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Huu-ay-aht First Nations

Post-Secondary Program Policy

Version 5.0: September 2026



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1.0 Mission, Vision, Community Wellness Vision, and Administration

- i. The Huu-ay-aht government and administration recognize that learning is not confined to childhood or the classroom but takes place throughout life and in a range of situations. Huu-ay-aht First Nations seeks to encourage, support, and assist its citizens to access post-secondary education and training opportunities and to graduate from their respective programs of study with the skills, qualifications, and competencies to pursue their chosen careers or employment and to realize their full potential.

ʔaayačitah ʔamatap

"I know lots of things"

- ii. Mission

As a leader among First Nations, Huu-ay-aht First Nations will create certainty for its people and generate wealth for financial independence by providing economic opportunities, social, cultural, and recreational programs for all Huu-ay-aht people.

*Naaca maʔat Huuʔeeʔath ʔaaʔak
ʔuukʷaqhʷitas ʔuuʔaatuk quuʔas minh
ʔiisaakstaʔ ʔuusahqʷin čačimhi
Hupukʷanim, ciqyak, timaqsti, tanaqit minhukqin*

- iii. Vision

Huu-ay-aht envisions a strong, self-governing and self-reliant Nation. *ʔiisaak* will guide us as we work together to foster a safe, healthy and sustainable community; where our culture, language, spirituality, and economy flourish for all.

- iv. Community Wellness Vision

Our citizens are grounded in our culture, teachings, and sacred principles. Through healing, wellness, celebration, and the understanding of our Treaty, we are connected, empowered, responsible, accountable, and motivated.

- v. Administration

The Education Department administers the Huu-ay-aht First Nations Post-Secondary Program, under the direction of the Director of Community and Citizen Services. The Budget Act and the Post-Secondary Program Policy are approved by Huu-ay-aht First Nations Executive Council. HFN citizens seeking education and training sponsorship may submit their applications in accordance with these policies. The Education Department will review and assess completed applications and will advise applicants as soon as practical of whether their application for



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sponsorship has been approved. If an application is not approved and the applicant wishes to have the decision reconsidered, they may follow the appeal process set out below.

Appeals

Appeals under the HFN Post-Secondary Program Policy must be submitted to the Executive Director of Huu-ay-aht First Nations in accordance with Section 9.0 of this Policy.

Appeals may be submitted by email to executivedirector@huuayaht.org or by another method approved by Huu-ay-aht First Nations.

1.1 Program Eligibility

The Huu-ay-aht First Nations Post-Secondary Program provides financial support to eligible Huu-ay-aht citizens pursuing education and training that supports their educational, employment, professional, and career goals.

Eligible studies may include:

- a. post-secondary courses and programs leading to a recognized certificate, diploma, undergraduate degree, graduate degree, professional qualification, or other credential;
- b. Foundation and Apprenticeship programs in the skilled trades;
- c. Adult Basic Education, upgrading, occupational and workplace training, and post-secondary preparation;
- d. short-term education and training that supports employment, career advancement, or entry into further education; and
- e. other education or training approved by HFN Education that is consistent with the purpose of this Policy.

Programs must normally be offered by a recognized or accredited educational institution, training provider, or other approved service provider.

Eligibility for a program does not automatically guarantee sponsorship. Applications will be considered in accordance with the Approval Criteria, Funding Priorities, Limits of Assistance, available Post-Secondary Program funding, and other requirements of this Policy.

Students who are uncertain whether a program or institution is eligible for sponsorship are encouraged to contact HFN Education before enrolling or making financial commitments.

1.2 Post-Secondary Preparation

HFN recognizes that some citizens may require upgrading, prerequisite courses, academic preparation, or other supports before entering their intended post-secondary program.

Post-secondary preparation may include:

- prerequisite courses required for admission to a post-secondary or trades program;
- academic upgrading;
- Adult Basic Education courses;
- literacy, numeracy, or other foundational studies;
- academic assessment or placement where required by an educational institution; and
- other preparatory studies that support successful entry into further education or training.

Funding for Adult Basic Education and post-secondary preparation may normally be provided for up to **10 months**, in accordance with Section 2.2 of this Policy.

Additional time may be considered where there is a reasonable basis for doing so, including program requirements, recommendations from an educational institution or academic advisor, accommodation needs, medical or compassionate circumstances, or other exceptional circumstances.

A student's full-time or part-time status will be determined in accordance with Sections 2.0 and 2.1 of this Policy.

HFN Education may work with students undertaking preparatory studies to identify their educational goals, intended program of study, and any academic or other supports that may assist them in successfully progressing to further education or training.



1.3 Skilled Trades & Applied Technology

HFN supports citizens pursuing careers in the skilled trades and applied technology through recognized Foundation, Apprenticeship, technical training, and other approved programs.

Students pursuing a designated trade in British Columbia are encouraged to become familiar with **SkilledTradesBC** and the requirements of their chosen trade, including apprenticeship, technical training, work-based training, certification, and Red Seal requirements where applicable.

Eligible trades sponsorship may include:

- Foundation or pre-apprenticeship training;
- Apprenticeship technical training;
- required classroom or technical components of an apprenticeship;
- approved upgrading or prerequisite training;
- mandatory tools, equipment, clothing, or other program requirements in accordance with this Policy; and
- other approved training leading toward recognized trade or occupational certification.

Programs must be offered by a recognized training provider or otherwise be approved by HFN Education.

HFN Education may assist students in identifying available training, employment, apprenticeship, and funding opportunities related to their chosen trade.

Students are encouraged to discuss their trades training plans with HFN Education before enrolling, particularly where their program involves a combination of technical training, employer-sponsored apprenticeship, and work-based learning.

1.4 Adult Basic Education, Occupational and Workplace Training

Adult Basic Education and other employment-related education and training are eligible for consideration under the HFN Post-Secondary Program.

Eligible studies may include education or training intended to:



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- complete secondary school graduation requirements;
- obtain prerequisites for further education or training;
- improve literacy, numeracy, academic, digital, or workplace skills;
- prepare for employment or career advancement;
- obtain occupational certification;
- refresh or strengthen skills needed for work or further education; or
- support another reasonable educational or employment goal.

Adult Basic Education and post-secondary preparation funding is subject to the Limits of Assistance set out in Section 2.2.

Short-term and part-time courses, occupational training, workplace certifications, and other employment-related programs may also be considered where they support the student's educational, employment, or career goals.

A student's eligibility for the Student Living Allowance will depend on whether they meet the full-time requirements of Section 2.0 and the other requirements of this Policy.

1.5 Graduate and Post-Graduate Studies

Graduate and post-graduate programs offered by eligible institutions may be considered for HFN sponsorship.

Eligible programs may include graduate certificates and diplomas, master's degrees, professional or advanced degrees, doctoral programs, and other recognized post-graduate qualifications.

Graduate and post-graduate students remain subject to the Approval Criteria, Funding Priorities, Limits of Assistance, academic performance requirements, and other provisions of this Policy.

Funding for graduate, advanced, professional, and doctoral studies will be provided in accordance with the Limits of Assistance set out in Section 2.2.

Graduate and post-graduate students who meet the full-time requirements of Section 2.0 may be eligible for the Student Living Allowance and other supports available to full-time students, subject to the applicable requirements and limits of this Policy.

1.6 Private Institutions

Programs offered by private post-secondary institutions may be eligible for sponsorship where the institution and program meet the eligibility requirements of this Policy.

Where an equivalent or comparable program is available through a publicly funded post-secondary institution in British Columbia, HFN funding for tuition will normally be limited to the tuition cost of the comparable BC public program.

For the purpose of determining a comparable British Columbia public program, HFN Education will consider the credential awarded, program content, normal duration, admission requirements, and intended professional, occupational, or educational outcome. Where more than one comparable program exists, HFN Education may use a reasonable representative tuition cost in determining the amount of sponsorship.

Students choosing a private institution are responsible for tuition and other costs that exceed the amount approved by HFN.

HFN Education may consider the nature of the program, its accreditation, the availability of comparable programs at publicly funded institutions, and the student's educational and career goals when determining eligibility for sponsorship.

1.7 Studies Outside of British Columbia

Huu-ay-aht citizens may apply for sponsorship to attend eligible post-secondary programs outside British Columbia, including programs elsewhere in Canada or internationally.

Where an equivalent or comparable program is available at a publicly funded post-secondary institution in British Columbia, HFN funding for tuition will normally be limited to the tuition cost of the comparable BC public program.

For the purpose of determining a comparable British Columbia public program, HFN Education will consider the credential awarded, program content, normal duration, admission requirements, and intended professional, occupational, or educational outcome. Where more than one comparable program exists, HFN Education may use a reasonable representative tuition cost in determining the amount of sponsorship.

Students are responsible for tuition and other educational costs that exceed the amount approved by HFN.

All funding will be calculated and paid in Canadian dollars.

Students studying outside British Columbia remain subject to the eligibility requirements, funding priorities, Limits of Assistance, and other requirements of this Policy.

1.8 Distance and Online Education

Programs delivered through distance, online, hybrid, or other forms of remote learning may be eligible for sponsorship where the institution and program meet the eligibility requirements of this Policy.

The method by which a program is delivered will not, by itself, affect a student's eligibility for sponsorship.

A student enrolled in an eligible distance or online program will be considered full-time or part-time in accordance with the course load requirements of this Policy.

Students enrolled full-time in an eligible distance or online program may be eligible for the same tuition, Student Living Allowance, textbook, equipment, and other supports available to students attending in person, subject to the applicable requirements and limits of this Policy.

2.0 Course Load: Full-Time

For the purposes of this Policy, a student will normally be considered full-time where the educational institution considers the student to be enrolled in a full-time course load or full-time program of study.

Students enrolled full-time in an eligible program may be eligible for the Student Living Allowance and other supports available to full-time students under this Policy.

Full-time status may include programs delivered in person, online, through distance education, or through a combination of delivery methods.

Where the structure of a program does not use a traditional course or credit system, HFN Education may rely on confirmation from the educational institution that the student is participating in the program on a full-time basis.

Reduced Course Loads and Accommodations

A student who is enrolled in a reduced course load as part of a disability-related or other formally approved accommodation may be considered full-time for the purposes of HFN sponsorship.



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HFN Education may request reasonable documentation from the educational institution confirming that the reduced course load is recognized as an accommodation or that the student is considered full-time for the purposes of their program.

Students will not normally be required to provide detailed medical information or disclose a specific diagnosis where confirmation of the accommodation is sufficient.

HFN Education may consider other exceptional circumstances affecting a student's ability to maintain a standard full-time course load on a case-by-case basis.

2.1 Course Load: Part-Time

A student who is enrolled in an eligible program but does not meet the full-time requirements of Section 2.0 will normally be considered a part-time student.

Part-time students may receive sponsorship for eligible tuition, textbooks, supplies, and other approved educational costs in accordance with this Policy.

Part-time students are not normally eligible for the Student Living Allowance.

HFN Education may consider exceptional circumstances in determining whether additional support is appropriate.

2.2 Limits of Assistance

Huu-ay-aht First Nations supports citizens in progressing through post-secondary education and training toward recognized credentials and their educational and career goals.

Funding may be provided at the following levels:

Level 1 – Certificate or Diploma

Funding may be provided for the normal duration of an approved certificate or diploma program, to a maximum of **12 months for a certificate or 24 months for a diploma**.

Additional time may be considered where the normal requirements of the approved program cannot reasonably be completed within those periods or where exceptional circumstances have affected the student's ability to complete the program within the normal funding period.

Approval of additional funding will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Education Manager and is not automatic. The student must be making satisfactory progress toward completion of their credential.



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Level 2 – Undergraduate Degree

Funding may be provided for an undergraduate degree program to a maximum of **40 months**.

Additional funding beyond 40 months may be considered where the normal requirements of the approved degree program cannot reasonably be completed within the 40-month funding period. This may include programs with required additional academic terms, practicums, co-operative education placements, internships, or other mandatory program components.

Additional funding may also be considered in exceptional circumstances where a student has experienced circumstances beyond their reasonable control that have affected their ability to complete the program within the normal funding period.

Approval of funding beyond 40 months will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Education Manager and is not automatic. The student must be making satisfactory progress toward completion of their credential.

Level 3 – Graduate, Advanced, or Professional Degree

Funding may be provided for an approved graduate, advanced, or professional degree program to a maximum of **24 months**.

Additional funding beyond 24 months may be considered where the normal requirements of the approved program cannot reasonably be completed within the 24-month funding period, or where exceptional circumstances have affected the student's ability to complete the program within the normal funding period.

Approval of additional funding will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Education Manager and is not automatic. The student must be making satisfactory progress toward completion of their credential.

Level 4 – Doctoral Degree

Funding for doctoral studies may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Adult Basic Education and Post-Secondary Preparation

Funding for Adult Basic Education and post-secondary preparation may be provided for up to **10 months**, subject to the other provisions of this Policy.

Previous Education and Additional Credentials

Students will normally be funded to progress toward a higher level of education or qualification.



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Completion of a credential does not automatically make a student ineligible for future sponsorship at the same or a lower level. HFN Education may consider additional education or training where the proposed program:

- is required for entry into or advancement within the student's chosen occupation or profession;
- provides a specialization or qualification not provided by the student's existing credential;
- supports a reasonable change in the student's educational or career direction; or
- otherwise supports the student's educational, employment, or career goals.

Previous education and HFN sponsorship will be considered when determining whether additional sponsorship is appropriate and the amount of funding available.

Changing Programs

HFN recognizes that students may determine after beginning their studies that a different program is more appropriate for their educational or career goals.

Students considering a change in their program of study are expected to discuss the proposed change with HFN Education before making the change.

Changing programs does not restore funding already used. Months of HFN sponsorship already received at an educational level will normally be counted toward the maximum funding available at that level.

Continued sponsorship following a program change will be considered based on:

- the student's reasons for changing programs;
- the student's academic progress to date;
- the relationship between the new program and the student's educational or career goals;
- the amount of sponsorship already received; and
- the student's ability to complete the new program within the remaining period of funding.

HFN Education may approve additional time in exceptional circumstances where there is a reasonable basis for doing so.

Pausing Studies

A student who needs to pause their studies should advise HFN Education as soon as possible.

A temporary pause in studies does not, by itself, make a student ineligible for future sponsorship. When the student is ready to return, HFN Education will review their continued eligibility, previous sponsorship, academic standing, and proposed plan for completing their studies.

Previous Un-sponsored Studies

A student who becomes eligible for HFN sponsorship after completing part of a program without HFN financial assistance may receive sponsorship for the remaining eligible portion of the program.

HFN will not reimburse tuition, living expenses, books, or other educational expenses incurred before sponsorship was approved.

3.0 Withdrawals

HFN recognizes that students may need to withdraw from a course or program for a variety of reasons.

A student considering withdrawing from a course or program should contact HFN Education as soon as possible and, wherever possible, before completing the withdrawal. HFN Education will work with the student to understand the circumstances, the impact on their sponsorship, and any options that may be available to support the student's continued studies.

Withdrawal from a Course

A student who withdraws from one or more courses must advise HFN Education promptly.

Where a course withdrawal results in the student no longer meeting the full-time course load requirements of this Policy, eligibility for the Student Living Allowance may be affected from the date the student's enrolment status changes.

Withdrawing from a course does not automatically result in suspension of future sponsorship. HFN Education will consider the circumstances of the withdrawal, the student's academic progress, and their continued ability to complete their program.

Withdrawal from a Program

A student who withdraws from their program must advise HFN Education as soon as possible.

Student Living Allowance payments will end when the student is no longer actively enrolled in or attending their approved program.

Where tuition, textbooks, or other educational costs have already been paid by HFN, HFN Education will seek any refund available from the educational institution or service provider.

The student will not normally be required to repay tuition or other educational costs that were legitimately incurred while the student was enrolled and participating in their studies and that cannot be refunded.

Failure to Advise HFN Education

A student who stops attending or withdraws from their studies and continues to receive Student Living Allowance or other financial support for a period in which they are no longer eligible may be required to repay the amount received for that period.

Where a student knowingly fails to advise HFN Education of a withdrawal or change in enrolment in order to continue receiving funding for which they are no longer eligible, HFN may require repayment before approving additional sponsorship.

The amount owing will be based on funding received for the period in which the student was no longer eligible, rather than automatically requiring repayment of all sponsorship provided during the academic term.

Amounts owing to HFN may be recovered in accordance with applicable HFN laws, policies, and financial procedures.

Future Sponsorship

A withdrawal does not automatically make a student ineligible for future HFN sponsorship.

When considering a future application following a withdrawal, HFN Education may consider:

- the circumstances that resulted in the withdrawal;
- whether the student kept HFN Education informed;
- the student's previous academic progress;
- any outstanding amounts owing to HFN; and
- the student's plan and readiness to return successfully to studies.

Medical or compassionate withdrawals will be considered in accordance with Section 3.1 of this Policy.



3.1 Medical and Compassionate Withdrawals

HFN recognizes that medical, family, personal, or other serious circumstances may arise that affect a student's ability to continue or successfully complete their studies.

A student who needs to withdraw from one or more courses or from their program because of medical or compassionate circumstances should advise HFN Education as soon as reasonably possible.

Medical Withdrawal

A medical withdrawal may be considered where a student's physical or mental health significantly affects their ability to participate in or successfully complete their studies.

HFN Education may request reasonable documentation from a medical or other appropriate health professional confirming that the student's circumstances affected their ability to continue their studies. Students will not normally be required to provide detailed medical information or disclose a specific diagnosis where confirmation of the impact on their studies is sufficient.

Compassionate Withdrawal

A compassionate withdrawal may be considered where serious personal, family, cultural, or other circumstances significantly affect a student's ability to participate in or successfully complete their studies.

Circumstances may include, but are not limited to, the death or serious illness of a family member, family responsibilities, housing or financial emergencies, cultural or community responsibilities, or other significant circumstances beyond the student's reasonable control.

Documentation may be requested where appropriate. HFN Education will consider the nature of the circumstances when determining what documentation, if any, is reasonable.

Effect on Sponsorship

An approved medical or compassionate withdrawal will not, by itself, result in suspension of the student's future sponsorship or be treated as an unsuccessful academic term.

Where possible, HFN Education will seek reimbursement of tuition or other refundable costs from the educational institution.

A student will not normally be required to repay Student Living Allowance or other support that was properly received before the withdrawal. Payments received for a period after the student was no longer eligible for sponsorship may be subject to repayment in accordance with Section 3.0.



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Courses from which a student has withdrawn for approved medical or compassionate reasons may be repeated where required for completion of the student's program.

HFN Education may approve the reasonable costs of repeating a required course where the original withdrawal was approved for medical or compassionate reasons.

Returning to Studies

A student returning to studies following a medical or compassionate withdrawal should contact HFN Education to confirm their continued eligibility and sponsorship.

Where appropriate, HFN Education may work with the student to identify supports or accommodations that may assist them in successfully returning to their studies.

Medical and compassionate withdrawals will be considered on a case-by-case basis, with consideration given to the individual circumstances of the student.

4.0 Applications and Application Timing

Applications are accepted at any time by HFN Education for full-time, part-time, or individual courses. Students are encouraged to submit their applications well in advance of anticipated start dates so that sponsorship and all required information can be arranged in a timely manner. For example, for full-time studies beginning in September, it is recommended that applications be submitted by June. Students may contact HFN Education for further guidance regarding application timing or required documentation.

4.1 Approval of Applications

I. Approval Criteria

As funding for post-secondary education is limited, applications that meet the basic eligibility requirements are not automatically approved. HFN Education will assess eligible applications using the following criteria.

Each criterion will be assessed on a scale of 0 to 3 points, for a maximum assessment score of 12 points.

a) Past Academic and Employment Record



Consideration will be given to the applicant's previous academic performance, employment experience, training, and other experiences that demonstrate readiness to undertake the proposed program.

0 – Limited evidence: The application provides little evidence of academic or employment readiness, or there are significant concerns that have not been addressed.

1 – Developing: The applicant demonstrates some readiness but may have limited experience, previous academic challenges, or other factors that should be considered in planning for success.

2 – Good: The applicant demonstrates a reasonable record of academic, employment, training, or other relevant experience indicating readiness for the proposed studies.

3 – Strong: The applicant demonstrates a strong record of academic achievement, employment, training, or other relevant experience indicating a high level of readiness for the proposed studies.

Previous academic difficulties will not, by themselves, prevent an applicant from receiving a positive assessment. Consideration may be given to evidence of growth, improved circumstances, upgrading, employment experience, or other indicators of current readiness.

b) Commitment to the Program of Studies and Stated Goals

Consideration will be given to whether the applicant demonstrates an understanding of the proposed program and a commitment to successfully completing it.

0 – Limited evidence: The applicant has not clearly identified their educational or career goals or demonstrated an understanding of the proposed program.

1 – Developing: The applicant has identified general goals but has provided limited information about how the proposed program supports those goals.

2 – Good: The applicant has identified clear educational or career goals and demonstrates an understanding of how the proposed program will assist them in achieving those goals.

3 – Strong: The applicant demonstrates clear and well-considered goals, a strong understanding of the program, and evidence of preparation and commitment to completing their studies.

c) Value of the Education or Training to the Huu-ay-aht Community

This criterion considers the potential value of the education, qualifications, knowledge, or skills being pursued to Huu-ay-aht citizens and the Huu-ay-aht community.

0 – Limited connection: No clear connection has been identified between the proposed education or training and potential benefit to Huu-ay-aht citizens or the community.

1 – General value: The education or training will provide transferable knowledge or skills that could benefit Huu-ay-aht citizens or the community.

2 – Significant value: The education or training relates to an identifiable community, professional, organizational, cultural, economic, educational, health, technical, or service need that could benefit Huu-ay-aht.

3 – Strong community value: The education or training directly relates to an identified Huu-ay-aht priority, community need, cultural or language priority, workforce need, professional capacity need, or another area in which increased Huu-ay-aht citizen knowledge and expertise would be particularly valuable.

Applicants are not expected to limit their educational choices to occupations currently available within the Huu-ay-aht First Nations government. Building the knowledge, qualifications, professional capacity, and experience of Huu-ay-aht citizens is recognized as having long-term value to the Nation.

d) Commitment to Contribute Knowledge and Skills to the Huu-ay-aht Community

This criterion considers how the applicant intends to use their education, knowledge, skills, or experience for the benefit of Huu-ay-aht citizens and the Huu-ay-aht community.

Contribution to the Huu-ay-aht community is not limited to employment with the Huu-ay-aht First Nations government. It may include employment, entrepreneurship, professional service, mentorship, volunteering, committee participation, cultural or language activities, community involvement, sharing expertise, supporting other Huu-ay-aht citizens, or other forms of contribution.

0 – Not demonstrated: The applicant has not identified how they might contribute their knowledge, skills, or experience to the Huu-ay-aht community.



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1 – General commitment: The applicant expresses a general interest or intention to remain connected to or contribute to Huu-ay-aht.

2 – Clear commitment: The applicant identifies realistic ways they intend to use their education, knowledge, or skills to contribute to Huu-ay-aht citizens or the community.

3 – Strong demonstrated commitment: The applicant identifies specific and realistic ways they intend to contribute and/or demonstrates an existing pattern of involvement with Huu-ay-aht through community participation, employment, volunteering, mentorship, cultural activities, committees, or other meaningful involvement.

Overall Assessment

An overall score of 8 points or higher will normally indicate a positive assessment for sponsorship.

An applicant receiving 6 or 7 points may be considered for sponsorship where HFN Education determines that there are circumstances supporting approval. These may include an applicant returning to education after an extended absence, recent evidence of academic or personal growth, completion of upgrading or preparatory studies, significant community involvement, or other circumstances demonstrating readiness and potential for success.

An application receiving fewer than 6 points will normally not be approved for sponsorship. HFN Education may work with the applicant to identify steps that could strengthen a future application.

The assessment score does not create an automatic entitlement to sponsorship. Approval remains subject to the requirements of this Policy and the availability of Post-Secondary Program funding.

HFN Education will maintain a brief record of the assessment and the reasons for the funding decision.

II. Funding Priorities

The funding priorities below will be applied sequentially in the order in which they appear. Residency priority will be determined first, followed by Student Status and Performance within each residency category. The Approval Criteria assessment score may then be used to distinguish between applicants who otherwise have the same funding priority. A higher Approval Criteria assessment score does not, by itself, override a higher residency or student-status priority.

Where demand for Post-Secondary Program funding exceeds the available budget, the following priorities will be used to determine which students receive sponsorship.

1. Residency

Priority will be given in the following order:

- a. Huu-ay-aht citizens who have resided in British Columbia for the 12 months immediately preceding their application for the current period of sponsorship.
- b. Huu-ay-aht citizens who reside elsewhere in Canada.
- c. Huu-ay-aht citizens who reside outside Canada.

The Post-Secondary Program budget is based primarily on the costs of attending publicly funded post-secondary institutions in British Columbia. Students studying outside British Columbia remain eligible for sponsorship subject to the funding limits and other requirements of this Policy.

2. Student Status and Performance

Within the applicable residency priority, consideration will be given in the following order:

- a. Current continuing students who are demonstrating satisfactory progress in their studies.
- b. First-time applicants and students returning to upgrading, post-secondary education, or training after a hiatus.

Where applicants have the same funding priority and available funding is insufficient to support all applications, the Approval Criteria assessment score may be used to assist HFN Education in determining funding priority.

Meeting the eligibility requirements and receiving a positive assessment does not guarantee sponsorship where available Post-Secondary Program funding is insufficient.



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4.2 Additional Application and Funding Considerations

The following provisions apply to financial support provided through the HFN Post-Secondary Program.

I. Truth and Accuracy of Application

Students are responsible for providing complete and accurate information when applying for or receiving sponsorship.

A student must advise HFN Education of any significant change that may affect their eligibility or the amount of support they receive, including changes to enrolment, course load, program, living arrangements, dependents, or other circumstances relevant to their sponsorship.

Where a student knowingly provides false or misleading information or fails to disclose a significant change in order to receive funding for which they are not eligible, HFN may require repayment of the amount improperly received and may consider the circumstances when determining eligibility for future sponsorship.

Amounts owing to HFN may be recovered in accordance with applicable HFN laws, policies, and financial procedures.

II. Tuition and Tuition Deposits

HFN may pay approved tuition and mandatory institutional fees directly to the educational institution.

Where an educational institution requires a registration or tuition deposit before a student can register or secure a place in an approved program, HFN may pay the required deposit as part of the student's approved tuition funding.

If the student does not enter or continue in the program after a non-refundable deposit has been paid, HFN Education will consider the circumstances before determining whether repayment is required.

A student will not normally be required to repay a deposit that was reasonably incurred as part of their approved studies where circumstances beyond the student's reasonable control prevented them from beginning or continuing the program.

Where a refundable tuition or registration deposit has been paid by HFN, any refund should be returned to HFN or credited against the student's sponsorship.

Tuition funding remains subject to the provisions of this Policy respecting private institutions and studies outside British Columbia.



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III. Student Living Allowance

A monthly Student Living Allowance is available to eligible students enrolled full-time as defined in Section 2.0 of this Policy.

Eligible full-time students will receive:

- **\$1,000 per month** where the student is living with a parent, guardian, family member, partner, or another person and is not paying rent or otherwise making a regular financial contribution toward the cost of the accommodation; or
- **\$2,000 per month** where the student is paying rent, maintaining their own accommodation, or otherwise has regular financial responsibility for the cost of their accommodation.

HFN Education may request reasonable documentation confirming a student's rental, housing, or other accommodation costs where necessary to determine the applicable rate.

Where a student's living arrangement does not clearly fall within either category, HFN Education may determine the appropriate rate based on the student's actual financial responsibility for their accommodation.

The Student Living Allowance is intended to assist with ordinary living expenses while the student is engaged in full-time studies.

Urban Rental Supplement

A student renting accommodation in **Victoria, Nanaimo, Metro Vancouver, or another high-cost rental community designated by HFN Education** may receive an additional **\$400 per month Urban Rental Supplement**.

To receive the Urban Rental Supplement, the student must provide a rental or tenancy agreement confirming their rental costs.

HFN Education may designate additional communities for purposes of the Urban Rental Supplement where prevailing rental costs reasonably justify the additional support.

Designations will be based on reasonable evidence of prevailing rental costs and will be applied consistently to students residing in comparable circumstances.

The Urban Rental Supplement is intended to assist with the higher cost of rental accommodation in designated communities.

Student Living Allowance payments will normally be provided only for the months in which the student is actively participating in their approved program.



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IV. Dependent Supplement

An eligible full-time student may receive an additional **\$200 per month for each dependent** for whom the student has significant financial responsibility.

The Dependent Supplement recognizes that students may have different family structures and caregiving responsibilities.

A dependent may include a child, spouse or partner, adult family member, Elder, or another person who is substantially dependent upon the student for financial support.

HFN Education may request reasonable documentation confirming the student's financial responsibility for a dependent.

The Dependent Supplement is intended to provide additional support to the student and does not replace other benefits, income, or supports for which the dependent may be eligible.

V. Textbooks and Required Course Materials

HFN will provide funding for textbooks and other required course materials associated with an approved program of study.

Where possible, textbook and course-material costs may be paid directly to the educational institution or approved supplier.

Where a student purchases approved materials directly, HFN may reimburse the actual cost upon submission of appropriate receipts.

HFN Education may request information from the institution confirming that materials are required for the student's courses or program.

Students are encouraged to identify anticipated textbook and course-material costs when applying for sponsorship.

Textbooks and course materials purchased through HFN sponsorship become the property of the student.

VI. Childcare

Students who require childcare in order to participate in their studies are encouraged to access provincial, federal, institutional, or other available childcare benefits and subsidies.

HFN Education may assist students in identifying and applying for available childcare support.

Where available childcare programs do not reasonably meet a student's needs, HFN Education may consider additional childcare support on a case-by-case basis, subject to available funding.

In determining whether additional support is appropriate, HFN Education may consider the student's course schedule, practicum or program requirements, availability of childcare, other childcare funding available to the student, and the student's individual circumstances.

VII. Relocation and Travel

Relocation

A student who **must** move to another community in order to attend an approved program may be eligible for assistance with reasonable relocation costs.

Eligible costs may include transportation for the student, and their dependents and other reasonable costs directly associated with relocating for studies.

Students should discuss anticipated relocation costs with HFN Education before making arrangements wherever reasonably possible.

Relocation assistance will be considered based on the student's circumstances, distance of the move, program requirements, other available funding, and reasonable actual costs.

Travel to and from School

Where regular travel is necessary to attend an approved program, HFN may provide reasonable transportation assistance.

Support may include public transit, required ferry travel, parking, mileage, or other appropriate transportation costs.

Transportation support will be based on the student's circumstances, location, program schedule, and the most reasonable means of attending their studies.

Required Admission or Program Travel

HFN may consider reasonable travel costs where a student is required to attend an interview, assessment, examination, orientation, practicum, or other mandatory activity associated with admission to or participation in an approved program.

VIII. Housing Deposit

A student who must obtain rental accommodation in order to attend an approved program may be eligible for assistance with a required security or damage deposit.

The student must provide a rental or tenancy agreement, or other reasonable documentation confirming the amount of the required deposit.

Housing-deposit assistance will normally be provided on a one-time basis. Where the deposit is subsequently returned to the student, the student is expected to use those funds toward future housing-deposit requirements associated with their studies.

Additional assistance may be considered where circumstances beyond the student's reasonable control result in the loss of a previous deposit or where a higher deposit is reasonably required for subsequent accommodation.

IX. Required Clothing and Equipment

HFN may provide funding for specialized clothing, tools, equipment, supplies, or other items that are mandatory requirements of an approved program.

The student must provide reasonable documentation from the educational institution or training provider confirming that the item is required and identifying the anticipated cost.

Examples may include required safety equipment, uniforms, professional clothing, tools, specialized supplies, or equipment required for trades, health, technical, practicum, laboratory, or other programs.

Ordinary clothing and personal items are not eligible unless they are specifically required by the student's program.

X. Technology

HFN recognizes that access to appropriate technology is an essential part of many post-secondary programs.

Students may apply for assistance with computer hardware, software, internet-related equipment, or other technology that is reasonably required to participate successfully in their approved program.

Technology support will be considered based on:

- the requirements of the student's program;
- technology already available to the student;
- the expected duration of the student's studies;
- whether specialized hardware or software is required; and
- the reasonable cost of meeting the student's educational needs.

HFN Education may request confirmation of program technology requirements and estimates or receipts for approved purchases.



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Technology purchased with HFN sponsorship becomes the property of the student unless otherwise agreed in writing.

HFN Education may establish reasonable funding limits for technology purchases based on available program funding.

XI. Exceptional Educational Costs

HFN recognizes that some programs may involve necessary educational expenses that are not specifically addressed elsewhere in this Policy.

HFN Education may consider reasonable additional costs that are directly related to successful participation in an approved program.

These may include required:

- field trips;
- practicums or clinical placements;
- licensing or certification examinations;
- professional or regulatory fees;
- specialized assessments;
- mandatory program travel; or
- other exceptional educational expenses.

The student may be required to provide documentation from the educational institution or other appropriate organization confirming that the expense is required and identifying the anticipated cost.

Approval will be based on the necessity and reasonableness of the expense, other available sources of funding, available Post-Secondary Program funding, and the student's individual circumstances.

5.0 Student Intake and Interviews

HFN Education will normally meet with first-time applicants before approving Post-Secondary Program sponsorship.

The purpose of the intake meeting is to provide an opportunity for the student and HFN Education to discuss:

- the student's educational, employment, and career goals;
- the proposed program of study and how it relates to those goals;
- the student's previous education, training, employment, and other relevant experience;
- the student's understanding of the requirements and expectations of their program;
- financial support available through the Post-Secondary Program;
- any academic, financial, family, accessibility, cultural, or other supports that may assist the student in succeeding;
- opportunities for the student to maintain or strengthen their connection with Huu-ay-aht during their studies; and
- the student's longer-term interests in contributing their knowledge, skills, and experience to Huu-ay-aht.

The intake meeting may also be used to clarify information contained in the student's application or to identify additional information required to complete the assessment.

Continuing students will not normally be required to complete a formal interview for each subsequent funding period. HFN Education may request a meeting where there has been a significant change in the student's program, academic progress, funding needs, or other circumstances relevant to their sponsorship.

Students may request a meeting with HFN Education at any time to discuss their studies, sponsorship, educational plans, challenges, or future opportunities.

Where distance, scheduling, accessibility, or other circumstances make an in-person meeting impractical, the meeting may be conducted by telephone, video conference, or another appropriate method.

6.0 Performance

Students receiving HFN sponsorship are expected to make satisfactory progress toward completion of their approved program of study.

Satisfactory academic progress will normally mean that the student:



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- remains enrolled and actively participating in their approved program;
- meets the academic requirements of their educational institution;
- maintains the academic standing required to continue in their program; and
- successfully completes a reasonable proportion of the courses or program requirements for which HFN sponsorship has been provided.

HFN recognizes that academic performance may be affected by medical, family, personal, cultural, disability-related, or other circumstances. Where concerns arise, HFN Education will consider the student's individual circumstances and may work with the student to identify appropriate supports before determining whether sponsorship should be placed on probation or suspended.

A single unsuccessful course will not normally result in probation or suspension where the student is otherwise making satisfactory progress.

6.1 Submission of Grades and Progress

Students receiving sponsorship are responsible for providing HFN Education with confirmation of their academic progress.

Students enrolled in programs with regular academic terms must provide their final grades or transcript following each term.

Students enrolled in programs that do not issue regular grades may provide another form of progress confirmation from the educational institution.

HFN Education may request an interim progress report where there are reasonable concerns about a student's academic progress, attendance, participation, or continued eligibility for sponsorship.

Students are expected to respond to reasonable requests from HFN Education for information necessary to confirm their continued eligibility and academic progress.

Continued sponsorship may be delayed where required academic progress information has not been provided.

7.0 Academic Probation and Suspension of Sponsorship

The purpose of academic probation is to identify concerns early, provide an opportunity for the student to improve their academic standing, and support successful completion of their studies.

Academic Probation

A student may be placed on academic probation where:

- the student does not meet the academic standing required by their institution or program;
- the student's academic performance demonstrates that they may be at risk of not successfully completing their program;
- the student has failed or unsuccessfully completed a significant portion of their funded course load; or
- there are other significant concerns about the student's academic progress.

Before placing a student on probation, HFN Education will consider any relevant circumstances that may have affected the student's academic performance, including circumstances that may qualify for medical or compassionate consideration under Section 3.1.

Where appropriate, HFN Education will discuss the concerns with the student and identify supports or actions that may assist the student in returning to satisfactory academic standing.

Conditions of Probation

Academic probation will normally apply for the student's next academic term.

The student and HFN Education may establish a reasonable academic success plan appropriate to the student's circumstances and program.

The plan may include:

- maintaining regular contact with HFN Education;
- accessing academic advising, tutoring, counselling, accessibility services, cultural support, or other appropriate supports;
- providing interim confirmation of attendance or academic progress;
- meeting with instructors or program advisors where appropriate; or
- other reasonable measures intended to support successful completion of the term.

The conditions of probation will be communicated to the student in writing.

At the end of the probationary term, HFN Education will review the student's academic progress.

A student who demonstrates satisfactory progress will normally be returned to good standing.

Probation may be extended where the student has demonstrated improvement but additional time or support is reasonably required.

Suspension of Sponsorship

Sponsorship may be suspended where:

- a student does not demonstrate satisfactory academic progress following a period of probation;
- a student repeatedly fails or unsuccessfully completes a substantial portion of their funded studies;
- a student does not comply with reasonable conditions established as part of an academic probation plan; or
- other circumstances demonstrate that continued sponsorship is unlikely to result in successful progress toward completion of the approved program.

Suspension will not normally occur solely because of one unsuccessful course or one difficult academic term without consideration of the student's circumstances.

The student will be advised in writing of the decision to suspend sponsorship and the reasons for the decision.

Reapplying Following Suspension

A student whose sponsorship has been suspended may reapply for HFN sponsorship.

Before sponsorship is reinstated, the student should demonstrate that the circumstances that resulted in the suspension have been addressed and that there is a reasonable basis to expect successful progress if sponsorship resumes.

Evidence of readiness may include:

- successful completion of courses or upgrading;
- improved academic standing;
- participation in academic, counselling, accessibility, cultural, or other supports;
- changes to the student's program or course load;
- resolution or improvement of circumstances that previously affected the student's studies; or



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- an academic success plan developed with the educational institution or HFN Education.

HFN Education will consider the student's circumstances, previous academic record, actions taken since suspension, proposed program of study, and readiness to return when determining whether sponsorship should be reinstated.

A student will not automatically be required to complete a prescribed number of courses at their own expense before being considered for reinstatement.

A decision to suspend sponsorship or to decline reinstatement may be appealed in accordance with Section 9.0 of this Policy.

8.0 Student Major Projects, Theses, and Dissertations

HFN encourages students completing major projects, theses, dissertations, or other significant academic research to share their work with HFN Education where appropriate.

With the student's permission, HFN Education may retain a copy of the work for the purpose of developing a library of research and knowledge produced by Huu-ay-aht citizens.

All intellectual property rights in the student's work remain with the student, subject to any requirements or agreements established by their educational institution, research partners, or other applicable agreements.

Students are not required to provide HFN with research or academic work that contains confidential, culturally sensitive, restricted, or protected information, or where sharing the work would be inconsistent with research ethics, institutional requirements, community protocols, or agreements with research participants or partners.

Where a student wishes to share their work but the complete document cannot appropriately be provided, HFN Education may accept an abstract, summary, public version, or other appropriate description of the research.

Where research relates specifically to Huu-ay-aht First Nations, Huu-ay-aht citizens, Huu-ay-aht knowledge, culture, language, lands, resources, or community information, students are encouraged to discuss appropriate research protocols and knowledge-sharing expectations with HFN before beginning the research.



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9.0 Appeals

HFN Education will advise applicants and students in writing of decisions that significantly affect their eligibility for sponsorship or continued funding. Where a decision is not favourable to the student, the written notice will include the reasons for the decision.

A student may appeal a decision concerning:

- approval or denial of an application for sponsorship;
- the amount or type of sponsorship approved;
- an assessment made under the Approval Criteria;
- academic probation or suspension of sponsorship;
- a decision not to reinstate sponsorship following suspension;
- repayment of funding;
- eligibility for a benefit or support under this Policy; or
- another decision made under this Policy that significantly affects the student's sponsorship.

Submitting an Appeal

The Executive Director is the appeal authority under this Policy.

An appeal must be submitted in writing to the **Executive Director of Huu-ay-aht First Nations** within 30 days of the student being advised of the decision.

Appeals may be submitted by email to executivedirector@huuayaht.org or by another method approved by Huu-ay-aht First Nations.

The appeal should identify:

- the decision being appealed;
- the reason the student believes the decision should be reconsidered;
- any relevant information or circumstances the student believes were not adequately considered; and
- any supporting documentation the student wishes to provide.



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HFN Education will provide the Executive Director with the information and documentation used in making the original decision.

Review of the Appeal

The **Executive Director** will review the decision, the requirements of this Policy, the information considered by HFN Education, and any additional relevant information provided by the student.

The Executive Director may:

- confirm the original decision;
- vary the decision;
- overturn the decision; or
- return the matter to HFN Education for further review or additional information.

The Executive Director may speak with the student or HFN Education staff where additional information would assist in reviewing the appeal.

The student will be advised in writing of the outcome of the appeal and the reasons for the decision.

Appeals will be considered as soon as reasonably practical.

Late Appeals

An appeal submitted after the 30-day period may be considered where the student demonstrates that there were reasonable circumstances that prevented the appeal from being submitted within the required timeframe.

10.0 Cultural Support, Counselling, and Academic Support

HFN recognizes that student success includes academic, personal, cultural, and community well-being. HFN Education will work with students to identify and access appropriate supports throughout their studies.

Cultural and Community Support

HFN encourages students to maintain and strengthen their connection to Huu-ay-aht while pursuing their education and training.

Students may seek support from HFN Education to connect with Huu-ay-aht culture, language, community, citizens, Elders, knowledge holders, and other appropriate cultural supports.

Students are also encouraged to connect with Indigenous student services, Indigenous centres, Elders, cultural advisors, and other Indigenous supports available through their educational institution or in the community where they are studying.

HFN Education may assist students in identifying appropriate cultural and community supports where they are studying.

HFN encourages students studying away from home to remain connected with the broader Huu-ay-aht community and, where possible, to visit Huu-ay-aht Treaty Settlement Lands and Anacle.

Where appropriate and subject to available funding, HFN Education may provide reasonable assistance to support a student's participation in Huu-ay-aht cultural, community, mentorship, or other activities that strengthen their connection to the Nation.

Counselling and Personal Support

Students experiencing personal, family, academic, financial, cultural, or other challenges that may affect their studies are encouraged to contact HFN Education as early as possible.

HFN Education may assist students in identifying counselling, wellness, institutional, community, or other appropriate supports.

Students are also encouraged to make use of counselling, wellness, accessibility, Indigenous student services, and other supports available through their educational institution.

Seeking counselling or other support will not, by itself, negatively affect a student's eligibility for HFN sponsorship.

Tutoring and Academic Support

Funding for reasonable tutoring and other academic supports may be available where they will assist a student in successfully participating in or completing their approved program.

Students may identify an appropriate professional tutor or request assistance from HFN Education in locating tutoring or other academic support.

HFN Education may also support reasonable costs associated with:

- tutoring;
- academic coaching or learning support;
- writing, mathematics, or study-skills assistance;



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- institutional academic support services where a fee is required; or
- other appropriate academic supports related to the student's individual learning needs.

Students are encouraged to seek academic support early rather than waiting until they are experiencing significant academic difficulty.

Where appropriate, academic or tutoring support may form part of an academic success plan developed under Section 7.0 of this Policy.

Connection to Future Opportunities

HFN Education may also assist students in connecting with Huu-ay-aht citizens, staff, departments, businesses, mentors, and other opportunities related to their education and career interests.

These connections are intended to help students build relationships with the Nation during their studies and explore ways of bringing their knowledge, skills, and experience home to Huu-ay-aht.

11.0 Students Requiring Accommodations

HFN recognizes that students may require additional supports or accommodations in order to participate fully and successfully in post-secondary education.

Students may request accommodation or additional support where a disability, medical condition, learning need, or other circumstance affects their ability to participate in their studies.

HFN Education will work with the student, and where appropriate with the educational institution, to identify reasonable supports that may assist the student in successfully completing their program.

Documentation

HFN Education may request reasonable documentation confirming the student's need for accommodation or support.

Where the educational institution has already approved an accommodation, confirmation of that accommodation will normally be sufficient.

Students will not normally be required to disclose a specific diagnosis or provide detailed medical information where documentation of the functional limitation or approved accommodation is sufficient.



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Types of Support

Depending on the student's individual circumstances and the requirements of their program, support may include:

- a reduced course load while maintaining full-time sponsorship status in accordance with Section 2.0;
- assistive technology, specialized software, or equipment;
- tutoring or other academic supports;
- transportation or travel assistance;
- support accessing institutional accessibility services;
- adjustments to HFN reporting or academic progress requirements where appropriate; or
- other reasonable supports necessary to assist the student in participating successfully in their studies.

Support will be considered on a case-by-case basis and may be subject to the funding limits and other requirements of this Policy.

Changes in Accommodation Needs

Students should advise HFN Education where their accommodation or support needs change during their studies.

HFN Education may review or adjust approved supports where the student's needs, program requirements, or institutional accommodations change.

12.0 Coming Home: Practicums, Employment and Opportunities with Huu-ay-aht

Huu-ay-aht First Nations invests in the education and training of its citizens with the goal of building the knowledge, skills, professional capacity, leadership, and self-reliance of the Nation.

HFN encourages citizens who pursue post-secondary education and training to maintain their connection with Huu-ay-aht and to consider opportunities to bring their knowledge, skills, experience, and qualifications home for the benefit of Huu-ay-aht citizens and future generations.

Connecting Students with Huu-ay-aht

HFN Education will seek opportunities to connect sponsored students with Huu-ay-aht First Nations, Huu-ay-aht businesses, community initiatives, and other opportunities related to their fields of study.

Depending on the student's program and interests, these opportunities may include:

- practicums, co-operative education placements, internships, or work experience;
- summer and other temporary employment;
- mentorship with Huu-ay-aht staff, citizens, professionals, leaders, or knowledge holders;
- participation in Huu-ay-aht projects, research, committees, or community initiatives;
- career and employment opportunities with HFN or Huu-ay-aht businesses;
- entrepreneurship and economic development opportunities; and
- opportunities to share knowledge, skills, and experience with Huu-ay-aht citizens and the community.

Students are encouraged to discuss their career interests and future plans with HFN Education throughout their studies so that appropriate connections and opportunities can be explored.

Practicums and Work Experience

Where appropriate opportunities exist, HFN will seek to support Huu-ay-aht students in completing practicums, internships, co-operative education placements, or other work experience within HFN departments, Huu-ay-aht businesses, or other organizations connected to the Nation.

Where a placement is paid, compensation will be determined in accordance with applicable HFN employment policies, funding arrangements, or the requirements of the placement.

Returning Home

HFN recognizes that citizens may pursue education, employment, and experience in many different places. Students are encouraged to consider how the knowledge and experience they gain can contribute to Huu-ay-aht over the course of their careers.

Contribution to Huu-ay-aht is not limited to employment with the Huu-ay-aht government. Citizens may contribute through professional service, entrepreneurship, employment with Huu-ay-aht businesses, mentorship, cultural and language activities, community service, leadership, sharing expertise, supporting other citizens, or other forms of involvement with the Nation.



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Where opportunities are available, HFN will seek to create pathways for educated and trained Huu-ay-aht citizens to return to Huu-ay-aht territory, work with or for the Nation, and contribute their knowledge and skills to the long-term strength and well-being of Huu-ay-aht.