

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR FURTHER EDUCATION STUDENTS

1. PURPOSE

1.1 This Policy sets out the arrangements for financial support provided by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) Adult Education Budget Learner Support Funds (AEB), Advanced Learner Loans Bursary Fund (ALLBF) for 19+ learners and the 16-19 Bursary Fund for Further Education students for 2021-2022.

1.2 Full time students studying on ESFA funded programmes can apply for assistance from funds provided by the Education and Skills Funding Agency

1.3 Part time students studying on ESFA funded programmes may be able to apply for assistance from funds provided by the Education and Skills Funding Agency

2. SCOPE

The Policy outlines arrangements for: ESFA Adult Education Budget Learner Support Funds (AEB), Advanced Learner Loans Bursary Fund (ALLBF) for 19+ learners and the 16-19 Bursary Fund for Further Education students for 2021-2022.

3. OBJECTIVES

This Policy explains various types of financial assistance that may be available to Further Education students, the eligibility criteria and the appeals process.

4. 16 – 19 BURSARY FUND

The bursary fund is to help students with essential costs of participating in their study programme. It is not to provide support for general household incomes. All awards are subject to the student completing an application on PayMyStudent, providing any evidence requested and outlining their study related costs. Funds will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. Any award decisions will be made based on individual needs.

4.1 Eligibility

- Means tested household income assessment as stated in Appendix 1
- Students who are aged 16 – 18 (be at least 16 but under 19 years of age on 31 August 2021) and satisfy the eligibility criteria set out in the ESFA Funding Guidance 2021/22.
- Students who are 19 or over as at 31 August 2021 and are continuing a study programme they began aged 16-18.
- Students aged 19 who have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

- To retain eligibility during the academic year, students must also have a good attendance rate at College of at least 90% and/or be actively engaged in their studies.
- Students must also demonstrate positive behaviour for learning and be making the expected level of progress on their study programme.

4.2 Travel Assistance

Blackburn College will use the 16-19 Bursary Fund to support eligible students with the cost of a bus pass to travel to college from their registered home address, with passes being provided by Transdev or Lancashire County Council. The full cost of the pass will be paid from the fund for those students with a household income of under £34,000, who live more than a mile away from college and have made a successful application.

Travel passes will be issued on a termly basis and students must maintain an attendance rate of 90% or above for travel assistance to continue each term.

Please note funds are limited and awards for travel assistance will be made on a first come, first served basis, so we advise students to apply early.

4.3 Kit, Uniform and Books Assistance

Blackburn College will use the Bursary Fund for eligible 16 – 18 further education students so that they can fully participate in class by accessing additional Uniform, Books and Equipment that they are unable to purchase for themselves. Curriculum Centres will advise what kit, uniform or books a student requires.

4.4 UCAS Fee

Any bursary eligible 16 – 18 further education student who requires help with the cost of a UCAS fee will be supported with the value of the UCAS application fee. Blackburn College retain the right to decide when payments of the UCAS Fee will be made.

4.5 Emergency Housing

Any eligible 16 – 18 further education students will be supported with additional costs incurred as a result of them becoming homeless.

4.6 Lunch Card

Daily Free College Meals

Additional Eligibility Requirement:

Blackburn College will provide a free college meal to the value of £2.41 per day of timetabled study for students –

1. Aged between 16 and 18 on 31 August 2021 who are studying a full-time further education course and are disadvantaged as defined by the students being in receipt of, or having parents who are in receipt of, one or more of the benefits listed below
2. Aged 19+ on 31 August 2021 and continuing with a study programme they started prior to being 19, OR, with an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP), who are disadvantaged as defined by the students being in receipt of, or having parents who are in receipt of, one or more of the following benefits:

Eligible benefits

- Income Support.
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance.
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA).
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.
- The guarantee element of State Pension Credit.
- Child Tax Credit (provided you 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)).
- Working Tax Credit run-on.
- Universal Credit with net earnings not exceeding the equivalent of £7,400 pa.

Blackburn College will provide a free college meal to the value of £2.41 per day of timetabled study.

4.7 Food Allowance

Blackburn College will provide bursary eligible 16 – 18 further education students who have a need for support with College meals with a food allowance of up to £300 per year that can be spent at all College food outlets (dependent on household income). Credit will be uploaded to Student ID cards once a term and students need to maintain an attendance rate of 90% or above for credits to be made. Blackburn College retain the right to decide when payments of the Food Allowance will be made.

4.8 Childcare

All learners aged 19 years old and under who require childcare support can access 100% from 'Care to Learn'. Applications are made directly to the scheme on www.gov.uk/care-to-learn

5. 16 - 18 BURSARY FOR VULNERABLE GROUPS

5.1 Eligibility:

- Students who are aged 16-18 (Be at least 16 but under 19 years of age on 31 August 2021).

- Students must meet the ESFA funding regulations residency criteria
- Students must be defined as being in one of the following vulnerable groups:
- Young people in care, including unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.
- Young care leavers
- Young people in receipt of Income Support or Universal Credit.
- Disabled young people in receipt of Employment Support Allowance (or Universal Credit as a replacement for ESA) who are also in receipt of Disabled Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments.
- To retain eligibility during the academic year, students must also have a good attendance rate at College of at least 90% and/or be actively engaged in their studies.

5.2 Awards and Payments

- Vulnerable students will be assessed for an award of up to £1200.
- Award amounts will vary depending on the student's individual financial needs. These will be assessed as part of the bursary application and it is possible that no award or a limited award will be made where there is not a financial need because these are already met and/or they have no relevant costs.
- Awards may include support with travel, additional support with college meals and support with study related kit and equipment.
- Any other additional costs will be assessed on a case by case basis.

6. ADULT EDUCATION BUDGET HARDSHIP FUND (NOT ALLBF)

The hardship fund is to help students with a specific financial hardship preventing them from taking part or continuing in learning. It is not to provide support for general household incomes. All awards are subject to the student completing an application on PayMyStudent, providing any evidence requested and outlining their study related costs. Funds will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. Any award decisions will be made based on individual needs.

6.1 Eligibility

- Students who are aged 19+ as at 31 August 2021 studying an adult funded programme
- Have a household income less than £34,000¹ (including spouse/partner) and/or in receipt of Universal Credit, Jobseekers Allowance, Income Based Employment Support Allowance, Tax Credit Award or Income Support.
- Satisfy the residency criteria set out in the ESFA AEB Funding Guidance 2021/22.
- Students must continue to satisfactorily attend College at a rate of 90% and above
- Students must also show a good attitude to learning and be making satisfactory progress on their course.

- It is the responsibility of any student in receipt of state benefits to inform the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) about any bursary they receive as this may impact those benefits.

6.2 Travel

Blackburn College may use the Adult Education Budget Hardship Fund for eligible 19+ Further Education students to subsidise the cost of travel. This will be based on individual needs, up to a maximum of £500. Transport funds are limited and will be made available to those students travelling more than one mile into college, on a first come, first served basis.

6.3 Kit, Uniform and Books

Blackburn College will use the Adult Education Budget Hardship Fund for eligible 19+ Further Education students so that they can fully participate in class by accessing additional Uniform, Books and Equipment that said students may have not been able to purchase themselves. Curriculum Centres will advise what kit, uniform or books a student requires.

6.4 Lunch Card

Blackburn College will provide bursary eligible 19+ Further Education students who have a need for support with College meals, with a food allowance that can be spent at all College food outlets (dependent on household income). Credit will be uploaded to Student ID cards once a term and students need to maintain an attendance rate of 90% or above for credits to be made. Blackburn College retain the right to decide when payments of the Food Allowance will be made.

6.5 Domestic Emergencies

Support may be provided for domestic emergencies. This will be assessed on an individual basis and you will need to meet with a Student Finance Adviser who will advise you about any additional evidence required.

6.6 Examination Fee

Blackburn College will use the Learner Support Hardship Fund for eligible 19+ Further Education students to pay any examination fees associated with their course.

6.7 Childcare

Additional Eligibility Requirement:

- Student must live alone or with a partner who is employed at the same time as the students timetable
- Childcare must be from an OFSTED registered childcare provider
- Student must utilise at least 50% of their free government funding hours if applicable.

Blackburn College will use the Learner Support Childcare Fund for eligible Further Education students age 20 and above to pay 90% of all childcare costs to cover timetabled classes during term time only.

7. ADVANCED LEARNER LOANS BURSARY FUND

The bursary fund is to help students with a specific financial hardship preventing them from taking part or continuing in learning. It is not to provide support for general household incomes. All awards are subject to the student completing an application on PayMyStudent, providing any evidence requested and outlining their study related costs. Funds will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. Any award decisions will be made based on individual needs.

7.1 Eligibility

- Students who are aged 19+ as at 31 August 2021 studying a programme funded by a loan approved by SLC
- Have a household income less than £34,000² (including spouse/partner) and/or in receipt of Universal Credit, Jobseekers Allowance, Income Based Employment Support Allowance, Tax Credit Award or Income Support.
- Satisfy the residency criteria set out in the ALLBF Funding Guidance 2021/22.
- Students must continue to satisfactorily attend College at a rate of 90% and above
- Students must also show a good attitude to learning and be making satisfactory progress on their course.
- It is the responsibility of any student in receipt of state benefits to inform the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) about any bursary they receive as this may impact those benefits.

7.2 Travel

Blackburn College may use the Advanced Learner Loans Bursary Fund for eligible 19+ Further Education students to subsidise the cost of travel. This will be based on individual needs, up to a maximum of £500. Transport funds are limited and will be made available to those students travelling more than one mile into College, on a first come, first served basis.

7.3 Kit, Uniform and Books

Blackburn College will use Advanced Learner Loans Bursary Fund for eligible 19+ Further Education ALLBF students so that they can fully participate in class by accessing additional Uniform, Books and Equipment that said students may have not necessarily have been able to purchase themselves. Curriculum Centres will advise what kit, uniform or books a student requires.

7.4 Lunch Allowance

Blackburn College will provide bursary eligible 19+ Further Education students who have a need for support with college meals, with a food allowance that can be spent at all college food outlets (dependent on household income). Credit will be uploaded to Student ID cards once a term and students need to maintain an attendance rate of 90% or above for credits to be made. Blackburn College retain the right to decide when payments of the Food Allowance will be made.

7.5 Domestic Emergencies

Support may be provided for domestic emergencies. This will be assessed on an individual basis and you will need to meet with a Student Finance Adviser who will advise you about any additional evidence required.

7.6 Childcare

Additional Eligibility Requirement:

- Student must live alone or with a partner who is employed at the same time as the students' timetable
- Childcare must be from an OFSTED registered childcare provider
- Student must utilise at least 50% of their free government funding hours if applicable.

Blackburn College will use Advanced Learner Loans Bursary Fund for eligible Further Education students aged 20 and above to pay 90% of all childcare costs to cover timetabled classes during term time only.

8. 16-18 & 19+ APPRENTICES

In line with Government eligibility criteria, apprentices are excluded from receiving any support from these funds.

9. APPEALS

If a student does not agree with any decision taken by Student Finance in relation to judgements made on the distribution of support funds then they can make an appeal in writing. These should be addressed to the Assistant Principal for Student Support and Engagement at Blackburn College. Students will receive a response and a decision within 10 days of the appeal.

10. STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

This Policy has been devised following the annual guidelines of the Education and Skills Funding Agency. The College's records are audited annually against these guidelines.

11. MONITORING AND REVIEWING

11.1 The Policy will be reviewed by the College annually in line with the guidance received from the Education and Skills Funding Agency

11.2 Annual monitoring of the process takes place by both internal and external auditors, and by regular (termly) monitoring meetings with the Head of Finance and the Vice Principal: Finance and Corporate Services.

12. RELATED POLICIES/ PROCEDURES

Not applicable

13. MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITY

The manager responsible for the effective operation of the Policy is the Assistant Principal: Student Support and Engagement

14. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Blackburn College is committed to the promotion of equality, diversity and providing a supportive environment for all members of our community. Our commitment means that this policy has been reviewed to ensure that it does not discriminate (either intentionally or unintentionally) any of the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation and meets our obligations under the Equality Act 2010. Therefore, this policy has no adverse impact on any of the above protected groups.

Author:	<i>Vicky Wilding, Careers and Welfare Manager</i>
Owner:	<i>Assistant Principal: Student Support and Engagement</i>
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Next Review date:	<i>June 2022</i>

EFA 16-18 BURSARY SUPPORT FUND 2021/22

Discretionary Support Bands	Lunch Card	Transport	Kit/Equip/Books	UCAS Fee
<p>In receipt of at least one of following benefits: Income Support income-based Jobseekers Allowance income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 the guarantee element of State Pension Credit Child Tax Credit (provided you 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)) Working Tax Credit run-on Universal Credit with net earnings not exceeding the equivalent of £7,400 pa (Band 0)</p>	<p>£2.41/ day for those eligible to free college meals</p>	<p>You will be entitled to a free Travel Pass if you live more than one mile away from college and indicate that this is a support need in your application</p>	<p>Essential kit/Equipment/books for subject/course authorised by a Resource Manager</p>	<p>Up to £25 Paid via claim back</p>
<p>If your household Income is £16,190 or under and in receipt of working tax credit (Band 1)</p>	<p>Up to £100 credit per term to college card to spend in the college catering outlets</p>	<p>You will be entitled to a free Travel Pass if you live more than one mile away from college and indicate that this is a support need in your application</p>	<p>Essential kit/Equipment/books for subject/course authorised by a Resource Manager</p>	<p>Up to £25 Paid via claim back</p>
<p>If your household Income is between £16,191 - £23,000 or under (Band 2)</p>	<p>Up to £80 credit per term to college card to spend in the college catering outlets</p>	<p>You will be entitled to a free Travel Pass if you live more than one mile away from college and indicate that this is a support need in your application</p>	<p>Essential kit/Equipment/books for subject/course authorised by a Resource Manager</p>	<p>Up to £25 Paid via claim back</p>
<p>If your household Income is between £23,000 - £34,000 (Band 3)</p>	<p>Not entitled to support</p>	<p>You will be entitled to a free Travel Pass if you live more than one mile away from college and indicate that this is a support need in your application</p>	<p>Essential kit/Equipment/books for subject/course authorised by a Resource Manager</p>	<p>Up to £25 Paid via claim back</p>

If your household Income is £34,001+ (Band 4)	Not entitled to support	You will be entitled to a subsidised Travel Pass £65 per term for Blackburn Area £85 per term for Lancashire Area	Essential kit/Equipment/books for subject/course authorised by a Resource Manager	Not entitled to support
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Terms and Conditions

- Please note that the bursary is not an entitlement – Payments are subject to attendance and behaviour conditions - Funds are limited and applications are actioned on a first come first serve basis - Support will be made on a termly basis subject to funds being available - The College retains the right to withdraw support at its sole discretion at any time.