



Policy	Bursary Policy
Author	Alan Evans, Interim Chief Executive
Approved by	Finance and Operations Committee
Date of Approval	February 2021
Review Date	November 2023

Contents

1. Aims.....	1
2. Guidance	2
3. Definitions.....	2
4. Roles and responsibilities.....	2
5. How we use the bursary fund	3
6. Eligibility criteria.....	3
7. Payment	5
8. Monitoring arrangements.....	6

1. Aims

The Government provides funding to tackle disadvantage both through the Education Funding Agency's (EFA) funding formula and through support to help young people meet the costs of participating in education and training post-16, principally through the 16-19 Bursary Fund.

The 16-19 Bursary Fund has two elements:

- A bursary of £1,200 a year ('statutory bursary') for young people in the following defined vulnerable groups: in care; care leavers; young people in receipt of Income Support or Universal Credit; and disabled young people in receipt of Employment Support Allowance who are also in receipt of Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments.
- Discretionary awards made by institutions to young people in ways that best fit the needs and circumstances of their students. Bursary awards should be targeted towards those young people who face the greatest financial barriers to participation; such as the costs of transport, meals, books and equipment. Institutions are free to determine the assessment criteria for eligibility for discretionary bursaries, and the frequency of and conditions for payments for all awards; subject to the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

Academies receive 16-19 Bursary Fund allocations for discretionary bursaries only. The funding for statutory bursaries is held centrally by the Learner Support Service and academies draw down this funding on demand throughout the academic year.

Our academies aims to:

- Have clear and transparent processes for the use and allocation of 16 to 19 bursary funds
- Make clear to parents and students the type of support which is available and the means of applying for it

2. Guidance

This policy is based on advice from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) on the [16 to 19 bursary fund for the 2019 to 2020 academic year](#).

3. Definitions

- 'In care' is defined as: children looked after by a local authority on a voluntary basis (section 20 of the Children Act 1989) or under a care order (section 31 of the Children Act 1989). Section 22 of the Children Act 1989 defines the term 'looked after child'
- 'Care leaver' is defined as:
 - A young person aged 16 and 17 who was previously looked after for a period of 13 weeks consecutively (or periods amounting to 13 weeks), which began after the age of 14 and ended after the age of 16, **or**
 - A young person aged 18 or above who was looked after prior to becoming 18 for a period of 13 weeks consecutively (or periods of 13 weeks), which began after the age of 14 and ended after the age of 16)

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 Governance

The Trust Board has overall responsibility for approving the 16 to 19 bursary fund policy and monitoring its implementation, but can delegate these responsibilities.

Responsibility for approving the 16 to 19 bursary fund policy has been delegated to the Finance and Operations Committee.

Responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy has been delegated to the Academy Principal.

4.2 The Principal

The Principal is responsible for ensuring staff are familiar with the 16 to 19 bursary fund policy, and that it is being applied consistently.

4.3 Staff

Our staff are responsible for implementing the 16 to 19 bursary fund policy consistently.

The senior leadership team will provide staff with appropriate training in relation to this policy and its implementation.

4.4 Parents

Parents are expected to notify staff or the Principal of any concerns or queries regarding the 16 to 19 bursary fund policy.

5. How we use the bursary fund

Support is available to eligible students from the 16 to 19 bursary fund. See section 6 below for details of our eligibility criteria.

The fund is intended to support students aged 16 to 19 in overcoming specific barriers to participation so they can remain in education.

We use the fund to provide students with support to fund:

- Travel
- Specialist equipment
- Course books
- Course specific clothing
- Educational Trips
- Internet
- Laptops/Dongles
- UCAS applications

6. Eligibility criteria

6.1 Age

To be eligible:

- A student must be aged 16 or over but under 19 on 31 August 2019

Students 19 or over must either:

- Be continuing on a study programme they began aged 16 to 18, or
- Have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

6.2 Eligible education provision

Students must be participating in provision that is subject to inspection by a public body that assure quality (e.g. Ofsted). The provision must also be either:

- Funded directly by ESFA or by ESFA via a local authority
- Funded or co-financed by the European Social Fund
- Publicly funded and lead to a qualification (up to and including level 3) accredited by Ofqual or on the ESFA list of qualifications approved for funding 14 to 19
- In a 16 to 19 traineeship programme
- Non-employed and participating in a Prince's Trust Team Programme

Students are not eligible if:

- They are on an apprenticeship programme
- Are on any waged training

Students who are studying via distance learning may need infrequent financial help (e.g. travel to exams), if this is the case we will provide support in-kind (e.g. a travel pass)

6.3 Residency

Students must meet the residency criteria in the [ESFA funding regulations for post-16 provision](#).

6.4 Asylum seekers

Those under 18 with an adult relative or partner and those aged 18 and above:

- Are entitled to education
- Are not entitled to public funds
- Can apply to the Home Office for suitable housing and cash for essentials

We will provide in-kind support such as books, equipment and a travel pass to asylum seekers who have not had asylum refused.

Unaccompanied children:

- Are the responsibility of the local authority
- Are to be treated as 'looked after' children
- Are eligible for a bursary for vulnerable groups

When these students reach 18 we will consider their immigration status. They will still be eligible for a bursary if the asylum claim is in their favour and will be treated as a 'care leaver' until they reach the upper age limit.

6.5 Bursaries for young people in defined vulnerable groups

Students who meet one of the following 4 criteria below, in addition to the above age and residency criteria, can apply for a bursary for vulnerable groups of up to £1,200 per year.

The defined vulnerable groups are students who are:

- In care (those who are privately fostered are **not** classed as looked after)
- Care leavers
- Receiving Income Support, or Universal Credit because they are financially supporting themselves or, financially supporting themselves and someone who is dependent on them and living with them such as a child or partner
- Receiving Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments in their own right as well as Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit in their own right

We will look at individual cases for these students, based on needs. Students will only receive the amount they actually need to participate and not automatically receive £1,200 if they do not need the full amount.

Students eligible for bursaries under this category will be given a pro rata bursary if their study programme lasts for less than 30 weeks.

We will obtain the following **proof of eligibility** for vulnerable groups:

- For students who are in care or a care leaver, written confirmation of their current or previous looked-after status from the relevant local authority. The evidence could be a letter or an email but must be clearly from the local authority
- For students in receipt of Income Support or Universal Credit, a copy of their Income Support or Universal Credit award notice. This must clearly state that the claim is in the student's name/confirm they are entitled to the benefits in their own right. The evidence must not state any conditions that prevent them from participating in further education or training
- For students in receipt of Universal Credit (UC), a tenancy agreement in the student's name, a child benefit receipt, children's birth certificates, utility bills etc.
- For students receiving UC/Employment and Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance and Personal Independence Payments, a copy of their UC claim from DWP (UC claimants should be able to print off details of their award from their online account). Evidence of receipt of Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment, must also be provided

6.6 Discretionary bursaries

In assessing an application for a discretionary bursary, we will consider:

- Level of household income

and other factors which may include

- Distance to travel between the student's home and the institution
- The number of dependent children in the student's household
- Whether the student has additional responsibilities that may mean they need extra help

To assess household income, we may ask to see:

- Proof of benefits letters
- Tax credit award notifications
- P60s
- Pay slips
- Bank statements covering a certain period (e.g. the last 3 months)
- Universal Credit award notices (e.g. the most recent 3)

7. Payment

7.1 Process

Applications should ideally be submitted in sufficient time to allow the overall level of demands to be assessed and make discretionary awards on a fair basis. This date will be clearly stated on the application form. However, as students' circumstances may change, the application process will remain open for the whole school year.

Payments are made taking into account the student's circumstances

7.2 Conditions for the receipt of bursary payments

Payments are conditional on students meeting the following conditions in relation to their standards of attendance and behaviour:

- Attendance above 85%
- Deadlines for classwork and homework are met
- Work produced is of an acceptable standard

Discretionary Bursary will not be paid to any pupil who is issued with a fixed term exclusion or permanently excluded. The Bursary will also be withdrawn if a pupil's circumstances change significantly

All students are required to sign a declaration confirming that they agree to these conditions.

Students who fail to meet these conditions may have their payment withheld.

We will consider the impact on attendance that might be caused by illness, caring responsibilities or other exceptional circumstances.

We will stop payments where students have been absent for a period of 4 continuous weeks or more (excluding holidays, or if there is evidence that the student intends to return).

As much as possible, we will avoid sanctioning a student to the extent that their bursary funding had been stopped for a whole term.

We reserve the right to take back money from students where it is not spent for the reasons it was awarded.

We will consider the impact of such an action on the individual student before taking a final decision to do so.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by the Finance and Operations Committee every three years unless more frequent updates are required.

Discretionary Bursaries are awarded by decision of a representative of the 6th Form leadership and the academy Finance Manager; any appeal will be heard by the Principal and the Principal's decision is final.