What's the program?

The Queen Elizabeth II Aiming for the Top scholarship program (formerly Aiming for the Top) is an Ontario Government program that recognizes hard working students who earn top marks. They deserve special recognition and support for their outstanding achievement. Students who have achieved the best marks at Ontario high schools will be recognized and celebrated through this scholarship.

Winners may receive a tuition scholarship worth up to a maximum of $3,500 per year. Students who keep their grades up can receive the scholarship for up to four years.

This is part of the government’s commitment to help every willing and motivated student receive a postsecondary education.

Who's eligible?

To be considered for a scholarship:

- you must apply;
- you must be an Ontario resident, as defined by Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP);
- you must graduate from an Ontario high school in 2003 and achieve academic excellence;
- you must apply to attend a publicly funded Ontario university or college of applied arts and technology on a full-time basis, through the Ontario Universities’ Application Centre or the Ontario College Application Services; or apply to attend another Ontario postsecondary institution (for example, a private career college) that is approved for purposes of this scholarship program;
- you will be a full-time postsecondary student in 2003-2004.

Check School Search on the OSAP website to see if the institution you plan to attend is approved for purposes of this scholarship.

How much are the scholarships worth?

The amount of your scholarship will be determined based on the information you provide about your financial resources in your application. The maximum scholarship of $3,500 will go to students with high financial need. The minimum scholarship that you can receive is $100.

The scholarship cannot exceed your actual tuition plus compulsory fees.

Ingrid qualifies for the maximum scholarship of $3,500. She meets the academic conditions for renewal and over the course of her four-year program she receives a total of $14,000 through the Queen Elizabeth II Aiming for the Top scholarship.

How do I apply?

Apply using the 2003-2004 OSAP online web application for full-time students that is available on the OSAP website, at http://osap.gov.on.ca. OSAP paper application forms will also be available through the guidance office at your high school this spring.
How will you get my marks?

If you are applying to attend a provincially-funded university or college of applied arts and technology, we will receive your high school marks from the Ontario Universities’ Application Centre or the Ontario College Application Services. The OSAP application form will ask you to fill out your OUAC reference number or OCAS application number to be considered.

If you are applying to an approved institution other than a provincially-funded university or college of applied arts and technology, you must ask your high school to send your high school transcript for consideration. For detailed instructions on how to provide your marks, please see the Queen Elizabeth II Aiming for the Top scholarship web page on the OSAP website.

When is the deadline?

June 20, 2003 is the deadline for paper OSAP application forms to be received by the financial aid office at your postsecondary institution.

If you are applying using the OSAP on-line application, you must submit your application by June 20, 2003. The ministry will then mail you a personalized signature and declaration form for you to complete. You must ensure that this form is completed, and returned to your financial aid office by July 18, 2003 to be considered.

It is your responsibility to meet the scholarship’s deadlines. Applications that are received late will not be considered.

What’s the selection process?

Students graduating with the highest marks in their secondary school will be selected. The share of scholarships given out at each high school will reflect the number of students in the graduating years.

Selection will be based on the marks submitted to the application centres by your secondary school. Please note that marks from summer school courses taken in 2003 will not be considered.

What’s the standard for renewal?

This scholarship is renewable for up to four years, provided that you keep your grades up. To have your scholarship renewed, you must maintain an average of at least 80 per cent, or the equivalent in Grade Point Average (GPA) or letter grades. You must also continue to be enrolled full-time in an eligible program.

Frequently asked questions:

How can I find out whether I have been selected?

Recipients will be notified by mail in August.

How will my scholarship be paid to me?

The Ministry will forward your tuition scholarship to your college of applied arts and technology or university in August. This will be applied directly against your tuition. If you have already paid tuition, your college or university will provide you with a tuition refund for the scholarship amount.

If you attend an institution other than a provincially-funded university or college of applied arts and technology, your scholarship will be mailed to your financial aid office for you to pick up once your enrolment is confirmed.

Do I need to apply to have my scholarship renewed?

No. Previous years’ recipients will be automatically considered for renewal.

Can I be considered for this scholarship if I am going to a private career college?

Starting in 2003-04, the Ministry will approve some Ontario private postsecondary institutions for purposes of this scholarship. To be approved, private institutions will have to meet various Ministry requirements. To find out whether the private institution that you are planning to attend is approved, please check School Search on the OSAP website.
My parents’ income is high. Should I still apply for the *Queen Elizabeth II Aiming for the Top* scholarship?

If you are one of the best students in your graduating year, you should definitely apply regardless of your family’s financial circumstances.

This scholarship is intended to celebrate academic excellence and hard work. Receiving a scholarship will recognize your outstanding academic achievement.

I will also be receiving a provincial loan through OSAP. Will my *Queen Elizabeth II Aiming for the Top* scholarship affect the size of my loan?

The provincial government has increased the exemption for merit-based scholarships to $3,500 for a typical academic year on the Ontario Student Loan. Winning this scholarship will not affect your overall loan amount.

If my circumstances change and I need more money, can my scholarship be increased?

No. The size of your scholarship is set when you apply for it and the amount will not be changed in subsequent years, even if your circumstances change. However, other programs such as OSAP or student assistance offered by your university or college may respond to such changes in your situation.

Fran’s father is a waiter and her mother is a systems analyst. Their joint income is $90,000/year. Fran decides to apply for the *Queen Elizabeth II Aiming for the Top* scholarship and qualifies for a scholarship of $450. She also adds this scholarship to the achievements listed in her resume.

If my circumstances change and I have less need, will my scholarship be decreased?

Generally the size of the scholarship will not be reduced even if your circumstances change over time.

In rare circumstances, students changing from a high-tuition program to a low-tuition program may find their scholarship is affected because the scholarship is capped at actual tuition plus compulsory fees.

The value may also be reduced and a student may be required to repay some or all of the scholarship where his or her application under-reported family income.

Is my scholarship taxable?

Like all scholarships, *Queen Elizabeth II Aiming for the Top* scholarships are considered income for tax purposes and you will receive a T-4A form by the end of February. However, Ontario and the federal government will exempt from tax the first $3,000 of scholarship income each year.

If I change my program of studies will this affect my eligibility for renewal?

Changes to your program of studies will generally not affect your eligibility, provided that you meet the academic conditions for renewal. You must continue to be enrolled full-time in a designated Ontario postsecondary institution, in an eligible program.

Jane starts off in a General Arts program but then decides to study Law in her fourth year. She keeps her marks up and gets the scholarship in all four years.

Special circumstances:

Can I have my scholarship renewed if I transfer to a different postsecondary institution?

Your scholarship can be renewed if you decide to transfer to a different publicly-funded Ontario college of applied arts and technology.
or university or another approved institution. However, you are responsible for promptly notifying the financial aid office of your transfer to ensure that you continue to receive the scholarship.

### Can I defer my scholarship?

You can defer your scholarship one time and the deferral can be for up to one year. If you decide to defer receipt of a scholarship you are responsible for notifying your financial aid office and receiving their approval.

### What if I applied to start in September but I now would like to start in January?

If you are a scholarship recipient and you start your postsecondary program in January, the scholarship can be applied against your tuition at that time.

### My parents don’t want to fill out the sections of the OSAP application on family income. Can I still apply?

If you wish to be considered for the full scholarship, all sections of the OSAP application must be filled out, including sections on your family’s income. However, if you elect to simply be considered for the basic merit amount of $100, you can apply through an abbreviated application form that can be found on the OSAP website.

This abbreviated application form does not request information on your or your parents’ financial situation. It must be received by the financial aid office at your college or university by the scholarship’s application deadline in order to be considered.

### If my marks drop below 80 per cent in first year, but I improve them later, can I get my scholarship back?

Generally, students who drop below this academic requirement will lose their entitlement to the scholarship. However, if the drop in your marks resulted from exceptional circumstances, such as illness, you may be able to appeal through your university or college of applied arts and technology. If you find yourself in this situation, please contact your financial aid office for more details.

### What if the estimate of income in my application turns out to be wrong. Will my scholarship be reduced?

A student may be required to repay some or all of the scholarship where his or her application under-reported personal or family income, or in a situation of early withdrawal. Situations of early withdrawal will be handled in a manner consistent with the treatment of other scholarships.

### The application form says that names of winners will be publicized. Can I request that my name be withheld?

Yes, this information can be withheld on request. You must notify the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities in writing by September 5, 2003 at:

Queen Elizabeth II Aiming for the Top Student Support Branch, Programs Unit Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities P.O. Box 4500 189 Red River Road, 4th Floor Thunder Bay, ON P7B 6G9

or by fax to the attention of Queen Elizabeth II Aiming for the Top Scholarship, Privacy Request at (807) 343-7278.

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If you would like more information about education reform in Ontario, visit the Ministry’s website at [http://www.edu.gov.on.ca](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca) or call 1-800-387-5514