

## **Chelmsford College 16 – 19 BURSARY FUND Policy and Guidance 17/18**

### **Policy Statement**

The 16-19 Bursary Fund will provide financial assistance for learners who are finding it most difficult to participate in learning through financial hardship. The fund will be distributed in a consistent and equitable way and in accordance with guidance issued by the Education Funding Agency.

Chelmsford College has determined that funds will be allocated to cover the essential costs, it deems necessary, for learners to complete their Study Programme. Support is very limited and cannot cover all costs associated with all Study Programmes. Funds will generally be paid to a third party, not directly to the learner.

Each application is individually assessed and **all assistance is subject to the availability of funds**. Learners who are eligible for support are not automatically entitled to it. If demand exceeds the available funds, reduced awards may be given and when the fund is fully committed, no further awards will be made.

All on-going bursary payments will be subject to 90% attendance across your study programme and meeting college expectations of coursework and behaviour or payments may be withheld. Learners are responsible for monitoring their attendance and addressing any queries.

Applications are assessed against household income within three categories. Means testing will be rigorous but not excessive and supporting evidence of personal circumstances and/or relevant benefit evidence will be required. Other sources of financial support will be taken into consideration when processing applications.

### **Eligibility**

To be eligible for support you must be classified as being

- a 'home' student for fee assessment purposes,
- enrolled on a funded Study Programme,
- under 19 years of age on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2017
- in care, a care leaver, receive or be dependent on someone who receives a relevant benefit,
- and/or can demonstrate a genuine financial hardship which is causing a barrier to learning

### **Priority groups:**

Priority will be given to

- Learners enrolling on to the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of a Study Programme
- Existing learners progressing to the next level
- Young Carers/Young Adult Carers

The following groups are **not** eligible for financial assistance

- Waged apprentices
- Learners on HE courses
- Learners in prison or released on temporary licence

**Assessments will be made within the following categories.**

### **Category 1**

Financial assistance for:

- Young people in care**
- Care leavers**
- Young people in receipt of Income Support or Universal Credit**
- Young people in receipt of both Employment Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments**

Appropriate evidence would include:

- Letter from your local authority (usually a social worker) to confirm your current status.
- Proof of entitlement (dated within last month) showing evidence of the above benefits.

### **Level of support**

Learners in category 1 may be eligible for the following financial assistance:

**Bursary:** A vulnerable learner bursary **up to £1200** per academic year which will be paid weekly in arrears directly to your bank account. Learners will be required to have a bank account to receive bursary awards. The following costs can be offered, however where funds are limited, may be deducted from the total award.

**Course costs:** Financial assistance for help towards costs such as uniforms, books, equipment and materials. Only costs deemed necessary to complete your Study Programme will be paid. Visits and enrichment activities that are not linked to learning and assessment will not be supported.

**Food Allowance:** The Government has awarded a free meal allowance for learners in post 16 education of £2.41 per timetabled day. The bursary fund will enhance this payment to £3.50, however, this amount may be reduced if demand on funds is high. Regular payments will be made, directly onto college cards to be spent in the college refectories. Where there is no access to the college refectories luncheon vouchers will be provided

**Travel:** The Bursary Fund may be able to help towards your travel costs to and from college. Full cost can be paid for the autumn term only. Further support will be subject to the availability of funds. Please refer to the College Travel Scheme for cost information.

### **Category 2**

Financial assistance for those who are dependent on someone in receipt of the following relevant benefits (total income must not exceed **£16,190**):

- Income Support**
- Job Seekers Allowance - Income Based**
- Employment Support Allowance - Income related**
- Child Tax Credits only. You will not be eligible for free travel if you receive any amount of Working Tax Credit**
- Universal Credit**

You will need to provide proof of benefit (dated within last month) or for Child Tax Credits, 2017/2018 Award Notice.

### **Level of support**

**Course costs:** Financial assistance for help towards costs such as uniforms, books, equipment and materials. Only costs deemed necessary to complete your Study Programme will be paid. Visits and enrichment activities that are not linked to learning and assessment will not be supported.

**Food Allowance:** The Government has awarded a free meal allowance for learners in post 16 education of £2.41 per timetabled day. The bursary fund will enhance this payment to £3.50, however, this amount may be reduced if demand on funds is high. Regular payments will be made, directly onto college cards to be spent in the college refectories.

Where there is no access to the college refectories luncheon vouchers will be provided

**Travel:** The Bursary Fund may be able to help towards your travel costs to and from college. Full cost can be paid for the autumn term only. Further support will be subject to the availability of funds. Please refer to the College Travel Scheme for cost information.

### **Category 3**

Financial assistance for those who are dependent on someone in receipt of:

**Working Tax Credits with total taxable income less than £21,000.**

You will need to provide 2017/2018 Award Notice.

### **Level of support**

**Course costs:** Financial assistance for help towards costs such as uniforms, books, equipment and materials. Only costs deemed necessary to complete your Study Programme will be paid. Visits and enrichment activities that are not linked to learning and assessment will not be supported.

**Travel: You will not be eligible for free travel if you receive any amount of Working Tax Credit.** Please refer to the College Travel Scheme for information on subsidised travel.

### **Financial Hardship**

Applications can be made where household income exceeds the guidelines and evidence of financial hardship can be demonstrated e.g. redundancy, bereavement, debt management. Supporting evidence will be necessary to fully assess your application and determine level of support available.

### **Additional Information**

#### **Bursary Award Conditions**

In order to receive bursary awards learners are expected to achieve a satisfactory attendance of 90% and above across their study programme and meet college expectations of coursework and behaviour. If attendance does not meet college requirements payments may be withheld, subject to a progress review with learner's Academic Tutor. Personal circumstances will be taken into consideration when determining if payments are to be re-instated.

#### **Part-time/Short Programmes**

Where learners are studying on part-time or short study programmes financial assistance will be pro-rated and adjusted accordingly.

#### **Exceptional Circumstances**

In exceptional circumstances discretionary payments can be considered for costs which have been identified as a barrier to participating in learning. Applications for discretionary payments will be referred to The Student Support Team Leader for assessment. Where there are exceptional circumstances, reasonable adjustments to the policy can be made.

#### **Additional Study Hours**

Travel and food costs can be considered for additional studies required to complete your Study Programme.

#### **Childcare**

If you need help with your childcare costs whilst you study please contact Care to Learn on 0800 121 8989 or visit [www.gov.uk/care-to-learn](http://www.gov.uk/care-to-learn)

### **Changes of Circumstances**

Learners will be required to disclose any change of circumstances during the year which may affect their eligibility. If a learner leaves before the completion of their Study Programme they may be asked to repay their award or return any equipment.

### **Appeals**

If you don't agree with a decision and wish to appeal, please put it in writing to The Director of Learner Development and Inclusion within 7 days of receiving your letter. Appeals will be resolved within 21 working days.

### **How to Apply**

#### **Learners on full time Study Programmes**

Complete a Financial Support application form, ensuring that you **enclose a copy of your supporting evidence**. All applications are assessed on receipt of a correctly completed application form, within the priority groups. As funds are limited an early application is advisable.

Applications must be received by **14 July 2017**. Applications received after this date will not receive priority assessment. Later applications will be accepted and assessed in order of receipt.

#### **Learners on part time Study Programmes**

Complete the financial support section of the part time application form. During your enrolment you will be asked to complete a Financial Support application form and **provide a copy of your supporting evidence**. All applications are assessed on receipt of a correctly completed application form within the priority groups. As funds are limited an early application is advisable.

### **Application Process**

In order for your application to be processed you must fully complete the application form and **provide a copy of your supporting evidence**.

Confirmation of the outcome of your application will be sent in writing within 2 weeks of the date received. If you have been allocated funds your confirmation letter must be brought with you at enrolment to finalise your application.

If you do not attend for enrolment reserved funds may be reallocated.

If all funds have been allocated your details will be recorded on a waiting list. You will receive written confirmation of this and contacted as soon as funds become available.

Chelmsford College cannot take responsibility for any correspondence lost or mislaid in the post.

### **Please Note:**

The information provided is correct at time of publication but may be subject to change in line with Government guidelines.

This document can also be found on the Chelmsford College Website [www.chelmsford.ac.uk](http://www.chelmsford.ac.uk) and may be converted to other formats if appropriate (Braille, Large Print, Other Languages etc.).

This guidance applies to the academic year **2017/2018** and is reviewed annually.