
Bursary Policy 2020-21

Policy Statement

City of Bristol College bursary funds are designed to widen participation and to support our students to attend college and achieve their goals, as well as to support their general welfare. The funds are distributed in accordance to Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and West of England Combined Authority (WECA).

Scope

The College can provide the following funds:

- 16-19 Bursary Fund
- Free Meal Fund
- Loan Bursary Fund (for students who have taken out an Advanced Learner Loan)
- Discretionary Learner Support Fund (for 19 plus students)
- Care to Learn

Funds are allocated to students who demonstrate a financial barrier which impacts on their learning, and this is based on household income. All funds have published financial eligibility criteria which are detailed in the bursary application forms.

16-19 Bursary Fund

A student must be aged 16 or over but under 19 at 31 August 2020 to be eligible for help from the bursary fund in the 2020 to 2021 academic year.

There are 2 types of 16 to 19 bursaries:

- A Vulnerable Bursary of up to £1,200 a year for young people in one of the defined vulnerable groups.
- Discretionary bursaries to help with the cost of transport, meals, books, uniform and equipment.

Free Meal Fund

To be eligible for Free Meals, students must be aged 16 or over but under 19 at 31 August 2020, or have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), and be in receipt of, or have parents in receipt of, one or more of the following benefits:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided they are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190, as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC))
- Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for 4 weeks after someone stops qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit with net earnings not exceeding the equivalent of £7,400 per annum

Eligible students will be entitled to a free meal allowance; a minimum of £2.41 each day for timetabled activities. Free meals funding is available to the student from the point of a successful bursary application and cannot be back dated.

Loan Bursary Fund

This fund is available to students who have taken up the Advanced Learner Loan to fund their course who meet the eligibility criteria for household income. Support is available for accommodation and travel, course materials and equipment, childcare and classroom assistance for a disability or learning difficulty (once assessed by the College).

Students will be expected to use any free childcare funding they receive to cover the course hours, and the bursary will support additional hours. Childcare funding is only available for childcare delivered by OFSTED registered providers.

The cost of books, uniforms and equipment costs are usually charged direct by the curriculum area and the items are purchased on behalf of the student. The costs available are defined for each course to meet the needs of that course. Travel is paid on days of the timetabled course.

Discretionary Learner Support Fund (for 19 plus students)

Students aged 19 or over are only eligible to receive a discretionary bursary if they are continuing on a study programme they began aged 16 to 18 ('19+ continuers') or have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

These 2 groups of aged 19+ students can receive a discretionary bursary while they continue to attend education (in the case of a 19+ continuer, this must be the same programme they started before they turned 19), as long as their eligibility continues and their institution considers they need the support to continue their participation.

To be eligible for support students must be:

- 19 or over
- Studying for a qualification funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)
- Meet the ESFA residency criteria of home student

Eligible students can receive support with childcare (if they are aged 20 or older on the first day of their course), travel, course materials and equipment.

Students will be expected to use any free childcare funding they receive to cover the course hours, and the bursary will support additional hours. Students aged 19 can apply for childcare through Care to Learn. Childcare funding is only available for childcare delivered by OFSTED registered providers.

The cost of books, uniforms and equipment costs are usually charged direct by the curriculum area and the items are purchased on behalf of the student. The costs available are defined for each course to meet the needs of that course. Travel is paid on days of the timetabled course.

Care to Learn

Care to learn (C2L) helps young parents under the age of 20 to continue in, and return to education after the birth of a child. It does this by providing funding for childcare whilst the young parent is studying. The scheme can provide up to a maximum total amount of support of £160 per child per week and covers only days in which the student has timetabled course activity.

The young parent's study programme must have some direct public funding.

C2L will only fund childcare provision registered with Ofsted.

Young parents, their education institution and their childcare provider must all meet the eligibility criteria to receive C2L.

Young parents must complete and submit a new C2L application for each academic year. Childcare providers and education institutions also need to provide information for each young parent who applies. Students submit applications online via the Student Bursary Support Service (SBSS) online portal.

Attendance

Awards are made subject to satisfactory attendance of a minimum of 89%, unless there are exceptional circumstances. If attendance is less than 89% awards may be stopped and may be reinstated if attendance improves.

Changes of Circumstance

Students are required to disclose any change of circumstances during the year that may affect their eligibility for bursary funding. If a student leaves before the end of their course they may be required to repay their award, or return any equipment purchased from bursary funding.

Unforeseen Emergency Support

The College will set aside an element of funding which will provide a safety net for genuine emergencies that cannot be foreseen or provided for in advance.

Application Process

Application forms are available from Student Services. Applications will be checked against the eligibility criteria and students will receive a written outcome, and if successful details of the awards and payment dates.

All copies of application forms and evidence will be kept securely by the College.

Appeals

Students have the right to appeal in writing to the Learner Support Fund (LSF) Team, and have 10 working days to do this from receipt of their award notification. The appeal should set out their reasons and include any supporting evidence. The Hub Leader in charge of LSF and Head of Student Services will consider the appeal and provide the student with an outcome in writing within 10 working days of receipt of the appeal.

Students who are not satisfied with the outcome of their appeal, should refer to the College's Complaints Policy and Procedure.

Linked Policies

- Data Protection Policy
- Additional Learning Support Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Policy and Procedure

Review frequency: Annually

Lead Officer: Head of Student Services

Executive Lead: Director of Marketing, Communications and Customer Services