

## Survey Data and Sample Selection

Conducted as part of the Measuring the Effectiveness of Student Aid (MESA) project, the L-SLIS represents a longitudinal survey of recipients of the Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation (CMSF) Access Bursaries<sup>1</sup>. The L-SLIS consists of a sample of students who entered PSE for the first time in the fall of 2006. Surveys were conducted, by telephone, in the early winter months of 2007, and then again in 2008 and 2009. Survey data have been linked to government aid administrative data. It is important to note that the eligibility requirements for the CMSF Access Bursaries were determined provincially and vary from province to province. The L-SLIS therefore represents somewhat different populations in different provinces.

Restrictions have therefore been made to the L-SLIS in order to create a consistent national sample. Due to the unique nature of the programs in Quebec, Saskatchewan and Alberta, students from these provinces are not included in this analysis. Prince Edward Island is omitted due to the absence of any administrative data. The following restrictions have been made in order to provide a consistent sample across the remaining provinces, which include Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Ontario, Manitoba and British Columbia:

1. The sample is restricted to only students who enter PSE for their first time and are single dependant students, as defined by student aid systems.
2. Only students with parental incomes below the National Child Benefit (NCB) line are included.

Only low income students who apply for and receive government aid are included in the L-SLIS, therefore this is not a sample of all low income students in Canada. The resulting sample has 4027 observations: 1,380 of these observations classify as college students, 2,528 classify as university students and the remaining observations represent students who attend private institutions. Roughly 64 percent of the students in the sample are from Ontario and roughly 15 percent are from British Columbia. The remaining four provinces together make up 20 percent of the sample and each have shares of around 2.5 to 10 percent. Due to small sample size, college students from Nova Scotia are not well represented in the data.

In telephone surveys, differences in non-response rates related to variables of interest introduce bias into estimates of those variables. The L-SLIS uses weights to try to correct for this bias. These weights are generated using a model that uses age, gender, survey language, family characteristics, PSE institution and program characteristics, student aid status and the income of both the student and his or her parents to predict the likelihood of survey non-response. Similar models are used to model attrition in subsequent years of the survey.

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<sup>1</sup> For some provinces, certain non-recipient low-income students are also included in the L-SLIS but they are not included in this analysis due to the income restriction placed on the sample (see below).