



16-19 Bursary Support Fund guidelines

The 16-19 Bursary Fund is available to provide financial support to help students to overcome the specific financial barriers to participation they face so they can remain in education.

Do Parents/Carers apply?

As students are 16+, it is the students' responsibility to apply as the application is in the student's name, and all payments are made direct to the student, and they are applying for themselves. However, the students will need support from their parent(s)/carer(s) to provide information regarding household income and the required supportive evidence. Some students may need some extra personal support with their application. If this is the case, they can contact student services directly who will be able to assist them complete their application.

How do students apply?

Students can access the online application platform PayMyStudent – the link is both on the college website and their student portal – all students will also receive a text towards the end of July with a link to PayMyStudent to start or renew their application <https://s6f.paymystudent.com/portal/>

How are students' applications assessed?

The student's applications will be assessed on the parent(s)/carer(s)'s household income. Household income needs to be below £35,000. Most households that have a household income under £40,000 a year particularly if they pay rent and have children may qualify for Universal Credit so it is worth checking

What will students receive?

- Free Meals (£2.61 per day (2025/26)) is automatically awarded and not income related if family receives Universal Credit
- Discretionary Meals top up contribution with Free Meals element if household income is below £35,000
- A contribution towards travel if a student lives more than 3 miles from college
- A contribution to essential equipment/books/clothing – students submit a separate request

- A limited contribution towards travelling for University/Placement Interviews – students submit a separate request

How are students paid?

- Meals are paid monthly in advance on their student ID cards
- Students will be either provided with a college bus pass or if they need to use public transport they will receive a monthly BACS payment – it is essential for students who receive BACS payments to have their own bank account

Important – *All payments are based on a student's attendance; students will only receive payments for the days they have attended college. Students whose attendance falls below 90% will have a reduced payment unless there are extenuating circumstances*

What evidence does a student need for their application?

Students need to upload the required documents to evidence their household income. This needs to be provided by their parents/carers. Most families will receive Universal Credit or a legacy benefit if they haven't yet transitioned to Universal Credit. Legacy benefits are:

- ESA – Employment Support Allowance
- JSA – Job Seeker's allowance – most JSA application will have moved to Universal Credit
- IS – Income Support
- Working Tax Credit or Child Tax Credit

- **Universal Credit**

Parents/carers will need to provide their 3 latest Universal Credit statements. Parents/carers can access these by logging on to their UC account – go to the Statement Section and download their last three statements as PDFs. We will require the full statement not partial statements. Most statements are 2-3 pages and give us all the information we need to assess a student's household income. Students can then upload these PDF documents to their application.

We understand that parents/carers may be uncomfortable with sharing this information with the student applying for financial support, however, it is essential that the student is provided with the evidence for their application to be assessed.

Important - *We do not need parent(s)/carer(s) or student's Disability Living Allowance/(DLA)/Personal Independent Payments (PIP) information as this is not classed as household income*

- **Legacy Benefits**

Parent/carer(s) will need to provide the current academic year award letter. We will require the letter to be scanned to a PDF document for the student to upload to their application. We would require the letter to be scanned in full, for example, if there are four pages we would need the full four pages. Students have access to scan documents in the college if they do not have the facilities to scan at home

Students or parents/carers can contact student services directly if they need any assistance with providing the required evidence

- **State Pension/Pension Credit**

Parent(s) who are state pension age will need to provide an up to date letter of their award or pension credit award unless they are a mixed age couple and one parent gets Universal Credit

When should a student apply for financial support?

We advise as soon as possible students. Students will receive a text in late July with a link to PayMyStudent to start their application. They can also access the link from their portal or the college website.

First, students will need to register and then they will need to activate their account. To activate their account, they will be sent an activation link to their personal & college email address.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION – *Please ensure that the students personal email address is on their personal details not the parents/carers to enable the student to register and start their application – students can check on their portal. Please contact student services if it is incorrect to enable us to correct it as soon as possible*

Students will then be able to complete their application with the support of their parent(s)/carer(s) to provide the household income information and required evidence.

Students can apply for financial support from the 16-19 Bursary Fund at anytime during the academic year

How quickly are applications processed?

Stage 1 – students are sent an acknowledgement email if they apply before September and from September all financial support communication is through the student portal to say their application has been received. We try to aim to do this within the 10 days of the application being activated.

- Contact 1 – Students will be informed on their portal on Journey* that their application has been received and have 90 days to complete their application with the expiry date
- Contact 2 – If the application is incomplete after 14 days – students will get a reminder to complete their application on their portal on Journey*
- Contact 3 – If the application is still incomplete after 40 days – students will get a second reminder to complete their application on their portal on Journey*
- Contact 4 – if the application is still incomplete two weeks before the 90-day deadline – student will be notified of the date their application will be closed on their portal on Journey*

If a student does not complete their application within 90-days they would need to reapply, and the application will be assessed from the date of their 2nd application

Stage 2 – when the application is complete with the required information and evidence students will receive notification if their application has been successful on their portal on Journey.

Approved applications – Applications meet the 16-19 bursary fund/Free Meals criteria – students will be informed on their portal on Journey* that their approved application letter has been uploaded to their documents on their portal. The letter will inform them of what they have been awarded and a payment schedule of when they will receive the award.

Declined applications – Applications which do not meet the 16-19 bursary fund criteria – students will be informed on their portal on Journey* their application notification letter has been uploaded to their portal. They will also be sent an email with a detailed explanation on how their application didn't meet the criteria and the appeal process

Students whose applications were not approved will be informed that they can reapply at any time should their circumstances change.

**Applications submitted prior to September will be contacted by email – all correspondence after September will be via the student portal. All documents are uploaded to the students portal.*

What if a student lives independently or in a foster placement?

Students are eligible to apply for the 16-19 Vulnerable Bursary element if they meet the following criteria:

- A. In care
- B. Care leavers

- C. Receiving Universal Credit because they are supporting themselves or financially supporting themselves and someone who is dependent on them e.g. a child
- D. Receiving DLA (Disability Living Allowance) or PIP (Personal Independent Payments) **AND** Universal Credit

The maximum award is £1,200 and this will be to contribute towards meals and travel & essential equipment

For students that fall in the A & B criteria they will be provided with a letter that their social worker would need to complete

For students that fall in the C criteria they would need to provide their last 3 months Universal Credit statements

For students that fall in the D criteria they would need to provide their DLA or PIP award letter and their last three months Universal Credit Statement – if the student is on ESA and not UC they would need to provide their current ESA award letter

Do students need to apply every year or just once?

Students need to apply for financial support for each academic year as family circumstances can change

For help, advice or further information please do not hesitate to contact student services directly who will be there to support you in your application.

Email: studentservices@s6f.org.uk

Telephone: 01723 380726