

# UNIVERSITY ADMISSIONS IN ONTARIO

## For Home Schooled & other Non-Traditional Applicants

Produced by Sarah Rainsberger

[www.rainsberger.ca](http://www.rainsberger.ca)

## GENERAL GUIDELINES

- ⇒ The university admissions process in Ontario. (Forget what you've seen on TV)
  - We often see American television shows of students applying to college
  - American application system is very different from Canadian system
  - Ontario system is based solely on graduating average except for the most competitive of programs/schools
  - Only a few schools, such as Queen's University, require/allow "Personal Information Forms" where extracurricular activities will be noted
  
- ⇒ How it works for public/private school students
  - Top Six: students submit all Grade 11 and 12 marks, but only their "Top Six" (not their *best* six) are used in admissions calculations.
  - Most schools do not penalize for repeated courses, but some do.
  - Acceptances are generally handed out starting at the highest average until the university has filled its spots
  
- ⇒ What is a home schooler by university standards?
  - Home schoolers are students who do not present the OSSD because they have been following another course of study (formal curriculum, informal curriculum, unschooling) or have attended an unaccredited high school
  - According to universities, if a student has completed the OSSD (even if through correspondence, virtual or home study) the student is *not* considered a special applicant; they apply as a regularly-schooled student
  - NOTE: Students applying with six 12U credit courses (even if they did not complete the whole diploma) are often indistinguishable from traditional applicants. So, they will be evaluated by their "Top Six" alone.
  
- ⇒ How is the admission process different for home schoolers?
  - Universities have restrictions on how many students they can accept, so they must admit the "best" students, sometimes rejecting "qualified" students in the process.
  - Therefore, the admission process is a *relative, comparative, competitive* process. Home schoolers pose an additional burden on the system because it is difficult to accurately *compare* these students to other applicants. It is not necessarily difficult to *evaluate* them on their own merits, but the admissions process is based on *comparison* not objective evaluation.
  - Universities must try and find a way to *compare* home schooled applicants to their other applicants, which is why standardized testing is a popular alternative to traditional school curricula.

⇒ Credit courses *or* standardized tests?

- In most cases, you will be required to pick one option or the other. It is currently very difficult to apply to an Ontario university as a home school high school applicant without some kind of external credentials.
- Many policies offer the “Top Six” option to home schoolers and will consider admission on these 6 courses alone, even without a full high school diploma. Often universities tend to prefer this method because it is easy to *compare* you with traditional applicants. If you choose this method, then you will have little trouble applying and likely only need to contact the university to make yourself known a year or two in advance.
- Credit courses make for a smooth application process, ensure a certain amount of prerequisite knowledge and ensure some experience with “coursework.” Credit courses taken through home study will still involve contact with a teacher, and issues surrounding fair grading, having a “good or bad” teacher, slow turn-around time for grading of tests and assignments, group projects, doing busy work etc. are still possible.
- Standardized tests offer the most flexibility in the preparation stage but do place a lot of pressure on students to perform well on test day. These marks are generally an objective measure of level of achievement, but require good test taking skills in addition to good content knowledge.

⇒ What if I don't use a curriculum or if I unschool?

- If you haven't used a curriculum thus far but would now like to focus on curriculum study, it's not too late! Plan on anywhere from one to three years of a curriculum-based study (depending on skills acquired previously and your area of study) before attempting standardized tests or credit courses where the grades will determine your university admission. Search out resources specifically for the standardized tests you will be writing. If you plan to take only a Gr.12 level credit course, find a copy of the approved textbook at the library ahead of time and see if you're ready to dive right in. If not, spend some time studying the textbook from the grade before.
- If you do not wish to formally study any curriculum, take credit courses or write standardized tests, then you can still apply to university as a mature student after reaching the age of 21. At this point, universities are looking for maturity, how university study fits into a student's life plans etc. and may admit without any formal credentials.
- There is currently only one public university in Ontario with a formal policy of admitting homeschoolers on the basis of an academic portfolio, interview and entrance examination (no standardized tests/credits required): Wilfred Laurier (Brantford Campus). Ontario universities without any formal homeschool admission policy generally report admitting on a “case-by-case” basis and may or may not require external evaluations of the applicant.

## Without a high school diploma, you can apply to university....

1. as a *mature student* (requires waiting until a certain age, either 18, 19, or 21 depending on the school)
2. with the presentation of *standardized test scores* (general achievement tests such as the SAT or ACT; subject-specific tests such as SAT Subject Tests, AP exams)
3. with a year of university courses received from an *open university* (with an open entrance policy) such as Athabasca University or BC Open University. These universities do not require a high school diploma as a prerequisite for attending courses. After the equivalent of a year's worth of courses from one of these institutions, a student is considered to be a "university transfer" student, and may transfer to a conventional university on the basis of the university marks alone.
4. as a transfer applicant from a **junior college**. Ontario does not have junior colleges, but some provinces do. These colleges may be easier to get into as a home schooler, and then prior high school completion (or lack thereof) is unimportant to the university one would later apply to.
5. with a *portfolio* including home made transcripts, samples of work etc. Often this portfolio should include standardized tests, letters/evaluated work from tutors or other outside sources as universities don't always take grades from mom. :)
6. with the "**Top Six**" (unique to Ontario). Some Ontario universities will allow students to present just their senior year (i.e. six grade 12 credits, chosen according to program-specific prerequisites, through an *accredited* school, including virtual and correspondence schools) without requiring the entire 30 credits of the full diploma. (Note: students do not, therefore, receive a high school diploma, but they do qualify for university admission.)
7. with a little *smooth talking!* Who knows what can happen if you just walk in with a good attitude and ask? Making connections in admissions departments or with professors can open doors.

**Note: Not all methods are accepted by every institution, and policies do change. Please consult each individual university for the most recent, official word!**

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

- SAT – [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)
  - What it is: a standardized achievement test covering mathematics, reading comprehension, vocabulary writing and grammar skills
  - How it works: one single test offered several times per year at local high schools/testing centres. Anyone can register online for this test.
- ACT – [www.act.org](http://www.act.org)
  - What it is: a standardized achievement test covering mathematics, science, social science, reading comprehension, vocabulary, writing and grammar.
  - How it works: one single test offered several times per year at local testing centres. Anyone can register online for this test.
- AP – [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)
  - What it is: a series of subject-specific examinations (approximately 32 different ones) that measure specific content knowledge at the senior high school or first year university level
  - How it works: students must sign up for and write this test at a participating high school. Contact local public/private schools for permission to join. Schools are not required to allow you to write.
- CLEP – [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)
  - What it is: a series of subject specific examinations intended to provide first year college (US) credits.
  - How it works: any student can write at any testing centre; however, the only testing centre in Canada is in BC and the closest one to Ontario is in Buffalo.
- GED -- [www.ged.on.ca](http://www.ged.on.ca) and [www.ilc.org](http://www.ilc.org)
  - What it is: a series of examinations in various subjects intended to provide a high school diploma equivalency.
  - How it works: exams are held by the Ministry of Education over a weekend (Friday night and Saturday).
  - NOTE: most universities do *not* consider this equivalency for admission purposes. It is usually accepted by employers who require proof of high school graduation.
- Credit courses (virtual / correspondence) through school boards, private schools or ILC – [www.ilc.org](http://www.ilc.org) ; [www.amdec.on.ca](http://www.amdec.on.ca) ; [www.ottawacarleton-school.ca](http://www.ottawacarleton-school.ca)
  - What it is: Very similar to regular courses, only lessons are pre-printed (in books or on websites) and work is submitted by correspondence/email/fax.
  - How it works: There may be one or many teachers involved, and some courses will require group participation (emails/chat sessions/discussion boards). Assignments, tests and exams are all usually required.
  - NOTE: These courses count as any regular high school credit courses. They are not *equivalent to* high school courses, they ARE the courses!
  - Virtual classes can be similar to regular classes which have attendance requirements, due dates etc. ILC courses are independent where pre-printed lessons are mailed (no direct teaching) and material is completed at the student's own pace. A final exam is written at the end.

## **SPECIFIC UNIVERSITIES**

### **Brock University**

While Brock University does not have a formal admissions policy for home-schooled applicants, we do typically receive one or two applications each year from home-schooled students. We do look at each applicant individually. Our primary concern is that home-schooled applicants are able to provide ample proof of OSSD Grade 12U/M equivalency.

Generally, our recommendation is that home-schooled applicants complete the Ontario 12U/M curriculum either via correspondence or night-school if the regular day program is not an option. Six credits at the grade 12U/M level is the best way to present evidence of OSSD equivalency.

For those home-schooled applicants that do not wish to complete six 12U/M credits, assessment can get quite complicated, but it can be done. Essentially, in consultation with the relevant department representatives, we would review the curriculum used for the duration of studies, and then review the textbooks used, course outlines and content, sample work, etc. for six subjects. For each subject we would determine whether or not the course outline and submitted work is equivalent to work completed in the 12U/M courses. It is time-consuming so the earlier an applicant applies, the better the opportunity to be considered for the program of choice. We would also like to see some type of transcript documenting progress from year to year at the secondary school level. A standardized test score would also be helpful in making the decision.

Like any student preparing for university level study, it is important that students have the necessary background for the field they intend to enter. If an applicant is applying for the sciences, we would expect to see preparation in that area. Writing skills are important regardless of field. Work experience is not taken into consideration at Brock University, as almost all applicants are assessed on grades only.

Should you have any further questions or concerns regarding this matter, please contact our Director of Admissions, Michelle Lea, at: [mlea@brocku.ca](mailto:mlea@brocku.ca)

## Carleton University

Thank you for your email. Carleton University does not have a formal policy regarding homeschooled applicants, and we continue to consider each student on a case by case basis. At this time, we are not looking to change this policy.

Generally speaking, however, we do expect these types of students to have some sort of examination score to present to the Admissions Committee, such as provincially recognized examinations or SAT scores.

Renea A. Free, Admissions Services, (613) 520-3609 email: [renea\\_free@carleton.ca](mailto:renea_free@carleton.ca)

### **Home School Admissions – Queen’s University**

Queen's will consider home schooled applicants if they can provide proof of receiving an Ontario Secondary School Diploma or another recognized high school graduation diploma, as well as providing a transcript showing final year courses taken and the grades obtained.

(Upon further questioning)

We would not accept diplomas from either of these schools. (Clonlara; Keystone)

## University of Guelph

<https://admission.uoguelph.ca/template.aspx?SiteID=0577fd55-03d8-4564-b10d-7a1cc0ff392b>

Students who have been home schooled or home educated may qualify for admission to an undergraduate program by satisfying either of the requirements outlined below. Admission to all programs is competitive, and admission decisions are based upon academic performance.

Please note that the University of Guelph does not provide individual educational assessments for home schooled applicants.

1. Complete six 4U/4M courses (offered by an Ontario Ministry of Education inspected school), including [prerequisites](#). Home schooled students may pursue an independent curriculum to the grade 11 level. The 4U/4M courses may be completed via correspondence, on-line learning, night school, day school, or any combination thereof. Provided a letter is submitted by the student indicating that they have been home-schooled to the grade 11 level, the OSSD [Ontario high school Diploma] requirement will be waived. Students applying in this manner are expected to

present the same admission average and prerequisites as other Ontario Grade 12 applicants. This option is recommended as the preferred choice as it best prepares the student for entrance into our programs, especially in the sciences.

2. Present acceptable test scores from the SAT Reasoning Test/ACT and three SAT Subject Tests. The specific SAT Subject Tests required depend upon the intended field of study.
  - o Biological Sciences: Math (level 2), Biology (either E or M) and Chemistry
  - o Physical Sciences: Math (level 2), Physics and Chemistry
  - o Arts/Humanities/Social Sciences: Literature, and two additional humanities or social science type courses (e.g. World History, French, etc.)
  - o Commerce--Math (preferably level 2) plus two additional SAT's

In addition, an outline of the curriculum followed should be sent to Admission Services along with a letter of intent.

Completed Advanced Placement (AP) exams will be considered in lieu of SAT Subject Tests on a subject for subject basis. As these exams are available only in May, students interested in this option should write the exam the year before they apply, provided they are prepared. Details on the AP can be found at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com).

For both categories 1 and 2 above, the application deadline (via the OUAC 105) is March 1, and the document deadline for 4U/4M courses or SAT test scores is April 1.

Should you have questions about the above information, please [contact us](#).

### **Lakehead University**

Lakehead University does not currently have a published admission requirement for home schooled applicants. Our current procedure is to ask the applicant to provide a minimum of two Grade 12 U courses with a minimum 80% mark in each. We are, however, in the process of reviewing our requirements.

### **Laurentian University**

At the present time, Laurentian University does not have a policy on homeschooled students. We look at each case individually as well as the program the applicant has applied to.

## **McMaster University**

<http://registrar.mcmaster.ca/external/other-homeschool.htm>

McMaster has introduced an admission policy regarding Home Schooled applicants. Home schooled applicants who in addition to their home schooling experience have completed six Grade 12 U and M courses (or OACs) or equivalent from another recognized academic jurisdiction may be considered for their program of choice providing they present the appropriate prerequisite courses on official transcripts from accredited schools and meet the required admission average. All other home schooled applicants may apply for admission to Humanities I or Social Sciences I only and must present the following for consideration:

- List of home school credentials including but not limited to structured curriculum completed through ACE (Accelerated Christian Education Programme) or other such programs.
- Portfolio of written work; normally, we will expect to see evidence of appropriate intellectual maturity.
- Results of standardized tests such as SAT, ACT. For SAT 1, we normally recommend a minimum requirement of 1200 combined score. For ACT, we normally recommend a requirement of a minimum composite score of 27.

Interested applicants should contact the Office of the Registrar for further information regarding admission criteria.

## **Nipissing University**

Thank you so much for contacting us about our policy on admission of home-schooled applicants. Nipissing welcomes inquiries from home-schooled students and we assess each applicant on an individual basis. We have had great experience with the small number of home-schooled students who have shown an interest in Nipissing in the past.

Our website is currently under renovation and adding a home-schooling section in our admissions area is on the wish list.

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 Associate Registrar, Admissions/Liaison  
 Nipissing University  
 100 College Drive, Box 5002  
 North Bay ON P1B 8L7  
 Phone: 705-474-3461 ext. 4516 Fax: 705-495-1772 [andrear@nipissingu.ca](mailto:andrear@nipissingu.ca)

## University of Ontario Institute of Technology

<https://connect.uoit.ca/uoit/admiss/homesch.jsp>

Home-schooled applicants will be evaluated on the basis of standardized tests (through distance learning or alternative education centres) or on a combination of SAT II tests and a portfolio. Parent generated transcripts will be accepted as a reflection of courses completed and marks attained but these transcripts must be submitted in conjunction with standardized test scores.

Applicants who have completed courses through distance learning or alternative education centres should include marks from these courses at the time of application. If official transcripts like these indicate completion of specific prerequisite subjects then there is no need to submit SAT II test scores or a portfolio.

Alternatively, applicants may write four subject-specific SAT II tests. A minimum score of 600 is required to demonstrate sufficient background in the subject. Below are the required SAT IIs for each program.

**Faculty of Business and Information Technology** - Writing, Mathematics (Level II C), 2 other SAT IIs

**Faculty of Education** - Writing, Mathematics (Level II C), Biology (Ecological or Molecular) and Physics or Chemistry

**Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science** - Writing, Mathematics (Level II C), Physics and Chemistry

**School of Energy Systems and Nuclear Science** - Writing, Mathematics (Level II C), Physics and Chemistry

**Faculty of Health Sciences** - Writing, Mathematics (Level II C), Biology (Ecological or Molecular) and Physics or Chemistry

**Faculty of Science** - Writing, Mathematics (Level II C), Biology (Ecological or Molecular) and Physics or Chemistry

**Faculty of Social Science** - Writing, Mathematics (Level II C), 2 other SAT IIs

Applicants presenting SAT II test scores must also submit a personal/career portfolio. This should detail personal and community participation and achievements including academic, volunteering and mentorship. In addition, the portfolio should include an essay detailing future goals and reasoning for application to their program of choice. A letter of reference to support the application should also be submitted.

The University of Ontario Institute of Technology reserves the right to accept or deny students based on overall performance of the measures listed above.

## **University of Ottawa**

[http://www.uottawa.ca/prospective/admissions/home\\_school.html](http://www.uottawa.ca/prospective/admissions/home_school.html)

The University of Ottawa evaluates applications from home-schooled students on an individual basis. Applicants should supply detailed information about the curriculum and methodology used in acquiring the knowledge they have. Any standardized tests that have been taken should also be provided.

Scholarships can be awarded to home-schooled applicants if the University can calculate an average that is comparable to applicants in a regular school program. For example, if a student has followed a recognized curriculum with independent assessment.

## **University of Toronto**

[http://www.adm.utoronto.ca/adm/adm\\_general\\_info/adm\\_definitions.htm#Homeschooled](http://www.adm.utoronto.ca/adm/adm_general_info/adm_definitions.htm#Homeschooled)

The University of Toronto welcomes home-schooled applicants. If you are completing your education through private tutoring or home study, we recommend that you consult us well in advance of making an application, since an individual assessment of your qualifications will be necessary.

In reviewing your academic preparation, we will require a portfolio that includes: course outlines; textbooks used; method of evaluation; samples of your written work; and relevant details of any independent evaluations or assessments completed. In addition, results of standardized tests such as SAT I (Reasoning) and SAT II (Subject Tests) or Advanced Placement Examinations will assist us in determining your eligibility. If you are seeking admission to a science or business program, you may wish to consider completing Ontario 4U level courses in prerequisite subjects through the Independent Learning Centre of the Ministry of Education.

If you do submit an application for admission, be sure to do so by the published application deadline and ensure that all relevant documentation, as outlined above, has been submitted to Admissions and Awards.

It is important to note that admission to the University of Toronto is highly competitive and we are unable to admit all qualified applicants.

Please contact Wendy Loat, Senior Policy Advisor at 416- 978-8343 or [wendy.loat@utoronto.ca](mailto:wendy.loat@utoronto.ca) for further information.

## University of Waterloo

<http://www.findoutmore.uwaterloo.ca/admissions/requirements.htm>

### How to apply

All applications to Ontario universities are handled by the Ontario Universities' Application Centre (OUAC). Use OUAC form 105.

### Admission requirements

- Completion of an academic background equivalent to the Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD).
- Courses equivalent to the specific course requirements and recommendations listed in the program requirements section.
- Evidence that studies have been completed at an academic level equivalent to the minimum standard required for your programs(s) of application. This evidence may include a letter from the principal of a traditional and accredited high school confirming that the equivalent of an OSSD has been completed and indicating an estimated overall standing/average based on a typical final year of high school studies.
- You are strongly encouraged to present test scores in related high school prerequisite subjects such as the Euclid Mathematics Contest, the Sir Isaac Newton Physics Contest, the Chem 13 News Contest, etc.
- Test scores such as the SATs, ACTs, and provincial or state college entrance examinations will better enable the Admission Committees to assess your background.
- It is preferable that you complete your final year of studies at a traditional and accredited high school.
- Applications from home-schooled students will be considered individually by the appropriate Admission Committees.
- An Admission Information Form is required.
- If your first language is not English, see UW's English language requirements.

**Notes:** Based on admission requirements for applications to winter, spring, or fall term 2006. Minimum admission requirements do not apply to Optometry or Social Work.

### Admission averages

- UW's admission averages are affected by the number of applicants and space availability and hence will not be known until mid-May 2006.
- Entrance averages listed in the program requirements section are based on previous years' entering classes.
- We consider other factors as well as grades.

## University of Western Ontario

<http://www3.registrar.uwo.ca/Admissions/HomeschooledApplicants.cfm>

You may download and print this checklist to send with your documents.

Name:

OUAC Reference Number:

At The University of Western Ontario, homeschooled applicants are evaluated for admission on an individual basis. In order to make a knowledgeable assessment of your application Western requires the following documents and supplementary materials:

### **Transcript of Grades**

Results from grades 10 through 12. These may be graded either by an independent homeschool agency or by your parent(s). The transcript should indicate the name of each course or subject covered, the grade received in each course and the number of hours or weeks that you studied it.

### **Standardized Testing Results**

Please have official results of standardized testing (such as SAT I, SAT II or ACT) sent directly to Western from the applicable examination board.

### **Portfolio**

Please include each of the following:

- . Cover letter written by you including the method of homeschooling you have followed. For example, you may have studied a provincial curriculum at home or another set curriculum such as the Tree of Life. In your letter, you should also include the length of homeschool study and why you and your parents decided to homeschool. In addition, it would be helpful to include your study plans for university, and career aspirations.
- . Brief course descriptions and syllabi of the courses you have studied with a list of texts. This is particularly important for science and mathematics courses.
- . Copy of a graded essay (any topic in a subject in the 12<sup>th</sup> grade).
- . Résumé including any volunteer experience (if you do not have a résumé, please include this information in your cover letter).

All documents should be sent directly to the following address: *Undergraduate Recruitment and Admissions, Room 165 Stevenson-Lawson Building, The University of Western Ontario, London, ON, N6A 5B8.*

Should you have any questions or concerns about applying to Western as a homeschooled student, please contact the Admissions Office at (519) 661-2150.

## **Wilfrid Laurier University – Brantford Campus**

[http://cubic.wlu.ca/documents/5702/home\\_based\\_learning.pdf](http://cubic.wlu.ca/documents/5702/home_based_learning.pdf)

**From Page 2:** “There is currently only one public university in Ontario with a formal policy of admitting homeschoolers on the basis of an academic portfolio, interview and entrance examination (no standardized tests/credits required): Wilfred Laurier (Brantford Campus).”

## **University of Windsor**

(from a telephone conversation)

Windsor will consider home schooled applicants on the basis of a portfolio, standardized test scores and 12U credits. They encourage students to contact them well in advance, and expect external evaluation (tests, credit courses) to weigh strongly in admission decisions.

## **York University**

<http://www.yorku.ca/web/futurestudents/requirements/homeschooled.html>

1. You are required to provide official evidence of academic achievement in secondary education:
  - through final grades in 6 Grade 12 U/M or OAC courses, including prerequisites for the program, obtained through correspondence, at night school, or through TVO. You may, as an alternative, present credentials from other jurisdictions, for example, results in Advanced Placement (AP) or Advanced Level courses in the General Certificate Education (GCE) examinations. (Note: students may register to sit for the AP and GCE examinations as private candidates).
  - You may also be required to provide proof of language proficiency.
  - You will be considered for entrance scholarships on the basis of your overall averages in the 6 Grade 12 U/M or equivalent courses.

In the absence of final grades in courses:

- You must submit the results of standardized tests such as the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) with a minimum of 550 (Verbal) and 550 (Math) or a composite ACT score of 24.
  - You may be required to provide proof of language proficiency.
  - Your application will be reviewed by an admissions sub-committee. If admitted, you will not be eligible for entrance scholarships. You will be considered for continuing student scholarships at the end of your first year of study, if you satisfy those criteria.
2. You must also meet Faculty-specific requirements for the current curriculum or the OAC curriculum (with Ontario Academic Credits) since some programs have higher averages or have supplementary procedures for admission.
  3. Make sure you know what the deadlines are for applying.
  4. Submit your application for admission.
  5. Make sure you submit all required supporting documentation.
  6. If you have a diagnosed physical, learning or psychiatric disability, you may want to request modified admission consideration.

Transfer Credit for Advanced Placement Courses: Up to 12 credits (2 full courses) may be granted for final scores of 4 or 5 on the College Entrance Examination Board Advanced Placement (AP) Exams, depending on program.