

Financial Support for Students: 16-19 Bursary Award

What is the 16-19 Bursary Fund?

The Bursary Fund has two parts:

- a statutory element which is for a restricted category of young people in defined vulnerable groups
- a discretionary part, enabling post-16 providers to give support to other young people according to their needs and circumstances

Who is eligible for the Bursary Fund?

Young people who fulfil the following criteria:

- who are under 19 on 31st August in the academic year in which they start the programme of study
- who satisfy the residency criteria laid down by the Education Funding Agency (EFA)
- who follow a programme of study funded by the Education Funding Agency (EFA)

Who might receive money from the Bursary Fund?

The college will pay a guaranteed bursary of £1200 a year to students in the following circumstances:

- students in care or recent care leavers living independently
- students in receipt of Income Support or Universal Credit
- disabled students in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) in their name and either Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or Universal Credit
- students in receipt of Personal Independence Payment (PIP) in their name and either ESA or Universal Credit

The college will pay Discretionary Bursaries to students whose household income is below £16,190 per annum after tax and NI deduction. The amount of the bursary will depend on the money available to the college and the number of students applying.

The college will provide targeted financial support towards **essential** educational expenses for the above groups of students, and will aim to help students whose household income is below £25,000 per annum.

Students who have been affected by a sudden exceptional change in financial circumstances, which brings them into the categories above, may also apply for financial support.

How much money will be available for Discretionary Bursaries and how can this money be used?

The amount of money available to each eligible young person will depend on the number of applications and the level of individual need.

The college will assess the extent of the likely need at the beginning of the academic year, before deciding how much money to allocate to young people. Students will be provided with an application form which **must be submitted to the college office before the stated deadline.**

Money from the Bursary Fund could be used to support essential expenses such as meals or the cost of files/paper/computer printing etc, as well as course-related costs which will support post-16 participation, including:

- specialist materials relating to courses studied e.g. Art/Photography
- additional course costs e.g. **essential** educational trips/visits or **essential** music tuition
- transport costs
- essential exam/test expenses required for post-18 progression (e.g. Bio Medical Admission Test (BMAT), National Admission Test for Law (LNAT, UKCAT, STEP, etc.)

We regret that we are unable to provide financial support for college trips which are not essential to the academic programme.

How will applications be assessed?

Students applying for a bursary will need to provide, in confidence, evidence of benefit entitlement such as Universal Credit, Income Support, Working Tax Credit, Child Tax Credit, Income Support, JSA, Tax Statements or similar documents. We will also require proof of income such as a recent P60.

Students applying for targeted financial support will be asked to state what they might need to spend for their course, as well as the evidence of total household income.

The college and finance teams will assess each application, consulting with the student's tutor, as appropriate.

If a student considers that an application has not been assessed fairly according to the principles laid down by the college, an appeal can be made to the Head of College who will review the assessment of the application. The Head of College's decision will be final.

If a claim is proved to be fraudulent, no award will be given and any money already allocated will be reclaimed.

How will the Bursary be paid?

This will depend on the nature of the award. It may take any of the following forms:

- a payment into a student's Bank Account in the case of a guaranteed or a discretionary bursary, normally paid in instalments
- a payment onto the student's Wisepay Account for free meal entitlement

Are there conditions attached to the receipt of a Bursary payment?

Students receiving an award will be expected to meet the normal expectations of students at the college, as outlined in the Learning Agreement. Failure to do so may lead to the student's eligibility for an award, whether current or future, being reassessed by the college management team.

How do I apply?

Once a student has enrolled at the college, they will need to:

- complete an application form (available from the college office or website)
- speak to their course tutors to get an estimate of likely costs for trips etc. throughout the year and then complete the relevant section on the application form

- return it to the college office together with the supporting evidence of financial circumstances. Examples of evidence are Universal Credit, Child Tax Credit Award Notice, Working Tax Credit Award Notice, Income Support, Jobseekers Allowance, Employment Support Allowance and a recent P60.

Deadlines for applications

Students are asked to apply by **21 September**, so that an initial assessment of demand can be made by the college. However, applications can be made throughout the year as needs are known, subject to funds being available. The outcome of applications will be advised in writing within 2 weeks of the application, including any conditions for the payment.

Appeals against unsuccessful applications may be made to the Head of College via the college office, in writing within 2 weeks of notification being received. Appeals will be settled within 2 weeks and advised in writing.

For emergency or temporary financial difficulties, please contact Mr K Marsaoui, Head of College.

Confidentiality

Please be assured that all applications will be kept confidential.

Free School Meals

To be eligible to receive free school meals, the Government has identified that students or parents need to be in receipt of one or more of the following benefits:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Child Tax Credit - but no element of Working Tax Credit – and have an annual income, as assessed by HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC), that does not exceed £16,190
- support under the part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- Working Tax Credit during the four-week period immediately after their employment ceases, or after they start to work less hours per week
- Universal Credit with an annual net earned income of no more than £7,400

A student is only eligible to receive a free meal when they or a parent/carer have made a successful application to Cambridgeshire County Council (evidence of benefit entitlements will need to be submitted with the application form).

Funds for free meals will be uploaded at regular intervals onto the student's Wisepay account. Meals can then be purchased at the catering outlets in college.

If you have any queries please contact:

College Administrator
Tel: 01223 868327
Email: office@oakescc.org