

Extract Report

BrightSparks Scholarship & Higher Education Survey Report 2018



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INTRODUCTION

About 2018 BrightSparks Scholarship and Higher Education Survey

The 2018 BrightSparks Scholarship and Higher Education Survey is an annual study to understand the higher education, scholarships and career preferences of students in Singapore. The findings from this study hope to provide key insights into the preferences of potential students and scholars. This will help tertiary institutions and scholarship providers to better align their scholarship offerings with some of their preferences and also know of the channels to use to effectively reach out to students should they wish to let them know about their scholarship information.

Survey Methodology

The BrightSparks Scholarship and Higher Education Survey is separated into two sections that are targeted at two main group of students:

1. Target at those students who are eligible to take up scholarships for their first tertiary degree programme which comprises of
 - I. GCE 'A' Level, International Baccalaureate (IB) students and graduates
 - II. Polytechnic students from Nanyang Polytechnic (NYP), Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP), Republic Polytechnic (RP), Singapore Polytechnic (SP) and Temasek Polytechnic (TP)

2. Target at those students who are eligible to take up mid-term scholarships for their first tertiary degree programme which comprises of
 - I. First and second year university undergraduates

The survey was conducted from the period of 26th March to 27th July 2018. Using different online questionnaires for the two separate group of students, respondents were invited to participate in the survey via emailers, ebanners and other online methods adopted by BrightSparks and the respective schools. Other attempt to solicit for relevant respondents was done via targeted sponsored posts on Facebook.

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Survey Structure

The survey was structured into 4 main sections to collect data on the following:

Section 1: Personal Details

gives information on the respondents' gender, nationality, school, academic results and course of study.

Section 2: Education Preferences (Excluding those not pursuing further education)

gives information on the respondents' preferred local and overseas institutions and their desired course of study.

Section 3: Scholarship Preferences (Excluding those not interested in scholarships)

gives information on the respondents' preferred scholarship providers, factors that are important to them when choosing a scholarship, the bond duration which they deemed acceptable, their preferred channels influencing their choice of scholarships, their preferred source of scholarship information and their preferred method of scholarship application.

Section 4: Career Preferences

gives information on the respondents' career expectation such as the attributes important to their ideal job, their preferred job sector and industries and their expected starting salary.

Survey Sample

The breakdown of the respondents by their categories is as follows:

RESPONDENT GROUPS	FINAL SAMPLE SIZE
Top GCE 'A' Level and IB Diploma students and graduates*	787
GCE 'A' Level and IB Diploma students and graduates	1,071
Polytechnic students	381
Total Sample Size (JC / IB / Polytechnic)	2,239

*Top GCE 'A' Level graduates refer to those 'A' Level students who have attained at least three or more 'A's for their H2 subjects. Top International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma graduates refer to those have attained a score of at least 39 points and above.

RESPONDENT GROUPS	FINAL SAMPLE SIZE
University undergraduates	1,106
Total Sample Size (University Mid-Term)	1,106

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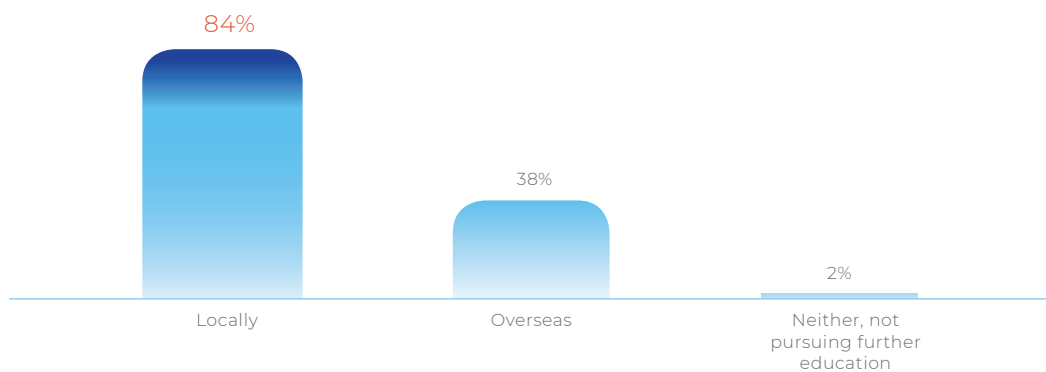
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GENERAL SURVEY FINDINGS

Majority intend to pursue further education

Collectively for all the 2,239 respondents in the respondent groups of top GCE 'A' Level and IB Diploma students and graduates, GCE 'A' Level and IB Diploma students and graduates and polytechnic students, 98 percent of them indicated that they intend to pursue a further education either locally or overseas with only a handful, 2 percent, of them indicating that they have no intention to further their education.

Intention to pursue further education



Amongst those who are keen to further their education, a high 84 percent of them intend to pursue their further education locally in contrast to 38 percent of them who intend to study overseas. Citing from their responses, the recognition of certificate is the most important factor when deciding on a local education institution while the quality of education is the most important factor when deciding on an overseas education institution.

Strong interest in scholarship - both full-term scholarship and mid-term scholarship

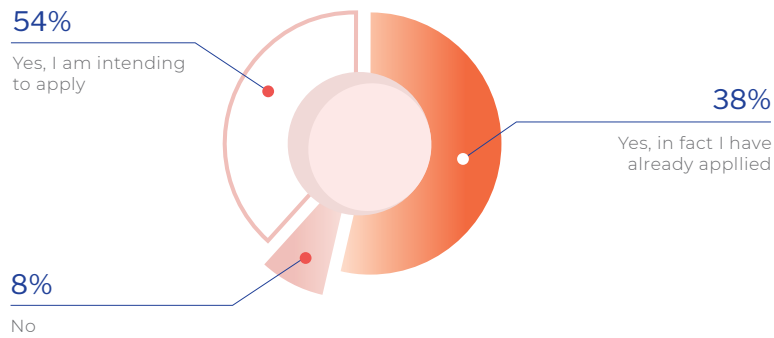
In general, across the various categories, majority of the respondents indicated that they intend to or have already applied for a scholarship. Though an application does not guarantee the receipt of the scholarship, only a small percentage of them do not have the intention to apply for scholarships.

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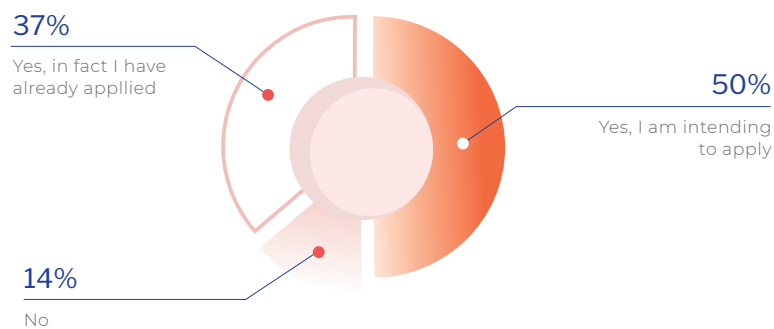
Top GCE 'A' Level and IB Diploma students and graduates

INTENTION TO APPLY FOR SCHOLARSHIPS



GCE 'A' Level and IB Diploma students and graduates

INTENTION TO APPLY FOR SCHOLARSHIPS

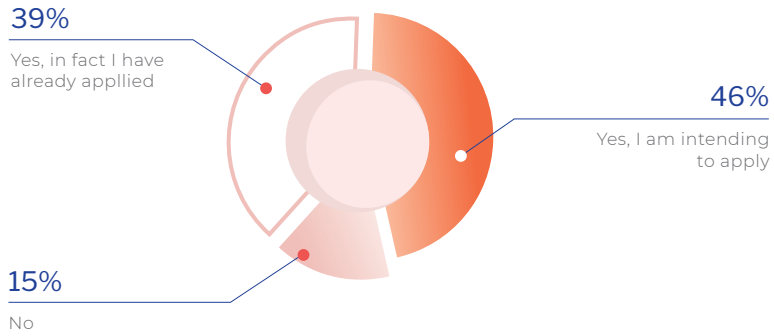


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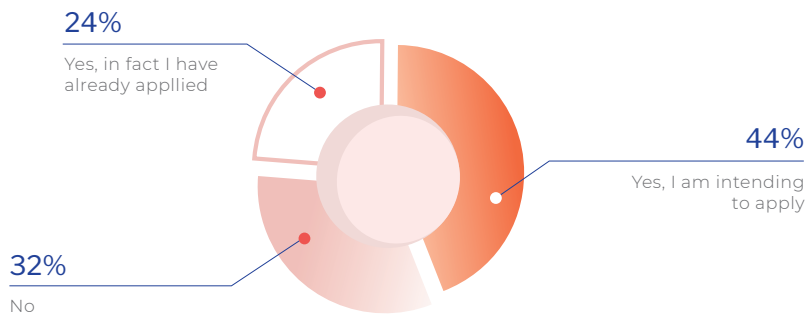
Polytechnic students

INTENTION TO APPLY FOR SCHOLARSHIPS



University undergraduates

INTENTION TO APPLY FOR MID-TERM SCHOLARSHIPS



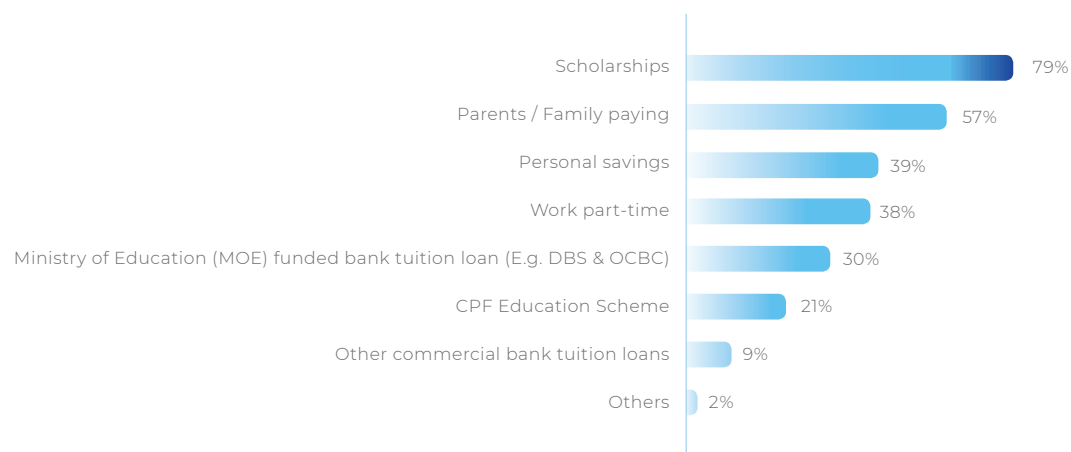
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Scholarship seen as the most preferred method to finance tertiary education

The strong interest in scholarships is substantiated by it being chosen as the top preferred education financing method across the various student category groups - top GCE 'A' Level and IB Diploma students and graduates, GCE 'A' Level and IB Diploma students and graduates and polytechnic students.

Method(s) to finance further education



*Respondent were allowed to make multiple selection.

Base: All respondents from top GCE 'A' level and IB Diploma students and graduates, GCE 'A' level and IB Diploma students and graduates and polytechnic students who are interested in pursuing a further education.

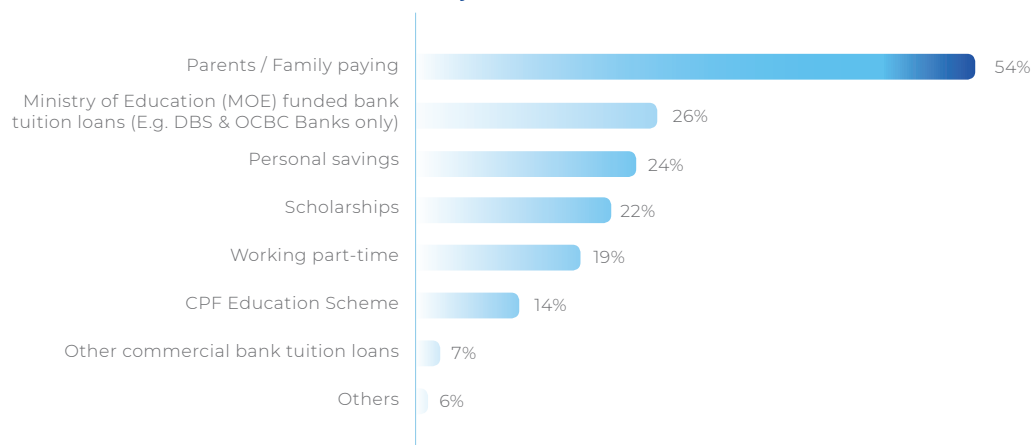
Low usage of scholarship to finance university education present opportunities for mid-term scholarship

The limited spots awarded for scholarships meant that only selected few are able to actually use scholarship to finance their university education. This is evident when only a relatively small percentage (22 percent) of university undergraduates are currently using scholarships to finance their university education. The low usage of scholarships by the university undergraduates coupled with the understanding that most students prefer to finance their tertiary education with a scholarship, presents an opportunity for scholarship providers to attract more university undergraduates to apply for mid-term scholarship.

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Method(s) used to finance university education



*Respondent were allowed to make multiple selection.

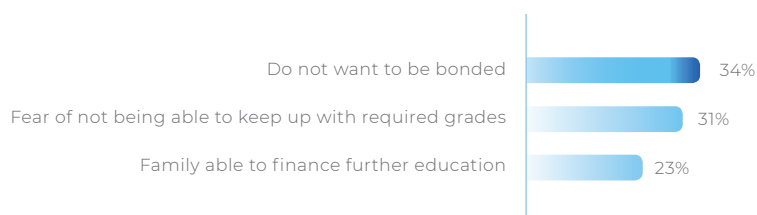
Base: All respondents from university undergraduates who are interested in pursuing a further education.

Main reasons for not applying for a scholarship

Among the top GCE 'A' level & IB Diploma students and graduates who indicated no intention in applying for a scholarship, the top reason cited for this lack of desire was because they do not want to be bonded. Unlike the top GCE 'A' level & IB Diploma students and graduates, the academic aspects such as not meeting the academic requirement or the fear of not being able to keep up with the required grades are the main barrier to scholarship application among the GCE 'A' level & IB Diploma students and graduates, polytechnic students and university students.

Top 3 reason(s) for not applying for a scholarship

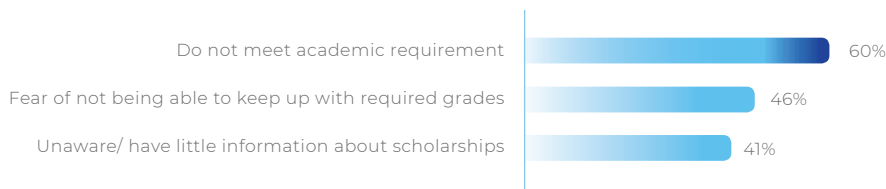
TOP GCE 'A' LEVEL & IB DIPLOMA STUDENTS AND GRADUATES



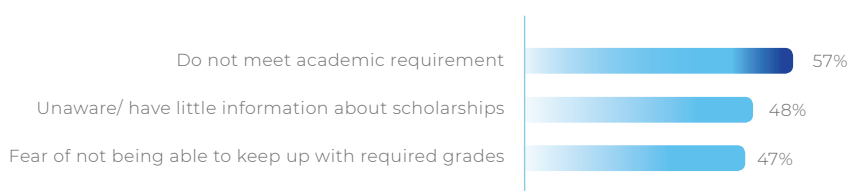
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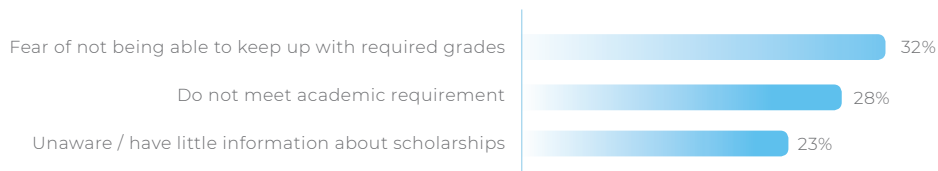
GCE 'A' LEVEL & IB DIPLOMA STUDENTS AND GRADUATES



POLYTECHNIC STUDENTS



UNIVERSITY UNDERGRADUATES



Important factors when applying for scholarship

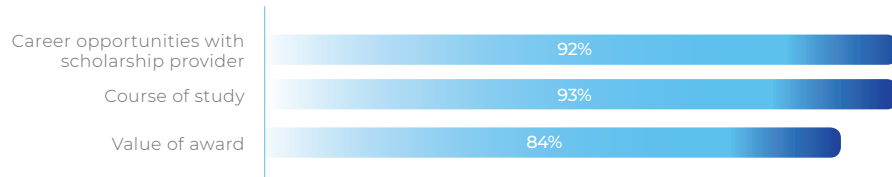
Across all the various student categories, it is noted that the common top 3 factors which are important to those who intend to apply or have already applied for scholarships are the career opportunities with the scholarship providers, course of study and value of award. Hence, to attract more scholarship application, scholarship providers can highlight that a well-designed career programme and opportunities will be made available to their scholar. Apart from the value of award which need to be attractive enough, the course of study also matters to potential applicants, a scholarship that limits or forces applicants to choose from narrow fields of study will not be well-received. Scholarship providers can consider widening and allowing their scholars to choose their major from a diverse list of courses.

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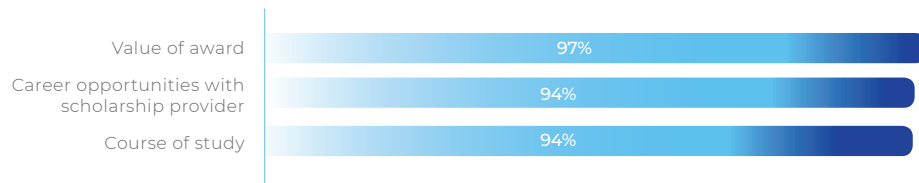
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Top 3 factors important when applying for a scholarship

TOP GCE 'A' LEVEL & IB DIPLOMA STUDENTS AND GRADUATES



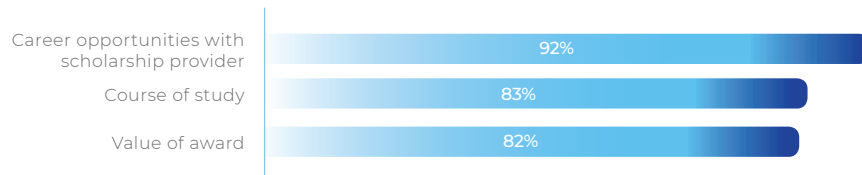
GCE 'A' LEVEL & IB DIPLOMA STUDENTS AND GRADUATES



POLYTECHNIC STUDENTS



UNIVERSITY UNDERGRADUATES



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Top 10 overall preferred scholarship providers rankings among the different categories

Respondents who indicated their interest to pursue scholarships were asked to select their preferred scholarship providers that they intend to apply or have already applied for which multiple selection of the scholarship providers is allowed. The scholarship providers rankings are as follows:

Top GCE 'A' Level and IB Diploma students and graduate

2017 RANK	2018 RANK	SCHOLARSHIP PROVIDER	COUNT	RANK MOVEMENT
1	1	National University of Singapore (NUS)	291	0
3	2	Nanyang Technological University (NTU)	204	1
4	3	Changi Airport Group (CAG)	152	1
5	4	Agency for Science, Technology & Research (A*Star)	121	1
10	5	Defence Science and Technology Agency (DSTA)	102	5
8	5	MOH Holdings Pte Ltd (MOHH)	102	3
6	7	Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore (CAAS)	99	-1
21	8	Singapore-Industry Scholarship (SgIS)	98	13
2	9	Public Service Commission (PSC)	90	-7
17	10	Singapore Management University (SMU)	89	7

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GCE 'A' Level and IB Diploma students and graduates

2017 RANK	2018 RANK	SCHOLARSHIP PROVIDER	COUNT	RANK MOVEMENT
1	1	National University of Singapore (NUS)	252	0
5	2	MOH Holdings Pte Ltd (MOHH)	185	-3
3	2	Nanyang Technological University (NTU)	185	-1
-	4	Ministry of Education (MOE)	147	-
6	5	Agency for Science, Technology & Research (A*Star)	145	-1
4	6	Changi Airport Group (CAG)	144	2
11	7	Singapore-Industry Scholarship (SgIS)	129	-4
15	8	Oversea - Chinese Banking Corporation Limited (OCBC)	108	-7
7	9	Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore (CAAS)	97	2
36	10	Defence Science and Technology Agency (DSTA)	89	-26
7	10	Health Promotion Board (HPB)	89	3

Polytechnic students

2017 RANK	2018 RANK	SCHOLARSHIP PROVIDER	COUNT	RANK MOVEMENT
5	1	MOH Holdings Pte Ltd (MOHH)	98	4
2	2	National University of Singapore (NUS)	54	0
3	3	Nanyang Technological University (NTU)	53	0
-	4	Ministry of Education (MOE)	38	-
11	4	Singapore Institute of Technology (SIT)	38	7
8	6	Changi Airport Group (CAG)	36	2
6	7	Agency for Science, Technology & Research (A*Star)	34	-1
6	8	Building and Construction Authority (BCA)	32	-2
12	9	Health Promotion Board (HPB)	31	3
17	10	Defence Science and Technology Agency (DSTA)	30	7

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University undergraduates

2017 RANK	2018 RANK	SCHOLARSHIP PROVIDER	COUNT	RANK MOVEMENT
2	1	Singapore-Industry Scholarship (SgIS)	121	1
10	2	Oversea - Chinese Banking Corporation Limited (OCBC)	94	8
7	3	JTC Corporation	90	4
1	4	Building and Construction Authority (BCA)	79	-
12	4	MOH Holdings Pte Ltd (MOHH)	79	8
-	6	National University of Singapore (NUS)	78	-
4	7	Agency for Science, Technology & Research (A*Star)	77	-3
-	7	Singapore Airlines Ltd (SIA)	77	-
13	9	Keppel Group	68	4
9	10	Health Promotion Board (HPB)	66	-1

Most preferred and influential channel to learn about scholarships

In order to attract the right applicants, scholarship providers need to have a clear understanding of the channels used by the different groups of students so as to effectively target their outreach efforts. Aside from the common channels of scholarship events and websites which were commonly cited as among the top three preferred channel across the different category of student groups, other channels can be used in combination to create greater awareness about their scholarships offerings.

TOP 3 PREFERRED CHANNEL TO LEARN ABOUT SCHOLARSHIPS			
TOP GCE 'A' LEVEL AND IB DIPLOMA STUDENTS AND GRADUATES	GCE 'A' LEVEL AND IB DIPLOMA STUDENTS AND GRADUATES	POLYTECHNIC STUDENTS	UNIVERSITY UNDERGRADUATES
Scholarship events (open house/ workshops/ talks)	Scholarship providers' websites	School (teachers/ counsellors)	Scholarship providers' websites
Scholarship providers' websites	Scholarship events (open house/ workshops/ talks)	Scholarship providers' websites	Scholarship events (open house/ workshops/ talks)
School (teachers/ counsellors)	School (teachers/ counsellors)	Scholarship events (open house/ workshops/ talks)	Web search results

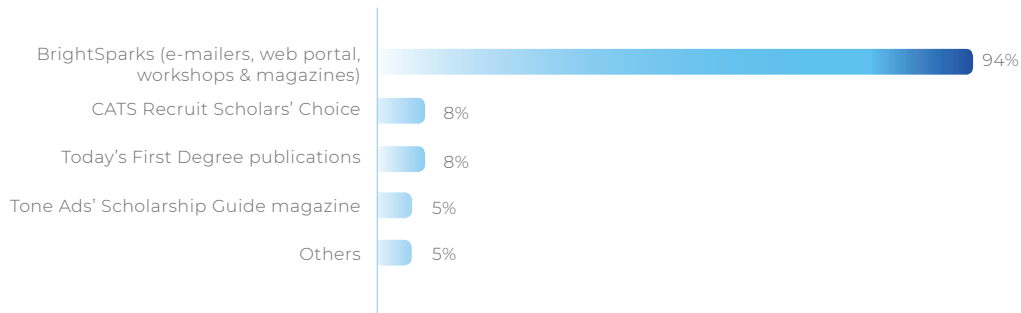
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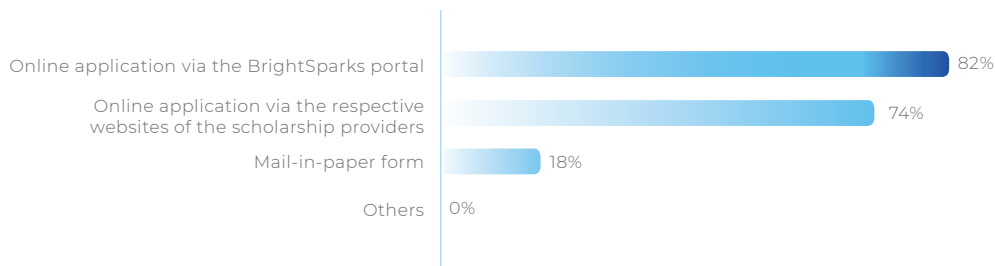
Brightsparks remains the most preferred scholarship portal for research and application of scholarship

As a one-stop centralised portal that has listings of the various scholarship providers, the BrightSparks portal provides the convenience and ease the needs of students in their scholarship research and application. Hence, it was noted that across the different student category groups, BrightSparks consistently outrank the other sources as the most preferred source of scholarship information and mode of scholarship application.

Preferred sources for scholarship information



Preferred method of scholarship application



**Respondent were allowed to make multiple selection.*

Base: All respondents from top GCE 'A' level and IB Diploma students and graduates, GCE 'A' level and IB Diploma students and graduates, polytechnic students and university undergraduates who are interested in applying or have applied for a scholarship.

Important factor of an ideal job

As a scholarship provider, there is a need to understand the career expectations of their scholars and hopefully meet their expectations and encourage their scholars to continue to serve their bonds with a great sense of ownership and motivation. Across all the various student categories, it is cited that career growth and opportunities is the top factor which is important to them in their ideal job. Knowing this, a well-designed and purposeful career programme can be developed to provide scholars with the development and advancement so as to prevent stagnation within their career.

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Most preferred industries

Across the group of top top GCE 'A' level & IB Diploma students and graduates, GCE 'A' level & IB Diploma students and graduates an polytechnic students, healthcare industry was voted as the top preferred work industry. On the other hand, the university undergraduates have different preferences with advertising being the top preferred industry.

TOP 3 PREFERRED INDUSTRIES			
TOP GCE 'A' LEVEL AND IB DIPLOMA STUDENTS AND GRADUATES	GCE 'A' LEVEL AND IB DIPLOMA STUDENTS AND GRADUATES	POLYTECHNIC STUDENTS	UNIVERSITY UNDERGRADUATES
Healthcare	Healthcare	Healthcare	Advertising
Banking & Financial Services	Government / Public Service	Engineering	Airline / Travel
Government / Public Service	Banking & Financial Services	Airline / Travel	Architectural Auditing / Accounting / Taxation

Expected starting salary

The expected starting salary varies among the different group of students categories with the majority expecting the following starting salary range. Salary expectation is somehow correlated to their education level and academic qualification whereby students perceived that a higher or better academic qualification will give them a higher starting salary.

TOP GCE 'A' LEVEL AND IB DIPLOMA STUDENTS AND GRADUATES	GCE 'A' LEVEL AND IB DIPLOMA STUDENTS AND GRADUATES	POLYTECHNIC STUDENTS	UNIVERSITY UNDERGRADUATES
S\$3,501 - S\$4,000	S\$3,001 - S\$3,500	S\$2,501 - S\$3,000	S\$3,001 - S\$3,500

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