

Checklist for applying to the Squaxin Island Education Commission for Higher Education Financial Aid:

- Read policies and procedures for the Squaxin Island Higher Education Program.
- Complete and sign Memorandum of Commitment.
- Complete and sign Education Information Sheet.
- Complete and sign Information Release Form.
- Please provide copy of acceptance letter from college or university. All colleges, universities MUST be federally accredited.
- Please provide copy of class schedule from college or university stating individual classes and how many credits student is taking. Class schedule must show the student's name and college's name.
- Write a letter to Squaxin Island Higher Education Commission. In this letter, explain your educational plans and goals. This letter must be submitted yearly.
- Please provide a copy of your completed/submitted FAFSA form. The FAFSA form must be completed yearly on or before April 1.
- Please provide a copy of your signed Squaxin Island Tribal Enrollment Certificate. The phone number for the Enrollment Office is (360) 432-3888. Copies of ID cards are not accepted.
- Submit all appropriate documents to the Squaxin Island Education Office no later than: **August 1** for Fall quarter; **November 15** for Winter quarter; **March 16** for Spring quarter; **May 15** for summer quarter. If you missed the deadline for the quarter, please submit your application and you will be considered for the next available quarter.

Once all required information has been received by the Education Department the Squaxin Island Education Commission will review your application and make a funding determination. Please be aware that the Education Commission will not review your application until ALL required information is in your education file. If you need assistance or have questions, please contact Mandy Valley (360) 432-3882 or by e-mail at mvalley@squaxin.us



SQUAXIN ISLAND MASTER'S PROGRAM

Policies and Procedures

It is the goal of the Squaxin Island Tribe's Higher Education Program to encourage all Squaxin Island Tribal Members to seek higher education or additional job training to further career opportunities and enhance employability. The Squaxin Island Tribal Council and the Tribal Community places higher education as a top priority for its members.

Applicants applying for financial aid from the Squaxin Island Tribe Education Commission are required to apply for ALL institution-sponsored (Federal, State, Private) financial aid programs and accept the entire Financial Aid Award offered by the college.

All applications go through a review process by the Squaxin Island Tribe's Education Commission to determine eligibility for funding, however, the funding amount will not exceed the yearly funding amount approved by the Education Commission. In some cases the students funding may be less than the yearly funding amount approved by the Education Commission. The college will invoice the Education Department for tuition, required class fees, and required books, anything left over will be given to student to

A. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Applicants must meet the following requirements in order to be considered for assistance through the Squaxin Island Tribe's Master's Program.

1. Must be enrolled member of the Squaxin Island Tribe.
2. Must be in need of financial assistance after all other sources of funding have been pursued and exhausted.
3. Must meet all deadlines as outlined in the policy and procedures and yearly calendar.
4. Must submit all requested documents needed for student's educational file by the designated due dates.
5. Must be enrolled or accepted for enrollment in a federally accredited university which offers a Master's program.

B. STUDENT CIRCUMSTANCES

1. Summer Quarter Students: Depending on the availability of funds, current students may be funded for summer quarter upon receipt of written request and summer quarter class schedule. Requests for summer quarter funding must be received by the Education Department on or before May 15 of the current school year.
2. Full-Time Graduate Students: Depending on the availability of funds students may be funded for a total of up to 48 credits (or a degree) to complete a Master's Degree. Each student is only allowed one degree, even if credits are still available.
3. On-Line Programs: Students interested in an on-line program may be funded through the Tribe's Master's Program, upon Education Commission approval. On-Line Education students will receive up to the yearly funding amount approved by the Education Commission. The on-line school must be federally accredited.
4. Out of State Colleges: Applications from students electing to attend an out of state college will be evaluated on the basis of the anticipated financial support from within the college. Out of State Education students will receive up to the yearly funding amount approved by the Education Commission up to 48 credits, whether attending an in or out of state college.
5. Private Colleges: Applications from students electing to attend a private college will be considered. Private College Education students will receive up to the yearly funding amount approved by the Education Commission up to 48 credits, whether attending a private or public college.

C. FUNDING PRIORITY

Due to the limited amount of funding available and the unpredictable availability of future funds funding will be on a case by case basis determined annually.

D. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Applicants will be required to submit the following information to the Tribe's Education Department prior to being considered for financial assistance through the Tribe's Higher Education Program:

1. Master's Program Application: This application must be filled out completely, signed, and dated by the deadline date listed on the calendar.
2. Financial Aid Form (FAFSA): The Education Department must receive a copy of the completed, signed, and electronically submitted Financial Aid Form (FAFSA). Applicant is responsible for sending a copy of the FAFSA to the Tribe's Education Department by April 1, for fall quarter funding.
3. College Financial Aid Application: Students must complete and apply for all available college-based aid. The Tribe's financial assistance contribution will be awarded based upon the recommendation of the financial aid officer at the applicable college and through a review by the Education Commission. The college's financial aid officer cannot recommend an award until a completed FAFSA application is on file in the college financial aid office.

4. Completed and signed Student Needs Assessment from the College Financial Aid office. This form is faxed to the college by the Education Department. The College completes the SNA form and returns the form to the Education Department.
5. Proof of Tribal Enrollment: Applicant must request from the Tribe's Enrollment Clerk (432-3888), a copy of the student's enrollment certificate.
6. Letter of Intent: A letter addressed to the Education Commission explaining the applicant's educational plans and goals.
7. Completed and signed Memorandum of Agreement Form.
8. Completed and signed Education Information Sheet.
9. Completed and signed Information Release Form.
10. Acceptance letter from the college or university student will be attending.
11. Class schedule showing which quarter, individual classes, and credits that student is enrolled in. Class schedule must show the college and student name.

**The student's funding award will not be released to the college until all above required paperwork is in the student's higher education file. It is the sole responsibility of the student to provide the Education Department with all required information outlined in the Master's Program Application.

E. RENEWAL APPLICATION PROCESS FOR CONTINUING STUDENTS

Applications from continuing students will be given funding priority. Those individuals desiring to continue with their college education the following year will be required to follow the procedures outlined below:

1. Renewal of Master's Grant application: In order for the Higher Education Commission to be aware of the intention to continue in school, students must complete a renewal application by August 1, of each calendar year.
2. Financial Aid Form (FAFSA): Each year the continuing student must also complete and submit to the Higher Education Coordinator a FAFSA by April 1. This form must be on file in the Education office before an award will be considered and determined.
3. College Financial Aid Applications: Continuing students must complete and apply for all available college-based aid each year. The Tribe may continue providing financial assistance based on the recommendation by the financial aid officer at the college of attendance. The financial aid officer is not able to make this recommendation to the Tribe until a completed financial aid application and the FAFSA results are in the student's financial aid file in the college office.
4. Transcripts/Grades: The Tribe's Education office must receive a current college transcript/grades prior to a student being considered for a renewal grant. The transcript/grades must be included with the renewal application. There may be an exception to this if all quarterly grade reports are present in the education Office.
5. Submit Completed Applications To:
Squaxin Island Tribe
SE 70 Squaxin Lane
Shelton, WA 98584
ATTN: Mandy Valley

F. APPLICATION REVIEW (Yearly & Quarterly Procedures)

Documents Required	First Time Applicant	Renewal Applicant	Quarterly
Memorandum of Commitment	X	X	X
Education Information Sheet	X	X	
Information Release Form	X	X	
Financial Aid Form (FAFSA)	X	X	
College Financial Aid Applications	X	X	
Proof of Tribal Enrollment	X		
Letter of Acceptance for Admission	X	If transferring	
Class Schedule	X	X	X
College Transcripts/Grades	X	X	X
Letter of Intent to Ed. Commission	X	X	
Tuition & Book Receipts	X	X	X

G. FILING DATE

Applications must be received by the Education Commission by the deadline dates listed on the yearly calendar for each quarter. Application must state which quarters the student will be attending classes.

H. DETERMINATION OF GRANT AWARD AND PAYMENT SCHEDULE

The amount of the award is based upon demonstrated financial need (Student Needs Assessment Form) and the recommendation of the financial aid officer from the appropriate college. The Tribe’s Education Department will compile all relevant student information to present to the Squaxin Island Education Commission. The Commission will meet quarterly, or by phone poll to review student application files and awards.

Upon finding that the applicant student is eligible for financial assistance through the Tribe’s Master’s Program, the Education Commission shall grant quarterly funding amount approved at the beginning of the school year, which when combined with other resources, shall not exceed the applicant’s educational budget as determined by the College Financial Aid Officer (Student Needs Assessment Form). The budget is composed of the following categories of expenses, however, at this time the Higher Education grant can only be used for tuition, required class fees, and required books:

1. Tuition and books;
2. Required class fees and supplies;
3. Room and board;
4. Allowable educational expenses.

Upon finding the applicant is a part time student (less than 12 credits) and is eligible for financial assistance through the Tribe's Higher Education Program, the Education Commission will determine amount of funding by taking a percentage based off how many credits a student is taking. (3-5 credits = 25% 6-8 credits 50% 9-11 credit 75%) Tuition, required fees, and required books will be paid and anything left over will be given to student to use for other expenses.

Students determined to be eligible for financial assistance will receive a copy of their Award Notification at the mailing address indicated on the application form. The award notification will be sent out at the beginning of the year. The funding amount will remain the same unless you are notified in writing.

Awards will be determined annually but are issued at the beginning of each quarter through the college Financial Aid Office. After the Education Commission has made a funding determination for the student, an agreement letter will be faxed to the college cashier, financial aid office, and book store if applicable. The college will invoice the Education Department for the full amount granted for that quarter. Tuition, required class fees, and required books will be paid first and anything left over will be given to the student to use for other expenses. The money will be sent out by the college. The Education Department will process the payment through the Tribe's Finance Department. The Finance Department will pay what the college or university has billed for that quarter. In some instances that amount may be less than the quarterly funding amount approved by the Education Commission. The check will be mailed directly to the college. The college will post payment to your student account for tuition, required class fees, and required books, any amount that may be given to the student to be used for additional expenses.

*In the event that an institution has stated or implied that allocated state or federal funds will be revoked upon receipt of tribal aid, a check may be issued directly to the student with the following provisions:

- 1) The student will be required to sign a compliance form with the Squaxin Island Education Department before the funds can be released.
- 2) The student must submit all receipts (tuition, required class fees, required books) to the Education Department within in three days of purchase.
- 3) Funds may be used for tuition, required class fees and required book expenses only.

Should the student not comply with the above provisions, the student will refund the tribe in full before being considered for future Higher Education funding from the education Commission.

*Please note that if the student's address changes, the Education Department must be notified in writing immediately by the student. The Education Department sends out notices to Higher Education student quarterly, it is imperative that up to date address and contact information be in the student's educational file at all times.

*Awards are made based on the availability of funds and review of student funding priority, student unmet need as determined by the school and Student Needs Assessment form and student/family contribution to their education.

I. SPECIAL RECOGNITION AWARDS

In recognition of a student receiving their AA, BA, or MA degree, a student may receive a monetary award, as determined by the Squaxin Island Tribal Council. This is at the discretion of Tribal Council the monetary awards will be given out one time per year at the annual Sgwi-gwi celebration in June. Please be aware that proof of degree must be sent to the Education Department on or before June 1 to be considered for the award. If the student receives their degree after the June 1 deadline the student will receive their award in June at the next Sgwi-gwi celebration.

J. DISAPPROVAL OF GRANT AWARDS

A grant application can be disapproved or reduced for any of the following reasons (however not limited to):

1. Failure to meet Education Commission deadline dates;
2. Incomplete or missing Higher Education grant forms (Memorandum of Commitment, Information Release, Education Information);
3. Insufficient grant funds;
4. Failure to make application for college based financial aid;
5. Failure to complete a yearly FAFSA form by the required date;
6. Not accepted by college;
7. Maximum period of eligibility for grant is reached;
8. No financial need is demonstrated;
9. Failure to complete the required number of credits per term with the required grade point average.
10. Failure to provide verification of information when requested (i.e. household income, parent and/or student tax information, etc.).
11. Failure to turn in receipts for tuition, class fees, and books, if purchased by the Education Commission.
12. Purchasing equipment, books, and supplies that are not required by the college the student is attending.

K. REFUND OF GRANT AWARDS

When a recipient of a grant award from the Education Commission does not enroll, withdraws, drops, or is suspended from an institution, a full refund of the grant will be made to the Tribe. Failure to reimburse the full grant award will result in denial of future funding requests until full grant reimbursement has been made. The student may make a request in writing to the Education Commission and Finance Department for a repayment plan. The student may also pay for a quarter of school and books on their own, the amount must be the same amount as the grant the student was funded. Students must bring in a copy of receipts for tuition, books, and grades to be placed in the student's education file as proof of reimbursement.

L. ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS FOR GRANT CONTINUATION

Grant recipients will remain eligible for continued awards for the approved school year, providing funds exist, and the student;

1. Submit term grade reports **within 30 days of the end of each quarter.**
2. Submit tuition and book receipts **within 30 days of the end of each quarter.**
3. Maintain a 2.0 grade point average;
4. Must meet all required Education Commission deadlines set forth in the Policy and Procedures as well as the Higher Education Calendar, which is attached to all Master's Program Application Forms.

M. GRANT PROBATION AND SUSPENSION

All grant recipients will continue to be eligible for financial assistance through the Squaxin Island Tribe for as long as funds exist and academic and other requirements identified for this program are met.

A grant recipient who does not meet the minimum academic and other requirements under this program will, upon recommendation from the Education Commission, be placed on financial probation for the following term. The student will then have one quarter to meet the minimum academic requirements (12 transfer, degree related credit hours with a 2.0 GPA) before being placed on grant suspension. This probation notice will be in written form signed by the student and the Education Department with a copy forwarded to the Financial Aid Officer at the college or university.

A grant recipient on financial probation who fails to meet the minimum academic requirements set forth in the signed Student Probation Form will be suspended from the Tribe's Higher Education Program and will no longer be eligible for financial assistance for the remainder of the academic school year. The student may apply for funding again at the beginning of the following school year, which is fall quarter. The student will be notified of the Education Commission's decision in writing. This notification will clearly identify the reasons for the decision and explain the process through which the student may appeal the decision. A copy of the grant suspension notification will also be forwarded to the Financial Aid Office of the student's college or university.

N. MAXIMUM PERIOD OF ELIGIBILITY FOR GRANTS

Graduate grant recipients will be eligible to grant awards for a maximum of 48 credits to complete up to one Master's Degree. At this time the Squaxin Island Education Commission is not able to fund more than (1) one Master's Degree. The Education Department staff will not have the authority or discretion to waive from the policies of the program.

O. APPEALS

An applicant who has completed a grant application and is denied funding may within 5 days of receiving notice of denial, appeal the Education Commission’s decision. The appeal will be in writing, addressed to the Education Commission, and will set forth the reason(s) why the applicant is appealing the decision.

Within 5 days of receipt of an appeal, the Education Commission will set a date to review the case. This Education Commission hearing must occur within 30 days of receipt of the written appeal. At or before the hearing, the student will be allowed to present justification for reconsideration.

P. PETITION

Student may petition the Education Commission in writing for reconsideration of grant funding during the school year.

Q. FUNDING AMOUNTS FOR FULL-TIME STUDENTS

Students who are enrolled in a Master’s degree program are eligible to receive, as an annual award distributed equally per quarter.

Full-time (minimum of 12 credits)	\$24,000.00 or \$8000.00 per qtr.
Part-time (11 credit or less)	3-5 credits 25% of total = \$2000.00
	6-8 credits 50% of total = \$4000.00
	9-11 credits 75% of total = \$6000.00