

FE Bursary Fund Policy and Procedure 2026/2027

Owner:	Executive Director of Finance and HR
Approval:	Finance & Resources Committee
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Due for Review:	June 2027
Publication	Staff Intranet Student Intranet College Website
Key Changes	- Household income threshold increased to £40,000. - Eligibility for free college meals updated to include students receiving Universal Credit or support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999. - Students may be eligible for financial assistance towards the cost of essential kit and equipment. - Students are entitled to free school meals for each day they attend college for more than three hours.



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Introduction

Myerscough College has clear criteria under which it administers and distributes funds received from the Department of Education (DfE) 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 DfE, subject to meeting eligibility criteria as detailed in this policy and as required by the funding bodies.

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 Department of Education's (DfE) 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.
- **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. Please see exceptions listed on page 3 for non-specialist Sports / Public Services courses.
- **16-19 Care to Learn (C2L).** C2L provides funding for childcare to help young parents (defined as those aged under 20) 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 the young parent with any additional travel costs involved in taking the child to the childcare provider. C2L can also provide funding for childcare whilst young parents are on work placements or industry placements, where these are a defined part of the study programme. C2L funding is provided by the Secretary of State for Education, acting through the Department of Education (DfE).
- **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 Secretary of State for Education, acting through the Department of Education (DfE).

- **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.

Students must:

- Be enrolled on a Further Education Course (not work based training or modern apprenticeship)
- Have a household income of less than £40,000 per annum (including benefits)
- Have parental savings/investments of less than £14,250 (awards may be reduced for savings greater than £10,000)
- Not be on a placement year.
- Follow the criteria as stated in the DfE 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 DfE 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.

Asylum seekers will be funded in accordance with the DfE Bursary Fund guidance.

Further Education Free Meals

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

The following students may be entitled to free meals:

- students aged 16-18 on 31 August 2026
- students aged 19+ who are continuing on a study programme they commenced aged 16 to 18 ('19+ continuers')
- students aged 19-24 who are subject to an Education Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan)

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

- Universal Credit
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

16-19 Bursary Fund – Defined Vulnerable Group

A maximum payment of £1,200 (plus daily free meal allowance if the eligibility criteria is met) 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

Awards will be based on a student's actual needs relating to their course.

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 evaluated based on financial hardship, participation, and an assessment of financial need. This support is intended to help students cover the costs of travelling to college, or required work placements, and purchasing essential kit or equipment needed for their course.

For students attending the Preston Centre, travel awards will be given as a bus pass for use on College / service buses, subject to award maximums. This is in accordance with the Highways Agency policy to discourage additional vehicles on the College campus. For students attending the other centres, travel awards will be provided with a bus pass for the local area subject to award maximums.

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 £2.61 for each day in attendance and subject to the student being timetabled for 3 or more hours per day (including placements) 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, plus daily free meal allowance if the eligibility criteria is met-

16-19 Care to Learn

Applications are assessed for a C2L award based on students who are young parents, are the main carer and in receipt of child benefit. Either parent can claim providing the other parent is unable to provide childcare (e.g. They are in education themselves or absent) and not claiming childcare through any other source. Parent must be living and studying in England.

C2L payments will be only made to an Ofsted registered nursery, childminder or school (breakfast & after school club). If childcare is provided by a relation to the child, they must be Ofsted registered and also provide care for other children who are not related.

Maximum award is £180 per child per week and payments are made directly to the childcare provider.

C2L will also pay for travel costs, where appropriate, if these are necessary for the student to take their child between childcare and home. Travel costs are only paid if they are additional to the student's normal travel costs from home to the education institution.

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): Care to Learn top up for 19 year olds
- **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 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 upon 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 Executive Director of Finance & HR, 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 DfE rules.

Documents Associated with this Policy

DfE 16-18 Residential Bursary Fund Guide 2026-27
DfE 16-19 Bursary Fund Guide 2026-27
DfE Care to Learn 2026-27: conditions of funding
DfE Adult Education Budget Funding Rules 2026-27
DfE Advanced Learner Loans Funding Rules 2026-27
Myerscough College Bursary Fund 2026 to 2027 Awards