

SYNCRUDE HIGHER EDUCATION AWARDS PROGRAM (SHEAP)

Frequently Asked Questions

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Who is Universities Canada?	2
2. Where can I get the guidelines and apply?	2
3. When do I apply for the award?.....	2
4. Who can apply for the award?.....	2
5. How many awards can I qualify for?	3
6. What qualifies as two years of academic study?.....	3
7. What if I complete my Degree or Diploma in less time than anticipated?	4
8. What is an official transcript?.....	4
9. How do I apply for renewal of my award?	4
10. Is the award taxable?	4
11. What if I am enrolled in a Co-op Program?.....	4
12. When and how will I receive my Award?.....	4
13. Is there a maximum age limit of eligibility?.....	5
14. Are married persons eligible for SHEAP financial support?.....	5
15. What if I attended post-secondary education but did not successfully pass all my courses?.....	5
16. What if I withdraw from a full semester or originally enroll in the full Academic Year, but do not return for the second semester?	5
17. What is my Account Number?.....	6
18. How can I verify the status of my award online?	6
19. I have lost my password, what do I do?	6
20. My account has been locked, how do I re-activate it?	6
21. Can my parents inquire about the status of my application/renewal?.....	6
22. What if I have a disability, or learning disability, that prevents me from enrolling in a full-time course load?	6
23. Am I eligible for more than one award per semester if both of my parents/step parents work at Syncrude?	7

1. Who is Universities Canada?

For almost 50 years, Universities Canada has been managing scholarship programs and distributing millions of scholarship dollars to students in pursuing postsecondary education. Universities Canada administers the SHEAP program on behalf of Syncrude Canada Ltd. They will be your main contact throughout this process.

Their contact information is as follows:

Universities Canada
Ref: Syncrude Higher Education Awards Program
1710-350 Albert Street
OTTAWA, ON K1R 1B1
Tel.: (613) 563-1236
E-mail: awards@univcan.ca

2. Where can I get the guidelines and apply?

- The SHEAP Program Guidelines are located in the Awards for Children of Employees page under the Scholarships and Awards section of www.syncrude.ca
 - The Syncrude Employee (Parent) can also find this information on Syncrude's intranet via www.myHRSyncrude.com > Menu > Myself > Company Info > HR Literacy, Other Programs > Higher Education Awards Program (SHEAP).
 - If you are a New Applicant, you can Apply Online, see Article 10 ("Application and Renewal Procedures") of the SHEAP Program Guidelines.
 - If you are a Renewing Applicant – please contact Universities Canada to receive your renewal package.
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3. When do I apply for the award?

Provided you meet all the eligibility requirements as outlined in the SHEAP Program Guidelines, the deadline for applications is as follows:

- For the academic session commencing in September: November 15 of that year
 - For the academic session commencing in January: February 15 of that year
 - For the academic session commencing in May: June 15 of that year
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4. Who can apply for the award?

In order to be eligible for SHEAP financial support, an applicant must be:

- i. A naturally born child, stepchild, legally adopted child, or a child under legal guardianship of an Eligible Syncrude Employee. For the purposes of the SHEAP Program Guidelines, Eligible Syncrude Employee is defined as a current, permanent employee of Syncrude Canada Ltd.; former, permanent employee of Syncrude or Northward who attained official annuitant status and who is receiving a pension from either company; or former, permanent employee of Syncrude or Northward who died while employed. Please review Absences & Leaves Benefit Schedule regarding eligibility during a company leave of absence.

- ii. Financially dependent on the Eligible Syncrude Employee (or his or her Estate), or the surviving spouse regardless of the dependent's place of residence.
- iii. Entering into or already enrolled in full-time studies in a degree or diploma program at an Eligible Education Institution. For the purposes of the SHEAP Program Guidelines, Eligible Education Institution is defined as a Canadian, American or foreign educational institution that has recognized degree/diploma-granting powers, or their affiliates (e.g. universities, colleges, CEGEPs - technical diploma). For foreign postsecondary institutions, the applicant may be required to provide Universities Canada with documentation proving that the institution is properly accredited.
- iv. Under the age of 25 on September 1st of the Academic Year the application is made, or incapable of self-sustaining employment because of mental or physical disability, if the disability commenced while the child was a dependent under the age of 25

Applicants can apply for SHEAP financial support in the academic semester or term immediately following an Eligible Syncrude Employee's permanent hire date, provided that the applicant meets the other eligibility criteria. For further information about application deadlines, see Article 10 ("Application and Renewal Procedures") of the SHEAP Program Guidelines.

5. How many awards can I qualify for?

- Eligible applicants can receive SHEAP financial support of \$1,200 CAD per academic semester / term, up to a maximum of \$2,400 CAD per Academic Year;
- For the purposes of the SHEAP Program Guidelines, an Academic Year begins in September and ends in August of the next calendar year;
- For undergraduate studies, eligible applicants can potentially receive SHEAP financial support for a maximum of:
 - two years if pursuing studies at the college level (total potential SHEAP financial support available is \$4,800 CAD over 2 Academic Years); or
 - four years if pursuing studies at the university level, or a combination of a university level studies and college level studies (total potential SHEAP financial support available is \$9,600 CAD over 4 Academic Years).
- For graduate studies and studies towards a professional degree such as Law, Medicine, etc., SHEAP financial support is available for a period of two years over and above any financial support received while pursuing college level or university undergraduate studies (total potential SHEAP financial support available is \$4,800 CAD over 2 Academic Years -- in addition to undergraduate support).

6. What qualifies as two years of academic study?

An Academic Year is understood to begin in September and end in August. Two years of academic study means two regular school years of in-class instruction and study. Some university and college programs incorporate co-op, internship or practicum semesters. These are considered work terms and not academic terms.

A program with one year of academic studies and one year of work placement experience does not meet the two-year full-time academic study requirement. A program that condenses two or more years of academic study into a shorter time period may qualify – these will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Examples of programs that do not qualify under the scholarship guidelines are: Power Engineering Co-op at Keyano College or Process Operator Co-op at Keyano College. Both programs consist of one year of classroom and one year of work placement, and are not a degree or diploma program.

7. What if I complete my Degree or Diploma in less time than anticipated?

Payments are made based on enrolment for the entire Academic Year. For example, if you complete a 4-year university degree in 3.5 years, and during your last year you only attended one semester and received payment of \$1,200 CAD, you would not be entitled to the remaining \$1,200 CAD. Payment of the award is based on your statement of fees and proof of registration for the entire Academic Year, regardless if additional courses were taken throughout the program to complete the degree in less time.

8. What is an official transcript?

An official transcript will be considered acceptable if it meets the following criteria:

- i. The transcript is issued directly by the eligible institution (i.e. the Registrar) and bears the appropriate signature(s) and/or seal of the institution.
- ii. The transcript indicates the final results of the student's performance.

Web based transcript print-outs or interim results are not considered acceptable.

9. How do I apply for renewal of my award?

Each year (June/July), Universities Canada will send the renewal notice by email to all students in the program. Award recipients must complete the online renewal process using the portal. It is important to advise Universities Canada if you change your email address. If you do not receive your renewal notice, please contact Universities Canada.

10. Is the award taxable?

The award is considered other income and could be taxable depending on the students' annual income. A T4A slip will be issued to each student. In most cases however, students will not have sufficient earnings to be required to pay any tax. The award is considered as income to the student and not the parent.

11. What if I am enrolled in a Co-op Program?

Students registered in co-op or work placement terms are not eligible to receive a payment for those semesters, however, are eligible for SHEAP financial support for the semester/term(s) in which they are enrolled in full-time studies.

To receive a Syncrude scholarship payment, the student must provide the required documentation for full-time academic studies (as outlined in the SHEAP Guidelines). Co-op students will also need to submit a co-op schedule in addition to this documentation.

12. When and how will I receive my Award?

It will take approximately 9 weeks from the time the completed* application or renewal package is received by Universities Canada to when you will receive the award in your bank account.

*a complete application or renewal package includes all required supporting documentation such as statement of fees, proof of registration and official transcript (where applicable)

Once the award amount is approved by Syncrude Canada Ltd., the payment of the award will be sent by Universities Canada. It will be sent by electronic fund transfer (EFT) to the bank account provided by the award holder. It is important to keep your banking information updated in your file.

Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) payments can only be made to a Canadian bank account. Please note that the bank account must be in the student's name and not the parent's.

13. Is there a maximum age limit of eligibility?

The applicant must be under the age of 25 on September 1st of the Academic Year the application is made, or incapable of self-sustaining employment because of mental or physical disability, if the disability commenced while the child was a dependent under the age of 25.

14. Are married persons eligible for SHEAP financial support?

Married persons are not considered financially dependent and therefore do not meet the eligibility criteria for SHEAP financial support; however, if an otherwise eligible dependent who is receiving SHEAP financial support is married part way through an Academic Year, that person will continue to receive SHEAP financial support for the balance of the Academic Year. The applicant will not be eligible for SHEAP financial support in the Academic Year following the year in which he or she was married.

15. What if I attended post-secondary education but did not successfully pass all my courses?

If you received a Higher Education Award and did not successfully pass all courses during the Academic Year, your award would be suspended and you would not be eligible to receive the award for the next Academic Year. If you are in a program that is greater than 2 years, you may qualify for reinstatement of your award if you complete postsecondary studies, at your own expense for one Academic Year, while maintaining a full time status and passing all courses.

If you have not received a Higher Education Award and you are a new applicant, we do not base eligibility on previous postsecondary studies. For example, if you enrolled in a program after high school and did not complete the program, you could still apply for the Award as a new applicant where successfully completing postsecondary studies is not considered.

16. What if I withdraw from a full semester or originally enroll in the full Academic Year, but do not return for the second semester?

If for any reason you do not attend classes or withdraw from your post-secondary institution, it is your responsibility to request a refund. The refund must be returned to Universities Canada, c/o the SHEAP program administrator at the address indicated in the guidelines.

If you do not follow this process, upon renewal of your award for the next Academic Year – you would not be eligible for the payment of the amount already awarded as it was already awarded to you in the previous year where you did not attend full-time studies.

Note: The company reserves the right to request the return from the student or parent of any awarded amount not used to pursue studies at a qualifying post-secondary institution.

17. What is my Account Number?

The Account Number is unique for each applicant to a scholarship program. It is composed of twelve digits, the first four representing the year an applicant has applied for the scholarship, the next three digits representing the company code, the last five digits represents the file number assigned to a specific individual (example: 201231000005).

18. How can I verify the status of my award online?

You can verify the status of your application, track the status of your renewal and upcoming payments through your online account 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. To do so, you need to follow these simple instructions:

1. Visit our new scholarship management portal at <https://portal.scholarshippartners.ca>
2. Under Login, enter your email address and password *

* if you do not have a password, you will need to click on the link marked as “Forgot Password?”. Upon entering your email address, you will receive an email with a temporary password and instruction on how to reset your login credentials. Once your password has been reset, you will be required to complete your profile and will be able to access your online account.

It is strongly recommended that you verify your account to ensure that all supporting documentation has been received and approved.

Once you have checked your status online, and if you still have more questions, please call Universities Canada at 613-563-1236 or send your inquiry directly to Universities Canada: awards@univcan.ca.

19. I have lost my password, what do I do?

Visit Universities Canada’s Scholarship Partners Canada scholarship management portal at <https://portal.scholarshippartners.ca>. From there, you will need to click on the link marked as “Forgot Password?”. Upon entering your email address, you will receive an email with a temporary password and instruction on how to reset your login credentials.

20. My account has been locked, how do I re-activate it?

If you attempt to login to the system using an incorrect password, your session will be terminated for security reasons after three attempts. To re-activate your account, contact Universities Canada: awards@univcan.ca.

21. Can my parents inquire about the status of my application/renewal?

The information in your file will not be released to anyone else other than you and the person(s) you authorize to access the information in your file. To do so, please complete the Authorization for the Distribution of Personal Information section of your application/renewal. You may contact Universities Canada to add someone or modify your list of authorized person(s) at any time.

22. What if I have a disability, or learning disability, that prevents me from enrolling in a full-time course load?

Contact Universities Canada for further information.

23. Am I eligible for more than one award per semester if both of my parents/step parents work at Syncrude?

A student cannot receive more than one SHEAP award in a term/semester, even if they have more than one parent working at Syncrude. The Program Guidelines (Part 2) and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's) (Part 5) indicate that the awards are granted based on the level of education (college, undergraduate or graduate) and the number of academic terms/semesters attended full time (a minimum of two academic years are required). It is clearly stated that eligible applicants may receive up to \$1,200 CAD per academic semester/term, up to a maximum of \$2,400 CAD per academic year. The SHEAP is intended to provide one award to each eligible student for each academic term/semester. Therefore, whether or not a student has more than one parent who is a Syncrude employee is not a consideration for eligibility.