

**Learner Support Fund**  
**Information & Guidance**  
**2019/20**

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## Childcare

The payments will be made to your childminder, nursery or after school club by BACS.

Payments are made to a set schedule every month upon receipt of proof of intention of the child's attendance for the following month.

If you need payments for the Christmas or Easter holidays you need to submit an "Additional Application" form. These holiday payments will be made at 50% of the normal award.

If you have already paid for your childcare for dates covered by the Fund and need a refund you will need to provide a photocopy of your receipt. The refund payments will be made by BACS.

## Conditions of payment

Please note that payments CANNOT be made to a Post Office Card account.

You will need to provide a copy of your bank statement showing the account details with your application form in order for us to verify your account details.

In the case of 16-18 year olds this must be their own bank account.

16-18 Bursary payments are dependent on 100% attendance and having no more than 2 late marks per week. If you don't attend college, you don't get paid your bursary.

Hardship payments are dependent on attendance of at least 90%. Childcare payments are dependent on attendance of at least 80%. Where attendance is unsatisfactory, payment will either be withheld or reclaimed

Payments are also dependent on behaviour in accordance with the College's learner code of conduct. Therefore any learner under a sanction within the Learner Disciplinary Procedure will not be eligible to receive payments.

The College will reclaim money paid to learners where information given on the application form is found to be false.

The College will reclaim monies paid to learners where the learner has withdrawn before the end of the course.

## Grant

External grant payments will be made by Bank Automated Credit (BACS) at the beginning of each term.

Internal grant payments (Sports and Hairdressing courses) will be paid to the Course Area at the beginning of the course, unless you provide proof of purchase.

## Transport

The payment will be made by BACS.

Students on a termly course are only entitled to 6 weeks temporary travel per year for journeys on public transport.

Students on a yearly course are only entitled to a maximum of 12 weeks temporary travel for journeys on public transport.

Students under 19 years old will only receive funding for tube or train journeys.

You must live outside a 2 mile radius from the college site you attend.

## Hardship

The payment will be made by BACS.

## Free College Meals

The amount of £3.00 per day will be paid directly onto the student's ID Card or by a luncheon voucher if studying off site.

## Fee Costs (Tuition, Exam and External Accreditation/Membership fees)

Students will not have to pay anything towards the total course fee at the time of enrolment.

If you are then awarded fees 100% of the fees will be paid on your behalf.

If you are rejected you will be liable to pay the balance of the fees yourself.

Payments are made directly to the Course Area unless you can provide a receipt to prove payment, in which case the funds will be refunded to you via BACS.

## What is the Learner Support Fund?

The Learner Support Fund is used to provide financial help to students whose access to, or completion of, education might be threatened by lack of finance.

Funds are only for students on ESFA funded courses who meet the eligibility criteria.

The fund will be open for applications for the following year from 3rd June 2019. Application forms are available in paper format from Customer Services and electronic format on the College's website. Applications can also be made online at:

<https://barnet.paymystudent.com/portal/>

Applications are accepted from eligible students from 3rd June 2019 until the appropriate deadline date (see application forms) or until funds run out, whichever is sooner.

However, applications cannot be accepted unless a student is fully enrolled.

All paper applications to the Learner Support Fund must be signed by the Customer Services Department to validate the application.

A receipt will be issued to you as proof of date of application and you will be notified of the outcome of your application within a 4 week period.

Please note that the acceptance of an application form does not guarantee funding. Funds are allocated on a first come first served basis and may have run out by the time you apply.

You must re-apply each academic year of your course (or each term in the case of ESOL courses).

## 16 to 18 Bursary Fund

The 16 to 18 Bursary Fund provides financial support to help students overcome specific barriers to participation so they can remain in further education.

Students aged under 19 who are enrolled on higher education qualifications are not eligible for support from the scheme. Separate student finance arrangements are in place to support students in higher education. Young people can find out more details at the student finance website.

## Types of bursaries

There are 2 types of 16 to 18 bursaries:

- discretionary bursaries which institutions award to meet individual needs, for example, help with the cost of transport, meals, books and equipment
- a vulnerable bursary of up to £1,200 a year for young people in one of the defined vulnerable groups

## Eligibility for a bursary

To be eligible for a bursary students must:

- meet the residency criteria:
  - ◇ A Home student for fee purposes
  - ◇ A Refugee granted full status or Leave to Remain
  - ◇ Ordinarily resident in England
- be participating in provision that is either
  - ◇ funded directly by EFA
  - ◇ a 16 to 19 traineeship programme
- be studying for a minimum of 12 hours per week and 10 weeks per year
- be aged 16 or over but under 19 at 31<sup>st</sup> August 2019, or
- are aged 19-24 years old and have an Education, Health and Care Plan (this applies to discretionary bursaries only), or
- be aged 19 or over ('19+ continuers') at 31<sup>st</sup> August 2019 and continuing on an eligible study programme they began aged 16 to 18 (this applies to discretionary bursaries only). Funding will cease at the end of that specific study programme.

**Note** - students aged 19 or over ('19+ continuers') are not eligible for the vulnerable student bursary

## Ineligible courses

The following are not eligible for C2L:

- apprenticeships, because apprentices are paid by their employer
- HE courses in an HE institution or FE institution, including courses leading to a first degree, HND, HNC, diploma in HE, foundation degree or initial teacher training

## Proof of parental link

After the young parent has applied, they must give their education institution either:

- a copy of their child's birth certificate
- or
- a letter confirming receipt of Child Benefit for that child

## The impact of Learner Support Fund on DWP benefits

If learners are in receipt of any state benefits it is their responsibility to inform the Department for Work and Pensions about any learner support they receive, as the learner support payment may affect their eligibility for some state benefits

## Terms of awards

### Bursary

In order to be eligible for a bursary you will have to study for a minimum of 12 hours a week, 10 weeks per year and will only be eligible for a bursary of £1,200 or £800 if your course lasts for 30 weeks or more.

If the course lasts for less than 30 weeks, the bursary will be pro-rata'd to the course length.

## Eligibility criteria

To be eligible, the young parent's study programme must have some public funding and their childcare provision must be registered with Ofsted.

### Age

The young parent must be aged under 20 years old on the date they start their study programme. Young parents who become 20 during their study programme will continue to get funding to the end of that specific study programme, so to the end of the same programme at the same level.

### Main carer for the child(ren)

The young parent must be the main carer and in receipt of Child Benefit for the child(ren) for whom they are claiming C2L. The mother or father of the child can claim C2L as long as:

- the other parent is unable to provide childcare
- the other parent is not claiming childcare paid through Tax Credits

### Residency

To be eligible for C2L, a young parent must meet the residency criteria in Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) 2018 to 2019 academic year C2L funding regulations.

### Application

Young parents should apply for C2L before the start of their study programme or as soon as possible after they start.

If young parents apply after the start of their study programme, it is important they know that payments can only be backdated to the beginning of their study programme if their application is received within 28 days of the start date.

Young parents must complete and submit a new application each academic year even if their study programme runs for more than one year.

## Additional eligibility for a discretionary bursary

You must provide us with proof of benefit or low income and parental link to recognise you are financially dependent on your parent(s)

Acceptable proof of benefit:

- Jobseekers Allowance (official award letter dated within the last 2 weeks)
- Income Support (official award letter dated within the last 4 weeks)
- Universal Credit (official award letter dated within the last 4 weeks)
- Employment Support Allowance or Universal Credit (official award letter dated within the last 4 weeks)
- Any Other Means Tested Benefit (official award letters dated within the last 4 weeks)
- Working Tax Credit (the final award letter for the current financial year)
- Household Gross Income of £18,000 per year or less (last 3 Monthly Payslips OR the last P60 received)

Parental link:

- Child Benefit dated within the last year naming both you and your parent
- Child Tax Credit or Working Tax Credit final award letter from this academic year naming both you and your parent

## Additional eligibility for a vulnerable bursary

To be eligible for the vulnerable bursary, students must be in one of the defined vulnerable groups:

- in care
- care leavers
- in receipt of Income Support or Universal Credit because they are financially supporting themselves and anyone who is dependent on them and living with them, such as a child or a partner
- in receipt of 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

Acceptable proof:

- Official Social Services Letter if you are in Care or a Care Leaver (dated within the last 4 weeks)
- Income Support (official award letter dated within the last 4 weeks)
- Universal Credit (official award letter dated within the last 4 weeks)
- Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payments (PIP) PLUS Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit - PLEASE NOTE DLA OR PIP ALONE ARE NOT VALID

Unaccompanied asylum seeking children do not receive cash support from the Home Office and are the responsibility of the local authority. They are treated as looked after children and are eligible for a vulnerable bursary ('in care' group).

Students who are in one or more of the defined vulnerable groups above can apply for a vulnerable bursary of up to £1,200 if they are participating on a study programme that lasts for 30 weeks or more (a pro-rata amount will be paid for students on study programmes of less than 30 weeks).

## Grants and transport

Bursary students can also apply for a grant (to help with the cost of books and equipment) and for transport (where the cost of their travel is not fully covered by their 16+ Zip Oyster photocard).

## Learning support

The loans bursary fund provides learning support activity for "in-learning" support such as support for teaching assistants or reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010.

Learning support for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities (Additional Learning Support) will be available following assessment in line with existing College policy for up to a value of £2,000 per year. Learners should apply direct to the Additional Learning Support Department within the college for this element and they will provide details of their process.

Support above this level will be available subject to a decision made by two managers. This will include a financial decision based on whether the College can afford the costs, and the Equality Act 2010.

## Priscilla Ingram Trust Safeguarding Fund

The Priscilla Ingram Trust Safeguarding Fund is an allocation to the College paid through a private local Charity. It is used to provide emergency financial help to support vulnerable and disadvantaged learners and to remove immediate barriers to education or training.

Payments made through this fund are based on learner needs and local circumstances. The fund is used only for those that are at immediate risk of dropping out of education through severe and immediate financial hardship and is available to all students of all ages.

Proof of immediate hardship must be demonstrated and endorsed by a member of the College Safeguarding Team and the relevant curriculum representative and sanctioned by a member of the Executive Leadership Group.

## Care to Learn

Care to Learn (C2L) provides funding for childcare to help young parents (defined as those aged under 20) to continue in education after the birth of a child.

The scheme provides funding for childcare whilst the young parent is engaged in a study programme and is not able to provide care for their child. It can also help with travel costs involved in taking the child to the childcare provider.

C2L pays up to a maximum amount of £160 per child per week or up to a maximum of £175 per child per week in London.

## **Learner support: hardship**

Types of support include:

- course-related costs, including course trips, books and equipment (where these costs are not included in the tuition fee)
- transport costs
- examination fees
- accreditation fees, professional membership fees and any fees or charges due to external bodies

## **Learner support: childcare for learners aged 20+**

Loans bursary funding can only be used to pay for childcare with a childminder, provider or childminder agency who is registered with Ofsted.

Funding is paid directly to the childcare provider and covers only the days the learner is studying in college.

If you received childcare funding in 2018-19, then you must be progressing, ie the course you are enrolled on for 2019-20 must be at least one level higher than the course you completed in 2018-19.

We will usually fund up to 100% of the cost of your childcare, dependant on your timetable, for your all of your children. The maximum award is £200 per week, or £160 per week if your child is eligible for a Nursery Education Grant.

Loans bursary childcare funding cannot be used to:

- fund informal childcare, such as that provided by a relative
- fund childcare for learners aged under 20 on 31st August 2019; instead they must apply to the EFA 'Care to Learn' programme

## **Bank account**

In the case of 16-18 year olds this must be their own bank account.

“ESFA does not expect bursary payments to be paid into another person’s account, except in exceptional circumstances where a student is unable to administer their own account. If the student is in receipt of a bursary and cannot manage their own funds, the institution will need to consider who will manage the bursary on the student’s behalf.”

## **Students on apprenticeships and traineeships**

Students on apprenticeship programmes, or any waged training, are employed, rather than in education. They are not eligible for help from the 16 to 18 Bursary Fund.

Students on traineeships programme are non-waged. They are eligible to apply for help from the 16 to 18 Bursary Fund as long as all the other eligibility criteria are met.

## **The impact of bursaries on DWP benefits**

Receipt of bursary funding does not affect receipt of other means-tested benefits paid to families, such as Income Support, Jobseeker’s Allowance, Child Benefit, Working Tax Credit and Housing Benefit.

However, if a student is in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (or Personal Independence Payments) and Employment Support Allowance or in receipt of Universal Credit, parents can no longer receive certain household/family benefits for that child, such as child benefit.

## **16 to 18 Free College Meals**

### **Eligibility for free meals**

To be eligible for a free meal the student must be aged 16 or over but under 19 at 31<sup>st</sup> August 2019.

Students must also meet the residency criteria:

- ◇ A Home student for fee purposes
- ◇ A Refugee granted full status or Leave to Remain
- ◇ Ordinarily resident in England

ESF students aged between 16 and 18 are also entitled to a free meal while attending their provision if they meet the eligibility criteria.

Students aged 19 or over are only eligible for a free meal if they:

- are continuing on a study programme they began aged 16 to 18 ('19+ continuers'). Funding will cease at the end of that specific study programme
- or
- are aged 19-24 years old and have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC)

The following groups of students are **NOT** eligible for free meals in further education support:

- apprentices, including those with an EHCP
- students who are in care or care leavers

### Eligible benefits

Free meals are targeted at disadvantaged students. Free meals in further education defines disadvantage as students being in receipt of, or having parents who are 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 £18,000, 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

Acceptable proof of benefit:

- Jobseekers Allowance (official award letter dated within the last 2 weeks)
- Income Support (official award letter dated within the last 4 weeks)
- Universal Credit (official award letter dated within the last 4 weeks)
- Employment Support Allowance or Universal Credit (official award letter dated within the last 4 weeks)
- Any Other Means Tested Benefit (official award letters dated within the last 4 weeks)
- Working Tax Credit (the final award letter for the current financial year)
- Household Income of £21,000 per year or less (last 3 Monthly Payslips OR the last P60 received)
- National Asylum Support Service (ASPEN card plus original paperwork that came with the card or ARC card AND your last 3 Post Office receipts)

Parental link:

- Child Benefit dated within the last year naming both you and your child (ren)
- Child Tax Credit or Working Tax Credit final award letter from this financial year naming both you and your child(ren)

A loans bursary fund is provided to help vulnerable and disadvantaged loans learners to overcome barriers which may prevent them from taking part in or continuing in learning.

The loans bursary fund provides for the following:

- Learner support funding for financial hardship and childcare
- Learning support activity for 'in-learning' support, such as support for teaching assistants or reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010

The loans bursary fund can only be used for learners who have a loan approved by the Student Loans Company.



If you received childcare funding in 2018-19, then you must be progressing, i.e. the course you are enrolled on for 2019-20 must be at least one level higher than the course you completed in 2018-19.

We will usually fund up to 100% of the cost of your childcare, dependant on your timetable, for your all of your children. The maximum award is £20 per week, or £160 per week if your child is eligible for a Nursery Education Grant.

Childcare funding cannot be used:

- to fund informal childcare, such as that provided by a relative
- to fund childcare for learners aged under 20 on 31st August 2019; instead they must apply to the EFA 'Care to Learn' programme

## Advanced Learner Loans Bursary Fund

Advanced learner loans are available for individuals aged 19 or above to undertake approved qualifications at Levels 3 to Level 6. They give individuals access to financial support for tuition costs similar to that available in higher education and are administered by Student Finance England.

Students must:

- meet the residency criteria:
  - ◇ A Home student for fee purposes
  - ◇ A Refugee granted full status or Leave to Remain
  - ◇ Ordinarily resident in England
- be participating in provision that is funded directly by ESFA, is level 3-6 and eligible for an Advanced Learner Loan
- be aged 19 or over for hardship funding, or 20 or over for childcare funding, at 31st August 2019
- provide proof of benefit or low income, proof of Advanced Learner Loan approval, and parental link where applying for childcare to recognise you are financially responsible for your child(ren)

## Working Tax Credit

Working Tax Credit is not a qualifying benefit for free meals, and a parent or student who is in receipt of Working Tax Credits only is not entitled to a free meal.

If a parent or student is in receipt of one of the other qualifying benefits (with the exception of Child Tax Credit) as well as Working Tax Credit then they are eligible for free meals. In other words, the other qualifying benefit takes precedence over Working Tax Credit.

## 19+ Discretionary Learner Support

Support funding (learning and learner support) enables providers to meet the additional needs of learners who may have certain barriers to start or complete their learning goal.

### Eligibility

Students must:

- meet the residency criteria:
  - ◇ A Home student for fee purposes
  - ◇ A Refugee granted full status or Leave to Remain
  - ◇ Ordinarily resident in England
- be participating in provision that is funded directly by ESFA
- be studying on a course that is a minimum of 3 hours per week and 4 weeks per year
- be aged 19 or over for hardship funding, or 20 or over for childcare funding, at 31st August 2019
- provide proof of benefit or low income, and parental link where applying for childcare to recognise you are financially responsible for your child(ren)

Acceptable proof of benefit:

- Jobseekers Allowance (official award letter dated within the last 2 weeks)
- Income Support (official award letter dated within the last 4 weeks)
- Universal Credit (official award letter dated within the last 4 weeks)
- Employment Support Allowance or Universal Credit (official award letter dated within the last 4 weeks)
- Any Other Means Tested Benefit (official award letters dated within the last 4 weeks)
- Working Tax Credit (the final award letter for the current financial year)
- Household Gross Income of £21,000 per year or less (last 3 Monthly Payslips OR the last P60 received)
- National Asylum Support Service (ASPEN card plus original paperwork that came with the card or ARC card AND your last 3 Post Office receipts)

Parental link:

- Child Benefit dated within the last year naming both you and your child (ren)
- Child Tax Credit or Working Tax Credit final award letter from this financial year naming both you and your child(ren)

### **Learning support**

Learning support is available to meet the cost of putting in place a reasonable adjustment, as set out in the Equality Act 2010, for learners who have an identified learning difficulty or disability, to achieve their learning goal.

### **Learner support**

Learner support is to provide financial support for learners with a specific financial hardship preventing them from taking part / continuing in learning.

This falls into the following categories:

- Hardship funding – general financial support for vulnerable and disadvantaged learners.
- 20+ Childcare funding – for learners aged 20 or older on 31st August 2019 who are at risk of not starting or continuing learning because of childcare.

#### **Learner support: hardship**

Within learner support, a category of support to assist vulnerable and disadvantaged learners to remove barriers to education and training.

This includes:

- Course-related costs, including course trips, books and equipment
- Transport costs
- Examination fees
- Accreditation fees, professional membership fees and any fees or charges due to external bodies
- To support learners on a traineeship including the work placement element

#### **Learner support: childcare for learners aged 20+**

Within learner support, a category of support to assist learners aged over the age of 20 who are at risk of not starting learning or leaving learning due to issues in obtaining childcare.

Funding is paid directly to the childcare provider and covers only the days the learner is studying in college.

Childcare funding can only be used to pay for childcare with a childminder, provider or Childminder agency who is registered with Ofsted.