

# 16-19 STUDENT FINANCIAL SUPPORT (BURSARY) FUND POLICY 2021-2022

## 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 2 weeks 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 and equipment. To be eligible the student must:
    - i. Be aged 16 or over but under 19 at 31 August 2021 or 19 or over and continuing on a study programme they began aged 16 to 18 or have an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP).
    - ii. Meet the residency criteria in ESFA funding regulation for post-16 provision in the 2021 to 2022 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 household income must be below £30,000.
    - v. Students with a gross annual household income of more than £30,000 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 equipment, books 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. Google maps are used to assess distance.

## 16-19 STUDENT FINANCIAL SUPPORT (BURSARY) FUND POLICY 2021-2022

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- A curriculum based field trip must be undertaken in order to gain a qualification.
  - 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.
  - 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.
- 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 £1200 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.

Where a student's circumstances change in-year and a student becomes eligible as a vulnerable learner, they will receive a pro-rata amount.

### 2) Not Eligible

- i. 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.
- ii. Students who are aged 19 and over on 31 August 2020 are not eligible for support from the 16 to 19 Bursary Fund unless they:
  - Have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and are attending eligible education provision; or
  - Are a 19+ continuer, in other words, a student who is continuing on an eligible Study Programme they began aged 16 to 18.

### 3) Free College Meals

- i. Free College Meals 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).

## 16-19 STUDENT FINANCIAL SUPPORT (BURSARY) FUND POLICY 2021-2022

- 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.
- ii. The food allowance will be made available to students aged between 16 and 19 years old (as at 31 August 2020). 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.
  - iii. A food allowance of £4.00 will be available each day that a student is timetabled to attend a course, including work placements and trips. 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.
  - iv. 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 Learning Equipment Loan (Laptop, Dongle etc.) Procedure:

- a. Allocation will be decided in line with strategic objectives, in the following order:
  - i. Learners socio-economic need
  - ii. Learners who have no access to online learning equipment due to household financial situation
  - iii. Learners who may have additional learning needs
  - iv. Learners who have shared access to online learning equipment
  - v. Learners who are able to access online learning equipment from alternative sources
- b. If the demand outweighs supply the college reserves the right to recall loaned equipment as required.
- c. Learners must sign the online learning equipment agreement; this includes the acceptable use policy for college equipment (as below).
  - i. By using the above laptop, you are accepting the Tameside College IT ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY.
  - ii. Please note that this Tameside College laptop is booked out for the use of and the is responsibility of the person named below.
  - iii. If the laptop is broken or not returned you will be liable for the full cost of the laptop.
  - iv. You Agree to take reasonable care of the equipment as you will be financially responsible for any loss or damage due to personal negligence.
  - v. Please return it to the Bursary Team on request.
  - vi. Any Laptop that has not been returned within 2 weeks of a request to do so will be unable to access the college network.
  - vii. DO NOT GIVE THIS LAPTOP TO SOMEBODY ELSE TO USE, WITHOUT FIRST INFORMING IT SERVICES.
- d. If equipment is recalled the learner must return said equipment within 5 working days.
- e. At the end of the course the college will contact all learners to recover the equipment loaned, if the equipment is not returned when requested then the student's details will be passed to the finance department for the recovery of any costs incurred from the missing equipment.

#### 5) Payments

- 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.
  - i) 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 £18.53 for full time students and £10 for part time students.

## 16-19 STUDENT FINANCIAL SUPPORT (BURSARY) FUND POLICY 2021-2022

- ii) Where the award is for travel for students seeking asylum a weekly bus pass will be issued.
- iii) 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.
- iv) 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.
- v) Collection of bus passes will be available on Fridays.

### **b) Equipment, Uniforms and Books**

- i) Payments will be made either directly to the student or to the supplier usually within 7 working days from the hand in date of the application form. Additional payments will be made on the first Monday of every term if the student has met the attendance requirements for the previous term.

### **c) Educational Trips**

- i) 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 a trip 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.

### **c) Capacity Delivery Fund (CDF):- Industry Placements**

- i) 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.

### **d) Repayment of the Bursary**

The student will be required to repay all or part of the bursary if it is terminated in the following circumstances:

- i. If the student has used the bursary payment for anything other than the stated purpose.
- ii. If the student has knowingly or recklessly provided false or inaccurate information about their financial position.
- iii. 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.
- iv. If equipment purchased with bursary funds is damaged through misuse or neglect, then the learner will be liable for the cost of replacement items.

### **e) 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, uniform.
- ii. Adult meal allowance payments will be suspended.
- iii. Travel payments will be suspended.
- iv. Childcare payments will be suspended.

### **Prior to college re-opening**

# 16-19 STUDENT FINANCIAL SUPPORT (BURSARY) FUND POLICY 2021-2022

- v. For learners who meet criteria for BACS travel payments and have currently been awarded BACS payments 2 weeks in arrears – One, weekly travel payment of £15 for full time learners and £10 for part time learners 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

- i. Attendance criteria is set at 85% between 26<sup>th</sup> October 2021 and 21<sup>st</sup> June 2022.
- ii. 85% weekly attendance - automatic award of travel payment if student is eligible.
- iii. Less than 85% weekly attendance payment will be cancelled for that week for students in receipt of discretionary bursary.
- iv. 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 learners.
  - Assessment of information by Bursary Officer and a decision is made to continue or stop award. Passed then to the Manager for counter signature.
- v. 85% termly attendance – automatic award for financial help towards additional creative supplies and books if student is eligible.
- vi. Less than 85% for previous term’s attendance the additional award will be cancelled for that term.

## 7) Appeals Process

- i. First appeal must be made in writing to [studentfinancialsupport@tameside.ac.uk](mailto:studentfinancialsupport@tameside.ac.uk)
- ii. Second appeal can be made in writing to the Head of Central Support & Enrichment or the Vice Principal Quality & Services to Learners 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.

[Appeals Form](#)

## 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.

## 3. LOCATION AND ACCESS TO THE POLICY

The 16-19 Student Financial Support (Bursary) Fund Policy 2021-2022 and supporting policies and other documents are available via SharePoint on the College network.

## 4. POLICY STATUS

Responsibility: Gail Clifford – Head of Central Support & Enrichment  
Approved by: Senior Leadership Team  
Issue Date: July 2021  
Review Date: June 2022