

# 16 to 19 Bursary Fund Policy 2018 - 2019

## Introduction

This policy outlines the guidelines for the management and allocation of the 16-19 Bursary Fund and the 16-19 Vulnerable Bursary Fund for the 2018/2019 academic year.

These funds are provided to the College by the government and are aimed at supporting learners who are experiencing financial difficulties with essential costs associated with their studies. This could include transport, books and equipment, UK compulsory trips (overseas compulsory trips considered on individual basis) and other essential course related costs.

Funds are limited and targeted at those most in need. Funds are allocated on a first come, first served basis. All requests for funding will be considered although it may not always be possible to help. If the funding is exhausted, the College reserves the right to close the fund. Throughout this form the word 'student' will be interchangeable with the word 'learner', both referring to the individual undertaking the programme of study.

## Eligibility and Conditions

Eligibility to funding does not give the individual the right to funding. Assistance awarded to a learner will always be conditional on behaviour, remaining on the course and maintaining a **minimum of 90% attendance**.

If the learner does not meet the conditions or withdraws from the course then they may be requested to return equipment and any cash awards they have received.

Awards will be made in accordance with the published guidance from the Education & Skills Funding Agency. While it is recognised that learners face financial pressures, funding is not a right and the College has a duty to make sure that funds are awarded fairly and to the learners most in need.

## Application Process

Applicants must complete the relevant application form for the fund they are applying to, and clearly identify the support that they feel they need to achieve their course of study.

Students aged 19 who started a two year programme before their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday should apply for funding from the 16-19 Bursary Fund.

Students who are aged 19 or over at the 31st August 2018 and have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) should apply for funding from the 16-19 Bursary Fund

Applicants must demonstrate their financial need by providing the income information and supporting evidence as detailed in the application forms.

Each application for financial assistance will be considered by a College Fund Administrator and decisions will be made based on the information provided and the eligibility criteria for the different type of awards. These are detailed in the sections below.

For courses starting in September 2018, applications should be received by the Student Services office by 1st November 2018. Applications received after this date will be considered on a pro-rata basis subject to need and availability of funds.

## Appeals

Learners can appeal against decisions taken by the College Fund Administrators in writing to the Student Services Manager.

## 16-19 Bursary Funds (Learners under 19 years of age at 31 August 2018)

The 16-19 Bursary fund has two elements:

### 16-19 Discretionary Award

**Important: The college support fund will not make any reimbursements for items purchased by you prior to your form being assessed, unless authorised by the Student Services Manager.**

Open to students whose household income is below £16,190 (subject to Parliamentary review). Awards will be targeted towards students who face the greatest financial barriers to participation to cover course related costs including: transport; trips (within the UK); books and equipment; meals at College (for students in receipt of free meals at school or whose household income is under £8,000pa). Students whose household income exceeds £8,000 will only be considered for free meals at College in exceptional circumstances.

'In kind' payments will be made which may include: bus / train tickets; Colchester Institute meal credit; credit for the College shop; and equipment costs.

**Travel** As funding is provided by public money, we are required to ensure support given provides the best value for money. Travel support may be in the form of a bus pass, train pass or college organised transport, whichever is the cheapest option.

Students qualifying for awards in term 1 will continue to be supported in terms 2 and 3 **providing the minimum 90% attendance rate is maintained.**

### **Additional information required for the 16-19 discretionary award**

Evidence of income which should be one of the following:

- Working Tax Credit where the annual income used to calculate the award is less than £16,190
- Child Tax Credit (provided not entitled to Working Tax Credit) and have a gross income of no more than £16,190
- Job Seekers Allowance (income based)
- Employment & Support Allowance (income related)
- Pension Credit
- Income Support
- Universal Credit

### **16-19 Vulnerable Bursary**

An award of up to £1,200 a year for young people in the following defined vulnerable groups:

- Young people who receive Income Support in their own name
- Young people who receive Universal Credit (in place of Income Support) in their own name
- Young people who are disabled and receive Employment and Support Allowance (or UC) and Disability Living Allowance in their own name
- Young people who are disabled and receive Employment and Support Allowance (or UC) and a Personal Independence Payment in their own name
- Young people who are in Local Authority care on voluntary basis (section 20 of the Children Act 1989) or who are under a care order (section 31 of the Children Act 1989) or who are care leavers.

The vulnerable bursary is awarded to help students in paying for course related costs, such as books, equipment, travel, trips and stationery.

Any costs associated with the course (eg the purchase of uniform, kit, equipment, trips, DBS check or travel passes, etc) will be deducted from the £1200 bursary. Any remaining money will be paid to the student for ongoing course costs in six instalments throughout the academic year.

If the student does not have any immediate course or travel costs, a payment of £200 will be made six times a year. An initial instalment of £200 will be made, at the earliest, two weeks after the start of the course. Attendance and behaviour will be checked before subsequent instalments are made to ensure that the learner is making satisfactory progress.

Students are expected to maintain attendance of **at least 90%** and if attendance falls below this figure, subsequent payments may be reduced.

Where a student is in a defined vulnerable group and is undertaking a course lasting less than 30 weeks, the award will be an appropriate proportion of the £1,200.

### **Additional information required for the vulnerable bursary**

Evidence confirming benefit entitlement or written confirmation of the young person's current or previous looked-after status from the Local Authority which looks after them, or the leaving care services.

### **Estranged learners**

Learners who find themselves estranged from the family home will be advised on provisions made for them by the Local Authority and the Benefits Agency. Whilst state benefit claims are being processed a weekly payment of up to £50 may be made to the student to help with their living costs. This support will last for up to 6 weeks after which the learner should be receiving benefits in their own right and can be transferred onto the payment for vulnerable learners.

**Please note:** Applications for financial help are valid for one academic year only. Should you return to College in September 2019 and still require financial assistance, a new application form must be completed and up to date supporting evidence supplied.

(All figures correct at the time of printing)