



Policy Statement and Guidelines for Post 16 Bursary / DLS Fund

Recommended by:	Associate Principal Post 16 Lead
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Ratified by:	Governing Body
Signed:	<i>Steve Lewis</i>
Position on the board	Chair of Governors
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Policy Tier (Central/Hub/School):	School

Post 16 Bursary / DLS Fund

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 money given to post-16 providers by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). Many will experience financial difficulties with costs such as transport, food or equipment. Eligibility is based on the student meeting residency requirements and being on a means-tested or disability benefit.

There are two types of bursaries:

- I. **Higher-priority claimants** (defined vulnerable groups) who will receive a bursary of up to £1,200.00 per year from the school fund
- II. **Discretionary bursaries** awarded to Mid and Lower-priority claimants, to meet individual needs. For example, to help with the cost of transport, meals, books, equipment, field trips and other course-related costs. The school is responsible for managing both types of bursary. Students who want to apply for support from the bursary fund should complete and submit an application form by Friday 23rd October 2021

Eligibility criteria – all bursaries: To be eligible for either type of bursary in the 2021/22 academic year, the student must:

- Be aged over 16 and under 19 at 31 August 2021
- Be aged 16 or over at 31 August 2021 and have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)
- Be aged 16 or over at 31 August 2021 and continuing on a study programme they began aged 16 to 18 ('19+ continuers')
- Meet the residency criteria in section 3 of the ESFA document 'Funding guidance for young people 2021 to 2022'. Section 3 of this document also specifies the evidence the school must see to confirm eligibility.
- The student must also meet the criteria of either the higher, mid or lower-priority group (see below).

Criteria for the vulnerable bursary (higher-priority group - Priority 1)

Students must fall into one or more of the categories below to be able to apply for a **Priority 1** bursary:

- In care
- Care leavers
- Young people in receipt of Income Support or 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
- Young people 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.

Eligible students will receive payment of up to £1,200, paid weekly by BACs transfer.

Defining in care and care leavers

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

More information about Income Support can be found at www.gov.uk/income-support

More information about Universal Credit can be found at www.gov.uk/universal-credit

More information about Employment and Support Allowance can be found at www.gov.uk/employment-support-allowance

More information about Personal Independence Payments can be found at www.gov.uk/pip

The allocation of these funds will be subject to audit. Therefore, the Academy will require proof that the application is genuine in the form of written evidence from the young person and their key worker. The school will seek and retain copies of evidence from the young person, bearing in mind confidentiality. Appropriate evidence includes:

- for students who are in care or a care leaver, written confirmation of their current or previous looked-after status from the relevant local authority. This is the local authority that looks after them or provides their leaving care services. This could be a letter or an email but must be clearly from the local authority
- for students in receipt of Income Support or Universal Credit (UC), a copy of their Income Support or UC award notice. This must clearly state that the claim is in the student's name/confirm they are entitled to the benefits in their own right. The evidence must not state any conditions that prevent them from participating in further education or training. For students in receipt of UC, institutions must also see a tenancy agreement in the student's name, a child benefit receipt, children's birth certificates, utility bills and so on
- for students receiving UC/ESA and Disability Living Allowance and Personal Independence Payments, a copy of their UC claim from DWP. Evidence of receipt of Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment must also be provided

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

Criteria for mid-priority group (Priority 2)

Where a student does not meet the higher-priority group criteria they may still be eligible for support. The school's criterion is students who are entitled to free school meals (FSM). The school will need to be satisfied that the application is genuine following the standard procedures that are currently in operation for application for FSM.

A cash bursary of up to £500 will be paid to eligible students for the academic year, paid over 3 terms.

Criteria for lower priority group (Priority 3)

Where there is a surplus of funds after the allocation to students in Priority 2, then students with household incomes of less than £20,817 may apply for a lower level of support determined by their specific needs. The following evidence will be required for students in this group:

- A copy of entitlement to means-tested state benefit, or Tax Credit Award Notice confirming household income of less than £20,817; 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.

A cash bursary of up to £250 for the academic year will be paid to eligible students, paid over 3 terms.

Conditions for Receipt of Student Bursaries Receipt of both vulnerable student bursaries (Priority 1) and discretionary bursaries (Priority 2 and 3), is conditional on the student meeting the following standards:

- no unauthorised absence during the period the payment covers
- no lates without a valid reason during the period the payment covers
- good behaviour

Part payment may be awarded to students where attendance is lower than 95% at the discretion of the Academy. Students will be informed of any decision made.

Evidence that each student has agreed to these conditions will be shown by the signed declaration in the application form (see Appendix 2).

5. Allocation

All decisions about which students receive a discretionary bursary and how much bursary they receive are based 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, the number of dependent children in the household, the distance they need to travel to school and the requirements of their study programme.

Once it is established who will be supported, the funds will need to be divided:

- Some funding will be held back for applicants who join later on in the year or whose personal circumstances change.
- The allocation to the Priority 2 students needs to be fair; students that apply will be assessed individually based on their actual financial need.
- If there is still money in the fund after allocation of funds to Priority 2 students referred to above then students with household incomes of less than £20,817 may receive financial support. This could be in the form of the payment for specific items required (e.g. textbook or trip that is necessary for course of study).
- The allocation criteria will reflect the school's Equalities policies and codes of practice and be endorsed by school committees.
- 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.
- The funding for Priority 1 students comes from the Student Bursary Support Service (SBSS) and is held centrally, so does not form part of the allocation set out above.

Application for Bursary / DLS Fund

- To apply an Application form needs to be completed and submitted, **with evidence of income**, by the given deadline at the start of each academic year. All applications submitted will be processed by the end of Term 1 – BACs payments will be made as necessary.
- Where financial circumstances change during the academic year, students can apply for the Discretionary Fund. All applications will be processed promptly, however, please note no back payments will be made for mid-term applications.

Payment

If you are eligible for discretionary funding, this will be paid as Payment in weekly instalments as a BACs transfer payment. Alternatively, the Academy can purchase goods on your behalf to assist with your further education i.e. purchase of books and other resources.

Payments for High and Low priority will be made throughout the Academy Year on a termly basis. Please note: on occasion, where there are problems with payment, the Academy will endeavour to make the payment as soon as possible.

The Academy will consider financial support, relating to education and student welfare as follows:

- Uniform / clothing subsidy
- Transport subsidy
- School meals subsidy
- Books and educational resources (including Course Materials)
- Trips and Visits
- Examination re-sits
- Any other educational expenses
- NUS Cards
- 16-18 Travel Card
- UCAS Fee

Where a payment is not made, a student may appeal. Students, or their parent/guardian, will be required to put any appeal in writing within 21 days of receiving confirmation of an award or a rejection, making clear 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 Mrs Jackie Lee and will be reviewed by the Associate Assistant Principal – Head of Post 16.

The Academy will investigate the appeal and a final decision will then be made. The student will be informed, in writing, within a 2-week period.

All applications are to be renewed annually.