

Bursary Policy Statement to support students aged 16-19 years

The purpose of this bursary fund is to support students in meeting the costs of continuing in full-time education. It can be awarded for things like transport, books, equipment, educational trips related to your course, and other course-related costs; it may also be used towards the costs of attending university interviews and open days.

There are two types of bursaries that you may be able to apply for: **Vulnerable** or **Discretionary**. In applying for either, you must meet the relevant eligibility criteria (see 'about you' section overleaf)

If you are aged 16-18 and meet one of the criteria listed below, you can apply for a **Vulnerable bursary**:

- In care
- Care leavers
- Receiving Income Support or the equivalent 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, or
- Receiving Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments in your own right as well as Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit in your own right and have a financial need

How much might you get if you are eligible for a Vulnerable Bursary?

You could get up to £1,200 if you study full time for a minimum of 30 weeks. If your course is less than 30 weeks, you will get less. **Please note:** You will only receive the amount you actually need to participate, and we will not automatically award the full £1,200 if you do not need that level of support.

Proof you are eligible for a Vulnerable Bursary

You will need to provide proof that you are eligible, this can be either:

- a letter from your local authority showing you are in care or a care leaver
- a letter from the Department of Work and Pensions showing the benefits you get
(Benefits must be in your own name to get a Vulnerable Bursary)

If you do not fall into one of the above vulnerable groups but still need financial help to stay in education, you can apply for a **Discretionary bursary**. We use household income and benefits as criteria for assessing the amount of support you may get; this is outlined in our application form.

Free Meals

You may also be able to apply for Free Meals if you or your parents are in receipt of one of the eligible benefits listed here [Free meals in further education guide 2026 27 - GOV.UK](#) If you are eligible, we will make free meal provisions for you each day that you are in attendance on your course. (This could be by providing the meal or the cash for you to purchase a meal - this depends on whether our educational centre has on-site catering facilities or not).

Exceptional Hardship Fund

We also have a small Hardship fund for students who do not meet either the vulnerable or discretionary criteria but who experience financial difficulties during their period of study. This may provide one-off funds in exceptional circumstances, so please speak to your teacher or student services team to discuss anything you need help with.

Conditions on receiving financial support, you must:

- Only use the bursary to pay for the specific items that you need support with, for example, travel costs or lunch money.
- Attend all timetabled lessons (periods of sickness or absence may impact the amount you receive).
- Be up to date with classwork, coursework, and homework.
- Demonstrate excellent effort and attitude towards learning.

To enable us to confirm that the bursary is being used for the reasons it was awarded, i.e., travel costs or buying lunch, you may be asked to provide receipts at various points in the year. Your teacher will let you know when we need these.

About you

Age - You must be aged:

- over 16 on 31 August in the academic year in which you enrol
- under 19 on 31 August in the academic year in which you enrol
- the only Students aged 19 or over who are eligible to apply for a bursary are those who have an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP) – ***you can only apply for a Discretionary Bursary NOT a Vulnerable Bursary***

Residency & Eligibility - You must meet the residency & eligibility requirements set out by the DfE (Department for Education) ***We will check this during your enrolment process.***

How to apply

You will need to fill out an application form and provide the necessary supporting evidence. These are available from the education centre or college that you will be attending.

You should apply as soon as you know where you are going to study. The sooner you apply, the sooner your support can start. We have limited funds available and allocate funding on a first-come, first-served basis.

PLEASE NOTE:

The receipt of bursary funding does not affect other means-tested benefits paid to families, such as income support, jobseeker's allowance, child benefit, working tax credit, and housing benefit.

Confidentiality - How we use your personal information

Under the General Data Protection Regulation, we have a legal duty to protect your privacy, and as such this means that we ensure your data is secure and that your information is shared ONLY with those who are allowed and need it within our organisation. ***You can view our privacy statements here -***

<https://www.nacro.org.uk/privacy/>

<https://www.totton.ac.uk/home/privacy/>