

University FAQs 2017

Many of the Ontario universities will be in attendance at our **Further Education Events:**

Trafalgar Nov 21-thru-24, Davis Nov 22-thru-25, HMC Nov 30.

For details on which schools will be on campus and when, go to careercentre.sheridancollege.ca and click on the blue *Events* bar.

This leaflet is for general information and not intended to replace professional advice, nor to supersede official info published by OUAC/universities. Always check university web sites for the most-up-to-date admission information and requirements.

Programs and Schools

What is the best university to apply to? There is no best university. Universities in Ontario are public and their standards are regulated to provide a quality education. Some are better known than others, but ultimately it comes down to what you want from the university, its program and learning environment. For more help, pick up our *Selecting a University* leaflet.

What is a Bachelor's degree? It is the first level of study in a discipline (Master's is second, Doctorate is the highest level). Common degrees include B.A. (Arts), B.Sc (Science), B.Comm. (Commerce), B.F.A. (Fine Arts), B.B.A. (Business Administration), B.A.S. (Administrative Studies) B.Ed. (Teaching), B.Tech. (Technology).

What is an undergraduate degree? An undergraduate degree is your first degree (i.e., Bachelor's) whereas graduate degrees (e.g., B.Ed., M.A., M.B.A.) require some other degree as a prerequisite.

What is a major? Your major is the main subject you will study. When you have declared a major you will be given a list of specific core courses you must take as well as options from which you can select. Most degree programs require only around half of the courses you take to be related to your major so, beyond core and option courses, you have great latitude in determining the content of your studies. For example, you could do a B.A. yet take some business courses.

What is an honours degree? An honours degree is when you specialize in a subject as part of a 4 year program (general degrees are 3 years). Your honours specialization is just like a major except that you do a higher proportion of courses in that topic. Honours degrees are called Specialist degrees at some schools. Graduating is based on completing required courses and a total number of credits.

How long does it take? Describing a degree as 3 or 4 year is an indication of typical completion time. Really, it is about completing a certain number of credits to graduate. Transfer credit or advanced standing will lower the number of credits required. Also, university is generally more flexible than college in being able to take additional course load or summer courses to finish sooner.

Can I change programs once I am there? When applying, you must choose a degree type (e.g., B.A., B.Comm) and a major. If your marks are in good standing, it is usually possible to change your major within that degree at a later time; you may need to catch up on some of the required courses. Changing degree type may be permitted if you have met the prerequisites for the degree program you wish to transfer to.

Applying

What is OUAC? The Ontario Universities' Application Centre coordinates applications, offers and acceptances to degree programs at universities in Ontario. OUAC does not make admission decisions. OUAC is located in Guelph but is not affiliated with University of Guelph.

How do I apply? You initiate the process by using OUAC's online application: www.ouac.on.ca/105. The self-serve system takes you through each application step, from selecting programs to ordering college transcripts. Nothing permanent happens until the final step when you pay, so it is a good idea to set up an account and become familiar with the system before you apply. Do not lose your login information... you will need it to amend your application or accept an offer!

What happens after I apply through OUAC? Several weeks after applying, you will receive communication from each university with further information and (in some cases) a more detailed application which may ask you to complete a questionnaire, résumé, portfolio, etc.

What is the deadline for applying? Each September, OUAC opens the application for all entry points (January, May, September) in the following calendar year. Most undergraduate programs have application cutoff dates sometime in the spring for September entry*. However, you will have best chances if you apply by late-January. Although you can apply in the fall, it may be a good idea to wait until January so that you are aware of your fall semester final marks and cumulative GPA, and therefore make strategic choices which reflect your marks.

Can I apply as a mature student? Most universities define a "mature student" as an applicant over a certain age (usually 21) and who has been out of formal education for a certain period (usually 1 or more years). If you are currently a full-time student you may not meet the criteria for a mature student at most universities. More info see www.ouac.on.ca/ouac-105/105-mature/

Do I have to disclose all previous & current education? Yes.

How many programs can I apply to? What does it Cost? You can apply to as many universities as you like. The basic \$156 OUAC application fee includes 3 program choices. Each additional choice costs \$50. Applying to 2 programs at the same university counts as 2 choices. You can apply to a maximum of 3 programs at any one university.

What if I need help applying? Try watching the videos to be found in the "Tutorials" section of the OUAC site. If you're stuck or confused, check the Career Centre web site for drop-in times to meet with a Career Counsellor or book an appointment if you have many questions.

*Some professional programs including teaching and social work may have deadlines as early as December for entry the following September.

...“Applying” FAQs, continued from reverse side.

What other fees are charged? Each university has a supplementary/document evaluation fee. They range from \$50-\$90 and are collected by OUAC as part of the application process. You only pay one supplementary fee per school, regardless of how many programs you apply to at that university.

I applied for January but didn't get in. How do I reapply for September? Your OUAC application fee covers any entry point in the calendar year. Do not start a new application; simply amend your application to delete the January programs and add the September ones.

I accepted an offer but then got an offer from another school I would prefer to go to. Can I change it? When you accept an offer it does not cancel your other applications. You may get multiple (or subsequent) offers but you may only accept one. You can cancel a previously made acceptance and take a different offer.

What about part-time degree studies? Sometimes you must use OUAC, sometimes you apply direct to the university. Check with the school for proper procedure. Do not use OUAC to apply to part-time courses that are not part of degree studies.

Any other exceptions? In most cases, if you are applying to a university at which you have previously been registered, and it is the only university you are applying to, you do not use OUAC.

How do I apply to universities outside of Ontario? You can apply to as many out-of-province/country universities as you like. You apply to each one directly, not through OUAC.

Admission, Marks & Documentation

What do universities look for in assessing college students for admission? Universities are typically most interested in capability (can you do the program?) and motivation (how much do you want to do the program?). One of the main ways to judge capability is by looking at marks. They will look at your overall average (i.e., cumulative GPA) but may put an emphasis on academic (reading, writing, theory) courses. Consistently strong academic performance is an asset but a few bad marks should not affect you as long as your overall average is still good. In most cases they will look at all marks (sometimes including high school) but are more likely to put an emphasis on your college marks as recent performance is seen as the best indicator of future performance.

How do I find out my current/cumulative GPA? You can view your marks on AccessSheridan through *MyStudentCentre* or you can request a printed unofficial transcript from the Registrars Office. It is useful to understand how GPA is calculated when attempting to estimate or project it; this can be found in *MyOTR*.

What is an official transcript? It bears the stamp of the issuing school and is in a sealed envelope. Universities always require official transcripts. If you are late in the application cycle, they may accept unofficial ones (i.e., issued directly to you) until they receive official ones. Do not have transcripts sent to OUAC. Separate transcripts must be sent directly to each university.

How do I request transcripts from high school and/or Sheridan? As part of the OUAC application process, you can request that your Sheridan transcript be sent to the schools you are applying to. There is no additional charge for this. Sheridan will send them directly to the schools you indicate. For secondary school transcripts, contact the last high school you attended. Your high school may send transcripts directly or give you sealed envelopes to stamp, address & mail to universities yourself. Some high schools are now part of an electronic transcript system tied in with OUAC; you will be able to determine if yours is one of them during the application process.

I don't want my high school marks (or college marks) used—can they be left out? The application requires that you disclose all secondary and post-secondary education, and to account for any time while out of full-time education. This is also included in the declaration you must sign as part of the application process. If there were extenuating circumstances that affected your marks, there is usually a place to state this in the university's supplemental application.

Transfer Credits, etc

Can I get credit at university for what I have done at Sheridan?

It depends on several factors including:

- the university - some are known to be more accommodating in how they assess college courses than others
- program relevance - how much crossover is there between your college program and the university degree
- your marks - generally, credit is awarded for courses with grades at least 65% (sometimes 70%)
- whether there is a formal transfer agreement or policy for college transfer students.

What is a transfer agreement? Also known as an “articulation agreement”, it is a specific written understanding that specifies how much course credit you may be entitled to when moving from a specific program at Sheridan to a related program at a specific university. It usually lists minimum GPA for consideration but keep in mind that being eligible is not a guarantee of admission since other applicants may exceed that minimum. Ontario transfer agreements are detailed at: www.ontransfer.ca

What if there is no transfer agreement? You may still be eligible for transfer credit. Search the university web site for a general policy toward transfer students. Sometimes you may qualify to receive a block of unspecified transfer credit in recognition of good marks and time at college. If there is no such policy you can apply for advanced standing on a course-by-course basis once you are admitted to the university.

What is advanced standing? If there is a course at university that has similar learning outcomes, evaluation methods, and classroom hours as a course(s) in which you got good marks at Sheridan you can apply for advanced standing, which means it will count as a course in your university program without having to actually do it. They will want to see the Sheridan course outline and you will have to pay a fee for the assessment of advanced standing. Ultimately, it is up to the university whether to grant advanced standing.

Where can I view course outlines? Applying for advanced standing does not guarantee you will receive it. You can make your own initial assessment by comparing the university course outline with the Sheridan one. From the Sheridan home page: *Academics > Programs and Courses > Course Outline Search.*

USEFUL WEB SITES

ontransfer.ca a database of transfer agreements between Ontario colleges and universities, searchable by program.

electronicinfo.ca basic details, as well as admission prerequisites, for all Ontario university programs. Also allows you to look up a major and see all schools at which it is offered.

www.universitystudy.ca/search-programs searchable database of university programs across Canada.

careerquicktips.sheridancollege.ca immediately useful resources to help you locate, research, and compare schools.

NEED MORE HELP?

Counsellors are available to help you with career exploration and educational planning. Details: careercentre.sheridancollege.ca