

# Vuntut Gwitchin Government Post-Secondary Education and Trades Funding Policy



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*TABLE OF CONTENTS*

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**TABLE OF CONTENTS.....1**

**A. APPLICATION .....2**

**B. POLICY STATEMENT .....2**

**C. PURPOSE.....2**

**D. DEFINITIONS.....2**

**E. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.....3**

**F. CONFLICT OF INTEREST .....5**

**G. FUNDING AVAILABILITY .....5**

**H. NATURE OF ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE AND GENERAL CRITERIA.....5**

**I. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.....6**

**J. CRITERIA FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE: Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy (ASETS) .....7**

**K. SUSPENSION OR TERMINATION OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.....7**

**L. SCHOLARSHIPS .....8**

**M. APPLICATIONS .....8**

**N. DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS.....9**

**O. APPEALS OF DECISIONS.....9**

## *A. APPLICATION*

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This Policy applies to Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation citizens who have applied for funding and wish to further their post secondary, developmental studies or trades education.

## *B. POLICY STATEMENT*

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The creation of this Policy comes from the Vuntut Gwitchin Government's objective to provide its citizens with an education policy that is open, easily accessible and meets the needs of Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation citizens who are interested in furthering their education.

## *C. PURPOSE*

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The Policy is meant to maintain and establish consistent allocation standards for Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation citizens who are accessing funding resources to further their education.

## *D. DEFINITIONS*

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**Citizen** is a person enrolled under the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation land claim agreement and enrolled as Status under the federal Indian Act.

**Dependent** is a person who is 17 years of age & under. A Dependent can also be a person who, for medical reasons, is wholly dependent on the parent or guardian and is unable to live alone. The applicant is the parent or guardian of the dependent.

**Dependent Spouse** is a person married to or in a common-law relationship with the student who is unable to work for diagnosed physical or mental reasons.

**Educational Institution** in this Policy refers to an accredited educational institution or facility such as a Vocational or Trade School, College, University or any other recognized, accepted institution from which the student can obtain a Post-Secondary Education Certificate, Diploma or University Degree. Private universities, colleges or trade schools will not be funded.

**Full-Time Student** is a person enrolled in three (3) or more courses (9 credits) per term or enrolled full-time as designated by the educational institution the student is attending.

**Immediate Family** members are: father, mother, brother, sister, son, daughter, spouse, grandmother or grandfather and immediate family members of the approved applicant's spouse or common law partner.

**Living Allowance** is the amount allocated to approved applicants based on the chart in Section I Financial Assistance for living expenses while attending school.

**Non-status** Person is a person not eligible for status under the federal Indian Act. Non-status persons can be registered under a Yukon land claim agreement.

**Part-Time Student** is a person enrolled in two (2) or less courses (6 credits) per term unless otherwise designated by the educational institution the student is attending.

**Post-Secondary Education/ASETS Coordinator** is the Vuntut Gwitchin Government staff member responsible for administering post-secondary and ASETS funding.

**Regular Funding** is educational funding administered by Vuntut Gwitchin Government to approved applicants detailed under Section I, Financial Assistance.

**Resident** is a person who has lived in the location for 4 consecutive months or more.

**Status Person** is a person enrolled under the federal Indian Act.

**Student** is a Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation citizen who is enrolled in a recognized educational institution to upgrade or further their education to obtain a certificate, diploma, or degree at a College, Vocational School, Trade School, or University.

**Top Up** is additional funding provided by Vuntut Gwitchin Government to approved applicants who are eligible. (See table under Section I, Financial Assistance.)

**Tuition** outlined in this Policy includes fees for registration in order to take the program set by the educational institution.

**Travel** is movement as required to attend an educational institution outside the area where the student resides.

**Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation Chief and Council** consists of those individuals elected by Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation citizens. This is referred to as Chief and Council in the Policy.

**Vuntut Gwitchin Government Education Committee** consists of those individuals residing in Old Crow and appointed to the Vuntut Gwitchin Government Education Committee by Chief and Council.

**Vuntut Gwitchin Government Post-Secondary Education and Trades Funding Policy** is the Vuntut Gwitchin Government post-secondary education and trades funding policy adopted by Chief and Council and administered by the Vuntut Gwitchin Government. This will be referred to from here on as the Policy.

**Yukon Region** applies to all Yukon communities including Inuvik, NWT

## ***E. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES***

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### **The Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation Chief and Council:**

- Ensure the Education Policy is fair and beneficial to all Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation citizens who wish to pursue their education;
- Appoint an Education Committee composed of five (5) individuals including at least one Vuntut Gwitchin Government employee.
- Hear all appeals and make the final decisions;
- Meet with the Education Committee as necessary.

### **The Education Committee:**

The Education Committee consists of five (5) individuals appointed by Chief and Council including at least one employee of Vuntut Gwitchin Government, which will be the Post-Secondary Education/ASETS Coordinator. The Members shall be appointed for a term of two (2 years).

**The Education Committee shall:**

- Appoint one (1) member of the Education Committee as the Chairperson;
- All persons have voting rights except the Post-Secondary Education/ASETS Coordinator. The Education Committee shall strive to reach consensus. The Post-Secondary Education/ASETS Coordinator may vote to break a tie vote.
- Meet once per month, or as required, to perform and administer the roles and responsibilities outlined in this Policy;
- Form sub committees as needed;
- Review and make recommendations for improvements and changes to the Policy, in the administration, funding allocations and other issues regarding the programs to the Chief and Council;
- Review all incoming applications to ensure they meet the specified criteria in the Policy;
- Determine eligible applicants are chosen for Financial Assistance or Scholarships based on the criteria of the Policy;
- Review and recommend funding levels as required.
- Ensure successful applicants follow the requirements of the Policy;
- Maintain the confidentiality of all applicants.

**Director of Education shall:**

- Implement the Policy;
- Prepare necessary Policy and program recommendations, reports (i.e funding applications, operations, annual reports) and other written or oral submissions for the Chairperson to present to the Chief and Council for review;

**The Chairperson shall:**

- Call the meeting if there is a quorum (3 members)
- Ensure all applications are properly processed;
- Present recommendations to Chief and Council;
- Prepare necessary policies, reports and other written or oral submissions that were approved by the Education Committee for review by Chief and Council;
- Attend all appeal hearings to represent the Education Committee's decision and make recommendations to Chief and Council.

**Post-Secondary Education/ASETS Coordinator shall:**

- Provide contact for the Education Committee and students;
- Prepare an agenda prior to each meeting and ensuring that each Education Committee member has a copy of the minutes and agenda prior to the start of each meeting;
- Record minutes at the committee meetings and following up on action items from the meetings;
- Ensure Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation citizens are aware of public meeting times, places and dates;
- Assist the Chairperson in the preparing of policies, reports and other written submissions for Chief and Council's review.
- Coordinate the meetings;
- Ensure minutes are kept of all meetings;
- Ensure applicants are informed of the Education Committee's decisions within seven (7) days of any decisions made;

## *F. CONFLICT OF INTEREST*

Education Committee Members who are immediate family of Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation citizens applying for funding through the Policy shall declare a conflict of interest. The member will excuse him or herself from any discussions regarding the candidates' application and will not take part in the decision being made regarding the application. A member can self-declare a conflict of interest if he/she perceives the decision made would be impacted by their relationship with the applicant.

## *G. FUNDING AVAILABILITY*

Students are encouraged to seek funding from other agencies. The amount of Financial Assistance or Scholarships awarded will depend on the funding available and will be awarded at the discretion of the Education Committee, as per the Policy guidelines. When funding is limited criteria such as higher marks and how close the student is to completing the program will be taken into account.

## *H. NATURE OF ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE AND GENERAL CRITERIA*

Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation citizens can apply for Financial Assistance, Scholarships or both under the Policy. Scholarships will only be awarded provided a student is entering into full time studies at an educational institution as outlined in section D– Definitions.

To be considered for financial assistance under the Policy, the student must be enrolled under the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation Final Agreement and be accepted into an educational institution.

Normally students are required to take and complete their upgrading College Prep Courses in their home community if possible. At the discretion of the Education Committee this requirement may be waived. The funding available for College Prep will normally not exceed two (2) terms or one (1) year. At the discretion of the Education Committee this may be extended to a maximum of two (2) years.

The duration of financial assistance will be in accordance with the official length of the program that the student are enrolled in as defined by the educational institution the student is attending. Funding for students who switch programs will be determined by the number of transferable credits and the amount of funding already received.

Students are required to submit transcripts at the end of each academic year for which they received funding.

Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation will fund a student in a field of study for the following years:

2 years for Upgrading/Developmental Studies

2 years for College Prep

5 years for College/University

Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation will consider applications for various needs for the following:

2 years for Masters

2 + years for PHD

## I. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The amount of assistance allocated to an approved applicant for Living Allowance is according to the following rates and is dependent upon the funding available.

Living Situation	Expense Category	YT	NT	NU	NL	PE	NS	NB	QC	ON	MB	SK	AB	BC
<b>Student Away from Home</b>														
	<b>Total Monthly Living Allowance</b>	948	1160	1163	693	697	753	697	751	901	802	846	833	940
	<b>Total Monthly Living Allowance including Top Up</b>	1148	1360	1363	893	897	953	897	951	1101	1002	1046	1033	1140
<b>Each Dependent (Max 4)</b>														
	<b>Total Monthly Living Allowance</b>	480	648	651	362	414	442	402	439	535	489	437	491	560
	<b>Total Monthly Living Allowance including Top Up</b>	530	698	701	412	464	492	452	489	585	539	487	541	610
<b>Student Living at Home</b>														
	<b>Total Monthly Living Allowance</b>	520	516	518	410	448	444	430	446	457	461	457	492	475
	<b>Total Monthly Living Allowance including Top Up</b>	720	716	718	610	648	644	630	646	647	661	657	692	675

Table 1.1 Annually Indexed Rates According to Province or Territory of Study

	Regular Funding	Top Up Funding
VGFN Citizen, VGFN Status	✓	✓
Non Status or Status with another First Nation, VGFN Citizen		✓
VGFN Status, non VGFN Citizen	✓	

Table 1.2 Top Up and Regular Funding Eligibility

	Full Time Student, resident of Old Crow, studying outside the Yukon	Full Time Student, resident outside Yukon studying outside resident province or territory	Full Time Student, studying within resident province or territory, outside 300 km radius	Part Time Student	College Prep or Upgrading, with resident program available
Living Allowance	✓	✓	✓	\$0	✓
Travel – <b>per year</b>	\$3000	\$2000	\$1000	\$0	\$0
Tuition – course fees, activity and registration fees	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Books – fixed rate <b>per term</b> of \$500	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$250	\$500
Childcare – dependent child(ren) under 5 years of age, max. \$200/month at a <b>licensed</b> facility	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Table 1.3 Full and Part Time Student Funding Eligibility

***J. CRITERIA FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE: Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy (ASETS)***

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Students eligible to apply under the ASETS program shall include:

- a) All citizens or members of the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation who reside in the Yukon Territory and
- b) all other Aboriginal persons, including Inuit, Metis, and members of other First Nations regardless of their status under the Indian Act, who are residing in the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation community (Old Crow).

Criteria for workshops and trades training:

- Training must be taken in place of residence if available.
- Student must be accepted or enrolled in a recognized educational institution.
- Training must be required for current employment.
- Training must be needed for advancement in current employment.
- Training must increase the student's employability.

***K. SUSPENSION OR TERMINATION OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE***

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If a student's attendance and performance indicate failure to fulfill his or her responsibility as a sponsored student including:

- unsatisfactory performance,



- failed courses,
- unexcused absences and
- withdrawal from courses

the Vuntut Gwitchin Education Committee will take the following action:

1. Written warning, or email stating time period to rectify situation.
2. Re-evaluation of situation.
3. If situation persists, funding will be withdrawn.

The student shall inform the Post-Secondary Education/ASETS Coordinator in writing if he or she is suspended, released, or will not be returning for any other reason. Students who are suspended or released, or who do not complete their current studies will be required to reimburse the Vuntut Gwitchin Government Education Department for the amount received and may not be considered for further funding under the Policy. The Education Committee has the discretion to waive the reimbursement requirement if the recipient can justify why the course or program was not completed (i.e. medical or family reasons), provided the student informs the Post-Secondary Education/ASETS Coordinator as soon as possible.

Students must obtain a passing grade in order to complete their studies and remain eligible for funding. Students who fail a course are not eligible for funding to take the course again.

### *L. SCHOLARSHIPS*

The maximum of any scholarship given in one year per successful applicant will be one thousand (\$1000) Dollars.

Scholarships available:

- **General**
- **Administration**
- **Natural Resource**
- **Health & Social**
- **Finance**
- **Education**
- **Arts**

Approved applicants are eligible to apply for a scholarship provided they meet the following criteria:

- Minimum average of 60%
- Accepted into a eligible institution
- Full time
- Letter of recommendation from a current professor or instructor

The deadline to apply for these scholarships is January 15<sup>th</sup> each year. Scholarship applications are available from the VGG Education office in Old Crow, the VGG office in Whitehorse or online at [www.vgfn.ca/education](http://www.vgfn.ca/education).

### *M. APPLICATIONS*

- If requested, and where possible, the Vuntut Gwitchin Government Post-Secondary Education/ASETS Coordinator will assist Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation citizens in applying for funding under the Policy.
- Application forms shall be available from the Vuntut Gwitchin Government Education office in Old Crow, at the VGG office in Whitehorse or at [www.vgfn.ca/education](http://www.vgfn.ca/education).
- Application forms that are incomplete or do not have the necessary information attached will not be considered.
- Late applications can be deferred to the next deadline at the request of the student.

### ***N. DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS***

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Applications must be complete and be received by the Post-Secondary Education/ASETS Coordinator by the deadline.

<b>Program</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
Fall programs at Yukon College	May 15th of each year
Fall programs at other educational institutions	June 15 <sup>th</sup> of each year
Winter programs for all educational institutions	November 15th of each year
Summer programs at all educational institutions	April 15 <sup>th</sup> of each year
Alice Frost Community Campus	Year round, no deadline

### ***O. APPEALS OF DECISIONS***

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Should an applicant disagree with the Education Committee's decision, he or she has the right to appeal the decision to Chief & Council. The appeal procedure is as follows:

- The appeal must be in writing and must outline the reason for appealing and state where the Education Committee did not follow the Policy;
- The appeal must be in the hands of the Post-Secondary Education/ASETS Coordinator no later than 14 days from the date the candidate was notified of the Committee's decision;
- The applicant will be notified by Chief & Council of the date of the appeal review. .
- Where possible, all appeal hearings will be held within fourteen (14) days of receiving the appeal;
- Chief & Council will respond to the applicant in writing within seven (7) days of hearing the appeal.
- All the decisions of the Chief & Council shall be final.