



16-19 Bursary Fund Policy

Policy Title	16-19 Bursary Policy	Owner	Sadaf Ahmed
Review Period	Annual	Approval by	Academy Principals
Date of last review	September 2023	Next review due	September 2024

16-19 Bursary Policy

The Shared Learning Trust Sixth Form

2023-2024

1. INTRODUCTION:

The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) allocate the 16-19 Bursary Fund to the Academy.

It is designed to support post-16 students in full time education with the financial challenges of their continuing education, therefore the funds must be used to support students in their learning.

The 16-19 Bursary Fund is provided by the government to help support students who face barriers to participating and continuing in their studies. The financial support you receive is linked to attendance, behaviour and performance.

The purpose of the bursary is to:

- Support and retain students
- Promote a positive attitude to learning
- The bursary should be applied fairly and consistently
- The process must be easily understood and accessible to young people
- The process should identify eligible students in a timely fashion

The scheme should be designed to maximise the amount of the fund available to support students

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.

To be eligible to receive a bursary the young person must:

Be over **16 on 1st September** and be under **19 on 31st August** in the academic year in which they start their programme of study. Where a young person turns 19 during their programme of study, they can continue to be supported to the end of the academic year in which they turn 19, or to the end of the programme of study, whichever is sooner.

2. Emergency Food:

Institutions can use their bursary fund in individual cases of severe hardship, to provide food support whilst a student attends their study programme. There will be no checks or undertaking of evidence gathering to see if a student qualifies for emergency food vouchers. The value of the vouchers is at the discretion of the academy, however a record will be kept of:

- A number of students supported this way
- The number of days this support is given
- The value of food vouchers support provided to each student along with the rationale for the food support
- Signed confirmation of receipt of funding by the student

Discretion will be applied to individual cases and this flexibility only relates to food support and must not be assumed this will be on-going basis for any individual student.

In making decisions about bursary awards, institutions can now exercise discretion as to whether they carry out checks annually or just at the beginning of a student's study programme.

3. Assess actual financial needs:

Academy will assess the actual financial needs of individual students in addition to eligibility when awarding bursary funding. **(Providing documentary evidence where required)** in order to be eligible.

There are 2 types of 16 – 19 bursaries:

- 1 Bursaries for defined vulnerable groups**
- 2 Discretionary bursaries** which institutions award using policies set in line with funding rules

4. Essential costs:

The bursary fund is intended to help students with the essential costs of participating in their study programme, so to help with the cost of essential books or equipment or with the cost of travelling to school.

5. Bursaries for young people in defined vulnerable groups:

Students who meet the criteria, and who have a financial need, can apply for a bursary for vulnerable groups. Students will be awarded the amount of support they need to participate based on assessment of the types of costs they have and must not be automatically awarded the top threshold of £1,200 per year.

The defined vulnerable groups are students who are:

- In care
- Care leavers
- Receiving income support or universal credit
- Receiving disability living allowance or Personal independence payments
- In receipt of income support/Universal Credit because they are financial supporting themselves or financially supporting themselves or financially supporting someone who is dependent on them and living with them
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6. Evidence of eligibility:

The academy will need to check the student/parent/guardian are in receipt of the specified benefits and must retain evidence for audit purposes.

For those who are in receipt of Universal credit or Income support must show the award notice.

Discretionary Bursary

Discretionary bursary awards should be targeted towards young people facing financial barriers to participation, such as the costs of transport, meals, books and equipment. There is a possibility of no award or a limited award even after meeting the criteria below and not necessarily all application submitted will be awarded. Each application will be assessed on their individual level of financial needs.

Making blanket or flat rate/fixed rate payments to students will not be offered without considering their actual need for financial support or the types of costs they have.

Evidence to confirm household income must be supplied in the form of bank statements, Universal Credit information and any other relevant information.

Living in a household where the total annual income (including all wages, benefits, pensions etc.) is less than **£26,000**.

For the discretionary bursary:

- evidence used to assess eligibility and determine household income, such as P60's, self-employment accounts, wage slips, a letter from DWP, copies of online statements for Universal Credit
- receipts will be compulsory for purchases or in-kind payments, for example, bus pass, lunch receipts or book receipts before payment is given
- evidence in the form of receipts to be provided before suitable payment can be issued

Family must be in receipt in any of the following below to be eligible for bursary:

- Income Support/Universal Credit
- Child Tax Credit
- Job Seekers Allowance (JSA)
- In receipt of free school meals during 2022/23
- Pension Guarantee Credit
- Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part IV of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

<https://www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund>

The Shared Learning Trust Sixth Form (TSLTSF) may use their discretion to make awards to young people in ways that best fit the needs and circumstances of their learners.

7. CONDITIONS FOR RECEIPT:

The application form must be signed by both student, parents/carer. All evidence must be provided before payment is provided.

All awards will be conditional on the attendance and behaviour of the learners. Payment of the bursary may be suspended if these conditions are not met.

All applicants should satisfy the criteria. This can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/advice-funding-regulations-for-post-16-provision>

A range of conditions will include:

- Regular attendance – 98% (including authorised study leave)
- Good Attendance – No unauthorised absences per week
- Good Punctuality
- Good behaviour - not in breach of the TSLTSF dress code policy/learner agreement/behaviour policy.

The discretionary allowance may be withdrawn if attendance or behaviour is not satisfactory, at the discretion of the Sixth form team.

8. PAYMENT:

Students will receive termly payments throughout the academic year (6 times a year) based on receipts and evidence received. Students must comply and hand in all receipts during receipts week this will be two weeks before the end of each half term. The Shared Learning Trust Sixth Form will write to all vulnerable applicants with the amount that has been awarded following an assessment of their application by the Head of Year & Assistant Principal.

Bursaries will not be awarded if funds are exhausted.

Where funds remain, learners can put forward a case for one-off payments to meet a particular need (please see information regarding Hardship Fund) support for buying books and equipment; transport or fieldwork costs.

9. HOW DO I APPLY?

Application forms must be completed with full and relevant copies up-to-date proof of household income. Bursary Fund payments cannot be paid in to any bank account other than in the student name as they are made directly in to the students' bank account.

Evidence of the required household income must be included with the Bursary application; incomplete forms will delay payments.

Students are required to apply each year that they are studying at the TSLTSF.

In order to apply for bursary you will need to do the following:

- Fill in an application form (available from your tutor)
- Bring the application form together with the relevant documentation back to your Sixth Form base.

Students and parents/carers will be asked to sign to confirm that the information submitted is correct. Attempts to dishonestly obtain Bursary funding will be treated as fraud and will be subject to disciplinary procedures; funds will be claimed back by the school if students have provided information they know to be false.

***Please note that applications without the relevant documentation will not be processed, which may lead to late payments.**

*** All submitted documentation will also need to be photocopied and held on record.**

Once all of the above has been processed, you will:

- Receive a letter of the application decision
- Receive your payment allowance and date of payment
- Adhere to the qualifying expectations

10. APPEALS PROCEDURE:

If you are unhappy with a Bursary decision you should speak to Ms Elliott and Mr Verma/ Ms George in the first instance.

If you have any queries regarding your Bursary application – please contact Ms Elliott and Mr Verma/Ms George