

## DISCRETIONARY LEARNER SUPPORT ADVANCED LEARNER LOAN (BURSARY) FUND POLICY 2019-2020

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### 1. POLICY STATEMENT

The Discretionary Learner 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 19+ year old students enrolled at all campuses of Tameside College and Clarendon Sixth Form College who are eligible for an Advanced Learner Loan.

The Advanced Learner Loan (Bursary) funds are managed by the College and are allocated on a first come first served basis via an online or paper application and assessment process. Applicants will be notified of their application outcome.

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.

There are two types of Discretionary Learner Support bursary, Advanced Learner Loan Bursary and 20+ childcare:

- 1) **Advanced Learner Loan Bursary:** awarded to meet individual needs, for example, help with the cost of transport, course fees, books and equipment. To be eligible the student must:
  - i. Be aged 19 or over at 31 August 2019.
  - ii. Meet the residency criteria in the Adult Education Budget: Funding and performance Management Rules in the 2019 to 2020 academic year.
  - iii. Be leaning for a minimum number of days between the learning start date and the learning planned end date before they qualify:
 

Length of the learning aim	Qualifying period
168 days	42 days
14 to 167 days	14 days
Fewer than 14 days	1 day
  - iv. To qualify for the Advanced Learner Loan bursary support the student's gross annual household income must be below £30,000 evidenced by Benefits/Tax Credits/P60/Payslips/Bank Statements and the student must have an Advanced Learner Loan approved to pay for their course fees.
  - v. Students with a gross annual household income of more than £30,000 can apply for the Advanced Learner Loan 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 Advanced Learner Loan Bursary support may be paid to eligible students where one or more of the following applies:
    - 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 college and/or work placement. PayMyStudent (PMS) automatically measures distance using postcode.
    - 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.

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- 2) **20+ Childcare:** awarded to help meet costs for Ofsted registered childcare for the children of 20+ year old students whilst they are studying. Students aged 19 and under should apply to “Care to Learn” scheme. The student must have an Advanced Learner Loan approved to pay for their course fees.
- i. Informal childcare provided by a relative cannot be funded.
  - ii. No more than 3 children will be funded by the scheme.
  - iii. Maximum rates we will pay are: £40 per day, £28 per session and £10 per hour for before and after school clubs
  - iv. Funding is only to be used for timetabled days in College plus 30 minutes travelling time before and after college hours. We will pay for half term holidays, Christmas break and Easter break.
  - v. If the child is eligible for 15 or 30 hours per week free early education, these must be used to cover the required sessions.
  - vi. We will not assist in the payment of registration fees or retainer fees.
- 3) **NOT Eligible**
- i. Students on apprenticeship programmes, or any waged training, are employed, rather than in education.
  - ii. Students who are aged 19 and over on 31 August 2019 and eligible for the Advanced Learner Loan but have not applied or who have been declined for an Advanced Learner Loan.
- 4) **Payments**
- i. 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.
    - a. Where the award is for a travel payment to and from College, students will receive a weekly BACS payment in arrears of £15 for full time students and £10 for part time students.
    - i. Where the award is for travel for students seeking asylum a weekly bus pass will be issued.
    - ii. If a student is withdrawn within the first six weeks of their course we will attempt to reclaim all monies paid and/or ask for kit and uniform that has been paid in kind to be returned to us.
    - iii. Payments will be made to credit student accounts on Mondays. In the case of bank holiday payments will be made to credit student accounts on Tuesdays.
    - iv. Collection of bus passes will be available on Fridays.
    - b. **Equipment, Uniforms and Books**
      - i. These 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 for equipment and books will be made on the first Monday of every term if the student has met the attendance requirements for the previous term where applicable.
    - 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 75% of the overall cost of the trip per bursary student if the trip is of educational value.
- 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.
- 5) **Attendance Criteria**
- i. No minimum attendance criteria until the first half term.
  - ii. = or > 85% weekly attendance – automatic award of travel payment if student is eligible.
  - iii. < 85% weekly attendance payment will be cancelled for that week.
  - iv. = or > 85% termly attendance – automatic award for financial help towards additional creative supplies and books if student is eligible.
  - v. < 85% for previous term’s attendance the additional award will be cancelled for that term.

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6) **Appeals Process**

- i. First appeal must be made in writing to [FinancialSupportTeam@tameside.ac.uk](mailto:FinancialSupportTeam@tameside.ac.uk)
- ii. Second appeal must be made in writing to 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 at second appeal stage are final.

### 2. **POLICY CONTEXT**

This policy applies to all eligible 19+ year old students enrolled at Tameside College 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 Discretionary Learner Support Advanced Learner Loan (Bursary) Fund Policy 2019-2020 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: May 2019  
Review Date: May 2020