Funding Higher Ed: Financial Aid & Scholarships

StudentVu Survey Results

December 2025

Table of Contents

	Introduction & Method	**3**
	Key Findings	**5**
1.	**Fall 2025 Plans**	**8**
2.	**Financial Aid & Awards**	**16**
3.	**Preparedness**	**22**

Introduction & Method

Academica Group, Suzanne Tyson of Points for School, Chris Wilkins of SchoolFinder Group, and Necia Martins of Wilfrid Laurier University partnered to conduct a survey with incoming postsecondary students from across the country about affordability and financial aid and awards.

About the Survey	
Method	Online Survey
Target Audience	Incoming postsecondary students in Canada who applied to a postsecondary program for September 2025 entry.
Dates in Field	Aug 14 to Sept 3, 2025
Total Number of Completes	4,419
Analysis Notes	Data was weighted by gender, according to Statistics Canada's Postsecondary Student Information System (PSIS).

About the Respondents

Total n-size: 4,419

Gender Identity

Citizenship Status

First Generation Student

Have a Disability

Average Household Income

Key Findings

Key Findings

Application & Acceptance Decisions:

- Three-fifths (60%) of students applied to multiple institutions in Fall 2025 and just over half (54%) received more than one offer of admission, indicating an opportunity for institutions to sway student enrolment decisions with offer packages.
- Only 11% of students indicated that a scholarship/bursary or financial aid was a top reason for attending their school.
- About half of students plan to live at home while studying (51%). The most common reason for this housing choice was financial necessity (48%). Four-fifths (81%) of students said that a sufficient scholarship could have persuaded them to study away from home, with many students pointing to a scholarship of $10,000 or more.

Government Student Aid and Scholarships/Bursaries:

- Over half of respondents (56%) planned to apply for student aid and an additional 21% planned to but had not yet done so. Many students who applied for government student aid (66%) would not have been able to afford PSE without funding from loans/grants and/or scholarships/bursaries
- About one-third (36%) of students who received at least one offer of admission also reported receiving an offer of an entrance scholarship/bursary. There was notable variety in the range and types of awards offered.

Key Findings

Financial Concerns & Preparedness:

- In addition to concerns about getting good grades (60%) and adjusting to the workload (58%), over half of students surveyed were concerned about paying for their education (58%).
- Nearly half of students expected that managing monthly expenses will be difficult (48% very/somewhat difficult)
- One-tenth of surveyed students said that they did not have enough financial resources to pay for their first year of education (11%) and an additional two-fifths (43%) believe that paying for their first year will be difficult.

1

Fall 2025 Plans

Offer of Admission

Total n-size: 4,419

Have you received an offer of admission to a postsecondary program for September 2025?

Shown n-size: 4,199 respondents who received an offer of admission.

Did you accept any of the offers you received?

Offer of Admission

Total n-size: 4,419

Have you received an offer of admission to a postsecondary program for September 2025?

Shown n-size: 525 respondents who did not receive an offer of admission.

What do you plan to do in the fall?

Applications & Admissions

Total n-size: 4,419 | Shown n-size: 4,199 respondents who received an offer of admission.

Distance Considerations

Total n-size: 4,419 | Shown n-size: 4,199 respondents who received an offer of admission.

When you were considering postsecondary schools to apply to, which of the following best describes you?

Top 3 Reasons for Attending

Total n-size: 4,419 | Shown n-size: 3,778 respondents who accepted an offer of admission.

Select the top three reasons why you chose to attend this school

Work-Integrated Learning Plans

Total n-size: 4,419 | Shown n-size: 3,778 respondents who accepted an offer of admission.

Will you complete any type of work-integrated learning (e.g., co-op, internship, practicum, service learning) during your studies?

Shown n-size: 1,822 respondents who are pursuing WIL.

Will the work-integrated learning be optional or mandatory?

Will the work-integrated learning be paid or unpaid?

43% said that if their WIL was unpaid, they would **not** have enrolled in their program.

Living Situation

Total n-size: 4,419 | Shown n-size: 3,778 respondents who accepted an offer of admission.

Where do you plan to live while studying this September?

Shown n-size: 1,917 respondents who plan to live at home.

You indicated you will live at home during your PSE. Is this primarily out of…

What scholarship value would persuade you to study away from home?

2 Financial Aid & Awards

Received Entrance Scholarship/Bursary

36% of students **received a scholarship/bursary** from at least 1 institution

The most common value of an award (15% of all respondents) was **$1,000-$2,499.**

Students commonly received a **one-time scholarship based on academic merit** (21%).

Scholarship/Bursary Value & Type Accepted

Total n-size: 4,419 | Shown n-size: 3,778 respondents who accepted an offer of admission.

Scholarship/bursary value at the institution where respondent accepted the offer from

Award type at the institution where respondent accepted the offer from.

Government Student Aid Application

Total n-size: 4,419 | Shown n-size: 3,778 respondents who accepted an offer of admission.

Did you apply for government student grants/loans for the 2025/26 school year? (e.g., Alberta Student Aid, StudentAid BC, OSAP)

Shown n-size: 2,094 respondents who applied for government aid

How much funding will you receive in government grants and/or loans for the 2025/26 school year?

Financial Situation

Total n-size: 4,419 | Shown n-size: 3,778 respondents who accepted an offer of admission.

Which of the following best describes your situation?

Influence of Offer Package

Total n-size: 4,419 | Shown n-size: 3,914 respondents who received an offer of admission.

Would you consider accepting an offer from another institution if its offer package included…

3 Preparedness

Concerns About Starting PSE

Total n-size: 4,419 | Shown n-size: 3,914 respondents who received an offer of admission.

What concerns, if any, do you have about starting at your institution?

Levels of Preparedness

Total n-size: 4,419 | Shown n-size: 3,778 respondents who accepted an offer of admission.

Financial Resources

Total n-size: 4,419 | Shown n-size: 3,778 respondents who accepted an offer of admission.

Do you have enough financial resources to pay for your first year at your institution?

How difficult or easy do you expect it will be to pay for your monthly expenses (e.g., tuition, housing, food, clothing, transportation, etc.)?

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moving higher ed forward

This report was created by Academica Group,
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