

Care to Learn Terms and Conditions

V1 – July 2025

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Care to Learn (C2L) Scheme
Terms and Conditions 2025/26

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1. References

The following DfE funding guidance for Care to Learn informs this document:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-to-learn-guidance/care-to-learn-academic-year-2025-to-2026-conditions-of-grant-funding>

2. Introduction

C2L provides funding for childcare to help young parents aged under 20, continue in education after the birth of a child. The scheme provides funding for childcare whilst the young parent is engaged in a study programme and is not able to provide care for their child. It can also help the young parent with any additional travel costs involved in taking the child to the childcare provider. C2L can also provide funding for childcare whilst young parents are on work placements or industry placements, where these are a defined part of the study programme.

The maximum amount of funding available is £180 per child per week.

Receiving money from Care to Learn will not affect your benefits or allowances and you do not have to be on benefits in order to apply.

3. Eligibility

To receive C2L in academic year 2025 to 2026, the student, their education institution and childcare provider must all meet the following eligibility criteria.

3.1 Age

The young parent must be under 20 years old on the date they start their study programme. Young parents who become 20 years old during their study programme can continue to get funding to the end of that specific study programme, so to the end of the same programme at the same level.

3.2 Main carer for the child(ren)

The young parent must be the main carer and in receipt of Child Benefit for the child(ren) for whom they are claiming C2L. If a young parent loses custody of their child(ren), even temporarily, they must notify the college immediately. The mother or father of the child can claim C2L as long as:

- the other parent is unable to provide childcare, for example, they are also in education or are absent
- the other parent is not claiming childcare paid through any other source, for example, government funded early years places or Childcare Tax Credits

3.3 Residency

To be eligible for C2L the young parent must have the legal right to be resident in the UK at the start of their study programme. If a young parent indicates that they are not a British or Irish citizen, they will only be eligible for C2L if one of the following immigration conditions applies, evidence would be required to prove their legal right to remain in the UK:

They are an asylum seeker aged:

- under 18
- 18 or over and a care leaver aged 18 or 19 (they must include an original letter from their local authority that shows their address and confirms they are a care leaver with their application)

Or they have:

- refugee status
- humanitarian protection
- discretionary leave to remain
- indefinite leave to remain
- indefinite leave to enter
- limited leave to remain
- limited leave to enter
- leave outside the rule

3.4 Eligibility: Childcare Provision

C2L only pays for childcare provision that is appropriately registered with Ofsted. It must be registered in one of the following ways:

- on the early years register with either Ofsted or a childminder agency
- on the compulsory and/or voluntary part of the general childcare register with either
- Ofsted or a childminder agency offered by schools (who are exempt from Ofsted registration for children aged 2+) such as school-run breakfast and after school clubs, and holiday care

Nacro will not work with childcare providers who are deemed 'Inadequate' following an Ofsted inspection.

4. Application Assessment and outcome

Upon submission of your C2L application, we will contact your childcare provider for confirmation of their fees and any other information we require from them. When your application has been fully assessed, you and your childcare provider will receive notification of the outcome via email.

The student is responsible for the payment of childcare until we have formally agreed to contribute to the cost.

5. Attendance

Payment will be made directly to your childcare provider via BACS each month. Payments will only be made if you are attending your course, have at least 85% attendance **and** the child/children is/are attending the childcare provider.

The following are examples of absences which may be authorised and the required evidence:

- Student sickness – should be reported each and every day to your Nacro Education Centre. The number of sickness absences will be closely monitored and if considered excessive, payments may be withheld.
- Appointments – for example: hospital, doctors, dentist etc. Evidence of appointments must be provided in the form of a letter or appointment card. Failure to provide this could result in your childcare payments being withheld.
- Interviews – for example: Job, University etc. Evidence of interviews must be provided in the form of a letter or email confirmation. Failure to provide this could result in your childcare payments being withheld.
- Bereavement or funeral.
- Religious holidays.

If you fail to attend for a period of 4 weeks or withdraw from your course, C2L financial support will finish on the last date of recorded attendance. The responsibility for all childcare costs reverts to yourself from this date.

6. Payments

C2L will pay towards the cost of childcare up to a maximum of £180 per child per week. C2L will support childcare hours in reasonable excess of the study programme hours to allow time for the student's travel between the education institution and the childcare provider, and for any independent study time undertaken, within the maximum weekly amount.

C2L can pay deposits of up to a maximum of £250 per child if the childcare provider requires this. Deposits will be deducted from the overall agreed amount of childcare funding for the duration of the student's programme.

C2L can also pay any registration fees that are charged by the childcare provider, up to a maximum of £80 per child. This is a one-off payment that does not form part of the weekly maximum rate and will not be paid for subsequent academic years if the student uses the same childcare provision.

6.1 Childcare Provider payment information

Childcare payments will be made directly to the childcare provider by bank transfer (commonly described as BACS) in arrears on a monthly basis.

Childcare payments will not be released until such time as the childcare provider has confirmed that the student's child continues to attend their facility (and the student continues to attend their study programme).

Conditions of funding – The childcare provider will receive an email on the last working day of every month, with a deadline, asking them to confirm the child's attendance during the course of the month.

Assuming the deadline has been met, then payments will follow within the next 10 working days.

If we do not receive confirmation of attendance from the childcare provider by the deadline, then payments will be put on hold and will not be released until the following month.

Continuing C2L payments are subject to the student continuing to attend their study programme (as well as the child attending childcare). If the student stops attending their education provision, even if the child continues to attend childcare, payments to the childcare provider will cease.

Any overpayments made to the childcare provider which are a result of incomplete or inaccurate attendance data provided by them may result in a request for payments to be repaid.

6.2 Travel payments for the student

C2L will pay for travel costs, where appropriate, if these are necessary for the student to take their child(ren) between childcare and home.

Travel costs are only paid if they are additional to the student's normal travel costs from home to the education institution.

Travel should be by the cheapest means of transport available; this is normally public transport. If the cheapest means is by car, we will calculate the amount using a rate of 25p per mile.

The total of the childcare and travel costs must not exceed the C2L maximum weekly amount. i.e. £180.00

7. Summer Retainers

Summer retainers can be paid to childcare providers, if required, to hold the childcare place over the summer holiday period. This only applies if a student is finishing study in one year and continuing their study in the next academic year. The young parent and their study programme must continue to meet the eligibility criteria for a summer retainer to be payable.

To be eligible for a summer retainer for summer 2026, the student must:

- have received C2L funding in academic year 2025 to 2026 and be intending to return to the study programme in academic year 2026 to 2027
- be on a study programme that has lasted for 6 weeks or more in academic year 2025 to 2026
- be on a study programme that finishes no earlier than 26 May 2026
- be intending to continue with the same childcare provider they used during academic year 2025 to 2026
- have been using the childcare provider for a minimum of 6 weeks

Summer retainers can be paid for a maximum of 8 weeks with the amount per week not exceeding the C2L weekly maximum rates.

8. Complaints or Appeals

8.1 Any student who is unhappy with how Nacro has handled their application for Care to Learn funding should, in the first instance, contact Nacro's Head of Funding, Compliance and MIS to see if the complaint can be resolved locally.

8.2 If it cannot be resolved locally, it will be handled using our Compliments, Comments, and Complaints Procedure. Students can request a copy of our policy or complete our online form.

<https://www.nacro.org.uk/for-nacro-service-users/compliments-comments-and-complaints/>