

Tuition rebate for Ottawa students

ANDREW DIRIENZO

Students can now apply for a 30 per cent cut to their tuition costs on the OSAP website thanks to Dalton McGuinty's campaign promise from the previous provincial election.

Students can log in to the OSAP site, or create a new account if they don't already have one, and fill out the required information. In doing so, the information will determine whether or not the student is eligible for the tuition cut.

"This is definitely something I would want to take advantage of," said Jeff Heika, police foundations student. "I think it's a great idea because hey, who wouldn't want their tuition costs cut."

The cut, although enticing, can be misinterpreted because of the restrictions. In order to qualify, applicants must be no more than four years out of high school, they must be enrolled in a full-time program at an Ontario university or college and their parents must not have a higher combined income than \$160,000.

Alex Hamelin, bachelor of applied business student, said he thinks it is unfair that only people who are no more than four years out of high school are eligible. "I think it's one thing if they take a bunch of years off for no reason," he said. "But if they take those years off because they don't know

what program they want to take then it's different."

Others, however, agree with the regulations set out. Ashley Woods, business administration student, thinks it's fair that only people who are just out of high school get the tuition cut. She said she feels that having four years off is enough time to get a job and save up enough money to pay for school.

Some students are also unhappy about the fact that the income of a student's parents is a factor in determining eligibility.

Woods said that if the parents' income is more than \$160,000 but they don't give their kid any money, it's not fair that a student be turned down.

"I do and I don't think it's fair," said Heika. "It all depends on whether or not your parents are paying for your tuition."

The OSAP site says college and university degree students can save up to \$800 per semester and college diploma and certificate students can save up to \$300 per semester.

One thing the OSAP site does not clearly mention is when – and if – a student will receive any money. "I think more should be done to notify a student if they qualify, even if it's just an email saying so," said Heika. "It's a lot better and causes less stress rather than hoping you get a cheque in the mail."

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Jeff Heika
Police Foundations



ANDREW DIRIENZO PHOTO

An Algonquin student studies in the library. Eligible students can apply for a 30 per cent tuition rebate.

While the tuition cut is fairly new, there isn't much done in terms of advertising before students could apply.

"Definitely more should have been done to advertise the tuition cut," said Hamelin.