



Guidance Information

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 meeting a minimum of 90% attendance 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 total annual household income. 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.

Bursary Support Available

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE is available for families whose total household income meets our criteria.

Total household income will be based on a combined total of earned income **AND** any benefit payments:

- Tax Credits: Total income below **£25,000**
- Universal Credit: Total income below **£25,000**

Financial assistance covers the following course costs:

- Uniform
- Essential Equipment
- Essential Trips
- Essential Course Materials
- Essential Books
- DBS Checks / UCAS Fees

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
- 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))
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- UC with net earnings not exceeding the equivalent of £7,400 p.a. (after tax and not including any benefits you get)
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guarantee element of State Pension Credit

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

If eligible, you will receive a food allowance of £4.00 per timetable day. This is automatically added to your college card once your bursary application has been approved.

A **VULNERABLE LEARNER BURSARY** up to £1200 per academic year is available for learners. You may be able to get a bursary if at least one of the following applies:

- You're in or you recently left local authority care
- You get Income Support or Universal Credit because you're financially supporting yourself
- You get Disability Living Allowance (DLA) in your name and either Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or Universal Credit
- You get Personal Independence Payment (PIP) in your name and either ESA or Universal Credit

The amount you may get depends on the costs you have and what you need for your course.

A weekly BACS payment of £20 to cover additional study costs associated with college and enrichment opportunities is available subject to attendance. Where course costs have been agreed the payments may be deducted from the total award. The bursary may not be given where there is no financial need.

TRAVEL ASSISTANCE is available for those dependent on someone with a **taxable income below £16,190**.

Eligible applicants are expected to apply Essex County Council Post 16 transport and where evidence is provided a refund can be made for the subsidised contribution of £150 per term.

Eligibility

To be eligible for support students must be classified as being:

- Enrolled on a funded Study Programme.
- Meet the residency criteria in ESFA funding regulations.
- Aged 16 or over but under 19 years of age on 31st August 2021.
- 19 years of age and started a two year programme before their 19th birthday.
- 19 years and over who have an EHCP.
- 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 2nd year of a Study Programme.
- Existing learners progressing to the next level.
- Young Carers/Young Adult Carers – individual assessments will be undertaken.

The following groups are not eligible for financial assistance

- Students on apprenticeships or waged training.
- Learners on Higher Education (HE) courses.
- Learners serving a custodial sentence or released on temporary license.

Application Process

Applicants must complete the relevant application form from the fund they are applying to, and clearly identify the support they feel they need to achieve their course of study, within eligibility guidelines.

- Applicants must demonstrate their financial need by providing the income information and supporting evidence as detailed in the application forms.
- 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.

A decision on your application will be made within 14 working days from the date received and funds will be allocated following your enrolment.

If all funds have been allocated, your details will be recorded on a waiting list.

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

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 being informed of the assessment outcome. Appeals will be resolved within 21 working days.

Additional Information

Financial Award Conditions

In order to receive financial awards learners must achieve a satisfactory attendance of 90% and above 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 the learner's Curriculum Area Manager. Personal circumstances will be taken into consideration when determining if payments are to be re-instated.

Awards for living costs are outside the scope of the fund and are not available from the 16-19 Bursary Fund.

Vulnerable Learner Bursary

Learners will be required to have their own bank account to receive weekly bursary payments.

Learners 19 years plus are not eligible for the Vulnerable Learner Bursary.

Where learners are studying on a part-time or short study programme, 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.

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 Study Hours or Industry Placement

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

Travel

The responsibility for post 16 transport lies with our local authority, Essex County Council (ECC). Post 16 travel applications must be made to ECC prior to an assessment for additional support from the Bursary Fund.

Free Meals

Where remote food vouchers are provided they will be sent to your College email address. It is your responsibility to access them and assign them within 4 weeks of the delivery date, **as after this they will expire and will not be re-issued.**

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.

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 the College before the completion of their Study Programme they may be asked to repay their award or return any equipment.

Reimbursements

The College Bursary Fund will only offer reimbursements for approved items purchased by you where authorised by the Financial Support Coordinator.

Reimbursements require prior agreement and will only be offered for essential items with a valid receipt. They must be claimed within 30 days of purchase.

Please Note:

Applications for financial assistance are valid for one academic year only. Should you return to the College in September 2022 and still require financial support a new application form must be completed and up to date supporting evidence provided.

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 and may be converted to other formats if appropriate (Braille, Large Print, Other Languages etc.).

This guidance applies to the academic year 2021/2022 and is reviewed annually.

N.B. Laptops and iPads and Software are not available through the Bursary Fund, please contact your curriculum team for information on the College laptop loan scheme.

All correspondence relating to Bursary including confirmation of your award will be sent to your student email address.