

External Awards Application Tips

External award opportunities are highly competitive since the application is open to students in many universities; applicants are not only competing with classmates but with peers across the province or even country. The following steps are designed to help Mount Royal University students prepare a good quality external awards application.

Tip #1

Review the eligibility and requirements of the award. Are you eligible to receive the award? What does the organization require you submit to be considered for the award?

Tip #2

Make a checklist of everything that you will need to include to ensure you successfully complete the application. This helps to make sure that you don't miss any important information and are not automatically disqualified. If you have any questions about the scholarship you are applying for make sure to contact the institution administering the award well before the deadline.

Often external scholarships may require that you submit attachments. Common attachments may be: an updated resume highlighting specific extracurricular activities, copies of transcripts from previous academic years, and reference letters. Here are best practices for submitting attachments:

Tip #3

- Read the application requirements carefully. Take the time to ensure that the information you are attaching pertains to the scholarship; do not submit the same standard attachment for each one. Make sure you modify the information to meet the award criteria and also check that the attachment is saved with the correct award name in the title.
- When selecting a referee for a reference letter, think about the nature of the scholarship; if the scholarship is about music then it would be best to ask a music teacher. Make sure you select a referee that is able to speak to your ability that you are highlighting in your application; you may even provide them the scholarship name or some of the requirements. Give as much notice as possible to the person you ask to provide you a reference letter. Often reference letters are accepted sent in a sealed envelope with the referee's signature across the seal; however, you will want to make sure you follow the directions for providing a reference letter for each specific scholarship.
- Official transcripts can be requested through **MyMRU** for a fee of \$10.00 or students can go to the Registrar's Office and pick one up. If the award requires an official transcript, it should be sent in a sealed envelope. If the award specifies that unofficial transcripts are acceptable, then unofficial transcripts can also be found on **MyMRU** and can be printed by students.

When completing the application ensure that you add as much detail as possible, think about all of the extracurricular activities you have been involved in throughout the last few years. This might include, but is not limited to: committees, volunteer activities, clubs, sports teams, musical talents, church involvement, races, tutoring, and community events – anything above and beyond your classes.

Tip #4

Where applicable, focus on leadership such as participation in student government, or leadership roles within your extracurricular activities. Demonstrate ongoing and continuing involvement in your activities. Provide description about the group that you are involved in – the selection committee may never have heard of your group or activity. Then give details about your specific involvement – what has been your role or contribution to that group. Let yourself shine in the details! Unless you tell them, the selection committee won't know.

Tip #5

Essay questions and long answer questions commonly appear on scholarship applications. Read the questions carefully, understand what it is being asked of you, and make sure you've answered everything that they have asked. Answer all questions; do not leave any questions blank! If the application asks you to describe three activities, make sure you have provided three activities.

Tip #6

Proof read your application and any extra attachments. If the award requires you to submit attachments like essays or letters, have a friend read them over for spelling or grammar errors. Selectors care about seeing that you took the time to make this application your best work – if they see errors, you will likely be disqualified.

Tip #7

Finally be sure to submit the application and all required attachments on time – a deadline is a deadline!. **GOOD LUCK!**