



16-19 Bursary Fund Policy

Two Rivers High School & Wightwick High School

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Introduction

The 16-19 Bursary Fund provides financial support to help students overcome specific financial barriers to participation so they can remain in education.

There are two types of 16-19 bursaries:

- i) Bursaries for defined vulnerable groups of up to £1,200 a year
- ii) Discretionary bursaries which institutions award to meet individual needs, for example, help with the cost of transport, meals, books and equipment

The defined vulnerable groups are students who are:

- In Care
- Care Leavers
- Receiving Income Support, or 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
- 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.

Providers are free to determine the scale of discretionary bursaries and the frequency of payments for all awards.

Awards to students undertaking courses of less than 30 weeks will be paid pro-rata.

Receipt of a bursary will be conditional on the student meeting agreed standards, for example, relating to attendance and/or behaviour.

Eligibility

Young people must be aged 16 or over but under 19 on the 31st August in the academic year in which they start their programme of study.

Where a young person turns 19 during their programme of study, they can be paid until the end of the academic year or the programme of study, whichever is the sooner.

Appropriate evidence of eligibility must be provided, for example:

- A letter detailing the benefits to which the student is entitled.
- Written confirmation of the student's looked after status from the local authority which looks after them.

Assessment and Payment of Bursaries

Institutions must ensure they assess the actual financial needs of individual students when awarding bursary funding. Both types of bursary funding are designed to help students overcome the individual financial barriers to participation that they face, and institutions must ensure the funds go to those who genuinely need them. No student should automatically be awarded a set amount of funding without an assessment of the level of financial need they have.

The Schools may decide that although a young person may be eligible for a bursary because they are in one or more of the defined vulnerable groups, they do not have any actual financial need. This might be because their financial needs are already met and/or because they have no relevant costs, for example a student in the care of the Local Authority whose educational costs are covered in full by the Local Authority.

The Schools can refuse a student's application on this basis. Similarly, students should only receive the amount they actually need to participate and not automatically receive £1,200 if they do not need the full amount.

In these circumstances, an explanation will be given to the student and/or the student's parents or carers about the aim of bursary funding and the decision regarding the refusal to award any bursary.

The Schools will manage the number and size of discretionary bursary awards to keep within the allocated budget.

Students currently or previously in receipt of free school meals are not automatically entitled to receive a bursary/award.

Bursaries and awards will be used to help students pay for the costs related to participation e.g. books and equipment and other course-related costs.

Bursaries may also be paid 'in-kind', for example to pay for uniforms, trips, equipment and travel costs.

The Schools may make payments by BACS transfer into the student's own bank account. If the student cannot manage their own funds, The Schools will need to consider who will manage the bursary on the student's behalf. This may be a joint account with a parent.

The Schools may make small cash payments when and if it is considered appropriate to do so.

Payment of any bursary or award will be dependent on 100% attendance (discretion may be made for medical/dental appointments etc.) and acceptable behaviour.

Administration and Governance

Administration and allocation of bursaries will be subject to the schools' normal governance and audit regimes.

The schools will verify each student's eligibility and need for a bursary for vulnerable groups before submitting any funding claim to the Student Bursary Support Service.

The Schools will record bursary applications and awards (including the number, value, purpose, whether awarded or not, and brief justification).

The Schools will report any under-spend to the ESFA.

The Schools are entitled to keep aside 10% for hardship/emergency funding.

This policy complies with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and can also be found on each school's website.