligations and a responsibility to contribute to it. Education is a valuable investment in reaching future aspirations. Once OSAP has determined the amount of funding you are entitled to; it is the student's responsibility to budget accordingly.

What is a Confirmation of Enrollment?

St. Clair College starts confirming student enrollments electronically the week before the start of each study period. If the status on your OSAP account shows 'Confirmation of Enrollment', that means that OSAP is waiting for the College to confirm your enrollment for the next installment of your OSAP funding. You must be registered in your courses before the College can confirm your enrollment.

Funding will be released after the start of your study period. After your enrollment has been confirmed, funding normally takes 7-10 business days to be deposited to your school tuition account, with any remaining funds to your bank account.

What if 10 days have passed and my funds have not been deposited?

If you have not received your funds after 10 business days of the Financial Aid Office confirming your enrollment, call the National Student Loans Service Centre at 1-888-815-4514.

Why did I receive two separate deposits?

Your Federal and Provincial funds are deposited separately; they are usually 3 business days apart.

I already paid off my tuition and fees and OSAP still deposited funds to my school account, how do I get this money?

OSAP funds that you have been approved will be directly deposited into your student account to pay tuition and fees. If you have decided to pay your tuition before OSAP deposited money into your student account, and you have a credit balance, you may request a refund at the Financial Aid Office.

How can I check the status of my application?

Log in to your OSAP account (click "Check Status" and/or "Funding Summary") to see updates on your file. You will find out if there are any errors or if the Ministry requires any additional information from you before they can process your loan. Your status will be updated throughout the assessment process. Once your status is 'confirmed', National Student Loans Service Centre (NSLSC) will be given your funding information and they will start to process the payments to your bank account.

How do I change my address so that OSAP knows?

OSAP recipients must keep their address and contact information up to date with the Ministry, National Student Loans Service Centre (NSLSC) and St. Clair College.

- OSAP: Log in to your OSAP account to change your address
- National Student Loans Service Centre: 1-888-815-4514 or www.canlearn.ca
- St. Clair College: Update on your self-service Student Information System

Do I need to confirm my income to OSAP?

You must confirm your income before the release of your second installment of OSAP funds. It is your responsibility as a borrower to inform OSAP of any changes in your financial situation throughout the school year. Instructions will be sent to you by the Ministry about one month before your second installment of OSAP is scheduled to be released. Check your email or online OSAP status regularly for instructions. Please see the Financial Aid Office to report any income changes from your original application. It is important that you report your income promptly. Delay in reporting income may result in an OSAP overpayment or restriction. Please note that you may not make further changes to your income after the study period has ended.

Can I appeal the amount of funding I'm getting?

OSAP uses standard criteria to assess a student's financial need and to determine the amount of funding you may be eligible to receive. There may be situations, however, where the criteria may not adequately reflect your particular circumstances. If this is the case, you may request a review of your OSAP application.

The first step for you in the review process is to contact the Financial Aid Office at your institution. They will review your file and make a decision.

If I withdraw from studies, how will it affect my OSAP funding?

Students must maintain satisfactory academic progress. That means that students are required to successfully complete the academic requirements of their program to continue to be eligible for OSAP. Frequent or multiple program switches, drops, withdrawals and/or repeats of programs that are funded by OSAP may be considered lack of academic progress and direction. Please contact your Financial Aid Office before making any course load changes.

Consequences to withdrawing from full-time studies or dropping to part-time status while on OSAP may include:

- Your loans will become repayable 6 months after you withdraw from full-time studies
- An overpayment will be created due to a reassessment of your OSAP entitlement as a result of your withdrawal or drop
- There will be OSAP Academic probation or restriction placed on your file because you did not maintain full-time standing during your OSAP funded study period.

What does it mean if I'm on Academic Probation for OSAP?

If you're on Academic Probation for OSAP, it means that you didn't successfully complete your studies the last year you were on OSAP and that for the next academic year, your academic progress will be monitored closely. This happens if you don't complete your required course load or if you receive funding and then drop classes. During your OSAP probation, you can still receive OSAP funding by submitting an Academic Progress form. Please see the Financial Aid Office to get this form. You also will be expected to pass the courses you registered for. If you don't pass your courses, then you will be restricted from OSAP funding for a minimum of 12 months.

What is a Continuation of Interest-Free Status (CIFS) Form (Schedule 2)?

Full-Time Students:

If you are **not** receiving OSAP, but are a full time student for the current study period, and have previous OSAP loans, you must complete a Continuation of Interest-Free Status (CIFS) form to maintain the interest-free status on your OSAP loans. You must complete a CIFS application for each year you are in school but not receiving OSAP.

Part-Time Students:

While you are in school, you are not required to make part-time loan payments but interest will accumulate on your loan. If the National Student Loans Service Centre (NSLSC) is not advised that you are continuing your studies, you will be asked to start repayment of your loans. To ensure that you remain payment free while you continue your studies, please submit a Schedule 2 form. Note: If you are taking full-time OSAP, but have previous part-time loans, it is important to submit your Schedule 2 to keep your part-time loans payment free.

Where do I submit the Continuation of Interest-Free Status (CIFS) or Schedule 2 Form?

You can submit your CIFS application online when you log into your OSAP account, by simply clicking on the Continuation of Interest-Free Status application option.

You may also submit the completed form(s) to the Financial Aid Office ... in Windsor: Room 166 or fax to 519-972-2797; in Chatham: Room 134A or fax to 519-354-6941 or by email to financialaid@stclaircollege.ca. It is best to submit the form at the start of your study period. *Please note that forms cannot be processed after the study period has ended.*

When do I have to begin repaying my student loans?

While you are in school, the interest on your student loans is paid by the provincial and federal governments. You are responsible to start repaying your loan six months after completing your studies or when you are no longer a full-time postsecondary student. The interest on your student loan begins to accrue from the time you stop being a full-time postsecondary student.

You will be contacted by the National Student Loans Service Centre shortly before you are scheduled to begin repayment with details on your monthly loan payments and repayment period.

- National Student Loans Service Centre: 1-888-815-4514 or www.canlearn.ca

Do my Grants have to be repaid?

Normally, OSAP grants are money you don't need to pay back.

However, all or part of your OSAP grants may be converted into a loan if:

- you withdraw from studies or stop taking the minimum course load within the first 30 days of starting school
- at the end of the study period, as a result of an OSAP reassessment, you're not entitled to all or part of the grant that you received (e.g., dropped courses, unreported income)
- the income reported in connection to your application can't be verified within one year from the start of your studies (Ontario Student Grant only)

If your grant is converted into a loan, it's:

- added to your loan balance and
- included in the calculation of your monthly loan payment you'll make once you've left school

Information about the terms and conditions of your OSAP grants can be found in the body of your consents, declarations and signatures pages, as well as your Master Student Financial Assistance Agreement.

How do I find out information about internal & external financial aid opportunities:

Please visit the Financial Aid Office website at: <https://www.stclaircollege.ca/financial-aid>