



# 16-19 STUDENT FUNDING PROCEDURES

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## Revision history

Version	Type (e.g. replacement, revision etc...)	Date	History (reason for changes)

## Monitoring and review

This procedure will be reviewed by the Student Funding Team and SLT every year in line with the 16-19 Bursary Fund Guidance and Free Meals in Further Education Guide.

## 1. 16-19 Student Funding Procedures

The Learner Support Fund Bursary Scheme exists to help students continue with and complete their course where they would otherwise be unable to do so on financial grounds. The amount granted to students should make a significant impact on them coming to College or being able to remain on their course.

For students aged 16 to 19, the following bursaries are available:

- Discretionary Bursary
- Vulnerable Bursary

There is no entitlement to receive a bursary even if a student meets all the eligibility criteria. If the student does not have any additional costs associated with coming to College or if there are no funds available, no further bursaries will be given.

## 2. Who Can Apply

### 2.1 Criteria

The student must:

- Be enrolled at Bradford College on an eligible course. Eligible courses include:
  - Courses funded directly by the DfE
  - A Kings Trust Programme
- Meet the bursary criteria outlined in this policy.
- Be aged 16 to 18 on 31 August 2025, except where they are aged 19-25 and have an Educational Health Care Plan in place at the College or they are continuing a course they started when they were aged 18.
- Be fully engaged with their learning activities – this includes attending their classes/placements regularly and undertaking any online learning activities set for them (see Section 5)
- Students must meet the residence requirements as set out by the DfE. Information about this will be gathered at enrolment and may be verified at assessment. Special arrangements are in place for Asylum Seeking students.

The student must **not**:

- Be a young offender who:
  - Is serving a custodial sentence
  - Is on early release from a custodial sentence
  - Has been remanded to a secure institution
- Be studying a Higher Education course
- Be eligible for the EMA offered to students who live in Scotland or Wales
- Be on an apprenticeship course
- Be an employed student undertaking a King's Trust Programme

## 2.2 Vulnerable Bursary

In addition to the criteria in 2.1, to be eligible for a Vulnerable Bursary, students must also meet **one** of the following criteria:

- Be in Local Authority Care (as defined by the Children Act 1989)
- Be a Care Leaver (as defined by the Children Act 1989)
- Be in receipt of Income Support or Universal Credit payments in their own name. This should be because they are financially supporting themselves.
- Be in receipt of Employment Support Allowance / Universal Credit **and** Disability Living Allowance / Personal Independence Payments in their own name
- Have evidence to support the above criteria which is provided at the time of application.

## 2.3 Discretionary Bursary

In addition to the criteria in 2.1, to be eligible for a Discretionary Bursary student must:

- Be enrolled in a full-time course. A full-time course is defined as a course where a student must attend classes for a minimum of 15 hours per week and must be studying for a minimum of 8 weeks
- Have a gross household income of £50,000 or less (see Section 2.3.1.)

### 2.3.1 Household Income

Students will meet the income requirement if they / their parent(s) / their partner / their guardian(s) are in receipt of:

- Income Support

- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Pension Credit Guarantee

For other students, their household income will be calculated. We take all the following income into account for the relevant people within the household:

- Wages / earned income
- Contribution-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Any Employment and Support Allowance that is not income-related
- Working Tax Credits
- Universal Credit payments
- Carers Allowance
- Unearned income such as rent being paid to the student, partner or parent(s) / guardian(s)

We do not count:

- Disability Living Allowance / Personal Independence Payments
- Child Tax Credits or Child Benefit
- Childcare element of Working Tax Credits
- Housing Benefit / Council Tax Benefit
- Universal Credit payments made in replacement of any of the above

Applications, where a household has no income or a very low income, may not be accepted. Proof of non-entitlement will be required.

### 2.3.2 Whose Income Will Be Assessed?

The income of the people who receive child tax credits/child benefit/child element of universal credit for the student. The people whose income is needed will depend on who is in the household, for example:

- If a student lives with parent(s)/guardian(s), the income of both parent(s) /guardian(s) will be assessed
- If a student lives with both parents/guardians and their grandparents, it is the income of both parents/guardians that will be assessed. The grandparents' income will not be included
- If a student lives with their parent and partner (who is not the student's parent) it is the income of both the parent and their partner that will be assessed

### **3. How to Apply for the Learner Support Fund**

#### **3.1 Online Application**

Students can apply online via the Pay My Student portal.

Where insufficient evidence is provided, the student will be advised they have additional information to provide. An application will not be processed until all documents have been received.

### **4. How Learner Support Fund Applications are Processed**

Applications will be processed on a first-come, first-served basis. All applications will be dated when they are complete.

When a decision has been made an award notification will be provided in an email sent directly to your college email address.

### **5. Attendance/Course Changes and Withdrawals**

#### **5.1. Normal Levels of Participation/Attendance**

Students are expected to report all absences in line with the Bradford College Student Attendance Policy. Students are expected to attend regularly.

Students will be informed if their bursary is at risk due to low attendance.

#### **5.2. Special Circumstances**

Flexibility will be given to students with medical conditions and/or other special circumstances that are disclosed. However, all students must attend/participate at a level that will enable them to successfully complete their course.

This also includes where a student has signed an attendance/participation agreement with FE Student Funding / the College.

#### **5.3. Transfers**

When a student transfers to another course, their level of attendance will be judged only on their new course.

## 6. Learner Support Fund Payments

Every effort will be made to purchase transport passes directly on behalf of the learner.

When this is not possible, payment will be made by BACs into the student's bank account.

Where a student is unable to have a bank account of their own or manage their own money the following can be arranged:

6.1. An Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Child can have their money paid to a third party if all other avenues to apply for their own bank account have been exhausted. Arrangements must be made for the student to receive the money from the third party i.e., Social Worker/Carer. This funding will not be paid to friends/acquaintances.

6.2. Where a power of attorney is in place for the student, payment can be made to a third party named in the POA.

## 7. Financial Support Available

All applications are assessed on an individual basis and support offered will depend on personal circumstances.

The assessment that is completed will be based on the course(s) the student is enrolled on at the time they apply to the fund. If they enroll on additional courses after this, it is their responsibility to notify Student Funding so they can be re-assessed.

Every care is made to ensure each student receives the correct assessment. However, if an error is made in assessing a student's bursary and too much is awarded to the student, the College reserves the right to amend the award and, if already paid, ask for the money to be repaid. If too little has been awarded to the student this will be amended so the student receives the correct amount.

Below are the guidelines used to decide what help is available for each student.

Award	Details
<p><b>Travel Support</b></p>	<p>Eligible students funded through the 16-19 Learner Support Fund Bursary or the Vulnerable Bursary will receive the most cost-effective travel pass available to cover them for the duration of their course.</p> <p>In most cases, this will be an U19 WY MyAcademicYear Bus pass and be issued upon approval of their bursary application. This will be issued via the West Yorkshire Metro MCard mobile app. It is the responsibility of the student to create and access an account on this app, using their college email address.</p> <p>Consideration will be taken for students who travel from further distances within West Yorkshire and a train pass through the MCard Mobile app may be provided.</p> <p>Applications received later in the academic year, or applicants who do not provide sufficient evidence in a timely manner, may receive a shorter-term travel pass and there is no guarantee of travel support being backdated.</p> <p>Students will be provided with an electronic ticket to ensure best value for money and efficiency in using travel support. However, one of the following will be available if students have specific reasons for not using an electronic ticket:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• West Yorkshire Metro travel card (to be requested by student at local Metro desk) top up</li> <li>• First paper monthly pass</li> <li>• Travel payments – calculated at cost of daily ticket per timetabled day</li> </ul> <p>Students must carry age ID with them when using a travel pass and risk a fine and cancellation of their ticket without this. These can be obtained from Metro desks at Bradford Interchange or Leeds Bus Station.</p>
<p><b>Meals</b></p>	<p>Eligible students funded through the 16-19 Learner Support Fund Bursary, including those aged 19-24 with an Education Health Care Plan, and the Vulnerable Bursary, will be eligible for meals within college on timetabled days.</p> <p>Eligible students can access meals at college food service outlets using the cashless meal card. If there is no food service outlet on a campus, meal support will still be offered via local arrangements.</p> <p>A cashless meal card is provided to spend up to £8.00 for each day the student is required to attend college during term time. This can be used to purchase breakfast and lunch.</p> <p>This provision includes dates in which a student is expected to attend for an exam.</p>

<p><b>Digital Devices</b></p>	<p>Eligible students funded through the 16-19 Learner Support Fund Bursary, including those aged 19-24 with an Education Health Care Plan, and the Vulnerable Bursary, may be given access to digital devices in order to complete their study programme.</p> <p>Devices include laptops and dongles for connectivity, and will provided on loan to eligible students who demonstrate a requirement for such assistance.</p> <p>Students must complete a loan agreement form in order to receive a device, and the failure to return the device by the agreed date may result in a charge directly to the student via an invoice.</p>
<p><b>Additional Support</b></p>	<p>Where funding is available, eligible students can be supported with the costs of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UCAS Fees</li> <li>• Travel for work experience</li> <li>• Travel to university interviews</li> <li>• Course-essential trips</li> </ul> <p>Support cannot be provided for extra-curricular activities or non-essential trips.</p>
<p><b>Childcare</b></p>	<p>Eligible students under 20 years of age will receive assistance to cover childcare costs through the Care to Learn scheme, provided they meet the requirements outlined in the 2025/26 Care to Learn policy.</p> <p>Where the Care to Learn funding does not cover all reasonable costs, additional funding may be provided through the Learner Support Fund to cover requirements.</p>
<p><b>Hardship Support</b></p>	<p>A Hardship Fund is in place to assist students who are experiencing exceptional hardship or a domestic emergency, and can be provided in addition to any other support through the Learner Support Fund.</p> <p>Hardship needs are assessed in most cases by the college’s Safeguarding team and can provide support with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergency food supplies</li> <li>• Emergency accommodation</li> <li>• Emergency help with utility bills</li> <li>• Other safeguarding emergencies</li> </ul> <p>Support may be issued in the form of a payment via BACs or the issue of vouchers.</p>

### 7.1 Full-Time Vulnerable Bursary

Students eligible for the Vulnerable Bursary all academic year will be considered for the following elements of funding:

## Travel

Provision of bus passes or where the student prefers payments equivalent to the cheapest form of transport to College.

## Meals

Meal entitlement using your student card on timetabled College days – up to a value of £7.00 per timetabled day.

## Course/Other Costs

Depending on how much a student needs to spend on books, course materials, uniforms, University visits, compulsory course visits, internet connectivity, and IT equipment a payment or equipment can be given for course costs. There is no minimum/maximum grant, but the overall support the student can receive from the Vulnerable bursary will not exceed £1,200.

## 7.2 Discretionary Bursary

### Travel Support

Where a student has a disability or long-term medical condition and cannot access public transport and is not entitled to transport or funding (e.g. mobility element of Disability Living Allowance) for transport through another means:

- Payments to cover the cost of the cheapest mode of transport (using all passes and concessions available)

### Taxi Fares

If a student must use taxis because:

They have a short-term injury which means they cannot use public transport:

- The full cost of taxi up to a maximum of £750

At least one taxi receipt will be requested to confirm the cost of the journey. If possible, this should also be done in emergency situations, but this must not delay support being given.

It will be the student's responsibility to notify Student Funding that they fall into the above categories and to provide appropriate supporting information

### **Meals Support**

Meal entitlement using your student card on timetabled College days – up to a value of £7.00 per timetabled day.

### **Access to IT Hardware**

Priority will be given to students needing access to a device for their learning who do not already have one at home or have not been previously issued one by Bradford College. In the event of providing a device, Bradford College will provide a 'one specification' laptop to eligible students to use on their programme of study. The laptop will be loaned to the student for the full length of their course and will be managed and maintained as part of the Bradford College's network. This device must be returned when students leave college.

### **Hardship Fund**

Some students will occasionally encounter extreme hardship and will need additional support dependent on their circumstances. The fund can cover payments for the following elements dependent on student's needs and the availability of the funding:

- Emergency accommodation
- Emergency help with utility bills
- Emergency food supplies
- Other items at the discretion of the College, dependent on needs
- Support with Childcare for students under the age of 20 with dependents requiring childcare – see additional Care To Learn Policy.

## **7.1. Accompanied Asylum Seeking Children**

The College is unable to make any payments either by cash, cheque or BACs to Asylum Seeking Children unless they are classed as Unaccompanied.

Funding that can be given to Accompanied Asylum Seeking Children is help that does not include payments, e.g. bus passes, and free meals in further

## education

### 8. Free Meals in Further Education

In order to be eligible for the Free Meals in Further Education, students must come from a household that is in receipt of:

- 8.1. Income Support
- 8.2. Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- 8.3. Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- 8.4. Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- 8.5. Pension Credit Guarantee
- 8.6. Child Tax Credit (providing not entitled to Working Tax Credit) and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190 as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs
- 8.7. Universal Credit with net earnings not exceeding the equivalent of £7,400 per annum. This is equal to:
  - 8.7.1. Assessed income for 1 period £616.67 or less
  - 8.7.2. Combined assessed income for 2 periods £1,233.34 or less
  - 8.7.3. Combined assessed income for 3 periods £1,850.00 or less

The application for the Free Meals in Further Education has been combined with the 16 to 19 Learner Support Fund Bursary Application on the Student Portal automatically.

Discretionary meals – Students who are eligible for the bursary will be provided £7 per day towards the cost of meals. This includes FSM funding for those who are eligible.

### 9. Discretion in Special Circumstances

In the majority of cases the 16 to 19 Learner Support Fund Bursary & Free Meals In Further Education Policy Document 2025-2026 will be followed.

However, it is recognised that special circumstances may arise that cannot be written into policy.

Therefore, the Student Funding Team Leader has discretion to respond on an individual basis.

### 10. Appeals / Complaints Procedure – All Funds

Appeals can be made if a student feels this policy document has not been followed and this has resulted in them not being given a bursary, or not receiving as much as the policy document states they should.

Appeals must be made within 10 working days of the date on their decision letter and must be in writing, clearly stating the grounds of the appeal. Appeals should be addressed to: The Student Funding Team Leader and emailed to [studentfunding@bradfordcollege.ac.uk](mailto:studentfunding@bradfordcollege.ac.uk).

A decision will be sent in writing and the decision will be final.

If a student's situation changes during the academic year, there is no need to submit an appeal. They should contact Student Funding so any new evidence can be considered and added to the previous application.

## 11. Fraud – All Funds

Where there is evidence of fraud, the evidence will be reviewed and, if fraud is confirmed, this will result in:

- 11.1. The loss of all future payments OR
- 11.2. The loss of some payments not already made OR
- 11.3. The student being asked to repay all funding received and the loss of all future payments A N D / O R
- 11.4. Disciplinary action

In certain circumstances the College may have a duty to pursue fraud as a criminal matter