



Education
Funding
Agency

16 to 19 Bursary Fund

Advice for young people

2014 to 2015 academic year

May 2014

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Introduction to the 16 to 19 Bursary Fund

The government has given money to local authorities, schools, colleges and other education and training providers (these will be called institutions throughout the guide) to give to young people who need financial support to stay in education. This is called the 16 to 19 Bursary Fund.

There are 2 types of bursaries:

1. A [vulnerable](#) bursary
2. [Discretionary](#) bursaries

Both are managed directly by institutions because they are best placed to understand local needs.

The bursary can be used to help with any costs you face to attend your institution during the academic year.

The costs could include;

- food (unless you qualify for a free meal)
- transport
- books
- clothing
- equipment for your course
- help with educational visits

Vulnerable bursaries

You can apply for a vulnerable bursary of up to £1,200 if you fall into one of the areas below:

- you are in care
- you are a care leaver
- you are receiving [Income Support](#) or [Universal Credit](#) in place of Income Support in your own name
- you are receiving [Employment Support Allowance](#) and Disability Living Allowance or [Personal Independence Payments](#) in your own name

Amount paid

You could get £1,200 if you are studying a full time course for a minimum of 30 weeks. If your course is less than 30 weeks, or lasts for 30 weeks but you only study for a few hours a week, you will probably get less than £1,200.

If you do not have any costs related to your education, for example you are a residential student who does not need to travel to college, and you have all of your meals and equipment provided, your institution could decide you will get less than £1,200 or get no bursary at all. Your institution must tell you if this is the case and explain the reasons why.

Proof you are entitled to a vulnerable bursary

Your institution will need to see proof you are eligible for a vulnerable bursary. This could be a letter from your local authority showing you are in care or a care leaver. It could be a letter from the Department of Work and Pensions showing the types of benefits you receive. Your institution will tell you what you need.

Benefits that qualify for the vulnerable bursary

To get a vulnerable bursary you must be receiving the benefits in your own name.

If you are not receiving them in your own right, you will not be able to get a vulnerable bursary, but you may still be able to apply for a discretionary bursary.

Disability Living Allowance/Personal Independence Payments

To qualify for a vulnerable bursary you must be getting Employment Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments in your own name.

If you do not get both benefits, you can only apply for a discretionary bursary (unless you qualify by being in one of the other vulnerable groups).

Changes to Employment Support Allowance

If you continue to get both Employment Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments you can still apply for a vulnerable bursary. If you do not get both benefits, you are not eligible for a vulnerable bursary (unless you qualify by being in one of the other vulnerable groups). However, you can apply for a discretionary bursary.

Income Support

If you are claiming Income Support or Universal Credit in place of Income Support, you are eligible to apply for a vulnerable bursary.

Young carer

As a young carer you are not automatically entitled to a vulnerable bursary, unless you fall into one of the vulnerable groups, but you can apply for a discretionary bursary.

Young parent

If you are a young parent and get Income Support or Universal Credit in your own name you are eligible for a vulnerable bursary. If you are not eligible for a vulnerable bursary, you can apply for a discretionary bursary.

You might also get help with childcare costs through the government's [Care to Learn](#) scheme.

Children of armed service personnel who have died in service

The Ministry of Defence has a separate scheme to support the children of servicemen and women killed on active service. [Further information](#) and details about how to apply can be found at Gov.UK

If you are a child of serving armed forces service personnel, you are not automatically included in the defined vulnerable groups, but you will be able to apply for a vulnerable bursary if you fall into one of the defined vulnerable groups or you can apply for a discretionary bursary from your institution.

Discretionary bursaries

You can apply for a discretionary bursary if you do not fall into any of the vulnerable groups, but you need financial help to stay in education.

You can apply for a discretionary bursary if you are aged between 16 and 19 and in full-time or part-time further education or training.

Your institution will set their own eligibility criteria.

The eligibility criteria might be based on:

- your family's income
- if your parents receive benefits
- if you have been entitled to free school meals

Institutions set eligibility criteria because they have a limited amount of funding. They need to make sure it gets to the students who need financial help most to stay on in education.

Before you apply for a discretionary bursary, you will need to find out what your institution's eligibility criteria are and decide if you are likely to be eligible.

How much money you get is up to your institution. They decide who gets a discretionary bursary, how much they get and what it should be spent on.

Family's finances

If you apply for a discretionary bursary, your institution will probably ask for evidence of your family's income, such as a letter from the Department of Work and Pensions confirming your family's benefits, a P60, a Tax Credit Award Notice, or evidence of your family's annual income if they are self-employed.

Your institution will let you know what you will need to provide.

Help to pay for 'one-off' things

Some institutions offer 'one-off' discretionary payments for things like educational trips or a train ticket to attend a university interview as well as longer-term discretionary bursaries for things like bus fares to get to your institution.

You will need to ask student support services or your tutor for more information.

Eligibility

Age

To be eligible to receive a bursary you must be aged:

- over 16
- under 19 at 31 August before the academic year in question

There is other [financial support](#) available for older students. Student support services will be able to let you know what you can apply for.

Residency

To get a bursary you must meet with the residency requirements for enrolment which your institution will check.

Residents of Scotland

If you live in Scotland and travel to study at an English institution you should approach your home local authority in Scotland to make an application for [Scottish Education Maintenance Allowance \(EMA\)](#). You are not eligible to apply for support from the English 16 to 19 Bursary Fund.

If you live in England and travel to study at a Scottish institution you should approach your home local authority in England to make an application for a discretionary or vulnerable bursary. You are not eligible for Scottish EMA.

If you are from England and live in Scotland on a temporary basis for the purposes of education, for example at a residential college, you will be treated as if you are resident in Scotland and should apply to your host local authority in Scotland for Scottish EMA. You are not eligible for support from the English 16 to 19 Bursary Fund.

Residents of Wales

If you live in Wales and travel to study at an English institution, you should approach your home local authority to make an application for [Welsh EMA](#).

You may also apply to your English institution for a discretionary bursary, but not a vulnerable bursary, from the English 16 to 19 Bursary Fund.

If you live in England and travel to study in Wales, the source of financial support you should apply for depends on the type of institution you are attending, so:

- if you attend an FE college you should apply for discretionary student support from your college, via the Welsh institution's Financial Contingency Fund
- if you attend a special college or school sixth form you should approach your home local authority in England to apply for a discretionary bursary from the 16 to 19 Bursary Fund

All students living in England and travelling to Wales to study who are in one of the defined vulnerable groups are eligible, regardless of what type of institution they attend, are eligible for a vulnerable student bursary and should approach their home local authority in England to make an application.

Types of Study

Eligible education provision

You should be studying at an institution that is inspected by a public body that checks quality (e.g. Ofsted).

The institution must also be either:

- funded by the Education Funding Agency (EFA) directly or via a local authority
- funded or co-financed by the European Social Fund
- otherwise publicly funded and lead to a qualification (up to level 3) accredited by Ofqual or is pursuant to Section 96 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000
- on the list of employers, training organisations and subcontractors eligible to deliver the [traineeship programme](#)

Studying part time

You can apply if you are on a full time or part time course, your institution will take into account the amount of time you are studying when they decide if you will get any money and how much you will get.

Distance learning

If you are doing publicly funded distance learning (sometimes called a correspondence course or remote learning), and you belong to one of the vulnerable groups, or you meet your institution's eligibility criteria for discretionary bursaries, you may be able to get some funding from the bursary.

However, if you do not have any costs related to your education you will not receive any funding from the bursary.

If you want to apply, you should speak to student support services at the institution you are enrolled with. They will look at your individual circumstances. When they have done this they will be able to let you know if you can apply and how much you will get.

Please note that the 16 to 19 bursary will not pay course fees.

Young offender

If you are a young offender you can apply for a bursary if:

- you are serving a non-custodial sentence
- you have been released early from a custodial sentence (except on temporary licence)
- you have been remanded to a non-secure institution

Institutions should provide you with in-kind support, rather than cash, wherever possible.

In kind support is where your institution will provide you with things that you need such as a meal, course material or a travel pass, instead of giving you money.

You cannot apply for a bursary if:

- you are serving a custodial sentence
- you have been released from a custodial sentence on temporary licence
- you have been remanded to a secure institution

Higher Education qualifications

The Bursary is for students in further education or training only. There is separate [financial support](#) available for students in higher education.

Independent (private) institution

If you go to an independent institution that charges fees, you will not normally be able to apply for the 16 to 19 bursary. However, if you have been referred to this kind of institution by your local authority and they are paying your fees, you may be able to apply.

Your institution will be able to tell you if you can apply and what to do next.

Apprenticeship

Students on waged apprenticeship programmes, or any waged learning or training, are not eligible to apply for a bursary.

Traineeships

Students on a traineeships programme are non-waged so may be eligible to apply for a bursary.

Further information

How to apply

To apply you must be at least 16 years old and under the age of 19 at the start of the academic year.

You must also be taking part in full time or part time further education or training.

To apply you need to contact student support services or your tutor. They will tell you what to do.

You should apply as soon as you know where you are going to study. The sooner you apply, the sooner you will start to get support.

Some institutions ask for a new application every year and some only ask for an application at the start of a course. If you are unsure, talk to student support services or your tutor.

Payment of the bursary

How your bursary is paid is up to your institution. It may be paid into your bank account, in a lump sum or instalments. You may get a cheque or cash. It might be paid to you 'in kind', which means instead of getting money, you could get a travel pass, free meals or course equipment. You might get part of your bursary in money and part of it 'in kind'.

Bank account

Students aged 16 can open a basic bank account. The basic account will allow BACS transfers and allow you to withdraw money. If you cannot open a bank account you will need to speak to your student support services or your tutor to work out another way for them to pay you.

Need more support?

Some institutions set aside some of their bursary fund to help students who need emergency financial help because their circumstances have changed since the start of the year. Others provide one-off support like this through separate hardship funds which are not connected to the bursary fund. If you are already getting support from the bursary fund, and your circumstances change, you should speak to student support services or your tutor straight away. They will be able to let you know what to do next.

Impact on household benefits

Getting 16 to 19 Bursary Fund payments does not affect your entitlement to Department of Works and Pensions (DWP) income-related benefits. 16 to 19 bursaries are paid directly to students in addition to other means-tested benefits paid to families, such as Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance, Child Benefit, Working Tax Credit and Housing Benefit and does not affect them.

However, if you are getting Disability Living Allowance (DLA) (or Personal Independence Payments) and Employment Support Allowance (ESA) or Universal Credit, your parents can no longer get certain household/family benefits for you such as child benefit.

Bursaries are not a substitute for other sources of financial support such as childcare payments made under the [Care to Learn](#) scheme, or payments to meet residential costs under the [Residential Support](#) scheme.

Receipt of other financial support does not exclude a student from receiving a bursary. For example a student who is receiving support from Care to Learn may also receive a bursary if they are experiencing financial difficulty with meeting costs associated with learning.

Rules regarding payments

What the bursary is for

Because your bursary is to help pay for things you need to stay in education, your institution can say your bursary is to be spent on travel, meals, or equipment for your course. They may also ask for receipts for what you have brought with the bursary.

Attendance and behaviour

Your institution can set conditions on your bursary. These are rules you will need to stick to, such as attending classes or behaving well. If you do not stick to these conditions, your institution can stop your payments.

Illness or authorised absence

If you are ill or have been given an authorised absence, your institution will let you know if this will affect your payments.

Who will know you get a bursary

Your institution should make sure you are not singled out and your application is handled confidentially.

If you are worried, talk to student support services or your tutor before you make an application.

Fraud

Declaration

If you or your parents or carers provide false or incomplete information, or if you do not tell institutions about any part of your household income that is relevant, the matter may be referred to the Department for Education or the police. You and your parents or carers could face prosecution, and your institution will try to recover any payments you are not eligible for.

As part of the assessment process your institution could sample applications and could ask you for further evidence to support your application for bursary funds. If that evidence is not provided, or results in a lower award being due, they may stop any future payments and ask you to repay anything paid to you.

Fraudulent claim

If you think another student may have made a fraudulent claim, you should speak to student support services or your tutor in confidence. They will need to look into it.

Complaints and questions

If you have any problems with how the bursary is paid, how much money you are getting or other general questions, you will need to talk to your institution because they are responsible for administering the funds.

Institution is not administering the bursary correctly

If you feel your institution is not administering the bursary correctly, you should talk to your student support services and try resolving it with them. If they are unable to help, you can make a formal complaint, by using your institution's formal complaints procedure.

Other financial support

- [Transport](#)
- [Care to Learn](#)
- [Residential Support scheme](#)
- [Professional and career development loans](#)
- [Further details](#)



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Reference: EFA-00411-2014



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