

Policy/Procedure Name:	Bursary Policy
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Role Responsible:	Principal/CEO
Approved By:	Executive Team

Policy Version Control & Worksheet

Please ensure you complete the below table once you have checked this policy, to log acknowledgement of the sign off process.

Name	Date	Comments Made (Y/N)
Chrisitne Ricketts	13/05/2024	Yes
Sarah Clancey	16/05/2024	Yes
Allan tyrer	16/05/2024	Yes
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Discretionary Learner Support Fund

Policy and Guidelines for Financial Support for students at Brooklands College in line with Gov.uk Guidance

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/16-to-19-bursary-fund-guide-2023-to-2024-academic-year>

Background

Brooklands College receives an allocation of funds from the Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) for 19+ and 24+ students (studying at level 3 or above) and an allocation for 16-19's and Vulnerable student Bursary. This funding is to support eligible students studying further education courses funded by the ESFA and to help students meet the costs of participating in education and training post 16.

The college recognises that the Student Bursary has an important role to play in removing barriers to some students accessing and completing further education courses. It is the aim of the college to use funds to make the maximum impact on recruitment, retention, achievement and success rates.

The bursary fund is designed to help students overcome the individual financial barriers to participation that they face and ensure that their learning is not affected/impacted.

Enrolling on a learning programme or course can be expensive. Therefore before a student starts a course consideration should be given to costs such as:

- Travel Costs
- Examination or registration fees
- Equipment and Materials – unless compulsory to the completion of the Learning Aim
- Uniform and Kit – unless compulsory to the completion of the Learning Aim
- Childcare 19+ (16-19 years Childcare supported through Care to Learn)

To ensure finance is not a barrier to enrolment, the College will promote ESFA funds and other sources of financial assistance. The Bursary Fund policy and guidelines state how the funds are allocated and prioritised. There can be no virement between the 16/19 and 19+ or 24+ funds. A small percentage of funds may be vired from 19+ Hardship to 20+ Childcare.

Please note that funding for free school meals is now included within the Bursary funding from the Education Funding Agency; this means that where students take up the option of free school meals (FSM) following a successful application to the FSM system) this will be recorded separately from the Bursary.

The College will be responsible for awarding bursaries to students. In addition, the College will have the flexibility to give awards at a local level and the discretion to distribute these according to need.

The College will make awards based upon a proven hardship need which must be substantiated by evidence which will be retained in accordance with audit requirements. Students who meet the criteria for bursaries for vulnerable groups are not automatically entitled to a bursary if they do not have financial needs and/or their financial needs are covered from other sources.

The Bursary is intended to target those who are financially disadvantaged and need support for transport, books, equipment and other costs related to their learning.

The allocation to 19+ adult Bursary learners is intended to target those who are financially disadvantaged and need support for childcare, transport, books, equipment and other costs related to their learning.

Where appropriate the College will use up to 5% of the allocation to meet the costs of administering learner support funds allocated by the Skills Funding Agency.

The fund will be distributed in a consistent and equitable way, following guidance issued by the ESFA and SFA. Student eligibility will be determined through a means-tested assessment, with the award amount being calculated using a standard formula where possible. This process will be administered by the Admissions Officers.

In cases of exceptional hardship, where emergency help is required, or in the event that Bursary funds are completely exhausted, support may be arranged by the Admissions Manager or Admissions Officers to reflect the individual needs of the student, with approval from the Director of Student Services or equivalent Senior Manager

All support is subject to funds being available.

16/19 Bursary Fund Policy

Priorities

Priority Group 1

Young people on learning programmes that meet ESFA eligibility criteria who are:

- In care or care leavers
- In receipt of Income Support/Universal Credit
- In receipt of Employment Support Allowance/Universal Credit and Disability Living Allowance/Personal Independence Payment

All other awards are subject to funding availability.

Priority Group 2

Young people on learning programmes that meet ESFA eligibility criteria who are:

- Struggling to meet the costs of attending college and who come from a home which has a combined annual gross income of under £25,000*

Types of Support

16-19 Bursary support provided through Brooklands College will take the form of provision of services or equipment supporting the continuation of beneficiary to engage in learning or training. While some cash payments will be made to those students in priority group 1, the provision of services in preference to cash payments to learners, supports the effectiveness of the funding and ensures its expenditure on the intended items. It is recommended that expenditure is itself prioritised in the following way:

Support Priority 1

Bursary **up to** £1200.00 Bursary per year to all students who meet Priority group 1 criteria (as above). Monthly payments will be made to the student by BACS Credit payment. Payment amounts will be determined by the ESFA weekly payment criteria for the Guaranteed Bursary

Support Priority 2

Travel support for journeys to and from college. This level of support is integral to removing barriers to attendance and retention. Monthly payments will be made to the student by BACS Credit payment. Payment amounts will be determined by the overall student cost. Grants towards the cost of equipment, kit and other essential course related items where funds available. Grants allocated to learners to meet these costs will be capped as contributions towards expenditure. (Equipment/Kit is no longer available from the Bursary if it is a compulsory element and student cannot complete without necessary items)

Supporting industry placements

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/16-to-19-bursary-fund-guide-2023-to-2024-academic-year>

Institutions engaged in industry placement delivery are also encouraged to ensure their bursary policies can respond to the needs of students undertaking industry placements. A few students may find themselves facing financial difficulties due to incurring extra participation costs, for example,

because they need to pay for additional travel to their placement. These students may only need support for a short period of time.

Support Priority 3

Other items depending on factors such as learner priority group and remaining funds.

The allocation of funding/financial help to learners will be dependent on beneficiaries meeting the college's "Student/College Agreement" and other learning objectives as well as set 85% of attendance.

Eligibility for support from the Bursary fund

To be eligible for help from the Bursary students must be from priority group 1 or 2 and be under 19 on the 31st August in the academic year in which they start their studies. Students will also satisfy residency criteria and be enrolled on an appropriate course of study. More details regarding eligibility can be found in the ESFA Bursary Funds – Guide".

Eligible education provision

Students must be participating in provision that is subject to inspection by a public body that assures quality (for example Ofsted). The provision must also fall into one of these groups:

- funded directly by ESFA or by ESFA via a local authority
- funded or co-financed by the European Social Fund
- otherwise publicly funded and lead to a qualification (up to and including level 3) accredited by Ofqual or on the ESFA list of qualifications approved for funding 14 to 19
- a 16 to 19 traineeship programme

Students on apprenticeship programmes, or any waged training, are employed, rather than in education. They are not eligible for the 16 to 19 Bursary Fund.

Non-employed students aged 16 to 19 who are participating in a Prince's Trust Team Programme are eligible to receive the bursary in the same way as any other student participating in an eligible, publicly funded course.

ESFA does not expect students on distance learning provision to need help from the bursary fund because they do not have the kinds of costs the bursary is intended to cover (travel, equipment and uniforms, for example). In the rare instances where an institution identifies such a student does require financial help, they should provide support in-kind. An example could be providing a temporary travel pass for the student to attend exams.

Residency

Students must meet the residency criteria in ESFA funding regulations for post-16 provision. This document also specifies the evidence institutions must see and retain for audit to confirm eligibility for post-16 funding (and therefore meet the residency criteria for bursary fund eligibility).

To be eligible for the 16-24 bursary fund students must:

- be aged 16 or over but under 19 at 31 August or
- be aged 19 or over at 31 August (in year) and have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

To be eligible for the 19+ bursary fund students must:

- be aged 19 or over at 31 August (in year) and continuing on a study programme
- they began aged 16 to 18 ('19+ continuers')

To be eligible for the Advanced Learner Loan bursary fund students must:

- Be aged 19 or over on the first day of your course
- Have had your Advanced learner loan approved by the Student loan company (Level 3 or above courses only)

Bursaries cannot be paid to the following learners

- Learner is on a Higher Education (HE) course
- Waged Apprentices or provision with learning aims that are identified as fully funded from other sources
- Learner is in prison or a young offender institution, or released on temporary licence from custody
- Learner who is funded by us and as such must not be charged for equipment and facilities so they can complete their Learning aim
- The Learner is funded by a Loan (other than the Advanced Learner Loan)

<https://www.gov.uk/student-finance/who-qualifies>

The Learner is already receiving help with travel or childcare costs from the Jobcentre Plus or a Work Programme provider in connection with pre-employment training

Any learners who are unsure of their eligibility for support should contact the Admissions Office.

The Process

Application

All individuals wishing to receive help from the Bursary will need to apply using a standard application form in which they will need to supply the following information:

- Student information, e.g. name, DOB, address etc.
- Student Identity number to confirm enrolment
- Learning programme – e.g. title, campus, year
- Household income information for either:
Student living independently or students living as a dependent of parent, guardians or Carers
- Student declarations to confirm their understanding and observance of terms and conditions

The Evidence required to support the application will be as follows:

Priority Group 1 defined vulnerable groups

- Evidence from Local Authority Children's Services confirming
 - In care "Looked After" or
 - Care leaver "Leaving Care" status **and one of the following;**
- Letter from Job Centre Plus (JCP) confirming receiving Income Support (IS), or Universal Credit (UC) 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
- Letter from JCP confirming receiving Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payments (PIP) in their own right as well as Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or UC in their own right

Priority Group 2 – are required to supply one of the following:

- Enrolment Information on number, names and contact details of Next of Kin, parents, guardians or carers
- All pages of Tax Credit Award Notice/Review for household for 2022/23 and/or 2023 New Award Notice
- P60 for both parent (if single income household) or parents (if joint income household)
- Self Employed - Accountants Letter stating projected earnings for 2022/23 and/or 2023 SA32 form
- 3 recent monthly consecutive wage slips
- Any current welfare benefit letter dated within the 3months prior to the application and start of course
- Pension Credit Award Notice for current year
- Asylum Seekers/Refugee documents/letter from Home Office and recent Post Office benefit receipt

Assessment

Assessment and interviews (where appropriate) will be carried out by all members of the Admissions team. Level of support awarded will be determined by household income evidence

Policy Statement

Brooklands College will strive to:

- Do all it can so no eligible student has to withdraw from their course due to lack of Financial support*.
- Take steps to ensure that all eligible students can apply for financial help, thus supporting “widening participation” and the provision of learning for under-represented groups.
- Ensure that any personal information you provide in an application is subject to the Data Protection Act.
- Ensure that all applications for financial support are assessed and dealt with efficiently and fairly.
- Monitor and review the effectiveness of its financial support for students on a regular basis.

*Brooklands College is committed to do everything it can to support its learners; however Bursary funding is extremely limited and funding cannot be guaranteed.

Monitoring/Management

The college maintains records of the following:

- Details of all applications
- Application outcome
- Payment schedule (where appropriate)
- Appeals documentation
- Other records e.g. letters, interview notes

The Admissions team will maintain an electronic record of Bursary applications and outcomes using:

- Database
- Spreadsheet
- QLS
- Updates identified by ESFA

Framework

The framework below is applicable to discretionary awards. Support will be granted to students in line with the broad categories in the table below:

Childcare	16-19 Students should apply for the 'Care to Learn' scheme for childcare and associated transport. Further details can be obtained from https://www.gov.uk/care-to-learn or telephone 0300 303 8610
Equipment and Books (including uniforms/kit)	Capped contribution based on household income. Equipment/Kit is no longer available from the Bursary if a compulsory element and student cannot complete without necessary items.
Transport	The 16/19 bursary may contribute to the travel costs of coming to College
Student Visits	Students may apply for a contribution towards the costs of a trip(s), if these are not a compulsory to the completion of the Learning Aim and where funding remains available.
Emergency Payments	Emergency payments must be supported by a student's Tutor, plus an interview with a member of the Admissions team. These are considered to be one-off awards. On-going support will be discussed on an individual basis involving any external agencies as required

Appeal procedure:

If a student wishes to appeal against the outcome of an application, this will be reviewed by the Admissions Manager and supported by a member of the Senior Leadership Team. If satisfaction is not reached a further appeal can be made directly to the Assistant Principal Apprenticeships, Partnerships and Student Experience. This should be in writing and should set out the reasons for the appeal. The Assistant Principal will respond to the appeal in writing within ten working days. This decision is final.

Learner Support Fund 19+ Policy (including 24+ Advanced Learner Loan students)

The fund provides financial help to eligible students aged 19+. It is a means tested fund and the amount a student may receive depends on their family gross household income. The fund can help meet costs such as travel, equipment, exam costs and childcare. The fund provides support to students who are experiencing financial hardship. Awards from the fund are made to individual students on a discretionary basis. Any award is made subject to satisfactory attendance at college and meeting the "Student/College Agreement". Although funding will focus on students who are financially disadvantaged, the fund is finite and learners who are eligible for support are not automatically entitled to it.

Priorities

- Those who have recently left care
- Those acting as carers for a family member or friend
- Those on probation

- Those eligible for fee remission
- Those in receipt of means tested benefits i.e. Income Support/Universal Credit
- Learners with learning difficulties or disabilities

The Evidence required to support the application will be one of the following:

- Enrolment Information on number, names and contact details of Next of Kin, parents, guardians or carers
- All pages of Tax Credit Award Notice/Review for household for 2022/23 or 2023 New Award Notice
- P60 for both parent (if single income household) or parents (if joint income household)
- Self Employed - Accountants Letter stating projected earnings for 2022/23 and/or 2023 SA32 form
- 3 recent monthly consecutive wage slips
- Any current welfare benefit letter dated within the 3months prior to the application and start of course
- Pension Credit Award Notice for current year
- Asylum Seekers/Refugee documents/letter from Home Office and recent Post Office benefit receipt

Examples of awards based on Gross Household income

Income	Grant Award
Income up to £25,000	Discretionary Award
Income over £25,000	Nil – Help may be available under exceptional circumstances
Discretionary	Based on further evidence of financial constraint

Childcare Support:

Students who are ineligible for help from schemes such as Care to Learn can apply for discretionary childcare support. Brooklands College will only pay childcare up to the amount allocated for each academic year. If a student’s childcare costs exceed their Bursary allocation made to the student then the student is liable for any additional fees incurred.

Should a student cease to attend or be withdrawn from Brooklands College at any point during the academic year, financial support for childcare will finish on the last date of their recorded attendance. The responsibility for childcare costs reverts to the student from that date.

Eligibility for support from the 19+ Discretionary Learner Support Fund (including 24+ Advanced Learner Loans Bursary)

To be eligible for help from the Learner Support Fund student must be over 19 years of age at the start of their studies. Students will also satisfy residency criteria and be enrolled on an appropriate course of study. More details about the fund can be found in the “Discretionary Funding Guidance and Requirements 2023/24 – for learners aged 19+”. Learner Support Fund cannot be paid to learners on Higher Education (HE) courses, waged Apprentices, people in or released on temporary licence from custody. Any learners who are unsure of their eligibility for support should contact the Admissions Team.

In addition students in receipt of 19+/24+ Advanced Learner Loan can apply to the Loan Bursary, same criteria applies as above.

The Process

Application

All individuals wishing to receive help from the Bursary will need to apply using a standard application form in which they will need to supply the following information:

- Student information, e.g. name, DOB, address etc.
- Student Identity number to confirm enrolment
- Learning programme – e.g. title, campus, year
- Household income information for either:

Student living independently or students living as a dependent of parent, guardians or Carers

- Student declarations to confirm their understanding and observance of terms and conditions

POLICY STATEMENT

Brooklands College will strive to:

- Do all it can so no eligible student has to withdraw from their course due to lack of financial support.
- Take steps to ensure that all eligible students can apply for financial help, thus supporting “widening participation” and the provision of learning for under-represented groups.
- Ensure that any personal information you provide in an application is subject to the Data Protection Act.
- Ensure that all applications for financial support are dealt with efficiently and fairly.
- Monitor and review the effectiveness of its financial support for students on a regular basis.

Monitoring/Management

The college maintains records of the following:

- Details of all applications
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- Other records e.g. letters, interview notes

The Admissions team will maintain a record of Bursary applications and outcomes using:

- Database
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- QLS
- Updates identified by ESFA

Framework

Support will be granted to students in line with the broad categories in the table below:

Childcare	Students under 20 years old on the date their learning begins may also be eligible for the ‘Care to Learn’ scheme and should apply as above (<i>see page 6</i>).
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	<p>Students older than 20 years may be given an award towards childcare and associated /additional transport based on the number of course hours attended and essential private study. Learner Support Funds can only be used to fund childcare delivered by OFSTED registered providers.</p> <p>Note the College will not enter into a contract with a nursery. The student is responsible for the payment to the nursery and must abide by the terms and conditions of that provider. However, the college will make payments directly to a nursery on behalf of a student whose application for help through the LSF has been approved.</p>
Equipment (including uniforms/ kit)	<p>All awards are based on course requirements and student income as outlined above. If hardship funds are used to purchase equipment for individuals then this remains the property of the College and should be reused unless wear and tear, health and safety, and/or hygiene deem this inappropriate. Capped contribution based on household income, if not compulsory to the completion of the Learning Aim – Equipment/Kit is no longer available from the Bursary if a compulsory element and student cannot complete without necessary items.</p>
Emergency Payments	<p>Emergency payments must be supported by a student's Tutor plus an interview with a member of the Admissions team. These are considered to be one-off awards. On-going support will be discussed on an individual basis involving any external agencies as required</p>
Examination Fees	<p>All awards are considered on course requirement and learning aim. Students must apply for support towards examination entry fees before making an exam entry. Amounts will be within the overall limits for awards. Students will need to provide evidence of financial need.</p>
Student Visits	<p>Students may apply for support towards the costs of a trip(s) where funds not exhausted from travel. All awards are considered on course requirement and learning aim. Capped contribution based on household income, if not compulsory to the completion of the Learning Aim</p>
Other costs	<p>Students may apply for funding to cover other costs as appropriate. Awards shall be made within the overall funding limit. Tuition fees can be paid in exceptional circumstances up to 10% of the cost of a course. Course fee support is limited to one course per year</p>

Appeals Procedure

If a student wishes to appeal against the outcome of an application, this will be reviewed by the Admissions Manager and supported by a member of the Executive Team.

If satisfaction is not reached a further appeal can be made directly to a member of the Executive Team. This should be in writing and should set out the reasons for the appeal. A member of the Executive Team will respond to the appeal in writing within ten working days. This decision is final.

Appeals Panel

Membership: A member of the Executive Team

Admissions Manager

Appeals panels will be administered by an Admissions Administrator

Terms of reference:

1. To hear any appeals and to rule on the appropriateness of the original award decision, confirming or amending it as appropriate.
2. To communicate the outcome of the appeal
3. A Tutor's Statement supporting evidence of appeal for funds
4. The decision of the Appeals Panel is final.