

Bursary Fund Guidance 22/23



Context

This statement forms part of our commitment to ensuring all students have access to high quality provision. The 16-19 Bursary Fund provides financial support to help students overcome specific financial barriers to participation so they can remain in education. The fund is allocated by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). Students may experience financial difficulties with costs such as transport, offsite educational activities, equipment, or other course related costs.

The Scheme

There are 2 types of bursaries:

- Higher-priority claimants (defined vulnerable groups)
- Discretionary bursaries awarded to meet individual needs.

Bridge Training is responsible for managing both types of bursaries.

Emergency payments

Bridge Training can also use this fund for those who are not eligible for the bursaries above in individual cases of hardship to provide food support whilst a student attends their course. This emergency payment (in the form of vouchers or food) is for those who are in real need. This is not an on-going arrangement and is for food support only.

Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for either type of bursary the student must:

- Be aged over 16 and under 19 at the end of the academic year.
- Be aged 19 or over at the end of the academic year and continuing a study programme they began aged 16 to 18 ('19+ continuers'). If students are over the age of 19 at the end of the academic year, they must have an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP).
- Meet the residency criteria in section 3 of the ESFA document 'Funding Regulations for Post-16 Provision'.

EHE students (those under the age of 16): are eligible for the bursaries and will be considered on a case-by-case basis in line with the 16-19 Bursary Fund Guide 2022 to 2023 academic year

In addition, the student must also meet one of the criteria listed below

Criteria for Higher Priority Claimants (defined vulnerable groups)

Students must fall into one or more of the categories below to be able to apply for a vulnerable bursary:

- In care (see definitions)
- Care leaver (see definitions)
- Young person in receipt of Income Support or Universal Credit (see definitions) because they are financially supporting themselves or

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financially supporting themselves and someone who is dependent on them and living with them such as a child or partner

- Young person in receipt of Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments in their own right as well as Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or Universal Credit (UC) in their own right (see definitions).

In some cases, a young person might meet the eligibility criteria for a bursary for vulnerable groups, but their financial needs are already met. Therefore, they have no relevant costs or do not need the maximum award.

Students aged 19 or over are not eligible for the bursary for vulnerable groups.

Eligible Groups	Evidence Required
<p>Students who are 'in care', or 'care leavers' i.e., young people who are, or have been, cared for by the Local Authority.</p> <p>Most care-experienced young people have, or will have had, a Social Worker.</p>	<p>A letter/email from the relevant Local Authority. This must be on headed paper, or from a local authority email address. Please see the next page for more details on how 'in care' and 'care leaver' are defined.</p>
<p>Students in receipt of Universal Credit in their own name</p>	<p>A copy of 3 most recent monthly Universal Credit award statements. (Details of your award printed from your online account).</p>
<p>Students in receipt of Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments in their own name</p> <p>Also, in receipt of</p> <p>Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit in their own name</p>	<p>DLA / PIP Award Letter and/or evidence of payments made into their account within the last 3 months.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>A copy of your 3 most recent monthly Universal Credit award statements. (Details of your award printed from your online account).</p>

Eligible students are awarded a maximum of £1,200 per year. Exact amounts offered are subject to further financial assessment

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Criteria for Discretionary Bursaries

Students with household incomes of less than £31,161 may apply for a lower level of support determined by their specific needs.

Eligible Groups	Evidence Required
<p>The household are in receipt of one or more of the following benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working Tax Credit with a gross income of £31,161 or below per annum • Housing Benefit or Local Housing Allowance • Council Tax Reduction Scheme • Carer's Allowance 	<p>A letter / award notice confirming your entitlement to benefits from one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job Centre Plus • Department for Work and Pensions • Your Local Authority • His Majesty's Revenue & Customs e.g., Tax Credit Award Letter for 2022/23 which shows your income from 2021/22. The full award letter must be provided. <p>Any letter you provide to us should be dated within the last 3 months. If your letter is older than 3 months, then please provide a recent bank statement showing a relevant payment going into your account within the last 3 months.</p> <p>Any letter provided must confirm the name and address of the person receiving the benefit(s), and this must match the address we hold for the student.</p>
<p>The household are not in receipt of one of the benefits (listed above), but are employed or self-employed with a gross income of £31,161 or below per annum</p> <p>If you live between two homes, we only need information from the person you live with for most of the time. The address you give on your bursary application and evidence must match the</p>	<p>Bridge Training will need one of the following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A copy of entitlement to means-tested state benefit, or Tax Credit Award Notice confirming household income of less than £31,161; or • Evidence of income from self-employment, a P60, or 3 to 6 months' worth of bank statements as evidence; or • 3 most recent monthly award statements for Universal Credit

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address we hold for you on our system and paperwork	
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The allocation of these funds will be subject to audit so Bridge Training will require proof that the application is genuine in the form of written evidence.

Bridge Training will seek and retain copies of evidence, bearing in mind confidentiality.

Applications

Application forms must be completed and submitted to the Student Services Lead (Gemma, Emma, Mitch). The application form is available at induction or through the named Lead above. Funding is not guaranteed.

Allocation

The decision is made by the Head of Student Services regarding which students receive a discretionary bursary and how much they receive, following an analysis of each student's individual circumstances and their documented financial need.

This will vary from student to student depending on, for example, household income, number of dependent children in the household, distance travelled to Bridge and requirements of individual study programmes.

- up to 5% of the fund will be allocated to cover administrative costs
- where a student is required to attend a subject related trip (e.g. Geography field trip), the appropriate amount will be deducted from the allocation.

Appeals

Students have the right to appeal a decision. Students, or their parent/carer, will be required to put an appeal in writing within 21 days of receiving confirmation of an award or a rejection.

The letter should set out the reasons for the appeal, which must prove that the student has been wrongly assessed as falling outside the eligibility criteria, plus any further evidence to support the Appeal. It should be sent to the Managing Director.

The decision of the Appeals Panel is final and will be given in writing within 14 days of the decision.

The Appeals Panel will consist of:

- The student services Lead
- An impartial member of the Senior Management Team
- The Managing Director

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The Appeals Panel meeting will be minuted.

Payment

Bridge Training will base all decisions about which students receive a discretionary bursary and how much bursary they receive on each student's individual circumstances and their actual financial need.

These will vary from student to student, depending on, for example, their household income, and the requirements of their study programme.

Bridge Training will not make bursary fund payments as regular payments for living costs as this is out of scope of the bursary fund.

Bridge Training will provide, wherever possible (list not exhaustive)

- Cost of travel to Work Placements – including supporting students with travel costs for interviews for a job, apprenticeships and/or internships
- Travel training
- Equipment and clothing for work placements
- Books and essential equipment relating to the vocational and academic course
- exam retake fees
- Employability trips and visits
- Educational trips and visits
- Any other requirements will be considered on an individual basis, at the discretion of Bridge Training.

Where Bridge Training cannot provide the services directly, students must provide a receipt of evidence and Bridge Training (if approved) will make payment via BACS transfer.

Bridge Training reserves the right to cease bursaries where a student's attendance and/or punctuality is deemed unacceptable or persistent punctuality issues

Audit / Monitoring and Review

The fund will be audited in line with the school's standard audit procedure

The Head of Student Services will oversee the operation of the Bursary Fund. This fund, and its operation, will be reviewed at the end of each academic year to review the allocations and criteria for awards for the 16-19 Bursary Fund.

Our commitment

Bridge Training is committed to ensuring that the Bursary fund is used in accordance with the Government guidance:

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- producing this statement setting out how the fund will be used
- publishing this statement on our website
- recording the use of the fund, including references to individual students who receive the fund
- to spend the allocated funds in the academic year 2022/23.

Definitions

In Care / Care Leaver

The 16 to 19 Bursary Fund defines 'in care' as 'Children looked after by a local authority on a voluntary basis (section 20 of the Children Act 1989) or under a care order (section 31 of the Children Act 1989) - Section 22 of the Children Act 1989 defines the term 'looked after child'.' A 'care leaver' is defined as:

- A young person aged 16 and 17 who was previously looked after for a period of 13 weeks consecutively (or periods amounting to 13 weeks), which began after the age of 14 and ended after the age of 16; or
- A young person aged 18 or above who was looked after prior to becoming 18 for a period of 13 weeks consecutively (or periods amounting to 13 weeks), which began after the age of 14 and ended after the age of 16

Income Support, Universal Credit, Personal Independence Payments, Disability Living Allowance

More detailed information can be found below:

- Income Support www.gov.uk/income-support
- Universal Credit www.gov.uk/universal-credit
- Employment and Support Allowance www.gov.uk/employment-support-allowance
- Personal Independence Payments www.gov.uk/pip