



# UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

University of Toronto  
Governing Council

## **Policy on Student Awards Established in the University of Toronto**

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To request an official copy of this policy, contact:

The Office of the Governing Council  
Room 106, Simcoe Hall  
27 King's College Circle  
University of Toronto  
Toronto, Ontario  
M5S 1A1

Phone: 416-978-6576

Fax: 416-978-8182

E-mail: [governing.council@utoronto.ca](mailto:governing.council@utoronto.ca)

Website: <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/>

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# Policy on Student Awards Established in the University of Toronto

## 1. Preamble

- a) This Policy applies to all student awards established in the University of Toronto from restricted funds resulting from donations, excepting awards established in the Federated Universities, and provides for University-wide practices and procedures for the approval and administration of all such awards. The administration of awards will be governed both by this Policy and by the Policy on Student Financial Support (1998).
- b) The purpose of this Policy is to ensure consistency in fundamental award practices and procedures, while allowing academic divisions sufficient flexibility to administer their award programs in a manner appropriate to their individual needs and objectives.
- c) This Policy supersedes the Policy on Student Awards, approved by the Governing Council on June 19, 1986, and governs the administration of all awards established in the University regardless of the original date of their establishment.
- d) Section 9 establishes the University's response to requests from external awarding bodies for administrative support with respect to awards. Such support may include: publicity, collection of application forms, confirmation and monitoring of registration status, and payment.
- e) The Administrative Interpretation appended to this Policy provides specific administrative details concerning monetary values and payment procedures for awards. Periodic amendments to these procedures may be made by the University Registrar in consultation with the academic divisions and shall be reported to the Academic Board, through its appropriate committee, for information.

## 2. Definitions

### **Award -**

- i. any scholarship, fellowship, prize, grant or bursary; or,
- ii. a generic term including any monetary award based on a combination of academic and non-academic criteria for which none of the following terms are appropriate.

**Grant or Bursary** - a monetary award based primarily on financial need. (Although the University has historically used the term "bursary", "grant" is preferred as being more transparent to students.)

**Fellowship** - a monetary award, normally given to a graduate student, based on general academic excellence alone or in combination with financial need, having a fixed minimum value.

**OSAP** - the Ontario Student Assistance Program

**Outside Award** - an award given to a student of the University by an external agency. (The University often shares in the advertisement and/or the payment of such awards.)

**Prize** - a monetary award of small value or a non-monetary award based on general academic excellence, or on proficiency in a specific area of study or competition; if monetary, having a fixed maximum value.

**Scholarship** - a monetary award, normally given to an undergraduate student, based on general academic excellence or on excellence in a specific subject or group of subjects, alone or in combination with financial need, having a fixed minimum value.

Awards may be funded from restricted funds resulting from donations, from the University's operating budget, or from a combination thereof. These definitions apply regardless of the source of awards.

The maximum value of an undergraduate prize and the minimum value of an undergraduate scholarship shall be determined by the University Registrar in consultation with academic divisions; the maximum value of a graduate prize and the minimum value of a graduate fellowship shall be determined by the School of Graduate Studies.

### 3. Statement of Principles

- a) The fundamental priorities and principles of the University's student aid policies are established by the Policy on Student Financial Support (1998). The terms and conditions of awards established by the University will:
  - i) reflect one or more of those priorities, although they may also recognize non-academic achievements which the University or a division of the University deems worthy of consideration;
  - ii) be free of criteria based on personal characteristics such as race, ancestry, colour, ethnic origin, sex, creed, age, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, or handicap.
- b) During the period from 1996 to 1999, many endowed awards were established under the terms of the Government of Ontario's Ontario Student Opportunity Trust Fund (OSOTF). These endowments were made up of three equal parts: the original donation; the Government's OSOTF match; and, the University's match. The terms for these awards are, and will remain, in compliance with the Government's OSOTF guidelines.
- c) Notwithstanding section 3(a) and in order to ensure accessibility, the University may from time to time establish awards specifically intended to improve the participation of particular groups of students. The terms of such awards will reflect one or more of the primary purposes described in the Policy on Student Financial Support, and conform to the goals and objectives of the University and of the division concerned. The terms will include a provision for on-going review and provide for alternative uses of the funds once the specific purpose has been met.

### 4. Establishment of Awards

- a) In order to be constituted as an established University award, an award must meet the following criteria:
  - i) approval of the terms and conditions on behalf of the Governing Council by the appropriate officer, Committee, or body;
  - ii) confirmation by the University Registrar that the terms and conditions are in compliance with this Policy;

- b)
  - i) The terms and conditions of all awards will be consistent with the Statement of Principles enunciated in Section 3 of this Policy.
  - ii) The terms and conditions of a proposed award should take into consideration the wishes of the donor and the preferences of the academic division in which the award is to be established. The terms and conditions shall be approved by the council of the division concerned, or by the University Registrar in the case of general University awards.
  - iii) Where there is a lack of conformity or uncertainty as to conformity between the proposed terms and conditions of an award and the principles contained in this Policy, or where the acceptance of an award may be contrary to the interests of the University, the University Registrar will seek a decision from the Academic Board or its appropriate committee, which will have the authority, in circumstances which it considers to be exceptional, to accept and approve a non-conforming award on such terms and conditions as it may determine.
- c) Upon approval as above, an award is thereupon established and its establishment shall be confirmed by the University Registrar to the donor and the council of the academic division concerned. The terms and conditions of all established awards shall be recorded in the Office of Admissions and Awards.
- d) The terms and conditions of established awards essentially represent a formal agreement between the donor and the Governing Council. Amendments to those terms and conditions therefore require the full agreement of both parties. The approval process for amendments will be the same as if the award were being established *de novo*.

## 5. Granting of Awards

- a) The awarding body, on behalf of the Governing Council, is the council of the academic division in which an award is established, or, in the case of general University awards, the Office of Admissions and Awards or other appropriate University department as designated by the Governing Council.
- b) While a donor and/or his/her representatives may, with the approval of the awarding body concerned, participate in the selection process, the final choice of recipients will rest in the hands of the awarding body on behalf of the Governing Council.
- c) For awards requiring that the student demonstrate financial need, and for the purpose of implementing the guarantee in the Policy on Student Financial Support, there is to be a common mechanism of needs assessment, based on the OSAP mechanism with appropriate modifications as determined by the Vice-Provost, Students and the University Registrar in consultation with the academic divisions of the University. This mechanism will also allow for students to apply for aid in meeting needs that may not be captured by the common needs assessment.
- d) For undergraduate awards, unless it is otherwise prescribed in the terms of an award, students will be considered for awards without reference to their current course load; however, a prospective course load may be specified as a condition of entitlement to the full monetary value of the award.

## **6. Cancellation of Awards**

Students who withdraw, reduce their course load or otherwise alter their program of study may be required to forfeit all or part of their award. The decision will be made by the awarding body, and will be based on the terms of the award, the circumstances leading to the student's decision, and the educational costs already incurred. A cancelled award will take the form of a charge against the student's University fees account.

## **7. Reporting**

The University Registrar shall report all new, amended, withdrawn, or lapsed awards to the academic division(s) concerned and annually to the Academic Board through its appropriate committee.

## **8. Access to Awards Information**

Applications for awards, supporting documentation such as transcripts and letters of reference, and responses to applications shall be held by the academic division or by the Office of Admissions and Awards in accordance with the Governing Council's Policy on Access to Student Academic Records. That policy will also govern the information provided to donors concerning award recipients.

## **9. Outside Awards**

The University may provide assistance to external agencies offering awards where to do so may potentially benefit students at the University. Requests will normally be evaluated by analogy to section 3 of this policy; however, it is recognized that, in order to meet their particular objectives, special-interest groups may impose restrictions on awards which the University itself would not accept. Such requests shall be considered individually by the University Registrar, on the basis of the type and purpose of the restriction and the potential benefit or detriment to students and to the University.

## APPENDIX I

## ADMINISTRATIVE INTERPRETATION

## 1. Payment of Awards

(a) Scholarships, fellowships, and graduate prizes will normally be paid after the recipient has registered in the subsequent winter session in an academic program in which the award is tenable. The time(s) and method of payment are at the discretion of the awarding body, and must be explicitly stated in the award letter to the recipient.

(b) Payment of undergraduate prizes (awards of up to \$1,000) and those awards which are made to graduating students will not be contingent upon re-registration.

(c) Grants and bursaries will be paid as soon as possible after the recipient is selected.

(d) The normal method of payment will be as a credit to the student's University fees account. The awarding body may, however, specify that outstanding charges not be deducted before a payment is made to the student.

## 2. Presentation of Non-Monetary Awards

It is the responsibility of the academic division in which an award is established, or of the Office of Admissions and Awards in the case of University awards, to arrange for appropriate presentation of medals, book prizes and other non-monetary awards.

## 3. Award Naming Thresholds

Donors who wish to establish named University of Toronto awards will normally be expected to meet the following minimum levels of endowment:

- i. Undergraduate: an endowment of \$10,000
- ii. Graduate: an endowment of \$25,000

The University encourages award donors to consider endowing gifts intended to support awards. In the event that a donor of a significant amount wishes to

establish a named annually funded award, the donor will be expected to commit to providing at least \$1,000 for an undergraduate award, or \$2,500 for a graduate award, for a period of no less than ten years.

Donors may designate smaller gifts to general award funds in particular divisions of the University, where the gifts will be used for awards on terms and conditions determined by the division. Although these gifts will not be named, such donors will receive appropriate recognition from the division and the University.

Memorial funds and funds established in honour of individuals will be exceptions to these thresholds. Other exceptions may be made at the discretion of the University Registrar or the Director of Alumni and Development.

#### 4. Stewardship

The primary responsibility for ensuring that donors receive annual information about the awards they have established, as provided in the terms and conditions for each award, belongs to the academic division in which the award is established. For general university awards, the responsibility is shared by the University Registrar and the Director of Alumni and Development.