

16-19 STUDENT FINANCIAL SUPPORT (BURSARY) FUND POLICY 2023 – 2024



1. POLICY STATEMENT

The 16-19 Student Financial Support (Bursary) Fund is provided by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) to help students' overcome specific barriers to participation, to enable them to remain in education.

The College is committed to maintaining the integrity of its Student Financial Support (Bursary) awards and the validity of its assessment of qualifying criteria and has effective procedures for resolving appeals.

This policy sets out the financial support available through, and eligibility for, bursary funding for 16-19 year old students enrolled at all campuses of Tameside College and Clarendon Sixth Form College.

The 16-19 Student Financial Support (Bursary) funds are managed by the College and are allocated on a first come first served basis via an online application and assessment process (<https://tameside.paymystudent.com/portal>). Applicants will be notified of their application outcome within 10 - 15 working days of a completed application.

The rules within this policy are set at the time of writing but the College reserves the right to adjust the criteria in year according to the funds available and in accordance with any changes that the ESFA may make.

1) There are two types of 16 to 19 bursary, Discretionary and Vulnerable:

a) **Discretionary Bursary:** awarded to meet individual needs, for example, help with the cost of transport, free college meals, books, uniform and kit. To be eligible the student must:

- i) Be aged 16 or over but under 19 at 31 August 2023 or 19 or over and continuing on a study programme they began aged 16 to 18 or have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan.
- ii) Meet the residency criteria in ESFA funding regulation for post-16 provision in the 2023 - 2024 academic year.
- iii) Be participating in provision that is subject to inspection by a public body that assures quality (for example OFSTED). The provision must also be either:
 - 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 is pursuant to Section 96 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000.
 - A 16 to 19 traineeship programme.
- iv) To qualify for the Discretionary Bursary support the student's gross annual earned household income must be below £33,000.00
- v) Students with a gross annual earned household income of more than £33,000.00 can apply for Discretionary Bursary support providing the student can demonstrate they are facing financial hardship. In this instance the College will take into account any extenuating circumstances and a decision will be made.
- vi) An award for discretionary support may be awarded to eligible students where one or more of the following applies:
 - Specific kit, books, college meal and or uniform are needed for the student to attend the course.
 - The student lives 1 mile or more from college and/or work placement and the cost of travel is a barrier to attending college and/or work placement. PayMyStudent (PMS) automatically measures distance using postcode.
 - An educational visit must be undertaken in order to gain a qualification or develop employability skills.
 - The student needs financial support for UCAS application costs and or financial assistance towards a University open day or interview.
 - The student is facing unexpected financial hardship that is creating a barrier to attending College and or learning.

16-19 STUDENT FINANCIAL SUPPORT (BURSARY) FUND POLICY 2023 – 2024



- The student is taking part in an Industry Placement and incurs an increased demand for further travel to access their placement and/or incur additional participation costs, such as for equipment or clothing.
 - The student needs financial support for a meal when in College.
 - The student requires financial support to maintain their health and wellbeing.
- vii) For students with a total gross annual earned household income of £30,000.00 or less a 100% contribution towards course related costs will be made. A course related cost is classed as essential equipment, uniform and books.
- viii) For students with a total gross annual earned household income of £30,001.00 - £33,000.00 a 75% contribution towards course related costs will be made. A course related cost is classed as essential equipment, uniform and books.
- ix) For students with a total gross annual earned household income of £33,001.00 - £34,500.00 a 50% contribution towards course related costs will be made. A course related cost is classed as essential equipment, uniform and books.
- b) Vulnerable Bursary** Vulnerable bursary of up to £1,200 a year for young people in one of the defined vulnerable groups. To be eligible for the vulnerable bursary, students must be in one of the defined vulnerable groups:
- i) In care.
 - ii) Care leavers.
 - iii) Receiving Income Support.
 - iv) Receiving 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.
 - v) Receiving Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments in their own right as well as Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit in their own right.
 - vi) The maximum bursary is £1,200 for those most at risk.
 - vii) Pro rata awards will be made to those students who start 6 weeks or later than the start of the course.
 - viii) Students aged 19 or over are not eligible for bursaries for vulnerable groups.

Students will be awarded the amount of support they need to participate based on an assessment of the types of costs they have and will not be automatically awarded £1,200. If it is decided that although a young person may be eligible for a vulnerable bursary because they are in one or more of the defined vulnerable groups, they do not have any actual financial need. This may be because their financial needs are already met and/or they have no relevant costs, and a student's application may be refused on this basis. Equally, the College can pay a bursary to a vulnerable group student of more than £1,200 if it assesses the student needs extra help to remain in education. Any payments over £1,200 will be paid from the College's discretionary bursary allocation. Where a student's circumstances change in-year and a student becomes eligible as a vulnerable student, they will receive a pro-rata amount.

2) Not Eligible

- a) Students on apprenticeship programmes, or any waged training, are employed, rather than in education. They are not eligible for help from the Vulnerable or Discretionary Bursary Fund or Free College Meals.
- b) Students who are aged 19 and over on 31 August 2023 are not eligible for support from the 16 to 19 Bursary Fund unless they:
 - i) Have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan) and are attending eligible education provision; or
 - ii) Are a 19+ continuer, in other words, a student who is continuing on an eligible Study Programme they began aged 16 to 18.
- c) Students on distance learning provision are not expected 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 the college identifies such a student does require financial help, we will provide support in-kind. An example could be providing a temporary travel pass for the student to attend exams.

16-19 STUDENT FINANCIAL SUPPORT (BURSARY) FUND POLICY 2023 – 2024



3) Free School Meal Awards and Free College Meals

- a) **Free School Meal Awards:** A student must be aged 16 or over but under 19 on 31 August 2023 to be eligible to receive a free school meal. Students aged 19 or over are only eligible to receive a free meal if they are continuing on a study programme they began aged 16 – 18 (19+ continuers). Students aged between 19 and 25 who have an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) are also eligible for a free school meal allowance. Free School Meal Awards are targeted at disadvantaged students. For purposes of eligibility the students or their parents must be 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 pa (after tax and not including any benefits they get).
- b) **Free College Meal Awards:** For those students who do not meet the criteria to receive a Free School Meal Award a Free College Meal Award will be provided if the student meets the Discretionary Bursary criteria (as set out in 1a)
- i) The food allowance will be made available to students aged between 16 and 19 years old (as at 31 August 2023). If a student turns 19 during the academic year they will remain eligible until the end of the academic year or until the course of study finishes. Students aged between 19 and 25 who have an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) are also eligible for a free school meal allowance.
 - ii) A food allowance of £4.00 will be available each day that a student is timetabled to attend a course, including work placements and educational visits. The allowance will be credited to their ID cards. £2.41 from the free school meal allocation supplemented by £1.59 from the discretionary allocation.
 - iii) Eligible students attending placement or who are not based at a main College campus will receive a payment of £60 per term paid into their nominated bank account.

4) Bursary Online IT Learning Equipment Loan (including, but not limited to, Laptop, Dongle, Ipad, Tablet) Procedure

- a) Allocation will be decided in line with strategic objectives, in the following order:
- i) Students socio-economic need
 - ii) Students who have no access to online learning equipment due to household financial situation
 - iii) Students who may have additional learning needs
 - iv) Students who have shared access to online learning equipment
 - v) Students who are able to access online learning equipment from alternative sources
 - vi) If the demand outweighs supply the college reserves the right to recall loaned equipment as required.

16-19 STUDENT FINANCIAL SUPPORT (BURSARY) FUND POLICY 2023 – 2024



vii) Students must sign the online learning equipment agreement (below):

IT Learning Equipment Loan Agreement

- By using the above IT Learning Equipment, you are accepting the Tameside College IT ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY.
- Please note that this Tameside College IT Learning Equipment is loaned for the use of, and is THE responsibility of, the person named in the IT Learning Equipment Loan Agreement.
- If the IT Learning Equipment is broken or not returned you will be liable for the full cost of the IT Learning Equipment.
- You agree to take reasonable care of the IT Learning Equipment as you will be financially responsible for any loss or damage due to personal negligence.
- Please return IT Learning Equipment to the Bursary Team on request.
- Any Online Learning Equipment that has not been returned within 2 weeks of a request to do so will be unable to access the college network.
- DO NOT GIVE THIS IT LEARNING EQUIPMENT TO SOMEBODY ELSE TO USE.
- If IT Learning Equipment is recalled the student must return said equipment within 5 working days.

- b) Within 5 days of their course end date, the student is expected to return, in good working order, all loaned IT Learning Equipment. Where IT Learning Equipment is not returned within the specified timeframe, the college will contact students to recover the equipment loaned. If the equipment is not returned when requested, then the student's details will be passed to the Finance/Debt Collection Department for the recovery of any costs incurred from the unreturned equipment.

5) Payments / Repayments of Bursary Awards

- a) **Payment:** will be made direct into the student's bank account via the BACS system. Only in exceptional circumstances where a student is unable to administer their own account will a payment be made into another person's account. Bursary fund payments will not be made as a regular payment for living costs.

i) Travel

- Where the award is for a travel payment to and from College, students living within the Greater Manchester area who are aged 16-17 at the start of the academic year will be expected to apply for the Greater Manchester "Our Pass". On receipt of the Our Pass registration number the student will be able to recover the £10 admin fee. Students living outside of the Greater Manchester area will receive a weekly BACS payment in arrears of £20.60 for full time students and £10 for part time students.
- Where the award is for travel for students seeking asylum a weekly bus pass will be issued.
- Payments will be made to credit student accounts on Mondays. In the case of a bank holiday payments will be made to credit student accounts on Tuesdays.
- Payments will be made during term time only.
- Collection of bus passes will be available Monday to Thursdays 09:00hrs to 16:00hrs.

ii) Kit, Uniforms and Books

- These payments will be made either to the supplier usually within 7 working days from application assessment and approval date or directly to the student (where a valid receipt of expenditure by student, is supplied).
- In-year replacement/replenishment of items deemed by college as 'consumed/worn', additional payments for kit/uniform/books, additional payments will be made on the first Monday of every term if the student has met the attendance requirements for the previous term.

16-19 STUDENT FINANCIAL SUPPORT (BURSARY) FUND POLICY 2023 – 2024



iii) Educational Visits

- These payments will be made either directly to the student or to the department on an ad hoc basis throughout the year – usually within 6 weeks of being notified of an educational visit from the curriculum area. The bursary scheme will contribute up to 95% of the overall cost of the trip per bursary student if the trip is of educational value.

iv) Capacity Delivery Fund (CDF):- Industry Placements

- If the college is in receipt of funding from The Capacity Delivery Fund, in line with the fund regulations, the college will (from the CDF bursary element of the fund) make payments directly to the student to meet additional costs that can be incurred while undertaking an Industry Placement, these can include but not limited to additional costs for travel, equipment, clothing, personal protective equipment and/or any other reasonable costs incurred. Any trips the student undertakes as part of an Industry Placement the bursary scheme will contribute up to 100% of the overall cost of the trip if the trip is of educational value. The College must ensure the additional bursary funding is used in line with the 16 to 19 Bursary Fund rules set out in this guide and not guidance related to CDF.

b) Repayment of the Bursary

- i) The student will be required to repay all or part of the bursary if it is terminated in the following circumstances:
 - If the student has used the bursary payment for anything other than the stated purpose.
 - If the student has knowingly or recklessly provided false or inaccurate information about their financial position.
 - If the student has been found to have committed a serious breach, or series of persistent minor breaches, of discipline for which the sanction would normally be expulsion or required removal.
 - If equipment purchased with bursary funds is damaged through misuse or neglect, then the student will be liable for the cost of replacement items.
- ii) If a student is withdrawn within the first six weeks of their course we may attempt to reclaim all monies paid and/or ask for kit and uniform that has been paid in kind to be returned to us.

c) Coronavirus - Bursary payment procedure amendments, following college full closure:

- i) Minimum 85% attendance criteria in blended learning must be maintained in order to receive the following - Discretionary Bursary payments to continue to be awarded on the due dates for books, equipment, and uniform.
- ii) Adult meal allowance payments will be suspended.
- iii) Travel payments will be suspended.
- iv) Childcare payments will be suspended.
- v) **Prior to college re-opening**
 - For students who meet criteria for BACS travel payments and have currently been awarded BACS payments 2 weeks in arrears – One, weekly travel payment of £20.60 for full time students and £10 for part time students will be paid by BACS payment, a minimum of 3 days in advance of college re-opening date.

For all applications funding is limited, meaning evidence of eligibility does not guarantee an award. Students wishing to apply for financial support are advised to do so as soon as possible from the start of their course.

6) Attendance Criteria at College Site and Including Blended Learning

- a) Attendance criteria is set at 85% between 30th October 2023 and 21st June 2024.
 - i) 85% weekly attendance - automatic award of travel payment if student is eligible.
 - ii) Less than 85% weekly attendance payment will be cancelled for that week for students in receipt of discretionary bursary.

16-19 STUDENT FINANCIAL SUPPORT (BURSARY) FUND POLICY 2023 – 2024



- iii) Less than 85% weekly attendance for students in receipt of the Vulnerable Bursary, the following action will be taken (in order):
 - Suspend payment.
 - Contact relevant college staff (course tutor, progress tutor, welfare support team) and request information (if any) to support continued financial support for students.
 - Assessment of information by Bursary Officer and a decision is made to continue or stop award. Passed then to the Manager for counter signature.
- iv) 85% termly attendance – automatic award for financial help towards additional creative supplies and books if student is eligible.
- v) Less than 85% for previous term's attendance the additional award will be cancelled for that term.

7) Appeals Process

- a) First appeal must be made in writing to studentfinancialsupport@tameside.ac.uk
- b) Second appeal can be made in writing to the Head of Central Support & enrichment or the Vice Principal Quality & Services to Students within 14 days of notification of a decision. All Appeals will receive a response within 10 days of receipt. All decisions on Appeal are final

2. POLICY CONTEXT

This policy applies to all 16-19 year old students enrolled at Tameside College, Tameside One and Clarendon Sixth Form College and sets out the financial support available through, and eligibility for, Student Financial Support (Bursary) funding. The college reserves the right to review and make in year amendments to this policy.

3. POLICY REVIEW

Bursary policies will be reviewed on an annual basis taking in to account statutory guidance from DfE and ESFA. The college reserves the right to review and make in year amendments to this policy to ensure fair distribution of funds to those most in need of financial support to enable them to remain in education. Amendments made in year will be applicable from 1 day after the date of the in-year review only.

4. LOCATION AND ACCESS TO THE POLICY

The 16-19 Student Financial Support (Bursary) Fund Policy 2023-2024 and supporting policies and other documents are available via SharePoint on the College network.

5. POLICY STATUS

Responsibility:	Gail Clifford – Head of Central Support & Enrichment
Approved by:	Senior Leadership Team
Issue Date:	July 2023
Annual Review Date:	July 2024 (or on release of updated guidance)

16-19 STUDENT FINANCIAL SUPPORT (BURSARY) FUND POLICY 2023 – 2024



In-year review amendments: ~~Yes~~/No