Financial Aid

Students who have satisfactory academic records and are in need of aid may qualify for financial assistance. Although the primary responsibility for financing an education remains with students and their families, OCtech participates in several programs designed to supplement the family contribution in order to meet the financial need of the student. Financial aid may consist of a grant, a loan, a scholarship, campus employment, or any combination of these as determined by the policies of the Financial Aid Office.

Principles

1. The primary purpose of financial aid is to provide financial help to students who need additional resources to pursue their educational and career goals and objectives.
2. Financial aid from OCtech should be viewed only as supplementary to the efforts of the student and/or the family.
3. Financial assistance may take the form of a job, grant, loan, scholarship, or a combination of any of these.
4. Continuance in financial aid is based upon the student's ability to make "satisfactory progress" according to the College's Financial Aid Standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP).
5. The Financial Aid Office reserves the right to review and adjust any award at any time because of changes in financial or academic status, changes of academic program, and/or
6. citizenship status.

Consumer Information

OCtech administers various types of financial aid to students who demonstrate financial need. The types of financial aid available include grants, loans, scholarships and work study programs. Typically, a student must be enrolled for at least six credit hours or more to be eligible for most financial aid, although limited funds may be available for a few students who attend less than six credit hours. Any student who needs financial assistance must submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to determine eligibility. Application forms should be submitted online at www.studentaid.gov.

Financial aid awards are made equitably without regard to race, color, sex, handicap, or national/ethnic origin. Awards are disbursed each semester and are determined on the last day of Add/Drop and are based on class attendance. If a student does not attend all of his/her classes, the award will be recalculated and based on verified enrollment status.

Due to the limited amount of money and the large number of students in need, typically OCtech does not award Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (SEOG) and South Carolina Need-Based Grant (SCNBG) to students receiving aid from Workforce Investment Act, Employment Security Commissions, VA and/or Veteran Readiness and Employment (VR&E).

Eligibility for Aid

Eligibility requirements for each type of aid may vary from year to year. For information on the most recent eligibility requirements, methods for determining individual student eligibility and calculating award amounts, contact the Financial Aid Office. Specific eligibility requirements are established by the US Department of Education for federally-funded aid programs; South Carolina Commission on Higher Education for state-funded programs; and local/private sources determine eligibility for their respective programs. All aid awarded is based on courses required for the program of study for graduation purposes only. Courses taken outside of the program of study are not eligible for aid.

All aid awarded through OCtech is awarded on the basis of financial need and merit. Students in default on a student loan or repayment of a grant may not be awarded financial aid, except under certain circumstances. A student's aid package may include grants, scholarships, work study or loans.

When making aid awards, students demonstrating the greatest unmet financial need are assigned funds first. Because of this, students applying for aid early are most likely to receive assistance with available funds.

To remain eligible, a student must be enrolled and be in good academic standing. Students who withdraw from school after the start of the term are liable for repayment of part or all of the funds received during that semester. In addition, to assure that the student remains eligible, the student must notify the Financial Aid Office of changes in enrollment status or program of study.

A student must enroll in an eligible program to receive any type of federal aid. General Education Development (GED) and continuing education courses are not eligible courses. Students enrolled as a special or transient student are not eligible for financial aid. Enrollment status can only consist of those courses required for graduation or as a prerequisite for courses required in the program. For federal aid programs, once a student has successfully completed a course two times, that course will not be eligible for federal funding.

Students without a High School Diploma
The Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act of 2015 (Pub. L. 113-235) was enacted on December 16, 2014. The new law changed section 484(d) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (HEA), to allow a student who does not have a high school diploma (or its recognized equivalent), or who did not complete a secondary school education in a homeschool setting, to be eligible for Title IV, HEA student assistance (Title IV aid) through ability to benefit (ATB) alternatives, but only if the student is enrolled in an "eligible career pathway program" as defined in section 484(d)(2) of the HEA.

- A student may be eligible if he or she meets one of the following Ability to Benefit (ATB) alternatives:
- Passes an independently administered Department of Education approved ATB test.
- Completes at least 6 credit hours or 225 clock hours that are applicable toward a degree or certificate offered by the postsecondary institution.
- Completes a State process approved by the Secretary of Education. Note: To date, no State process has ever been submitted for the Secretary's approval.

A student who meets one of the above alternatives may use that alternative to establish his or her Title IV eligibility, if the student enrolls in an eligible career pathway program as defined in section 484(d)(2) of the HEA.

Audit Courses
Courses taken on an audit basis are not eligible for Title IV funding. Because audit courses are ineligible for Title IV funding, they will not be used to determine a student's enrollment status for financial aid purposes.

Developmental/Remedial Courses (001-099 level courses)
Developmental coursework prepares a student for study at the postsecondary level or for a given program. Students are only eligible to receive federal aid for up to a maximum of 30 semester credit hours of developmental coursework.

For additional information concerning types of aid, student eligibility selection, award procedures, etc., contact the OCtech Financial Aid Office.

How to Apply for Financial Aid

1. Complete an application for admission to OCtech.
2. Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). This form is required for all financial aid programs: scholarships, grants, work study, Lottery Tuition Assistance (LTA) , LIFE Scholarship, SC Need-based Grant and loans at OCtech. Under certain situations, the FAFSA may be waived for LTA and LIFE. Complete the FAFSA online at www.studentaid.gov.

3. If OCtech's school code (006815) is listed on the FAFSA, the Financial Aid Office will receive a copy of the student aid report electronically. The Financial Aid Office will use the student aid report to determine eligibility for the Pell Grant, student loans, and all campus-based aid.
4. If eligible for financial aid, an email is sent informing the student to review the financial aid offer letter via their Self Service account. Please contact the Financial Aid Office with any questions.

Financial Aid Office Hours:
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday: 8:00am - 6:00pm
Friday: 8:00am - 1:30pm

Financial Aid Priority Deadlines

Term	Deadline
Fall	July 15
Spring	November 15
Summer	April 15

To be considered for campus-based aid, the student aid report must be in the Financial Aid Office before May 1, each year.

Financial aid applications may be processed after the posted deadlines; however, students should make arrangements to cover the cost of tuition and books for the first semester of enrollment or until they are officially notified of eligibility status for financial aid.

Communication between Students and the Financial Aid Office
The Financial Aid Office uses the student OCtech email account as the primary means of communication. Students must review their email and announcements regularly through D2L to ensure they have the latest information about their financial aid status.