

FE Bursary Fund – Policy & Procedure 2024 - 2025

Myerscough College has clear criteria under which it administers and distributes funds received from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and this policy illustrates the different funds that comprise the FE Bursary Fund together with the eligibility criteria and application process.

The College will ensure that all applications for the Bursary Fund and the Discretionary Learner Support (DLS) Fund are considered on the same basis irrespective of age, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, belief or faith.

This policy applies to all students at all centres on programmes of study funded by the ESFA, subject to meeting eligibility criteria as detailed in this policy and as required by the funding bodies.

FE Bursary Fund – Policy & Procedure

INTRODUCTION

The FE bursary fund comprises of a number of funds:

- **16-19 Bursary Fund.** A key priority of the Government is to eliminate the gap in attainment between those from poorer and more affluent backgrounds, and to ensure every young person participates in and benefits from a place in 16-19 education and training. The Government provides funding to tackle the disadvantaged both through the Education and Skills Funding Agency's (ESFA) funding formula and through support to help young people meet the costs of participating in education and training post-16. Young people in the defined vulnerable groups may be eligible for a bursary of up to £1,200, dependent on financial need (pro-rata for courses lasting less than 30 weeks a year). The Bursary Fund is provided by the Department of Education administered through the ESFA.
- **16-18 Residential Bursary Fund (RBF).** RBF is intended to provide financial help towards the costs of accommodation for young people attending one of the designated providers of specialist provision, where that provision requires the young person to be resident in order to participate because it is not available locally and / or because it requires learners to be available at unsociable hours on a regular basis. RBF should be used to help young people with the costs of accommodation whilst they are learning; the accommodation may be owned or managed by the learning provider or be owned by a private landlord. It is anticipated that the majority of RBF funding will be used to cover accommodation costs. However, RBF may also be used to help with travel costs between the young person's lodgings and the provider where appropriate. The RBF fund is provided by the Department of Education administered through the ESFA. Please see exceptions listed on page 3 for non-specialist Sports / Public Services courses.
- **19+ Discretionary Learner Support for hardship, residential support and childcare (DLS)** DLS is designed to provide financial support to those learners experiencing financial hardship that prevents them from participating in learning. The Learner's specific financial hardship need must be identified within the following areas, 19+ hardship, 20+ childcare, residential support for learners attending specialist provision or COVID-19 response. DLS is available to support Learners studying adult further education and skills in Colleges. DLS funding is provided by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills administered through the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).
- **Advanced Learning Loans Bursary Fund.** Disbursed by colleges and training organisations that have an allocated loans facility. This will help vulnerable loans learners, such as those with learning difficulties or disabilities, parents who need help with childcare, and ex-military personnel. The fund will be distributed at the discretion of the provider and is not an entitlement. Subject to participation and need, funding may be provided for:
 - **Discretionary Learner Support (DLS):** for hardship, childcare and residential support
 - **Additional Learning Support:** Learning support (including exceptional Learning Support) for 'in learning' support. For example, this includes support for teaching assistants or necessary adjustments under the Equality Act.

- Providers may use up to 5% of their allocations to cover administrative costs
- **Further Education Free Meals.** FE funded institutions are required to make provision for free meals to disadvantaged students following FE courses. Funding is provided by the Department of Education administered through the ESFA

Students must:

- Be enrolled on a Further Education Course (not work based training or modern apprenticeship)
- Have a household income of less than £35,000 per annum (including benefits)
- Have parental savings/investments of less than £13,750 (awards may be reduced for savings greater than £10,000)
- Not be on a placement year.
- Follow the criteria as stated in the ESFA guidelines.
- Sports / Public Services students only: be studying a specialist sports course to qualify for a residential bursary: students on non-specialist Sport courses or Public Services course do not qualify for a residential bursary.

The amount of the award is determined by income band, based on evidence of annual household income, participation and assessment of financial need, and funding allocated to Myerscough College. Allocations are subject to change each academic year. Funding provided to the College is limited, and funds are to be used to support learners in accordance with the ESFA guidance issued to providers.

Where a student's attendance and / or behaviour does not reach the required standard, the funding could be withheld. In addition, if students decide to withdraw from their course, they may be required to repay all or part of any grant already received.

Students aged 16-18 living in Scotland, should contact their local authority to apply for a Scottish Education Maintenance allowance. They may not be eligible for the Bursary.

Students living in Wales should contact their local authority to apply for a Welsh Education Maintenance allowance. They are also entitled to apply for a 16-18 Discretionary Bursary but are not eligible for a bursary for the vulnerable group. Awards to students receiving Welsh EMA will be altered to reflect the EMA payments.

Further Education Free Meals

Students apply through the Bursary Fund and must meet the following criteria set by the ESFA in order to receive free meals.

The following students may be entitled to free meals:

- students aged 16-18 on 31 August 2024
- students aged 19+ who are continuing on a study programme they began aged 16 to 18 ('19+ continuers')
- students aged 19-24 who are subject to an Education Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan)

Providing the students or their parents are in receipt of one, or more, of the following benefits:

- Income Support
- income-based Job Seekers Allowance
- income related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (providing they are not entitled to Working Tax Credit) and have an annual gross income or no more than £16,190, as assessed by HMRC.
- Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit with net earnings not exceeding the equivalent of £7,400 pa (after tax and not including any benefits they get).

16-19 Bursary Fund – defined vulnerable group

A maximum payment of £1,200 (increases to £1600 if entitled to Further Education Free Meals) may be available for the following groups of learners to help with the cost of travel to College, lunch, equipment or other course related costs, assessment will be based on participation and financial need:

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

16-19 Bursary Fund

Students aged 19+ who are continuing on a study programme they began aged 16 to 18 ('19+ continuers') and students aged 19-24 who are subject to an Education Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan) will come under this fund.

Applications are assessed on a basis of financial hardship, participation and assessment of financial need to help students towards the costs of travelling to College. For students attending the Preston Centre, awards will be given as a contribution towards the cost of a bus pass for use on College / service buses. This is in accordance with the Highways Agency policy to discourage additional vehicles on the College campus. For students attending the other centres, awards will be given as a contribution towards the cost of a bus pass for the local area. Any bus passes lost will **not** be replaced and students will be liable for the cost of their travel during the rest of the term. Students not living on a bus route may be awarded a payment towards the cost of fuel based on mode of transport and mileage travelled. If funds permit additional awards may be made

FCM – If student is entitled to Further Education Free Meals, a food allowance of £2.53 each day (including placements and trips) will be awarded in addition to the above. This will be given in the form of a meal card for Preston, Liverpool and Walton Hall students. For students at other centres a monthly cash payment will be made.

16-18 Residential Bursary Fund

Applications are assessed for a residential bursary for students living away from home during term time, whether staying on campus or in a property on a list provided by our Residential Services.

There are a limited number of residential awards for Sports students. Initially a total of 55 residential Bursaries will be awarded to Sports students studying a specialist sports course. Students on a Public Services course or a non- specialist sports course will not be entitled to any residential Bursary.

Awards will be made from the fund directly to Myerscough College or to the landlord towards the cost of accommodation. If student is entitled to Further Education Free Meals, each award will be increased by £450.

19+ Discretionary Learner Support & Advanced Learning Loans Bursary Fund

Applications are assessed as follows:

- **financial hardship:** which may include tuition; registration and exam fees; travel costs; essential equipment; materials and field trips
- **childcare costs:** for parents aged 20 or over (parents **under** the age of 20 can get help through a separate programme called Care to Learn)
- **residential support:** help with accommodation costs (the College must not be within a reasonable travelling distance of a student's home)
- **Support with-IT related costs :** may include help with internet costs and loan of a device for disadvantaged students unable to study online, in the event of local or national measures (19+ Discretionary Learner Support Fund only)

For further information, please contact the Bursary administrators on 01995 642398 or by email bursary@myerscough.ac.uk

PROCEDURE

- All applicants must complete an online application.
- Applications will be available through the My Student Portal, or from links on the College Website, from June prior to the relevant academic year.
- All relevant questions in the application must be completed.
- To avoid delays all evidence requested should be uploaded within the application or sent to the Finance Office immediately on submission.
- All students with applications to the Bursary Fund should have a bank account as payment may be made directly into your bank (if applicable).
- All declarations must be read and approved as detailed on the application.
- All applications will be responded to by email, using the address supplied in the application, whether successful or not within 3 weeks (5 weeks if the application has been made in September).
- Applications will be assessed on total household income, participation and assessment of financial need as detailed in the terms and conditions.

- Decisions on the level of financial support offered to applicants will be made by a member of the Finance Office.
- Awards will be paid either direct to Myerscough College towards the cost of accommodation, bus passes, fees etc or be paid by BACS, subject to a review of financial need, direct to the student in three instalments at the beginning of each term (following the third week after attendance has been checked). Appeals against an award should be made to the Deputy Principal Finance and Corporate Services, stating clearly the grounds upon which the appeal is based - only appeals that are made in writing will be considered.
- Late applications (received after 30 November following the start of the academic year) and incomplete applications at that date will only be back dated to the start of the academic year at the College's discretion.
- Funds are limited and once they have been allocated in full the College reserves the right to close the fund.
- Applications submitted without supporting evidence will be closed 3 months after the submission date.
- Exceptions may be allowed in line with the ESFA rules.

DOCUMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH THIS POLICY

ESFA 16-18 Residential Bursary Fund Guide 2024-25
ESFA 16-19 Bursary Fund Guide 2024-25
ESFA Adult Education Budget Funding Rules 2024-25
ESFA Advanced Learner Loans Funding Rules 2024-25
Myerscough College Bursary Fund 2024 to 2025 Awards

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| Quality Assurance | | | |
| This Policy and Procedure maps to the following external quality assurance frameworks | | | |
| Framework | | Framework Section Reference(s) | |
| Common Inspection Framework MATRIX | | | |
| QAA | | | |
| QIA | | | |
| SFA | | | |