CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COLLEGE

Financial Support Policy

Policy and Procedure 2026-27

Customer Experience Manager

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1. Financial Support Overview

1.1. City of Wolverhampton College recognises that Financial Support has an important role to play in removing barriers for some students accessing and completing Further Education courses. It is the aim of the College to use funds to make the maximum impact on recruitment, attendance, retention, and achievement.

1.2. The College receives allocations of funds from the Department for Education (DfE) and WMCA (West Midlands Combined Authority) to support eligible students to meet the costs of participating in education. The College sets its criteria for funding in accordance with the guidelines provided by the DfE/WMCA.

1.3. Eligible students will be required to show timely supporting evidence to confirm that they meet the required criteria. In certain exceptional circumstances, the College may exercise its ability to make discretionary awards.

1.4. The bursary is intended to help with the financial hardship needs of individual students studying a programme at college.

1.5. Funds will be distributed in a consistent and transparent way and in accordance with the guidance issued by the Department for Education (DfE) and the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA). Financial Support is intended to help with the hardship needs of individual students studying a programme at college. Awards from the bursary will be used towards essential course-related costs such as travel, meals at college (if eligible), equipment, trips and other costs associated with learning (see Types of Support).

1.6. Discretionary and Hardship awards will be subject to sufficient funds being available and is subject to eligible students enrolled on a qualifying course. It is the responsibility of each student to ensure that they attend and complete their course in full. Students will receive financial support if they have met an 80% attendance level. Behaviour and the completion of all set work will be taken into consideration. If attendance falls below the required standard, then all future support could be withdrawn. Any evidence submitted will be used for assessment purposes and then stored securely in accordance with GDPR guidelines for such time that is necessary.

1.7. There is no support currently available for students on HE programmes or Full Cost (fully self-funded) programmes.

1.8. There is information outlining the support available for students on the college website.

1.9. For abbreviations used in this document, please refer to the Glossary of Terms.

1.10. The Financial Support table appendix 1 summarises the support available across respective funded programmes. These are contingent upon compliance with funding rules that are dictated by respective funding bodies.

2. General Eligibility

2.1. To be eligible to apply for the Student Bursary and Hardship Fund students must be:

- Fully enrolled on an eligible course at the college.
- Their place on the course must be funded by either the Department for Education (DfE) or the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA)
- HE and Cost recovery courses are not eligible to apply.
- Students following an Apprenticeship, or any waged training are not eligible to apply.
- Students must be aged 16 years or over on 31st August 2026.
- They must be a “home” student, i.e. having been ‘ordinarily resident’ in the British Isles (see Appendix 1)
- Accompanied asylum-seeking children (under 18 with an adult relative or partner) - As long as an asylum seeker has not had their application for asylum refused, institutions can provide in-kind student support such as meals, books, equipment or a travel pass.
- Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children do not receive cash support from the Home Office and are the responsibility of the local authority. They are treated as looked after children and are eligible for a bursary for vulnerable groups (‘in care’ group), where they have a financial need.
- Live in a household where the income is below £36,126 per annum or are in one of the categories listed in the Vulnerable Bursary section.
- Maintaining satisfactory attendance and progress in the professional judgement of the teacher.
- Bursary support is considered on a year-to-year basis; entitlement in one academic year does not guarantee entitlement in subsequent years or for future courses

3. Financial Support Table

Age on 31 August in the academic year (1 August to 31 July) of enrolment	Funding Body	Funding Stream	Bursary Type	Key Eligibility Criteria (further detail below)	Support Provided
16-18 OR up to 24 with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)	Department for Education	Youth	Breakfast	All 16-18 students eligible for free school meals	Breakfast served daily in term time 8.30 up to 9.30.
16-18 OR up to 24 with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)	Department for Education	Youth	Free Meals in FE	Must be in receipt of eligible benefits	£2.66 from free meals in FE and £2.34 top up (funded via 16-19 discretionary bursary £5.00)
16-18 OR up to 24 with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)	Department for Education	Youth	Discretionary Bursary	Household income under £36,126 (gross)	Travel; lunch; educational visits; essential equipment/uniform
16-18 OR up to 24 with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)	Department for Education	Youth	Vulnerable Bursary	• In or you recently left local authority care or • Direct receipt of Income Support/Universal Credit, or • Disability Living Allowance (DLA) and either Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or • Universal Credit or • Personal Independence Payment (PIP) and either ESA or Universal Credit.	Up to £1,200, Travel, educational visits; essential equipment/uniform excluding laptops. The amount you receive can be topped up through the Discretionary Bursary if necessary.
16-18 OR up to 24 with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)	Department for Education	Youth	T Level Industry Placement Support	• Household income under £36126 (gross). • Enrolled on T-Level programme.	Essential additional costs in travelling to or attending industry placements including, but not limited to, uniform.
Under 20	Department for Education	Youth	Care to Learn	Young parent, main carer and in receipt of Child Benefit for the child(ren) for whom C2L is claimed.	Up to a maximum of £180 per child per week for childcare and necessary additional travel between childcare and home, additional registration fees

Age on 31 August in the academic year (1 August to 31 July) of enrolment	Funding Body	Funding Stream	Bursary Type	Key Eligibility Criteria (further detail below)	Support Provided
19+	WMCA	Adult Skills Fund Free Courses for Jobs	Discretionary Learner Support Fund	WMCA residents with household income under £36126 (gross)	• Hardship: Travel, lunch, educational visits, equipment/uniform, professional fees, laptop/internet. • Childcare
19+	Department for Education	Adult Skills Fund Free Courses for Jobs	Discretionary Learner Support Fund	Resident outside of WMCA area with household income under £36126 (gross).	• Hardship: Tuition fees (Adult Skills Fund only), travel, educational visits, equipment/uniform, professional fees, laptop/internet • Childcare
19+	Self-funded through Advanced Learning Loan	Advanced Learning loan	Advanced Learning Loan Bursary	Available to learners that have successfully applied for loan finance with household income under £36126 (gross).	• Hardship: Travel, educational visits, equipment/uniform, professional fees, laptop/internet. • Childcare • Learning support

3. 16-18 Financial Support

3.1. Regardless of income, if you are 16-18 or 19-23 with a EHCP there are no course fees payable on our funded courses for mandatory activities. However, the College has additional support for those in low-income households.

3.2. As a college we understand that one of the greatest barriers to learning is financial and therefore the distribution of bursaries seeks to target those students experiencing the greatest financial disadvantage through a range of means-tested questions.

3.3. As part of your application, you will be asked questions which are intended to provide the best method of objectively assessing financial hardship and are not intended to cause embarrassment or discrimination to any student. The policy contains a section dealing with Equality and Diversity.

3.4. The Student Hub must have seen evidence of the student's gross annual wages in all circumstances. As part of the application process students will have to submit two pieces of financial evidence. These could be wage slips, UC statements or a current employment contract which states gross monthly/annual wages.

3.5. One of the two pieces of evidence must be within 3 months of the learner's start date. For example, if a course starts on the 7th of September 2026, one piece of evidence needs to be no earlier than 8th June 2026.

3.6. Receipt of bursary funding does not affect receipt of other means-tested benefits paid to families, such as:

- Income Support
- Jobseeker's Allowance
- Child Benefit
- Working Tax Credit
- Housing Benefit
- Universal Credit

4. 16-18 Discretionary Bursary

4.1. The Discretionary Bursary is designed to help young students, primarily those who are aged 16-18, with the extra costs of attending college. Support is available for:

- Travel
- Lunch credit
- Printing credit
- Educational Visits
- **Essential Equipment and/or Uniform**
- **Other relevant eligible costs**

4.2. To be eligible for this bursary, you must:

- be at least 16 and under 19 on 31 August 2026
- have a household income of less than £36126

4.3. You can also apply for the Discretionary Bursary if you're over 19 on 31st August 2026 and:

- You are continuing a course you started aged 16 to 18 (known as being a '19+ continuer') • OR have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

4.4. If you are 19+ learner and do not meet these criteria, financial assistance is available through

4.5. Learner Support. Please see the section entitled '19+ Financial Support' contained within this document for more information. Individual circumstances will be considered.

4.6. The College will comply with the Equality Act 2010 and will not discriminate, either directly or indirectly, against any student based on their protected characteristics.

5. Trips and Visits

5.1. 16 - 18 students are eligible for support for essential trips and/or visits.

5.2. The maximum payable per student for a residential visit is £250 UK based and £350 for overseas trips (A maximum of £350 per student per academic year); where it is part of the curriculum and where there is demonstrable value from the trip.

5.3. Where the student requires additional help, a carer to attend for example, this will be considered upon receipt of appropriate written support from the tutor.

5.4. Only one overseas trip can be funded per student per academic year; where it is part of the curriculum and where there is demonstrable value from the trip.

5.5. Should a student not attend a trip/visit once costs have been paid, they may be expected to refund the payment unless an acceptable reason can be given.

6. Books and Equipment

6.1. 16 - 18 students are eligible for support for essential equipment, this may include Uniform (PPE), books or kits.

6.2. Costs will be met for those that qualify

6.3. The value of support provided is determined by course, as agreed with Curriculum Managers who supply appropriate lists and costs.

6.4. Procedures are in place to recover equipment if the student leaves the course prior to completion.

6.5. Items requested by students that have not been verified as essential by the relevant course Curriculum Manager will not be awarded.

6.6. Where possible equipment will be sourced by the College from the supplier. Students may be reimbursed directly for essential equipment if this has already been purchased and only upon production of an itemised receipt.

6.7. Students aged 16 to 18 may be eligible for the provision of a mobile device if this supports their studies at college. Applications for a mobile device are made through the main bursary application process.

6.8. Students can only receive one electronic device during their studies at the college and prior year/s bursary award information will be checked to ensure the criteria is adhered to.

6.9. Students are expected to look after and maintain their electronic device and no replacements for lost or damaged equipment will be made without a written appeal (and approval).

6.10. Students are expected to follow ICT policies including the 'Bring your Own Device (BYOD) and Personal Devices Policy'.

7. Bursary for Students in Vulnerable Groups

7.1. Bursaries for youth funded students in vulnerable groups provide up to £1,200 support a year. Funding is not awarded automatically, and students must be able to provide evidence of their circumstances. The amount you receive can be topped up through the Discretionary Bursary if necessary. Support provided by this Bursary is intended to cover:

- Travel
- Lunch
- Educational Visits
- Essential Equipment and/or Uniform

7.2. At least one of the following must apply:

7.3. The defined vulnerable groups are students who are:

- in care
- care leavers
- receiving Income Support (IS), or Universal Credit (UC) 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 (DLA) or Personal Independence Payments (PIP) in addition to Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or UC - all benefits must be received by the student, in their own right
- Students must be in receipt of DLA or PIP and ESA or UC to be eligible – receipt of DLA or PIP alone does not meet the criteria.

8. Free Meals in Further Education

8.1. Free school meals (FSM) are available from the categories of benefits below:

8.2. 'A youth funded learner (so 16-19 unless a continuer or with EHCP), with:

8.3. Free meals are targeted at disadvantaged students. Disadvantage as students being in receipt of, or having parents who are in receipt of, one or more of the following benefits:

- Universal Credit
- support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- A student is only eligible to receive a free meal when they, or a responsible adult on their behalf, have made a successful application to the institution where they are enrolled.
- Households in receipt of Income-related Employment and Support Allowance or the guaranteed element of Pension Credit may also be entitled to a meal.

8.4. For qualifying students, free meals funding for days students attend study or activity that is part of their course is Government paid at £2.66 per day. The college has elected to top this funding up utilizing discretionary bursary funds to £5.00 per day, for timetabled days per week (term time only) for all students eligible for free meals. Meals will be supplied through the College's catering outlets only.

8.5. Alternative arrangements will be made for students who are studying off site (e.g.; collaborative provision) or in exceptional cases.

8.6. Students must be 16 or over but under 19 on 31st August 2026 to be eligible to receive a free meal. Students aged 19 or over are only eligible to receive a free meal if they either: are continuing a study programme they began aged 16-18 (19+ continuers on the same study programme they started before they turned 19) or have an EHC plan.

8.7. Students must satisfy the residency criteria set out in the funding rules; Advice: funding rules for 16 to 19 provision - GOV.UK

*****Breakfast is also available to all youth students, between 8:30am- 9:30am on the days you are in college****

9. T Level Industry Placements Support

10.1 **T levels programmes of study include 45-day work placements. The College may be able to support students who need to travel to their placements or incur additional costs for equipment and clothing. Students enrolled on T-Level programmes seeking support to attend placements must meet the eligibility criteria as set out in the** Discretionary Bursary section.

10. 19+ Financial Support

11.1 Unlike students aged 16–18, learners aged 19+ may be required to pay course fees. However, depending on your circumstances, you may be eligible to study the course for free. Please refer to the section titled '19+ Fee Remission and Concessions' to see if you qualify.

11.2 To remove the financial barriers to learning for adults, we offer further assistance through Learner Support for eligible learners. As with our other bursaries, this is means

tested. As part of your application, you'll be asked questions designed to assess your level of financial need. These are in place to ensure fair and consistent distribution of support and are not intended to cause discomfort or discriminate in any way. Our policy includes a commitment to Equality and Diversity, ensuring **all** students are treated with dignity and respect.

11.3 The Student Hub must have seen evidence of the learner's gross annual wages in all circumstances. As part of the application process students will have to submit two pieces of financial evidence. These could be wage slips, UC statements or a current employment contract which states gross monthly/annual wages.

11.4 One of the two pieces of evidence must be within 3 months of the learner's start date. For example, if a course starts on the 7th September 2026, one piece of evidence needs to be no earlier than 8th June 2026.

11. Discretionary Learner Support Funds for 19+ Learners

12.1 Learner Support is available to help adult learners manage the additional costs associated with attending college. Your household income and where you live will determine what support you may be able to obtain.

12. Students Residing within the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA)

12.1. If your postcode falls within the WMCA area, support is available includes:

- Travel costs to attend your course
- Lunch or meal costs while studying
- Educational visits required as part of your course
- Essential equipment, tools, uniforms, books, or materials
- Professional membership fees linked to your course
- Laptop loans or internet access for online learning
- Childcare with an Ofsted-registered childcare provider See Section on Childcare Support for Students
- Emergency financial support in exceptional circumstances

12.2. To be eligible for this bursary, you must:

- Live in the West Midlands Combined Authority WMCA area
- Are aged 19 or over on 31 August 2026
- Are enrolled on a WMCA-funded course
- Meet the residency requirements for funding: 'Section 1' of the guidance
- Have a household income below £36,126 per year
- Can demonstrate a genuine financial need.

13. Students Residing Out of the WMCA Area

13.1. If you live outside of the WMCA area, support is available for:

- Travel

- Educational Visits
- Essential Equipment and/or Uniform
- Professional Membership Fees (relevant to the course)
- Laptop and Internet Access
- Childcare with an approved Ofsted-registered childcare provider o *See Section on Childcare Support for Students*

13.2. To be eligible for this bursary, you must:

- have a gross household income of **less than £36,126**
- be 19 or over on 31 August 2026 and be enrolled on a DfE funded programme (i.e. this does not include Youth-funded learners)
- meet the residency requirements

13.3. If you are/were under 18 as of 31st August in the academic year of enrolment, please refer to the section entitled '16-18 Financial Support' in this document.

13.4. Financial evidence could include wage slips, UC statements or a current employment contract which states gross monthly/annual wages.

13.5. In order to comply with ASF guidelines, one of the two pieces of evidence must be within 3 months of the learner's start date. For example, if a course starts on the 15th September 2026, one piece of evidence needs to be no earlier than 15th May 2026.

14. Advanced Learner Loans

14.1. To remove the financial barriers to learning for adults, we offer assistance through the Advanced Learner Loan Bursary Fund. As with our other bursaries, this is means-tested. As part of your application for the bursary, you'll be asked questions designed to assess your level of financial need. These are in place to ensure fair and consistent distribution of support and are not intended to cause discomfort or discriminate in any way. Our policy includes a commitment to Equality and Diversity, ensuring all learners are treated with dignity and respect. Please see the chapter below for more information.

15. Advanced Learner Loan Bursary Fund

15.1. Awarded to students with a household income of £36,126 or less who have successfully funded their course through an Advanced Learner Loan.

15.2. Advanced Learner Loans Bursary will only be available to students who are funded by an Advanced Learning Loan for their course and the approval letter from the Student Loan Company must be attached to the application.

15.3. Applications can also be made by students who face genuine financial barriers to completing their Advanced Loan funded course to assist with paying their examination fees or other course related costs but as funds are limited all awards will be made subject to financial limits.

15.4. Students whose household income is more than £36,126 can still apply for hardship support however will need to demonstrate that they require financial support due to exceptional circumstances.

15.5. This fund can also be used to support childcare costs if an Ofsted registered provider is used.

15.6. Support is available for:

- Travel
- Educational Visits
- Essential Equipment and/or Uniform
- Learning support which is academic help with your studies outside the classroom. This could be within the Study Hub or maths and English Hubs. If an additional need is identified that requires in class support this will be assessed. You will receive a monthly check in with one of our staff to offer any support (if needed)
- Professional Membership Fees (relevant to the course)
- Laptop and Internet Access
- Childcare with an Ofsted-registered childcare provider o See Section on Childcare Support for Students

16. To be eligible for this bursary, you must:

- have a household income of less than £36126
- be 19 or over on 31 August 2026
- meet the residency requirements

17. Childcare Support for Students

17.1 We understand that balancing study with parenting responsibilities can be challenging. Childcare support is available to help learners continue their education, depending on age and financial circumstances.

18. Students Under the Age of 20 – Care to Learn

18.1. For students who are under 20 at the start of their course, support with childcare costs is available through Care to Learn (C2L). Funding continues until the end of the study programme, even if you turn 20 during the course. C2L provides students with:

- Up to £180 per child per week to cover childcare costs
- Support with additional travel costs, where necessary, to help take your child(ren) to the childcare provider (within the £180 per week above)
- Additional registration fees.

19. To be eligible for this bursary, you must:

- be under 20 years of age at the start of your course
- be the main carer for the child(ren) and in receipt of Child Benefit for them o AND provide a copy of the child's birth certificate

- use an Ofsted-registered childcare provider

20. Students Over the Age of 20

20.1. Childcare Support is available to help those who are over 20 manage the additional costs associated with attending college. Your household income and where you live will determine what support you may be able to obtain. This support provides students with:

- Reimbursement of childcare fees incurred on agreed teaching days
- Support with travel costs, where necessary, to help take your child(ren) to the childcare provider

20.2. To be eligible for 20+ Childcare Support, you must:

- be 20 years of age or over at the start of your course
- be enrolled on a course funded by the DfE Adult Skills Fund, WMCA OR be paying for your course with an Advanced Learner Loan
- have a household income **less than £36,126** if you live in the WMCA area
- use an Ofsted-registered childcare provide **AND** provide evidence of their daily rate

20.3. Unfortunately, we are NOT able to reimburse:

- Any costs for which students are entitled to use Free Early Education and Childcare
- Fees incurred by Advanced Learner Loan students prior to their loan application being approved by Student Finance England (evidence will need to be provided)
- Costs that fall outside what has been agreed upon with the Student Hub
- Any fees for which evidence has not been provided
- Invoices for childcare on days the student has not attended class

20.4. In ALL cases the funds will only reimburse the daily childcare fee (agreed with the bursary team in advance) for attendance to an **Ofsted Approved** childcare provider on the days the student attends the timetabled course. If entitled to use the Free Early Education & Childcare funding this must be used to fund the days students are required to attend college and therefore students must only claim for childcare fees in addition to the free placement.

20.5. Applications must have confirmation from the Ofsted Approved provider of the daily rate to be charged. The Learner support funds will only reimburse the agreed daily childcare rate – any other fees or charges made by the Ofsted approved childcare provider will not be covered by this fund.

20.6. If funding for the course is provided through an Advanced Learning Loan, we will not be able to consider your claim until your loan application has been approved – evidence must be uploaded with the application.

20.7. If your application is successful, then students must submit receipted invoices from the Childcare provider confirming the days the child attended (this must match the

attendance to the student's course) and the daily fee invoiced. We will not consider payments for childcare where the student fails to attend their course.

20.8. The responsibility will be for the student to pay their childcare fees with the chosen provider up front – once the childcare bursary application has been approved receipted invoices will need to be submitted to the Bursary team and these will be reconciled with your attendance and payment made via BACS to the student.

21. Equality and Diversity

22.1 Customer Services will:

a. Take positive action to ensure that all students can apply for financial support thus widening participation and providing learning opportunities for under-represented groups.
b. Ensure that no applicant applying for support receives less favourable treatment, which cannot be justified in relation to individual financial/personal circumstances
c. Ensure that all support literature, marketing and publicity material are free from stereotypes, discriminatory assumptions, images and language
d. Monitor and review the effectiveness of the support on a regular basis
e. Ensure that the application form and financial advice information is available in other formats if required. Information can be translated into other languages on an individual basis.
f. Financial Application & Assessment
g. Students should complete the relevant application form via Pay My Student which can be found through logging into your College Services Portal. Students can log in using their College Microsoft Email username and password.

22. How to Register a PayMyStudent Account

- Click on Wolverhampton College Online **Student Portal.**
- Enter your Student Number (the 5-digit number issued by the College).
- Enter your Date of Birth.
- Create a Password.
- Re-enter the password in the Confirm Password field.
- Click Email for Confirmation.
- Check your email inbox for a confirmation email sent to the email address you provided to the College.
- Open the email and click the confirmation link.
- Once your email address has been confirmed, return to the PayMyStudent website.
- Log in using your student number and password.

22.1. Applications submitted without the required evidence will not be processed and will therefore cause delays in approving any support funds. The Bursary team will email the student (using the email address provided to the College at Enrolment) confirming the evidence that is missing.

22.2. Once an application has been submitted, it will be assessed by the Bursary department and a decision made on whether an award can be made. Applications can take up to 28 working days to process and due to high volume of applications

payments for equipment, kit and uniform are unlikely to be made until the end of October 2026.

22.3. We will communicate the reason for non-payment to all unsuccessful applications via your college email. An appeals process is available which is set out below.

23. Late Applications

23.1. All students on a programme over 30 weeks, are expected to apply within 3 months of the start date of the course. Students on courses less than 30 weeks are expected to apply within 4 weeks of their start date.

23.2. If students apply after this time, then their application and back payments for travel, meals and childcare will still be consider dependent on funds available.

24. Confirmation of Award

24.1. Once a student has submitted their financial application via Pay My Student and all the relevant documentation I uploaded, we endeavour as a department to assess the application before the course begins or within 5 working days.

24.2. When an application has been assessed the student will receive a notification award or decline.

24.3. The student should read the award and the sign and date the acceptance slip if they are happy and return this to the Student Hub (if a student is unhappy please refer to the appeals policy).

25. Data Protection

26.1 During your time at the College, we will collect information about you. In order that you can progress through your course, it is important that this data is processed and stored securely within college for various purposes, which will include financial applications and the evidence included.

26.2 Financial Records may be in paper or electronic formats. Full records will be stored for the current and previous three academic years, after which time summary data will be held for a further three years, for statistical and reference purposes.

26. Fraud

27.1. Where a student is proved to have made a fraudulent application, all outstanding payments will be stopped. The case will be referred for disciplinary action under the College's Student Positive Behaviour Policy at a level consistent with the degree of fraud involved. The disciplinary hearing will decide on appropriate outcomes, including the potential for reclaiming any payments made. Suspected fraud cases will be reported to the police.

28. Financial Support Appeals

28.1. Any student that is unhappy with an award decision can appeal by completing a Financial Support Appeal/Change of Circumstance(s) Form and submit to the Student Hub within 10 days of receipt of the notification of the award. The Advisor will pass the form onto the Student Hub Coordinator

28.2. The Student Hub Coordinator will log the appeal which will then be presented to the Finance Committee

28.3. If a student is dissatisfied with the outcome of an appeal or with any aspect of the handling of an application, they can complain to the DfE

27. Glossary of Terms

Acronym	Full Term	Meaning
ASF	Adult Skills Fund	Government funding used to cover fees for eligible adult learners.
DfE	Department for Education	A ministerial department of the government responsible for education.
DLA	Disability Living Allowance	A benefit for people with personal care or mobility needs (mostly legacy cases or under 16s).
EHCP	Education, Health and Care Plan	A legal document outlining support for young people with special educational needs or disabilities.
ESA	Employment and Support Allowance	A benefit for people with a health condition or disability that affects how much they can work.
FCFJ	Free Courses for Jobs	A government initiative offering free Level 3 courses to eligible adults to boost employability.
PIP	Personal Independence Payment	A benefit for people aged 16+ with long-term disability or health needs. Currently replacing Disability Living Allowance for adults.
UC	Universal Credit	A UK government benefit for people on low income or out of work.
WMCA	West Midlands Combined Authority	A combined authority is a group of local councils working together to make their region a better place to live. The government gives combined authorities the money and power to make decisions for their regions. The West

Acronym	Full Term	Meaning
		Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) was set up in 2016 and is led by its own regional Mayor.

28. Appeals Procedure

28.1. Appealing a decision when the application for support was declined.

28.2. Students can submit an appeal if there application via Pay My Student was decline

28.3. The applicant will be asked to state the reasons for disagreeing with the decision and why it is unfair, and evidence must be submitted to support the claim and confirm that the bursary claim is for educational cost

28.4. A review will be convened within 20 working days by a senior leader.

28.5. A review will be made and the applicant will be notified of the panel's decision in writing within 5 working days.

28.6. This review decision will be final.

29. Appealing for additional funds following a successful application and bursary payment

33.1. Due to limited funds and high volumes of applications for Bursary support that are received by the College each year we have imposed strict limits for each of the Bursary elements listed in the policy above.

33.2. Any student wishing to appeal for additional support must complete an appeal form via Pay My Student and must specify how much support they require and what the additional support is required for. Additional payments will only be made where the requested support is for educational purposes only and only where evidence is provided and will be limited depending on the Bursary funds available.

Appendix 1 – Residency Eligibility

Students eligible for funding

The following persons will be eligible for funding

a. a person on the 'relevant date'1 who is 'settled' in the UK, and who has been ordinarily resident in the UK and Islands (that is including the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man) for the 3 years

preceding the 'relevant date'. 'Settled' means having either indefinite leave to enter or remain (ILE/ILR) or having the right of abode in the UK. British citizens and certain other people have the right of abode in the UK as follows:

i. British nationals who hold a United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland passport
ii. Irish nationals
iii. European Union nationals or family members of EEA and Swiss workers (resident in the UK before 1 January 2021) with settled or pre-settled status
iv. students who are children of Turkish workers where the Turkish worker has been lawfully employed and resident in the UK before 1 January 2021
v. British Dependent Territory Citizens (now known as British Overseas Territory Citizens)
vi. those whose passports have been endorsed to show they have right of abode in the UK
vii. those who have a certificate of naturalisation or registration as a British Citizen
viii. those with Hong Kong British National (Overseas) (BN(O)) visa who have been given Home Office permission to reside in the UK

In addition to the groups outlined above, DfE will also consider the following groups of students (including those who may not have lived in the UK for the last 3 years) to be eligible for funding:

a. people with refugee status (RS) or humanitarian protection (HP) or discretionary leave (DL) or exceptional leave to enter or remain (ELE/ELR), their spouses, civil partners and children
b. people with recently settled status (this means those having been granted indefinite leave to enter or remain, right of abode or British citizenship within the 3 years immediately preceding the start of the course)
c. people granted pre-settled status following our exit from EU
d. In addition to the groups above, DfE will also consider the following groups of students (including those who may not have lived in the UK for the last 3 years), aged up to and including the age of 18, as eligible for funding as follows:
e. those who are accompanying or joining parents or spouses or civil partners who have the right of abode or leave to enter or remain in the UK (or accompanying or joining relevant family members, usually parents, who are UK or Irish nationals), or those who are children of diplomats
f. those who are dependants of teachers coming to the UK on a teacher exchange scheme
g. those who are residing legally in the UK (including those entering the UK in the last 3 years who are or were not accompanied by their parents) who are British (or Irish) citizens or those whose passports have been endorsed (or as part of move to digital immigration systems, either a Biometric residency permit (BRP), or an equivalent digital status and/or an endorsement letter) to either show

they have the right of abode in this country or to show that they have no restrictions on working in the UK

a. those who are dependants of adults residing legally in the UK who have been given immigration rights as workers to reside in the UK
b. those who are dependants of foreign students where the accompanying parent or legal guardian has a student visa (the accompanying parent or legal guardian is excluded from our funding)
c. asylum seekers
d. those having been granted leave under section 67 of the Immigration Act 2016 (the 'Dubs' amendment)
e. those having been granted Calais leave to remain
f. those who are (including unaccompanied asylum seekers) placed in the care of social services or those in receipt of Section 4 support

No recourse to public funds Someone who has 'no recourse to public funds' included in their passport stamp would not be in breach of their immigration conditions if they had access to state-funded education in the UK.

'Public funds' are defined in the immigration rules, and the benefits and services listed do not include education or any education funding. This condition in a passport therefore makes no

difference to a student's eligibility, which must be determined under the normal eligibility criteria described in the paragraphs above.

Appendix 2

Financial support appeals assessment guidance

This guidance outlines the criteria and checklist for assessing student financial support appeals. Assessors must review each application against the eligibility criteria, attendance requirements, and supporting evidence provided.

Eligibility criteria

1. Marginal income limit: Determine if the total household income is within 10 percent of the standard £36,126 threshold, which equals a maximum limit of £39,738 per year. Income within this bracket is eligible for appeal review but is not grounds for automatic approval.
2. Evidence of change or exceptional costs: Verify if the student has provided official supporting documentation showing a recent drop in household income, that was not reflected in their original application evidence. Circumstances may include, but are not limited to, job loss, reduced working or agency hours, disability care costs, or a relationship breakdown.
3. Per capita household income: Calculate whether the overall household size reduces the income per person to under £8,000 per year, calculated by dividing the total household income by the number of evidenced residents living in the household. This must be evidenced by Universal Credit statement listing dependants, Child Benefit letter, or Council Tax bill showing registered occupants.
4. Minimum attendance threshold: Confirm if the student is currently maintaining a minimum course attendance level of 80 percent.

Assessment decision rules

To approve an appeal, the application must meet all of the following requirements:

- The student must meet the attendance requirement in point 4.
- The household income must not exceed the £39,738 ceiling in point 1 (unless evidence under point 2 shows current income has dropped below this level).
- The application must meet at least two of the financial hardship conditions outlined in points 2 and 3.

Applications that fail to meet the 80 percent attendance requirement or satisfy fewer than two financial hardship conditions must be declined or paused until further evidence or improved attendance is demonstrated.