

Free School Meals 22/23



Context

This statement forms part of our commitment to ensuring all students have access to high quality provision.

Free school meals are targeted at disadvantaged students and provides meals for eligible students if they or their parents get one of the qualifying benefits (the definition of disadvantage is students being in receipt, or parents who are in receipt of, one or more of the qualifying benefits).

Students who are eligible for free school meals will be able to receive a food voucher for every full day of training they attend.

Eligibility Criteria

Students must be enrolled on one of our courses to be eligible for a free meal. To be eligible 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 Free School Meals and will be considered on a case-by-case basis in line with the 2022-2023 Guidance

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">• Income Support• Income based Jobseekers• Income related ESA• Support under part VI of the immigration and Asylum Act 1999• Guaranteed Element of State Pension Credit• Working Tax Credit Run On (paid for the 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for WTC)• Child Tax Credits (whilst not receiving Working Tax Credits) with a gross annual household income of no more than £16,190	<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• Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs e.g., your Tax Credit Award Letter for 2022/23 which shows your income from 2021/22. You must provide the full award letter. <p>Any letter provided to us should be dated within the last 3 months. If your letter is older than 3 months, please provide a recent bank statement showing a relevant</p>

Free School Meals 22/23



<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Universal Credit (with net earnings not exceeding the equivalent of £7,400 per annum)	payment going into your account within the last 3 months. 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
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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 Free School Meals. Up to 5% of the fund will be allocated to cover administrative costs

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

The Appeals Panel meeting will be minuted.

Free School Meals 22/23

Payment

Bridge Training will base all decisions about which students receive a payment and how much they receive on each student's individual circumstances, timetable, and attendance.

Bridge Training reserves the right to cease payments where a students' 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

Our commitment

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

- 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.