Youth in Care Tuition Waiver Program
(Questions and Answers)

Vancouver Island University (VIU) offers the Youth in Care Tuition Waiver Program to provide support for eligible students who have lived in government care in British Columbia.

Why is VIU undertaking this initiative?
VIU is a values-based institution that embraces accessibility to post-secondary education as one of its core values. In 2013 when the Representative for Children and Youth, Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond, challenged universities to offer a tuition waiver for students who grew up in the care system, VIU moved quickly to respond, taking the lead on this initiative.

Does the Tuition Waiver Program have an age cap?
There is no age cap on the VIU Youth in Care Tuition Waiver program. Youth under the age of 19 are encouraged to first talk with their social worker or any Ministry of Children and Family Development office or any delegated agency to review funding options available for youth under the age of 19.

What does the tuition waiver cover?
The tuition waiver covers tuition fees towards a student’s first certificate, diploma or degree program. VIU will continue to review additional funding needs of participating students each semester and determine whether other sources of funding are available.

Can students access the VIU Tuition Waiver and other funding sources at the same time?
Students can access the VIU Tuition Waiver Program and other types of funding supports providing they have financial shortfalls preventing them from accessing university. For more information regarding additional funding opportunities available for youth check out www.agedout.com

Must students apply for student loans before they can apply for the VIU Tuition Waiver Program?
Students are not required to apply for loans before consideration for the Tuition Waiver Program.

What happens if students have financial shortfalls while accessing the Tuition Waiver Program?
If you have financial shortfalls during your studies at VIU while accessing the Tuition Waiver Program visit the VIU Financial Aid office at your campus to discuss financial supports available to assist you.

Who is eligible?
Vancouver Island University (VIU) offers the Youth in Care Tuition Waiver Program to eligible students who have lived in care for a minimum of one year in the British Columbia care system under one of the following conditions as defined by the Child, Family and Community Service Act (CFCSA):

- Continuing Custody Order pursuant to sections 41(1)(d), 42.2(4)(d) or (7) or 49(4), (5) or 10(a) of the Act
- A former British Columbia youth in continuing custody who was in the continuing custody of a director designated under Section 91 of the Child, Family and Community Service Act (CFCSA) pursuant to that act prior to an adoption pursuant to the Adoption Act
- An Agreement with Youth pursuant to section 12.2 of the Act
- A Transfer of Custody Order pursuant to section 54.1 of the Act

If not clear on above criteria, contact student’s former social worker or any Ministry of Children and Family Development office or any delegated agency for assistance.
Is a letter required from a Social Worker confirming student’s time in care before applying?
No, student is not required to provide a letter confirming time in care. Applicants are required to sign an “Authorization for Release of Information” form and submit with their tuition waiver application.

Why the focus on Youth in Care?
Programs such as the Tuition Waiver Program are a critical piece in ensuring more youth in care can go on to access post-secondary education and the myriad of opportunities it affords, including better employment options and increased self-sufficiency.

Who is VIU working with on this project?
VIU has been working closely with the Ministry of Children and Family Development, Representative of Children and Youth, the Ministry of Advanced Education and various delegated family service authorities on this program. Discussions are ongoing with individuals and the private sector to raise funds to support this program and additional costs for students.

What has the response been like so far?
The response has been very positive and VIU continues to receive increased interest from social service agencies, foster parent networks and school divisions. VIU has currently funded over 124 students since the implementation of this program in the fall of 2013.

How would you respond to those who may be saying “why are universities like yours providing this subsidy? Isn’t this just another form of social assistance?”
VIU views this as an investment in the future by supporting a student who may not otherwise be able to afford pursuing higher education. VIU is making an investment in the economy and society. “Education is one of the most powerful ways a person can create positive change and opportunities for themselves, families, and communities.” — Ralph Nilson, President & Vice Chancellor of VIU

Interested in donating to the VIU Youth in Care Tuition Waiver program?
Annual gifts allow Vancouver Island University to provide much needed financial assistance to students pursuing their post-secondary education. Your gift has immediate, meaningful impacts on our students and allows many to remain in school to achieve their goals. If you are interested in donating to this program visit our Vancouver Island University Advancement and Alumni website at www.viu.ca/giving/index.asp

Application Deadlines:
- March 31 for the fall and/or spring semester
- October 31 for the spring and/or summer semester

Applicants will be contacted by Vancouver Island University within 4 weeks to confirm eligibility status and details of funding. VIU reserves the right to change criteria based on funding available. Late applications will be considered if there is room in the program indicated by applicant.

To learn more and to download an application visit:
https://services.viu.ca/financial-aid-awards/youth-care-tuition-waiver-program

Nanaimo Campus: 900 Fifth Street, Building 200 Room 205, Nanaimo, BC (205-740-6423)
Cowichan Campus: 2011 University Way, Duncan, BC (250-746-3509)
Parksville- Qualicum Campus: 100 Jensen Avenue East, Parksville, BC (250-248-2096)
Powell River Campus: 100-7085 Nootka Street, Powell River, BC (604-485-2878)