

Section 5 – Post-Secondary Hockey Opportunities

There are many opportunities to play hockey while attending post-secondary school in North America. Some come with athletic and academic scholarships and some with financial aid. Some offer a very demanding hockey schedule while others balance the academic and athletic demands more equitably. Some recruit only the top, elite-level athletes and are focused on future professional opportunities and hence involve a very competitive recruitment process. Some offer athletes a chance to continue playing the sport they love in more of an extra-curricular and non-varsity format and others offer intra-mural programs.

Some have incredibly high academic standards and only take the very best student-athletes. Some schools offer very limited academic fields and are known for specific career programs. Others have a wide diversity of academic programs, and few are more focused on the technical and professional trades. All have entrance requirements that athletes need to be aware of while still in high school to assure proper planning and preparation.

It is critical when the time comes that student athletes are prepared for what these schools require and expect. This includes being aware and realistic about your academic and hockey abilities and what you are looking for in a post-secondary school. It also provides information on the expenses associated with each option and the opportunities for awards that can bring the final cost down for the student athlete and their families. This section covers the primary opportunities in Canada and the United States.

A. Canadian U-Sport (formally CIS)

a) U-Sport in Canada

i) What is U-Sport?

U-Sport is the governing body for Canadian university athletics.

ii) How many men's and women's ice hockey programs are there in U-Sport?

There are 35 universities which have varsity men's hockey teams, and 35 universities which have women's hockey teams in Canada's U-Sport.

iii) What U-Sport universities offer men's ice hockey and what are the conferences?

Canada West (CW)

- 1) British Columbia
- 2) Calgary
- 3) Mount Royal
- 4) Trinity Western

Canada West East (CWE)

- 1) Alberta
- 2) Grant MacEwan
- 3) Manitoba
- 4) Regina
- 5) Saskatchewan

Ontario Far West (OUAW)

- 1) Guelph
- 2) Laurier
- 3) Waterloo
- 4) Western
- 5) Windsor
- 6) Brock
- 7) Lakehead
- 8) Toronto Metropolitan
- 9) Toronto
- 10) York

Ontario East (OAUE)

- 1) Nipissing
- 2) Ontario Tech
- 3) Queens
- 4) Royal Military College
- 5) Carlton
- 6) Concordia
- 7) McGill
- 8) Ottawa
- 9) Trois-Rivieres

Atlantic University Sport (AUS)

- 1) Acadia
- 2) Dalhousie
- 3) Moncton
- 4) New Brunswick
- 5) Prince Edward Island
- 6) St. Francis Xavier
- 7) St. Mary's

iv) *What U-Sport universities offer women's ice hockey and what are the conferences?*

Canada West (CW)

- 1) British Columbia
- 2) Calgary
- 3) Mount Royal
- 4) Trinity Western
- 5) Alberta
- 6) Grant MacEwan
- 7) Manitoba
- 8) Regina
- 9) Saskatchewan

Ontario West (OUAW)

- 1) Guelph
- 2) Laurier
- 3) Waterloo
- 4) Western
- 5) Windsor
- 6) Brock
- 7) York

Ontario East (OAUE)

- 1) Toronto
- 2) Nipissing
- 3) Ontario Tech
- 4) Queens
- 5) Carlton
- 6) Ottawa

Quebec (RSEQ)

- 1) Concordia
- 2) Bishops
- 3) Montreal
- 4) McGill

Atlantic University Sport (AUS)

- 1) Mt Allison
- 2) St Thomas
- 3) Dalhousie
- 4) Moncton
- 5) New Brunswick
- 6) Prince Edward Island
- 7) St. Francis Xavier
- 8) St. Mary's

b) Costs, Scholarships/Financial Assistance

- i. What does it cost to attend a U-Sport University for a full year (Sept-April)?*

It does range and depends on accommodation costs but generally it should cost \$25,000 to \$30,000. This includes tuition, books, accommodation, and meals.

- ii. How does the scholarship money set aside for men by Major Junior Hockey teams work?*

For each year that a player plays in Major Junior they receive one year of paid registration in a post-secondary school in Canada. They have 2 years after junior hockey to claim the funding which is in turn paid directly to the university by the Major Junior league.

- iii. Can U-Sport universities offer financial awards or scholarships for athletic competition?*

Yes, U-Sport universities can offer financial assistance/scholarships for university athletic participation within certain restrictions and guidelines as set out by U-Sport.

iv. *What is the definition of financial awards?*

U-Sport refers to its scholarships and financial assistance as "Athletic Financial Awards" (AFA). An AFA is any award that is conditional on the student participating as a member of an athletic team. These awards include but are not limited to scholarships, bursaries, prizes, leadership awards, merit awards, housing, and all other related non-employment financial benefit received by an athlete from their institution.

v. *Who is eligible for an AFA?*

Both students entering their first year of university and returning students are eligible for financial assistance.

vi. *What are the eligibility requirements for an AFA?*

Students who are considered "entering students" must achieve a minimum 80% grade average in the previous academic year of study to be eligible for university financial assistance. An "entering student" is any student who has not yet completed 2 semesters of study at the U-Sport institution they are currently attending. This definition includes students entering from high school, students who are currently in their first year of university, as well as students who transfer from another post-secondary institution.

Students who are considered "non-entering students" must achieve a 65% average within the previous academic year of study. A "non-entering student" is any student who has successfully completed 2 semesters of study at the institution they are currently attending. This would include second, third, fourth- and fifth-year university students.

vii. *Is there a maximum amount of money that can be given out by a university in the form of AFA's?*

Yes, each U-Sport hockey team is allowed 14 AFA units. One (1) AFA unit accounts for 100% of one athlete's tuition and compulsory fees. For example, if your tuition and compulsory fees total \$5,000, and the university awards you an AFA totaling \$5,000, then they have used one (1) AFA unit on you. If you receive \$2,500 then only 0.5 AFA units have been used on you.

Therefore, 14 AFA's units allows for 14 players to receive 100% of their tuition and compulsory fees. Conversely, 7 players could receive 100% of their tuition and compulsory fees while 14 players receive 50% of their tuition and compulsory fees. Each individual U-Sport hockey team decides how it will divide its 14 AFA's among its student-athletes.

Also, it must be noted that schools are not required to give away all 14 AFA's each year. Some universities may award all 14 AFA's while others may award none, the decision rests with each individual university.

c) Admission and Academic Eligibility

i. What are the high school admission requirements to be accepted to a U-Sport university?

Each university sets their own admission requirements, so it does vary from school to school as well as program to program. They all look at core academic courses in grade 11 and 12. Generally, they will consider English 11 and 12, a Math 11, a Science 11 and 3-5 other academic grade 12 courses. Some universities require a second language 11 as well. Check with the schools for specifics.

ii. What marks are required for admission?

These too may vary from school to school, and they also vary from one year to the next. Schools are limited to how many first year students they can take by their very size, number of classes available and the number of seats available. Their information may say they require a minimum mark of 60% but the number of spaces they have combined with the number of students applying means that the spaces are usually filled long before they get to the minimum. Generally, admission to a U-Sport university will be in the range of 75% - 85% average in the courses listed above.

iii. When must a student apply for admission?

Most universities have an early admission date around December or January. Obviously, it is to an applicant's advantage to apply early because space is limited. However, in the case of athletes they may not have been recruited that early or will not have decided by then. Some students apply early to several schools just to be assured of a space when they decide. A degree of latitude is given to late applicants and coaches will lobby but nothing is assured.

iv. Is there consideration given if applicants are older as is often the case with athletes in the sport of ice hockey?

Most universities have policies around "mature" applicants but the age that they define a mature student may vary from 21-25 years of age.

v. What high school average is required to be academically eligible for U-Sport?

A prospective student-athlete must obtain a minimum 60% average on those courses used to determine university admission. It must be noted that this only makes the student eligible to compete in U-Sport athletics and does not guarantee entrance into a specific university or program.

vi. What happens if I don't have a 60% average but get accepted into a U-Sport institution?

In those instances where you have not achieved the 60% requirement but nonetheless have been accepted into a U-Sport university, you must complete 3 full courses (9 credit hours) or equivalent in a single semester prior to gaining eligibility.

vii. *What is required to continue to be academically eligible to compete in U-Sport?*

To be eligible to continue competing in U-Sport athletics you must be enrolled in 3 full courses (9 credit hours) during the term in which you are competing.

d) Athletic Eligibility

i) *How many years of athletic eligibility do I have to compete in U-Sport athletics?*

Every student-athlete has five (5) years to compete in U-Sport athletics.

ii) *Does ACAC and NCAA competition count towards my five (5) years of U-Sport athletic eligibility?*

Yes, for each year of competition in either the ACAC or NCAA you are charged with a year of U-Sport eligibility. Also, athletes who have used all their ACAC or NCAA athletic eligibility are ineligible to compete in U-Sport.

iii) *Do I lose U-Sport athletic eligibility if I compete for a professional team or get paid to play hockey?*

For each year that you played professional hockey you will lose one of your 5 years of U-Sport eligibility. Hockey players are not considered to have competed professionally regardless of the number of exhibition games played. If you do not compete in a game in a professional league, you will not lose any eligibility for participation in a tryout.

iv) *How soon after competing professional can I take part in U-Sport athletics?*

One year must pass between your last professional competition and your first game in U-Sport.

v) *Can I play games in major junior and still be eligible to compete in U-Sport?*

Yes, competition or try outs in Major Junior leagues will not jeopardize U-Sport athletic eligibility.

vi) *If I transfer from the ACAC, how soon after I transfer can I play?*

If you transfer from an ACAC institution you can participate immediately unless you have participated in any post-secondary institution game in that semester or term or you have not achieved a minimum 60% average in the courses used to determine U-Sport university admission or you have not maintained your academic eligibility to continue participating in the ACAC or you have used all your ACAC eligibility.

vii) *If I transfer from the NCAA, how soon after I transfer can I play?*
You can play in the following season if you meet the academic requirements applying to transfer students and have not used all your NCAA athletic eligibility.

viii) *Can I transfer and compete in U-Sport if I have used all my eligibility in the ACAC or NCAA?*
In general, if you have used all your athletic eligibility in the ACAC or NCAA then you cannot compete in U-Sport. However, NCAA athletes who participated for three years or less in the NCAA but are no longer eligible in the NCAA because of the NCAA timeclock/age limit or terms of attendance regulations, may compete in U-Sport using their remaining U-Sport eligibility.

e) Recruitment

i) *Do U-Sport universities provide for recruiting trips?*
Universities can bring prospective student athletes to campus for recruiting trips.

ii) *Can a U-Sport university cover prospect travel expenses for recruiting trips?*
University funding of recruiting trips for prospective athletes is acceptable provided these trips are consistent with general university policy.

iii) *How many official visits can I make?*
Although there is no limit on the number of universities you can visit on financed recruiting trips, each university can provide for only one financed recruiting trip per prospective athlete.

iv) *Can U-Sport universities pay for my parents to visit the campus?*
No, U-Sport universities are prohibited from paying, providing, or arranging for the payment of transportation costs incurred by relatives or friends of a prospective athlete.

v) *Can I receive university apparel or other products while on a recruiting trip?*
Yes, you can receive university products or services provided the products or services do not exceed \$100.00 over and above what is provided the general prospective student population.

vi) *What is a U-Sport Letter of Intent?*
A student-athlete may formally declare his intention to attend a specific member school during the upcoming academic year by signing a Letter of Intent. Upon signing the Letter all U-Sport members are to discontinue further recruitment of the student-athlete. It is at the discretion of an institution to include the terms of AFA within the Letter of Intent, however, when included, the school is expected to honor those terms.

vii) *What is a U-Sport Letter of Intent?*

A student-athlete may formally declare his intention to attend a specific U-Sport member school during the upcoming academic year by signing a Letter of Intent. Upon signing the Letter all U-Sport teams are to discontinue further recruitment of the student-athlete. It is at the discretion of a U-Sport institution to include the terms of AFA within the Letter of Intent, however, when included, the school is expected to honor those terms.

B) Alberta Colleges Athletic Conference

a) The ACAC

i) What is the CCAA?

The Canadian Colleges Athletic Association is the governing body for Canadian collegiate athletics, however the CCAA does not currently have hockey as one of their sports therefore the CCAA does not act as the “parent/national” body of ACAC Hockey.

ii) What is the ACAC?

The ACAC is the governing body for collegiate hockey in Alberta and Saskatchewan. The ACAC is permitted to make regulations concerning hockey.

iii) How many ACAC hockey programs are there?

There are currently 7 schools with ACAC men’s hockey programs and 6 schools with women’s hockey programs.

iv) What schools currently have ACAC men’s hockey programs?

1. Augustana Campus (U of A) Vikings
2. Briercrest College Clippers
3. Concordia University of Edmonton Thunder
4. Northern Alberta Institute of Technology Ooks
5. Portage College Voyageurs
6. Red Deer Polytechnic Kings
7. Southern Alberta Institute of Technology Trojans

v) What schools currently have ACAC women’s hockey programs?

1. Lakeland College Rustlers
2. Medicine Hat College Rattlers
3. Olds College Broncos
4. Northern Alberta Institute of Technology Ooks
5. Red Deer Polytechnic Kings
6. Southern Alberta Institute of Technology Trojans

b) Cost and Financial Assistance

i) What does it cost for a full year (Sept-April) at an ACAC school?

The costs may vary but on average it will cost between \$14,000 and \$18,000 per school year including tuition, fees, supplies and room and board.

- ii) *Can ACAC institutions offer financial awards or scholarships to its student-athletes?*
Yes, ACAC institutions can offer financial assistance to its athletes provided that any aid granted specifically to participate in sports cannot exceed tuition and enrollment fees.
- iii) *What is the definition of financial assistance?*
Financial assistance includes scholarships, bursaries, grants and financial awards.
- iv) *Who is eligible for an athletic financial assistance?*
Any student who competes in athletics and meets the requirements for financial assistance can receive financial assistance. Each institution sets its own eligibility requirements for athletic assistance.
- v) *Is there a maximum amount of assistance that individual student-athletes can receive?*
Yes. Financial assistance or awards cannot exceed the total cost of the student-athlete's tuition and enrollment fees.
- vi) *What is the definition of "enrollment fees"?*
Enrollment fees shall include all required fees including application fees, recreation fees, Student Association fees, library fees, technology fees etc.

c) Admission and Academic Eligibility

- i) *What are the academic entrance requirements for the ACAC?*
Each individual institution sets their entrance requirements based on the program a student is applying for.
- ii) *What are the minimum high school academic requirements to compete in ACAC athletics?*
There are no minimum high school requirements set out by the CCAA or the ACAC to determine initial athletic eligibility. If a student is admitted to an institution, then that student is eligible to compete in the ACAC. Therefore, initial academic requirements will vary depending on the program of study and institution to which you are applying.
- iii) *What are the academic requirements to be eligible to continue competing in the ACAC?*
Once attending an ACAC institution and competing in athletics, a student-athlete must maintain "full-time" status and achieve a passing GPA each semester to be eligible to compete in the following semester. The ACAC recently created a minimum GPA standard of 1.7 for an academic year (in addition to full time status credit completion)

iv) *What is the definition of fulltime student in the ACAC?*

A student shall be considered full-time if he/she is officially registered in a minimum of 60% of a full course load in an accredited program of study as defined by the relevant institution.

v) *Who determines what is fulltime and what constitutes a passing GPA?*

Each individual institution shall determine what constitutes a full-time student. The ACAC requires a 1.7 GPA over the academic year, to remain academically eligible. Each Institution is permitted to have a GPA requirement that is higher than the ACAC 1.7 minimum.

d) Athletic Eligibility

i) *How many years of athletic eligibility do I have to compete in ACAC athletics?*

You have 5 years to compete in the ACAC.

ii) *What is considered "a year of competition"?*

You will be considered to have used one year of eligibility if you have participated in one scheduled ACAC contest (your name appears on one (1) official game sheet for a league game). This does not include preseason contests.

iii) *Can I attend two ACAC institutions and still take part in the athletics programs?*

Yes, you have two options ...

- a) Attend an Institution (or Institutions) that have a declared Collaborative Program, approved by the ACAC, and participate for one of those Institutions in the ACAC
- b) Attend two Institutions however at least 9 credits (enough credits to be deemed full-time) must be provided by the one ACAC Institution for which the athlete participates

iv) *Do I lose ACAC athletic eligibility if I compete for a professional team, play in a professional league or get paid to play hockey?*

No, in men's hockey, a student-athlete does not lose eligibility for any years of participation as a professional athlete.

- vi) *Do I lose ACAC athletic eligibility if I try out for a professional team?*
No, hockey players are allowed to try out for professional hockey teams without jeopardizing their ACAC eligibility.

e) Transferring to the ACAC

- i) *Does NCAA and U-Sport participation count towards the four (4) years of my ACAC eligibility?*

Yes, participation in the NCAA or U-Sport will be considered equivalent to and deducted from your five years of ACAC eligibility. The NCAA and U-Sport definitions of "competition", "participation" and "eligibility" will be respected in determining loss of ACAC eligibility. As an example, if you entered the NCAA and played 10 games in your first season then according to NCAA definitions, you would have "competed" and as such used one (1) year of NCAA "eligibility". Therefore, if you transfer to the ACAC you would have only four (4) years of ACAC eligibility remaining.

- ii) *Can I transfer from another post-secondary institution to another ACAC institution and still play?*

If you transfer between seasons of your sport (i.e. during the summer) you will be eligible to compete immediately if you have been deemed eligible for participation in the coming season at/by the previous institution. If you are not deemed eligible you may reinstate academic eligibility by a) passing 9 credits during a semester of non-participation with a minimum 1.7 GPA or b) sit out a full academic year/season of ACAC participation (b can only be used once in a career).

If you transfer from an ACAC institution for which you competed in at least one hockey game during the same season, you will be deemed ineligible to compete in ACAC hockey at a different ACAC Institution for the remainder of that sport year.

Transferring back-to-back from one ACAC Institution to another is limited. You may transfer between two ACAC Institutions back-to-back (i.e. season 2021-22 at Institution A and 2022-23 at Institution B). However, if you choose to transfer back to Institution A or to new Institution C then you must sit out 12 months from your last date of participation at Institution B.

a) Recruiting Guidelines

- i) *Do ACAC institutions provide for recruiting trips?*

Students are free to visit the campus of an ACAC institution at any time.

ii) *How many official visits can I make?*

There are no restrictions on the number of times you can visit an ACAC campus. Funding of liaison/recruiting trips for prospective student athletes is acceptable, however the ACAC limits a member's institution or its delegates to finance only one visit on campus. The expenses covered by the institution are limited to transportation, meals and accommodation incurred by the prospective student athlete.

iii) *Can an ACAC institution cover prospect expenses for recruiting trips?*

The expenses covered by the institution are limited to transportation, meals and accommodation incurred by the prospective student athlete for one visit. Moreover, no institution shall finance, arrange, or permit entertainment of any prospective student-athletes. A prospective student-athletes who receives funding for a recruiting trip that takes place on or after December 1st is not eligible to participate in the winter semester immediately following the visit. A prospective student-athletes who receives funding for a recruiting trip that takes place on or after August 1st is not eligible to participate in the fall semester immediately following the visit.

iv) *Can ACAC universities pay for my parents to visit the campus?*

No institution shall finance transportation costs incurred by his/her family or friends.

v) *Can I receive free apparel or other products while on a recruiting trip?*

Gifts are limited to "when recruiting student-athletes an ACAC member may provide the prospective recruit with one piece of institutional or athletic department branded apparel that does not exceed \$100 (CAD)."

C) BC Inter-Collegiate Hockey League (BCIHL)

a) The BCIHL

i) What is the BCIHL?

The BCIHL is a League involving non-varsity or club teams from around BC communities, universities, and colleges. The league currently involves three of the top universities in BC and arguably Canada and two independent teams with student-athletes enrolled in full time courses at other BC colleges.

ii) What are the teams?

The current teams in the 2024-2025 season are ...

1. Okanagan Lakers (Okanagan College and UBC Okanagan)
2. Simon Fraser University Red Leafs
3. Vancouver Island University Mariners
4. University of Victoria Vikes
5. Logan Lake Miners (Thompson Rivers and Nicola Valley)

iii) Will the BCIHL continue to expand?

We'll evaluate every opportunity to tap into this interest and accept new teams, but we are focused on the ones that align with our values and enhance the future of the BCIHL. We'll continue to work closely with U-Sports programs to enhance our exhibition tournament schedule and promote university/college hockey across BC.

iv) Why choose the BCIHL?

Over 800 Canadian junior hockey graduates have continued their competitive career while earning post-secondary education in the BCIHL since 2006. The BCIHL promotes academic success, health and safety, and a highly competitive brand of hockey. The BCIHL looks within the deep talent pool of graduating junior hockey players across BC and Alberta, many of whom are looking for opportunities to compete and study closer to home rather than the traditional American university hockey routes many Canadians take.

v) Where do BCIHL players recruited from?

The BCIHL recruits from many different leagues and levels. Some come from Jr A teams in the BCHL, AJHL and SJHL and a few from Major Jr. Many come from Tier 11 Jr A or Junior B. Since 2006 the BCIHL has seen well over 200 Junior B graduates enter the league, helping establish and grow the collegiate game in BC.

b) Cost and Financial Assistance

i) What does it cost to attend a BCIHL school?

Since there is a variety of post-secondary schools participating in the BCIHL costs also vary. UVic and SFU have similar costs to U-Sport schools of around \$22,000 - \$25,000 per school year all inclusive. VIU is slightly lower as would Thompson Rivers primarily due to lower accommodation cost in those communities. Community colleges such as Okanagan and NVIT will have lower tuition and accommodations costs.

ii) What financial assistance is available?

This is a league involving non-varsity or club teams so there is no assistance for participating in hockey. There is, however, academic and citizenship scholarships one can apply for as well as both local and school bursaries.

iii) What about hockey expenses?

Most teams incorporate various elements of player fees ranging from \$1,500 - \$3,500 to cover expenses for ice time, travel and coaching. Expenses for personal equipment are the responsibility of each player.

c) Admission and Academic Eligibility

i) What are the admission requirements for BCIHL schools?

There are no standard league admission requirements as each institution sets their own requirements. UVic and VIU are similar to other U-Sport schools and SFU is the only Canadian school who is a member of the NCAA Division 2 so its admission requirements are different. Teams affiliated with other colleges must follow their admission requirements.

ii) What are the academic requirements for participation in the BCIHL?

Players must be enrolled in a member institution to participate in BCIHL hockey and if they remain a student in good standing of that school, they can continue their participation in the BCIHL.

d) Athletic Eligibility

i) How many years of playing eligibility are there in the BCIHL?

All BCIHL student-athletes have 5 years of eligibility.

ii) What are the academic requirements to be athletically eligible?

Athletes must be enrolled full-time in at least 9 credits or 3 courses per semester and be in academic good standing.

e) BCIHL Transfers

i) *What is the BCIHL transfer policy?*

Student-athletes who transfer from one BCIHL institution to another are not eligible to compete for their new school for 1 full year.

ii) *Can this waiting period be waived?*

This waiting period can be waived when the transfer is approved by the previous team or when the BCIHL Executive approved immediate transfer due to natural academic progression.

iii) *What about transfers from non-BCIHL institutions?*

A student-athlete who transfers to a BCIHL institution from a non-BCIHL institution where they participated as a hockey player must be eligible to play in the conference or league they are coming from.

TEAM WEBSITES

Are you ready to take the next step in your hockey career? Our coaches can discuss recruiting opportunities with you and your family.

Okanagan Lakers Hockey Club
www.okanaganlakers.com

Logan Lake Miners Hockey Club
www.loganlakeminers.com

Simon Fraser University Hockey Club
www.sfuhockey.com

University of Victoria Hockey Club
www.vikeshockey.ca

Vancouver Island University Hockey Club
www.viuha.ca

To learn more about the BCIHL, visit their website at www.bcihl.ca

D) National Collegiate Athletic Association Division 1

a) The NCAA Division 1

i) What is the NCAA?

The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) is a voluntary organization through which American colleges and universities govern their athletics programs. It is comprised of more than 1,300 institutions, conferences, organizations, and individuals.

ii) How many universities in the NCAA have Division 1 men's ice hockey teams?

There are currently 65 schools with men's hockey in Div 1 spread across 7 conferences.

iii) What are the NCAA D1 men's ice hockey teams by conferences?

ATLANTIC – Army, RIT, Robert Morris, Mercyhurst, AIC, Bentley, Holy Cross, Sacred Heart, Air Force, Canisius, Niagara

BIG TEN – Michigan, Penn State, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Ohio St, Michigan St, Notre Dame

ECAC – Brown, Cornell, RPI, Harvard, Princeton, Yale, Dartmouth, Union, Quinnipiac, Clarkson, Colgate, St Lawrence

HOCKEY EAST – Bost College, Maine, Bost U, N Eastern, New Hamp, Vermont, Merrimack, Providence, U Mass, Lowell, U Conn

NCHA - Colorado, Denver, Miami, North Dakota, Western Mich, Omaha Neb, St Cloud, Minnesota Duluth

CCHA – Bemidji, Ferris St, N Michigan, Bowling Green, Mich Tech, Minnesota St, Lake Superior, St Thomas

INDEPENDENT – Arizona, Alaska, Long Island

iv) How many universities in the NCAA have Division 1 women's ice hockey teams?

There are currently 46 schools with women's hockey in Div 1 spread across 5 conferences.

v) What are the NCAA D1 women's ice hockey teams by conferences?

ATLANTIC – RIT, Robert Morris, Mercyhurst, Lindenwood, Penn St., Syracuse, Delaware

ECAC – Brown, Cornell, RPI, Harvard, Princeton, Yale, Dartmouth, Union, Quinnipiac, Clarkson, Colgate, St Lawrence

HOCKEY EAST – Bost College, Maine, Bost U, N Eastern, New Hamp, Vermont, Merrimack, Providence, Holy Cross, U Conn

NEW ENGLAND WHA – Assumption, Franklin Pierce, Long Is, Post, Sacred Heart, St Anselm, St Michael's, Stonehill

WCHA – Bemidji, Minnesota, St Cloud, Minnesota Duluth, Minnesota St, Ohio St, St Thomas, Wisconsin

vi) What is Division 1?

Division I is the highest level of athletic competition in the NCAA. Athletic programs at Division I universities can offer financial aid or athletic scholarships based solely on athletic ability.

b) The NCAA Eligibility Center

i) What is the NCAA Eligibility Center?

The NCAA Eligibility Center is an agency that determines whether an athlete is eligible to participate in NCAA Division I or Division II athletics (does not apply to Division III). There are two components to the eligibility determination: (1) the academic certification process, which determines whether you are academically eligible, and (2) the amateurism certification process, which determines whether you are athletically eligible. It used to be called the Clearinghouse and sometimes I will refer to as the Gatekeeper.

It is important to note that academic and/or amateurism certification from the Eligibility Center does not guarantee you admission to any Division I or II university. You must apply for college admission separately. The Eligibility Center only determines whether you meet minimum NCAA requirements. as an incoming student-athlete in a Division I or II college to be able to practice and compete in NCAA athletics and to receive an athletic scholarship.

ii) How does the NCAA Eligibility Center determine academic certification?

To determine academic certification the Eligibility Center evaluates the types of high school courses taken, the grades achieved in those high school courses and in some cases standardized test scores. The Eligibility Center then provides the athlete's initial-eligibility certification results to all universities that request this information. Please see later for a more detailed discussion of academic requirements.

iii) How does the NCAA Eligibility Center determine amateurism certification?

To participate in NCAA athletics, athletes must be certified as an "amateur". Amateurism certification is a process to determine the amateur status of incoming student-athletes initially enrolling at NCAA Divisions I and II member institutions. Amateurism certification will consider a student-athlete's:

- Contracts with a professional team (Division I).
- Salary for participating in athletics (Division I).
- Prize money above actual and necessary expenses (Division I).
- Play with professionals
- Tryouts, practice, or competition with a professional team
- Benefits from an agent or prospective agent
- Agreement to be represented by an agent
- Organized-competition rule

The unique factor with men's ice hockey is that the NCAA used to consider Major Junior hockey as professional but rescinded that policy in November 2024.

iv) When should I register for the Eligibility Center?

In most sports you should register with the Eligibility Center sometime during Grade 11, but in men's ice hockey athletes play junior hockey for 1-3 years after high school so there is not the same urgency. I suggest after you graduate from high school then register. A transcript that includes grade 9 – 12 grades should be sent to the Eligibility Center from your high school or your province/state education ministry. You must have an NCAA Eligibility # for schools to be allowed to bring you in for a fly down.

- v) *How do I register for the Eligibility Center?*
Go to: <https://web1.ncaa.org/eligibilitycenter/common/index.html> .
- vi) *How do I contact the Eligibility Center?*
Go to: <https://webl.ncaa.org/eligibilitycenter/common/index.html>

c) Costs and Athletic Scholarships

- i) *What are the costs to attend an NCAA DI school?*
All NCAA DI schools are in the US so costs are in American dollars. This can be a heavy financial load for Canadian players and their families. Costs can range from \$35,000 US to \$65,000 US. Unless a Canadian player can receive scholarships or financial aid this figure when converted to Canadian funds can range from \$50,000 to \$90,000 or more with out of state fees.
- ii) *What are "athletic scholarships"?*
An athletic scholarship is a grant from a university or college based in any degree on the athletic ability of the student-athlete or the participation of the athlete on a university team (as opposed to "financial aid", which is usually based on financial need and not on athletic ability or participation). Athletic scholarships are formalized by entering into an agreement called a "National Letters of Intent", which is a written agreement between the institution and the student-athlete.
- iii) *What is a "National Letter of Intent"?*
The National Letter of Intent (NLI) is the name of the document that formalizes an athletic scholarship. It is a binding agreement between a student-athlete and a university. Under an NLI the university agrees to provide financial aid for one academic year in exchange for the student-athlete's agreement to attend the university for one academic year.
- iv) *Can I make a verbal commitment to a school and sign a National Letter of Intent with a different school, or can an institution make a verbal commitment to me and then offer my scholarship to another player?*
The National Letter of Intent program does not recognize verbal commitments (or even stating publicly one's intentions to attend a certain institution). You may verbally commit to one institution and subsequently sign a National Letter of Intent with another institution. Conversely, an institution may accept your verbal commitment and later offer the scholarship to another student-athlete.
- v) *What is covered by an athletic scholarship?*
Funds for tuition and fees, books, room and board, and certain other expenses.
- vi) *Is it possible to get a 4-year scholarship?*
Athletic scholarships cannot be awarded for greater than one academic year. At the end of that academic year the institution must notify the student-athlete in writing on or before July 1, whether the athletic scholarship has been renewed, reduced, or not renewed for the coming academic year. This written notification comes from the institution's financial aid authority and not from the athletics department.

vii) *Are scholarships guaranteed?*

The National Letter of Intent is guaranteed for one year. All athletic scholarships must be renewed on a yearly basis.

viii) *Who decides if I get a scholarship?*

Although the admissions office of a university can deny the admission of any student, thereby effectively refusing any athletic scholarship, university athletic programs have considerable influence with their respective admissions office. This allows coaches to scout and recruit players and offer scholarships to those players they want for their programs.

ix) *What are the New NCAA Men's Hockey Scholarships Limits?*

Starting in the 2025-2026 academic year, the NCAA will eliminate D1 scholarship limits if a proposed settlement is approved, enabling all sports to distribute scholarships more flexibly among athletes. This change is expected to have a significant impact on college hockey recruiting.

x) *How will this change impact men's hockey recruits?*

D1 men's hockey programs will be allowed to offer 26 full scholarships, up from the current limit of 18. D1 men's hockey will have a maximum roster limit of 26. D1 hockey is already an equivalency sport and will continue to offer both partial and full scholarships to recruits. **Note:** These are the maximum scholarship and roster limits set by the NCAA, but schools aren't required to meet these maximums.

xi) *How can you get a scholarship for hockey?*

There are four different types of offers that a men's ice hockey athlete can receive. Even if a recruit is not awarded a full-ride or partial scholarship, they can still earn a roster spot as a recruited walk-on (preferred) or unrecruited walk-on. Below we briefly describe each of these four different types of offers.

Full-ride scholarship offer: Men's full-ride ice hockey scholarships are reserved for recruits that competed in the top junior hockey leagues. Though, this does not mean that recruits who didn't play for a tier 1 junior hockey league won't receive a full ride.

Partial scholarship offer: With a maximum scholarship and roster limit of 26, coaches can award partial scholarships to all recruits and roster spot holders. Partial scholarships can be used to cover the cost of tuition, books, room and board, and other fees. They can also be combined with academic scholarship, grant and/or other forms of financial aid to cover the cost of college.

Recruited walk-on (preferred): If a recruit is not offered an athletic scholarship, they can still be offered a spot on the roster as a recruited walk-on. This is common when college coaches do not have the scholarship budget to give every recruited athlete financial funding.

Unrecruited walk-on: Some programs will hold walk-on tryouts if they still need to fill roster spots after the recruiting process ends. Student-athletes can try out for an opportunity to impress the coach and make the team.

Note: With the new NCAA scholarship rules and roster limits starting in 2025-2026, the exact impact on walk-ons is uncertain and will vary across different sports and schools. To understand how these changes might affect you, stay in touch with coaches and ask about their plans for walk-ons and redshirts, as this can differ significantly between programs.

xii) *Can athletic scholarships be cancelled if I play bad or the coach doesn't like me?*

Athletic scholarships may not be reduced, cancelled, or increased during the one-year term of the National Letter of Intent for performance or injury factors.

xiii) *If you are receiving an athletic scholarship, the scholarship may be reduced or cancelled during the year only if you:*

Render yourself ineligible for NCAA competition by ...

- misrepresented any information on your application, letter of intent or financial aid agreement
- commit serious misconduct which warrant a substantial disciplinary penalty; or
- voluntarily quit the team for personal reasons.

xiv) *What universities offer athletic scholarships?*

Athletes can receive athletic scholarships from Division I and II universities or colleges only. However, not all Division I and Division II institutions offer athletics scholarships (e.g. Ivy League institutions and a few others).

d) Financial Aid

i) *What is financial aid?*

Financial aid is a grant from the university that is typically based on financial need or financial capacity to pay for postsecondary education (as opposed to an "athletic scholarship" which is usually based solely on athletic ability and participation on a university team).

ii) *What is covered by financial aid?*

Financial aid can be granted for tuition and fees, room and board, books, and transportation.

iii) *How do universities determine the amount of financial aid?*

Although determining financial aid varies between universities, it is typically calculated based on the student and his parent's ability to contribute to the cost of post-secondary education. This is determined by evaluating the current savings and expected earnings of the student over the summer and the student's parents' overall wealth (i.e. earnings, savings, investments etc). Based on these types of criteria, the institution makes a judgment on the amount that the student and parents can contribute towards a university education. In theory, any shortfall between the expected contribution and the expected university expenses (e.g. tuition, room and board, books, and transportation) is covered by financial aid.

iv) *Can I keep my financial aid if I am not playing on the team?*

Since financial aid is not based on athletic ability, you cannot lose your financial aid simply because you are no longer on the hockey team. However, if you are released from the team for disciplinary reasons or for failing to meet academic standards, the school may rescind future financial aid or continued enrollment.

v) *What universities offer financial aid?*

Financial aid is offered at a variety of universities. Most Division III universities offer financial aid, as do many universities in Division I such as those in the Ivy League (e.g. Princeton, Harvard, Yale, Dartmouth, Cornell, Brown).

e) Academic Eligibility

i) *What is needed to determine academic eligibility?*

To compete in the NCAA student-athletes must graduate from high school and achieve a minimum 2.3 Grade Point Average. The requirement of writing a standardized test such as the SAT or ACT was rescinded in 2022 but has been reestablished for most IVY League schools. Prospective Division I and II student athletes must then register with the NCAA Eligibility Center and be declared academically and athletically eligible to compete in university athletics.

ii) *How does the NCAA determine overall academic eligibility?*

The NCAA determines academic eligibility through the NCAA Eligibility Center (discussed above). The minimum academic standard is a 2.3 GPA, however, each school determines their own academic standards. Very few schools would accept the NCAA Eligibility Centre's 2.3 minimum. It can range from 2.3 – 4.0 GPA depending on the school. For the IVY League schools using standardized tests as well, their admission is determined based on a sliding scale of the student's GPA and their SAT or ACT score. It is common for IVY schools to only accept athletes with GPA's in the 3.7 – 4.0 range. A high SAT or ACT score may allow them to accept an athlete with a slightly lower GPA. The same principle applied to their overall team academic average, may allow them to recruit an athlete with a lower academic standing.

iii) *How do my high school grades translate to GPA for the purpose of NCAA Eligibility?*

The high school average corresponding to a specific GPA will vary slightly from province to province. In Alberta and British Columbia, a specific grade in a particular course translates to grade points as follows:

Alberta			British Columbia		
Grade	US Grade	Grade Points	Grade	US Grade	Grade Points
80%- 100%	A	4.0	86%- 100%	A	4.0
65% - 79%	B	3.0	73% - 85%	B	3.0
50% - 64%	C	2.0	50% - 72%	C	2.0

- iv) *How is the NCAA core grade-point average different from a student's overall grade-point average?*

Your high school average generally includes grades from most or all the courses you attempted in Grade 10 through Grade 12. However, the NCAA calculates GPA by using only NCAA approved courses (also known as "core courses") for Grade 9 – 12.

f) High School

- i) *What courses are required by Canadians to be academically eligible for the NCAA?*

The NCAA specifies the number and subject area of core course that are required. These core course requirements must be completed no later than the date on which you should have graduated from high school (i.e. 8 semesters after the commencement of Grade 9). The core courses that are required to be eligible to compete in Division I of the NCAA are as follows ...

Core Courses & Subject Areas (16 Approved Core Courses)

4 years of English.

3 years of Mathematics

2 years of Natural/Physical Science.

1 year of additional English or Math or Science.

2 years of Social Science (Social Studies).

4 years of additional courses

(From any area above or foreign language or non-doctrinal religion)

- ii) *What high school average is required to be academically eligible for NCAA?*

A Canadian student-athlete will be considered to have satisfied the high school average requirements based on criteria for each province. For British Columbia — graduation and an average of at least 2.3 or higher in all core-course areas.

- iii) *Do upgraded courses count in determining NCAA academic eligibility?*

In Division I, all core courses must be completed in the first eight semesters of high school, based on when a student first started Grade 9. If a student graduates on time with his or her class (i.e. in eight semesters), the student may use one approved core course taken after graduation but only in the year immediately after graduation.

- iv) *How do I know which courses are approved by the NCAA Eligibility Centre?*

The NCAA Eligibility Centre has published a set of Approved courses for each high school in the United States and every province and territory in Canada. These lists can be accessed through the NCAA's High School Portal. The Portal also has lists for other international countries.

g) The SAT Exam

- i) *What is the SAT?*

The SAT is a 3 hour and 45 min exam that tests reading and math and an optional writing section. Some US colleges and universities use the SAT as one indicator of a student's readiness to perform college-level work. SAT scores are compared with the scores of other applicants and the accepted scores at an institution. For online sample questions and preparation materials, visit www.collegeboard.com. It is important to note that once you enroll "full-time" in college or university you can no longer write the SAT.

ii) *How is the SAT scored?*

The SAT has two scores, each on the scale of 200-800. Your score includes mathematics (M 200-800), and critical reading (CR 200-800). You can write the SAT more than once, the highest math score and the highest reading score will be combined to create the highest overall score out of 1600.

iii) *Will the NCAA be using the writing section to determine NCAA eligibility?*

The NCAA will continue to use only the math and critical reading sections in determining NCAA academic eligibility. However, it is important to note that although the NCAA may not be using the writing section in determining academic eligibility, member universities are free to use it in assessing student-athlete applicants.

iv) *Where and when is the SAT offered?*

The SAT is offered at many locations throughout Canada and in all major cities. The dates are set worldwide and are usually in late August, early October, early December, early March and early May. Visit www.collegeboard.com for more information.

v) *How do I register for the SAT?*

Go to www.collegeboard.com and follow the directions provided under the SAT tab. Pay the fee and pick your location and date.

vi) *How many times can I write the SAT?*

There is no limit to the number of times that a student can write the SAT, however only 6 scores will appear on the SAT score report. I suggest 2-3 times should be enough. Prior experience writing and studying for the test will help you perform better on subsequent attempts. Also, because you can combine your highest math and critical reading sections from all tests, the more tests that you write the more likely it is that you will perform better.

vii) *How do I study for the SAT?*

The most effective way to prepare for the SAT is to purchase an SAT study guide available at most bookstores. These study aids are extremely useful for learning how to write the test and in becoming familiar with the exam format and question types. There are professional centers that offer SAT prep, or some teams hire a tutor who is familiar with the exam.

viii) *Can I write the SAT while attending university or college?*

Yes, if you are not classified as a "full-time" student as per that institution's definition of "full-time". You must be classified as a "part-time" student.

h) The SAT II Subject Tests

i) *What is the SAT II?*

The SAT II's are one-hour, mostly multiple-choice, individual tests that measure how much students know about a particular academic subject and how well they can apply that knowledge. A few colleges require or recommend one or more of the subject tests for admission such as the IVY league schools. Student athletes will be advised as to whether they must write them or not.

ii) What subjects do SAT II's cover?

The SAT II includes the following subjects:

- English Literature
- U.S. History
- World History
- Math Level 1
- Math Level 2
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Physics
- Various Languages

iii) Which SAT II's should I take?

Remember only a few schools require them. Before deciding which test to take, review the school catalog of the college that you are considering. If the college requires specific SAT II's, then you must take the ones required. If the college does not specify which SAT II's you must take, choose the tests based on your subject strengths and the amount of time since you studied that subject.

iv) What's the difference between the SAT and Subject Tests?

The SAT tests general aptitude in math and English whereas the SAT II's test knowledge in specific subject areas. The SAT and the SAT II's are only required at the discretion of individual universities.

i) The ACT Exam

i) What is the ACT Exam?

The ACT is (1) a set of four multiple-choice tests which cover English, mathematics, reading, and science and an optional writing section.

ii) What subjects does the ACT cover?

The ACT covers the following subjects:

- English, 75 questions, 45 minutes
- Math, 60 questions, 60 minutes
- Reading, 40 questions, 35 minutes
- Science, 40 questions, 35 minutes
- Writing, 1 question, 30 minutes

v) When and where is the ACT offered?

The ACT is offered a few times throughout the year but at fewer locations and dates than the SAT (for dates and times visit <http://www.actstudent.org/regist/outside.html>)

vi) What is the difference between the ACT and SAT?

The ACT is an achievement test, measuring what a student has learned in school. The SAT is more of an aptitude test, testing general reading, and math skills. The ACT has up to 5 components: English, Mathematics, Reading, Science, and an optional Writing Test. The SAT has only 2 components: critical reading, and math, and optional writing. Math makes up 50% of SAT's test score and only 25% of ACT's test score. Some say, the ACT test is easier for high school students because it is subject based.

j) Athletic Eligibility

i) *What is amateurism certification?*

To compete in the NCAA a student-athlete must receive amateurism certification from the NCAA Eligibility Center. In determining amateurism status, the NCAA Eligibility Center will review using a lengthy questionnaire covering....

- Contracts with a professional team (Major Junior is NO LONGER considered professional by the NCAA)
- Salary for participating in athletics
- Prize money
- Play with professionals
- Tryouts, practice, or competition with a professionals
- Benefits from an agent or prospective agent
- Agreement to be represented by an agent
- Delayed initial full-time collegiate enrollment to participate in organized sports competition (see 21-year old rule below)

ii) *How many years of athletic eligibility do I have to compete in NCAA athletics?*

You have 4 years of athletic eligibility in the NCAA. However, you must complete those 4 years of athletic eligibility within 5 years of first enrolling full-time in a post-secondary institution.

iii) *Can I play games in Major Junior and still be eligible to compete in the NCAA?*

The NCAA no longer considers major junior hockey to be professional hockey (November 2024). Therefore, student-athletes who compete in Major Junior are now eligible to play NCAA D1 or DIII hockey.

iv) *What happens if I turn 21 years old during the junior hockey season?*

If you play a junior hockey game after your 21st birthday you will lose one (1) year of NCAA athletic eligibility, leaving you with three (3) years remaining.

v) *Does this rule apply to Division III?*

No, this rule applies only to Division I.

vi) *How can I turn 21 years old, continue playing junior hockey and still retain NCAA eligibility?*

Using the NCAA "transfer rules" you can continue playing junior hockey after your 21st birthday and retain 4 years of athletic eligibility if, prior to your 21st birthday you enroll full-time at a post-secondary institution that does not sponsor a hockey program. However, you must satisfy the NCAA academic eligibility requirements (discussed above) prior to enrolling in the post-secondary institution that does not sponsor a hockey program.

vii) *Can I use an agent to help me get to the NCAA?*

An individual shall be ineligible for participation in an intercollegiate sport if he or she ever has agreed (orally or in writing) to be represented by an agent for the purpose of marketing his athletics ability or reputation in that sport. Typically, athletes have "family advisors" who are not paid based on an athlete achieving and athletic scholarship.

J) Recruitment

- i) *Can I use a recruiting service or someone who will promote me to the NCAA?*
Yes, however, the compensation paid to the recruiting service or individual cannot be based on you receiving an athletic scholarship or financial aid.
- ii) *What do university coaches look for when they recruit student-athletes?*
In making decisions on prospective players universities will consider the entire profile of the student-athlete. That profile includes academic qualities such as high school marks, SAT or ACT scores, as well as athletic and personal qualities such as skill, attitude, character, and work ethic. What qualities are most important depends on the needs of the individual university and hockey program.
- iii) *How do I best promote myself to NCAA hockey programs?*
The most effective way to promote yourself is to develop a well-rounded student-athlete profile. Start by taking and performing well in proper high school classes, studying for and achieving a high score on the SAT or ACT and working hard on developing as an athlete. Extra-curricular activities, such as volunteering or internships, are also valuable for a college application.
- v) *Can I contact NCAA hockey programs and coaches?*
Yes, you can contact university coaches at any point and there are no restrictions on the time or content of the contact. There is no down-side to sending a resume and brief cover letter to college coaches beginning when you start junior. At the very least this will help you get your name in front of them. Keep in mind, however, that college coaches are very busy so do not be concerned if you do not hear back from any of the programs in response to your resume. If you decide to send a student-athlete resume, make sure that it is no longer than 1 page and includes only relevant information such as SAT, high school average and hockey statistics. Be sure to address the resume to one of the assistant coaches, not the head coach. For more information on each program, visit www.uscho.com.
- vi) *When can universities start contacting and recruiting?*
After June 15 at the conclusion of Grade 10, college coaches can call you once a month through to July 31 after Grade 11. Beginning on July 31 following Grade 11, college coaches can call you once per week. You may call any coach at your expense at any time. A coach may take calls from you. However, a college coach cannot return a call if a message is left on their voice mail unless that call satisfies the restrictions set out above. In addition, you may have unlimited contact via email beginning on July 1 following Grade 10. Coaches cannot respond to emails while a player is in Grade 10. Recruiting material may be provided to the prospect on or after June 15 at the conclusion of Grade 11.
- vii) *What is an "official visit" or "fly-down"?*
An "official visit" or "fly-down" is a visit to a university campus paid for by the university or hockey program. Fly-downs are used by athletic programs to introduce you to the university and members of the team, give you a flavor for the campus and induce you to attend their university.

viii) *How many official visits can I make?*

You can receive a maximum of 5 official visits while in high school and a maximum of 5 official visits post-graduation. However, you can only visit each campus once on a paid official visit.

ix) *What are the rules concerning official visits?*

To make an official visit you must have started classes in grade 12. Also, before a university can bring you to campus on a visit you must provide high school transcripts and must be registered with the NCAA Eligibility Center. Each official visit may last no longer than 48 hours and can cover food, entertainment, lodging and transportation.

E) National Collegiate Athletic Association Division III

a) The NCAA Division III

i) *What is the NCAA?*

The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) is a voluntary organization through which American colleges and universities govern their athletics programs. It is comprised of more than 1,300 institutions, conferences, organizations, and individuals.

ii) *What is Division III?*

The NCAA Division III (DIII) is a division of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) in the United States. DIII consists of athletic programs at colleges and universities that choose not to offer athletic scholarships to their student-athletes.

iii) *How many universities in the NCAA have Division III men's and women's ice hockey teams?*

There are currently 92 schools with men's hockey and 78 with women's hockey in Div III spread across 12 and 11 conferences respectively.

iv) *How many schools in each conference for men and women?*

	<i>Men/Women</i>	
1. CNE	9	7
2. Indep	1	2
3. MAC	8	8
4. MASCAC	9	6
5. MIAC	9	10
6. NCHA	10	10
7. NEHC	11	10
8. WECAC	10	9
9. WE-10	6	0
10. SUNYAC	8	7
11. UCHA	6	4
12. WIAC	6	5

b) Eligibility Center

i) *What is the NCAA Eligibility Center?*

The NCAA Eligibility Center is an agency that determines whether an athlete is eligible to participate in NCAA Division I or Division II athletics. Only the NCAA Eligibility Center's amateur policy applies to Division III.

c) Costs and Financial Aid

i) *What are the costs to attend an NCAA DIII school?*

All NCAA DIII schools are in the US, so costs are in American dollars. This can be a heavy financial load for Canadian players and their families. Costs can range from \$25,000 US to \$60,000 US. Unless a Canadian player can receive financial aid this figure when converted to Canadian funds can range from \$40,000 to \$80,000.

i) *What is financial aid?*

Financial aid is a grant from the university that is typically based on financial need or financial capacity to pay for postsecondary education (as opposed to an "athletic scholarship" which is usually based solely on athletic ability and participation on a university team).

ii) *What is covered by financial aid?*

Financial aid can be granted for tuition and fees, room and board, books, and transportation.

iii) *How do universities determine the amount of financial aid?*

Although determining financial aid varies between universities, it is typically calculated based on the student and his parent's ability to contribute to the cost of postsecondary education. This is determined by evaluating the current savings and expected earnings of the student over the summer and the student's parents' overall wealth (i.e. earnings, savings, investments etc). Based on these types of criteria, the institution makes a judgment on the amount that the student and parents can contribute towards a university education. In theory, any shortfall between the expected contribution and the expected university expenses (e.g. tuition, room and board, books, and transportation) is covered by financial aid.

iv) *Can I keep my financial aid if I am not playing on the team?*

Since financial aid is not based on athletic ability, you cannot lose your financial aid simply because you are no longer on the hockey team. However, if you are released from the team for disciplinary reasons or for failing to meet academic standards, the school may rescind future financial aid or continued enrollment.

v) *What universities offer financial aid?*

Financial aid is offered at a variety of universities. Division III universities offer financial aid, as do many universities in Division I such as those in the Ivy League (e.g. Princeton, Harvard, Yale, Dartmouth, Cornell, Brown).

d) Admissions and Academic Eligibility

i) What are the admissions standards to enter a DIII school?

In Division III, athletes must meet the admissions standards set by the school as opposed to first meeting divisional standards as in Divisions I and II. The standards vary according to the size and focus of the school. There are many schools with very high academic standards like the Ivy schools in D1. Other D3 schools may have programs requiring less rigorous academic requirements.

ii) What is the balance between academics and athletics?

Academics are the primary focus for Division III student-athletes. Participation in athletics is a way to enhance this priority, as it provides valuable life lessons for student-athletes such as teamwork, discipline, perseverance, and leadership, which often translate into becoming a better student and more responsible citizen.

Student-athletes most often attend a college or university in Division III because of the excellent academic programs, creating a primary focus on learning and the achievement of their degree. The division minimizes the conflicts between athletics and academics through shorter playing and practice seasons, the number of contests, out-of-season organized activities and a focus on regional in-season and conference play. Student athletes are integrated on campus and treated like all other members of the general student-body, keeping them focused on being a student first.

iii) What does it mean to be academically eligible?

To be academically eligible for DIII athletics a student must be registered full-time and be a student in good standing. Individual institutions may set other academic requirements.

iv) Is an SAT or ACT exam required for DIII?

There is no Division III requirement for the SAT or ACT exam, however, individual institutions may require it, particularly the higher academic schools in the NEHC.

e) Athletic Eligibility

i) How many years of athletic eligibility do I have to compete in NCAA DIII athletics?

You have 4 years of athletic eligibility in the NCAA. However, you must complete those 4 years of athletic eligibility within 5 years of first enrolling full-time in a post-secondary institution.

ii) *How do athletes stay athletically eligible from one year to the next?*

Athletes must maintain a full-time course load and remain a student in good standing with their school and sport.

iii) *What is amateurism certification?*

To compete in the NCAA III a student-athlete must receive amateurism certification from Div III who review will whether they received:

- *Contracts with a professional team (Major Jr no longer professional)*
- *Salary for participating in athletics*
- *Prize money*
- *Play with professionals*
- *Tryouts, practice, or competition with professionals*
- *Benefits from an agent or prospective agent*
- *Agreement to be represented by an agent*

iv) *Does the 21 year old rule apply to Division III?*

No, this rule applies only to Division I.

f) Recruitment

i) *Can I use a recruiting service or someone who will promote me?*

Yes, however, the compensation paid to the recruiting service or individual cannot be based on you receiving an athletic scholarship or financial aid.

ii) *What do university coaches look for when they recruit?*

In making decisions on prospective players universities will consider the entire profile of the student-athlete. That profile includes academic qualities such as high school marks, SAT or ACT scores, as well as athletic and personal qualities such as skill, attitude, character, and work ethic. What qualities are most important depends on the needs of the individual university and hockey program.

iii) *How do I best promote myself to NCAA hockey programs?*

The most effective way to promote yourself is to develop a well-rounded student-athlete profile. Start by taking and performing well in proper high school classes, studying for and achieving a high score on the SAT or ACT and working hard on developing as an athlete. Extra-curricular activities, such as volunteering or internships, are also valuable for a college application.

iii) *Can I contact NCAA hockey programs and coaches?*

Yes, you can contact university coaches at any point and there are no restrictions on the time or content of the contact. There is no down-side to sending a resume and brief cover letter to college coaches beginning when you start junior. At the very least this will help you get your name in front of them. Keep in mind, however, that college coaches are very busy so do not be concerned if you do not hear back from any of the programs in response to your

resume. If you decide to send a student-athlete resume, make sure that it is no longer than 1 page and includes only relevant information such as SAT, high school average and hockey statistics. Be sure to address the resume to one of the assistant coaches, not the head coach. For more information on each program, visit www.uscho.com .

iv) When can universities start contacting and recruiting?

After June 15 at the conclusion of Grade 10, college coaches can call you once a month through to July 31 after Grade 11. Beginning on July 31 following Grade 11, college coaches can call you once per week. You may call any coach at your expense at any time. A coach may take calls from you. However, a college coach cannot return a call if a message is left on their voice mail unless that call satisfies the restrictions set out above. In addition, you may have unlimited contact via email beginning on July 1 following Grade 10. Coaches cannot respond to emails while a player is in Grade 10. Recruiting material may be provided to the prospect on or after June 15 at the conclusion of Grade 11.

v) What is an "official visit" or "fly-down"?

An "official visit" or "fly-down" is a visit to a university campus paid for by the university or hockey program. Fly-downs are used by athletic programs to introduce you to the university and members of the team, give you a flavor for the campus and induce you to attend their university.

vi) How many official visits can I make?

You can receive a maximum of 5 official visits while in high school and a maximum of 5 official visits post-graduation. However, you only visit each campus once

F) The American Collegiate Hockey Association (ACHA)

a) The ACHA

i) What is the ACHA?

The ACHA was established on April 20, 1991, as a non-varsity option for college students to be able to play hockey at the collegiate level. The Charter Members had existed prior as club programs but by starting this association it allowed for standardization of procedures as well as raise the level of play and organization of the club hockey at the college level. During the last three decades, the ACHA has seen explosive growth.

ii) How many universities in the US have ACHA men's ice hockey?

There are currently 461 American colleges or universities who have men's or women's hockey teams. They are spread across three Men's Divisions. There are two Women's Divisions as well. They represent 48 states and 2 Canadian provinces and provide a structure, regulates operations, and promotes the sport of hockey in the US.

iii) Why do athletes choose the ACHA?

With approximately 13,000 players and coaches as well as countless volunteers and game officials, the ACHA has experienced tremendous growth over the past decade and continues to be a viable option for college bound student-athletes to continue playing competitive hockey nationwide. The primary mission of the ACHA is to support the growth of Collegiate Hockey while emphasizing academic performance, personal development, and opportunities for regional, national, and international competition.

The ACHA offers a great alternative to NCAA D1 and D3 college hockey for both men and woman. As you near decision time, choose wisely. If you are good enough to play NCAA hockey, then go for it. ACHA hockey is competitive, rewarding, and fun. It allows you to continue playing, create new and lasting friendships, and enough time to concentrate on the most important part of college, your education.

iv) Why was the ACHA level created?

The ACHA's primary mission is to support the growth of two-year and four-year collegiate hockey programs nationwide. The ACHA identifies standards that serve to unite and regulate teams at the collegiate level. The ACHA emphasizes academic performance, institutional sanction, eligibility criteria, standards of play and opportunities for national competition. The ACHA promotes all aspects of collegiate hockey, stressing the personal development of individual athletes, as well as national recognition for member organizations.

b) The ACHA vs NCAA

i) What is the relationship between the ACHA and the NCAA?

There are currently 75 schools in ACHA men's hockey that also have an NCAA team in Division I or Division III. In fact, two teams currently in the NCAA, the Arizona State University Sun Devils (D1) and the SUNY-Canton Kangaroos (D3) were both in the ACHA at one time, with ASU still employing two teams in it. There is even a rumour circulating that the University of Illinois Fighting Illini may come to the NCAA someday. Additionally, a further 32 ACHA schools are former members of the NCAA. Even more impressively, out of the 21 current ACHA schools that were once in NCAA Division I, four had NHL graduates.

ii) What are the differences?

Apart from the level of play and skill of the athletes, two of the other significant differences between NCAA college hockey and ACHA college hockey is time and cost. Most NCAA programs are on the ice every day, doing dry land training and all costs are covered. ACHA hockey is more equivalent from a cost perspective to, but not as much as, U18, AAA, or Tier 3 Juniors – all of which you pay to play. There are some ACHA schools that do not charge, but the majority do.

c) Costs, Athletic Scholarships and Financial Assistance

i) What are the costs to attend an ACHA school?

All but two ACHA schools are in the US, so costs are in American dollars. This can be a heavy financial load for Canadian players and their families. Costs can range from \$20,000 US to \$50,000 US. Unless a Canadian player can receive scholarships or financial aid this figure when converted to Canadian funds can range from \$30,000 to \$70,000.

ii) What are "athletic scholarships"?

Some ACHA schools do offer athletic scholarships. Athletic scholarship is a grant from a university or college based in any degree on the athletic ability of the student-athlete or the participation of the athlete on a ACHA team.

iii) What is Financial Aid?

Financial aid is usually based on financial need and not on athletic ability or participation. Financial aid can be granted for tuition and fees, room and board, books, and transportation. Not all schools provide financial aid, particularly for international students like Canadians. Student-athletes looking to play for an ACHA will need strong academics to receive any form of financial aid. All aid packages at ACHA schools are academic-based.

d) Admissions and Academic Eligibility

i) What are the admissions standards to enter an ACHA school?

The standards of school admissions vary depending on the University. The average standards expected would be a GPA in the range of 2.5 – 3.0. Some schools are higher, and some require an SAT of 1000 or an ACT of 22 to 25.

ii) What is the balance between academics and athletics?

Academics are the primary focus for ACHA student-athletes. Participation in athletics is a way to enhance this priority, as it provides valuable life lessons for student-athletes such as teamwork, discipline, perseverance, and leadership, which often translate into becoming a better student and more responsible citizen.

Student-athletes most often attend a college or university in the ACHA because of the excellent academic programs, creating a primary focus on learning and achievement of their degree. The ACHA minimizes the conflicts between athletics and academics through shorter playing and practice seasons, the number of contests, out-of-season organized activities and a focus on regional in-season and conference play. Student-athletes are integrated on campus and treated like all other members of the general student-body, keeping them focused on being a student first.

iii) What does it mean to be academically eligible?

To be academically eligible for ACHA athletics a student must be registered fulltime and be a student in good standing. Individual institutions may set other academic requirements. The ACHA has a minimum grade requirement of a 2.0 to play according to their website but you know what I say about minimums – “they’ll get you no where fast. “

iv) Is an SAT or ACT exam required for the ACHA?

There is no ACHA requirement for the SAT or ACT exam, however, individual institutions may require it, particularly the higher academic schools.

e) Recruitment

i) Do ACHA coaches recruit?

Most of the players come from tier I or tier II junior hockey in the US and Canada. Some come from AAA hockey and a few from high schools. The main US junior leagues that the ACHA pulls from are NAHL, MNJHL, WSHL and NAHL. The D3 Division of ACHA consists of high school players, AA and a few junior players. They are actively recruiting players at all levels. Recruitment, however, does not have much funding.

ii) *Can I use a recruiting service or someone who will promote me?*

Yes, however, the compensation paid to the recruiting service or individual cannot be based on you receiving an athletic scholarship or financial aid. I suggest interested players do some self-marketing to get their name out there.

iii) *What do university coaches look for when they recruit the ACHA?*

In making decisions on prospective players universities will consider the entire profile of the student-athlete. That profile includes academic qualities such as high school marks, as well as athletic and personal qualities such as skill, attitude, character, and work ethic. What qualities are most important depends on the needs of the individual university and hockey program.

v) *How do I best promote myself to ACHA hockey programs?*

The most effective way to promote yourself is self-market. Develop a well-rounded student-athlete profile. Start by taking and performing well in proper high school classes, studying for and achieving a high score on the SAT or ACT and working hard on developing as an athlete. Extra-curricular activities, such as volunteering or internships, are also valuable for a college application.

v) *Can I contact ACHA hockey programs and coaches?*

Yes, you can contact university coaches at any point and there are no restrictions on the time or content of the contact. There is no down-side to sending a resume and brief cover letter to college coaches beginning when you start junior. At the very least this will help you get your name in front of them. Keep in mind, however, that college coaches are very busy so do not be concerned if you do not hear back from any of the programs in response to your resume. If you decide to send a student-athlete resume, make sure that it is no longer than 1 page and includes only relevant information such as SAT, high school average and hockey statistics. Be sure to address the resume to one of the assistant coaches, not the head coach. For more information on each program, visit www.uscho.com.

vi) *Do ACHA schools offer "official visits" or "fly-downs"?*

There is no funding for "official visits" or "fly-downs". Players are welcome to make unofficial visits at their own expense.