



# 16–19 Bursary Scheme Policy Document 2018 - 2019

## Statement

The purpose of this policy, in accordance with in the guidelines set down by the ESFA (Education and Skills Funding Agency), is to:

1. Ensure that the funds received annually from the ESFA are targeted towards students identified as facing the greatest need to ensure that they are supported through their education
2. Ensure that any remaining funds are distributed fairly to students whose household income may present a barrier to continuing education
3. Ensure financial sustainability through the flexible development of ESFA funds received, thereby preventing an overspend in any annual cycle of funding
4. Ensure that any personal financial details remain secure and confidential
5. Set relevant controls to minimize the risk of fraudulent claims

## ESFA Bursary Fund Allocations

For the academic year 2018/2019, funding for the students in the defined vulnerable groups will be held centrally. The School will draw down funding on demand where we have identified and verified new students who meet the vulnerable student criteria. Funding will be drawn down by completion and submitting a vulnerable bursary funding claim form via the online portal. The Student Bursary Support Service will process the form, send the School remittance advice and issue payment. The School is responsible for distributing vulnerable student bursaries to eligible students.

The ESFA will advise the School of its allocation of bursary funds annually for each Academic Year. This figure is calculated based on the number of students who were eligible in the last academic year.

A 5% administrative cost and a 10% contingency fund to meet exceptional circumstances will be applied. To provide for these costs, 15% will be withheld from the total ESFA allocation.

Out of this allocation, the most vulnerable students, as defined in the ESFA Guidance Document, are to receive a Level 1 Bursary of £1,200 per year and the remainder to be shared amongst the Level 2 eligible students under the Discretionary Bursary Fund and Individual Hardship Payments.

## **Vulnerable Bursary (Level 1, High Priority)**

The highest level of support of £1,200 a year will be paid to those students in one or more of the following categories:

- A Young person in Care
- A Care Leaver
- A young person in receipt of Income Support or Universal Credit in their own right
- A disabled young person in receipt of Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit and Disability Living or Personal Independence Payments in their own right.

## **Discretionary Bursary Fund (Level 2, Medium Priority)**

The discretionary Bursary (Level 2) will support students from households with the lowest incomes. For guidance, this would be students:

- Entitled to free school meals and /or
- Whose families receive income related benefits, where earned family income is below £16,190 per annum
- PP or Ever 6

Proof of income, in original documentary form, such as P60, Self Employed Income Notification, Receipt of Benefit Notification and / or Free School Meal Notification will be required.

Information on entitlement to free school meals can be found on Northamptonshire County Council website.

## **Payments for Level 1 & Level 2 Bursaries**

Will be paid out termly, just after each half term break.

Students will require their own bank account to receive the cheque or Bacs payment.

## **Discretionary Individual Hardship Payments (Level 3, Low Priority)**

Discretionary Individual payments may be applied for where identifiable financial hardship can be evidenced but is not eligible to receive a Vulnerable Bursary (Level 1) or Discretionary Bursary (Level 2) for specific educational needs. Individual Hardship payments will be made for a specific educational purpose. For guidance, this would normally be students:

- Whose families receive income related benefits or where earned family income is between £16,190 and £25,500 per annum

In some circumstances, we are able to consider bursary applications from students whose families receive income related benefits, or where earned family income is between £25,001 and £30,000 per annum. It is anticipated, however, that funds for this purpose will be limited and will only be made available after all Level 2 Discretionary bursaries have been allocated. Each application will be assessed according to individual financial need.

## **Eligibility**

A student must be aged under 19 on 31 August 2018 in the academic year in which they start their programme of study and must satisfy ESFA residency criteria.  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/advice-funding-regulations-for-post-16-provision>

Amended July 2018

Students will need to be participating on a course that leads to a qualification (up to level 3) that is accredited by Ofqual or is pursuant to Section 98 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000.

## **Educational Needs**

Bursaries are to be used to meet the following types of education needs (or costs) although this list is not exhaustive:

- Books / equipment / materials
- Examination re-sits fees
- UCAS application fees / travel to open days
- Education visits / field trips which are course related
- Sports activities which are course related
- Travel to school (where existing schemes do not apply)
- Laptops will only be considered for students that fall in to the Discretionary Bursary Level 2 category

**Where possible, payment for goods and services will be made by the School on behalf of the student. In the case of laptops awarded under the Discretionary scheme, these must be returned to school at the end of the course so that they can be reused by other students.**

## **Evidence**

Recent and original documentation to determine status (vulnerable bursaries) or household income (discretionary bursaries) is required to be submitted together with the completed application form. Evidence of household income would normally take the form of:

- Benefit notification, such as Income Support or Universal credit in a student's own right
- HMRC Tax Credit Award Notice (renewal form will not be accepted)
- P60 and payslips
- Statement of income from self-employment agreed by the HMRC
- Bank statements (showing unearned income)

## **Conditions**

Bursaries are payable subject to certain conditions in the Sixth Form Agreement relating to attendance, behaviour and effort being maintained.

Bursary payments may be withheld if these conditions are not met to the satisfaction of the Head of Sixth Form, whose decision is final.

Regular reviews of attendance, behaviour and effort will take place to determine whether the student can continue to receive bursary support.

## **Payments**

To be paid termly, subject to the conditions in the Sixth Form Agreement (attendance, behaviour and effort) being maintained.

However, individual hardship payments may be made in single one off amounts during the academic year to meet a specific arising need.

Payments will usually be made by BACS but wherever possible goods and services will be purchased by the School on behalf of the student. Where money is provided to the student for a specific purpose (for example to purchase a bus pass), students will be required to provide the school with the receipt to confirm the money has been spend for the purpose it was intended.

## **Application Process**

Bursary Scheme applications are to be made to the Sixth Form Administrator by the middle of October each year – exact dates to be published annually. The application MUST be supported by the required evidence. The School will then process the application early in the second term and will advise students, in writing, of the outcome.

Students will need to apply for a bursary each academic year.

Applications may be received in year where a change of circumstances has occurred leading to financial hardship or qualifying new in year starters.

The School will also consider further assistance for any successful applicant due to the onset of an unexpected or large expense (such as a school trip) or a change in circumstances home leading to financial hardship.

## **Security of Personal Information**

All applications will be made through the Finance Office. All personal information and evidence submitted in support of the application will be stored securely and will remain strictly confidential.

## **Appeals**

Students have the right to appeal against a decision that the School has made, if they believe it to be wrong and can provide evidence to support this. In the first instance, appeals should be made, in writing, to the Sixth Form Administrator and the Head of Sixth form will review the evidence with them. If the matter remains unresolved, the student will be asked to attend a meeting with the School Business Manager or Headteacher. They may bring a family member or friend with them to these meetings to support them through this process. The outcome of the appeal will be communicated to the student in writing.

## **Fraud**

Parents / carers, together with the student, are required to sign the application form to confirm that the details given are correct and that they will notify the School of any change in circumstances. Parents and students are made aware, that in signing the application form, they understand that monies may be reclaimed and eligibility withdrawn should they knowingly provide information which is discovered to be false. An application found to be false or incomplete may be referred to the Department for Education and the Police. The student could face prosecution as a result.