

Allocation of Learner Support Funds

Lead: Leigh Allsopp	Status: Approved
Version: 2	Date of Version: 28/08/19
Approving Body: Executive Team	Supersedes: 2018-19 Criteria
Approved on: 30 September 2019	Next Review date: September 2020

Equality analysis tool¹

1.	Is the policy relevant to the public sector equality duty?	Yes
2.	Have any concerns previously been raised about this policy or practice?	No
3.	Is likely to result in discrimination against a protected group?	Yes
4.	Does this policy positively contribute to the participation of under-represented groups in the College's activities?	No

Version Control

Version	Date	Change(s)

Access

Location	Address/Link
Sharepoint	
Service Centre	
Document Centre	

Communication

Medium	Audience
e.g. Team Briefing, Managers' Briefing, Principal's Briefings	

¹ The Screening Template related to the Allocation of Learner Support Funds can be found on page 8 of the document.

**Wakefield College
Financial Support Criteria 2019-20
for the allocation of:**

- **16-18 Bursary**
- **Guaranteed Bursary**
- **Advanced Learner Loans Bursary**
- **Discretionary Learner Support Funds**
- **Remission of Fees**
- **Crisis Fund**

Contents	Page
1. Introduction	2
2. General Information	2-3
3. Further Education Students Aged 16-18	
3.1 Full Time	4
3.2 Part Time	4
3.3 Guaranteed Bursary	4
3.4 Free Lunches	4
4. Further Education Students Aged 19 and over	
4.1 Full and part time not in receipt of an advanced learner loan	4
4.2 Full and part time in receipt of an advanced learner loan	4
4.3 Childcare Funds	5
4.4 Remission of Fees	5
5. Crisis Fund	6
6. Contact Details	6

1. Introduction

Each year the Government allocates funds to the College to provide help to learners where access to further education might be inhibited by financial considerations or where learners, for whatever reason, face financial difficulties. Criteria for 2019/20 have been reviewed and any changes reflect the total Learner Support Funds (LSF) allocated to the College. Full guidance has been set down by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and the College produces their criteria following this guidance.

Category of Funding	Amount Allocated	Amount Available	Admin Fee
16-18 Bursary/Free College Lunches	£559,362.00	£531,393.90	£27,968.10
19+ Discretionary Fund & Childcare	£40,000.00	£40,000.00	£0.00
24+ Advanced Learner Loans Bursary (to split 80/20% with ALS)	£17,019.00	£16,168.05 (£12,934.44 80%)	£850.95

2. General Information

The following information relates to all aspects of funding available through the Discretionary Funds, 16-18 Bursaries and the Advanced Learner Loans Bursary.

The criteria and procedures here may be modified at short notice to reflect new developments and any future instructions received from funding authorities, i.e. re-allocating any funding if available. The funding criteria is available within Financial Support Services. As can be seen from the table above, the College receives several discrete funding allocations from the ESFA to provide financial support to our students. Funding from these is allocated on a first come first served basis until the appropriate funds are exhausted. The College will always seek additional funding from the ESFA where this is needed to satisfy learner needs, but there is no guarantee that any such request will be successful.

Please be aware if your application is received after Christmas 2019, and your course started prior to this, it will only be backdated to January 2020. If your application is received after Easter 2020, and again if your course started prior to this, it may only be backdated to April 2020.

2.1 Non-attendance - Students with attendance below 90% may have their payments suspended on guidance from the Student Experience Manager, Student Experience & Support Leader or Achievement Support Worker.

2.2 Income Details - Full documentary evidence of all household income must be produced for the application to be considered.

- Family income, including the student's, is taken into consideration (including step parents), if the student:-
 - Lives in the family home and
 - Is under 25
- A student's income only is considered if:
 - They are over 25 or
 - Supporting themselves in their own accommodation, or
 - Expected to provide a realistic rent and living costs if living in the family home.

2.3 Response Times - The Financial Support Team's target is one week for processing and informing applicants, but during September and October processing times will be extended. The Finance Department may extend payment by approximately another week, depending

on the date the request for payment is made, as there is normally only one BACS payment per week.

2.4 Appeals Procedure - All students can appeal against the decision on their application to the funds. The student appeals in writing providing additional information and documentation to support their claim. The appeal will be presented to the Student Advisors and Head of Student Experience Support Services/Executive Director Student Experience and Support. A letter will then be produced which will be signed off by two members of staff. The appeal decision is final.

2.5 Withdrawals - Normally, when an FE student withdraws before the end of the academic year they may be requested to repay part or all of the Learner Support Funds awarded. Information on the application form, covering leaflet and letter states this. A student can appeal by providing a letter and any evidence with which to support their claim. The Student Advisors and **Head of Student Experience Support Services/Executive Director Student Experience and Support.**

2.6 Kit/Residential Payments - Students will be asked to make a contribution to the cost of their kits and residential as per the information below. Kits/residentials are only considered if they are an essential part of the course.

	Cost of Kit			
	£1-£100	£101-£200	£201-£300	£301+
Kit – student contribution	<i>£10</i>	<i>£20</i>	<i>£40</i>	<i>£60</i>

The figures in italics are the amounts the student has to pay towards the cost.

Residentials – we will fund 50% of the cost up to a maximum of £300, for example, if the residential costs £700, we will fund £300 the student will fund £400.

2.7 General Payments

Travel/Guaranteed Bursary payments will be made on a monthly basis direct into the student's bank account. Residential payments will be made direct to the appropriate department, unless the student has already paid in full. Other awards allocated will be paid with the student's first payment (i.e. kit). Travel awards are only allocated if the student lives more than 2 miles from the Campus they are attending.

3. Students aged 16-18

If your total household income is below £26,000 (we take into account all income coming into the household except Disability Living Allowance/Personal Independent Payment and Child benefit) you may be entitled to some funding.

3.1 Full Time Students

The amount received is dependent on an assessment of income and is paid on receipt of the appropriate attendance slip.

- Kits/residentials as per the information in 2.6.
- £40 per month transport costs (see sentence below re first instalment).
- £24 per month meal costs (unless the student receives free lunches – see 3.4)
- £64 per month for students who turn 19 during the academic year
- £85 per month for students who live out of West Yorkshire

For students who qualify for travel payments, and have applied before December 2019, the first payment will be £45 which includes an amount towards the cost of the half fare pass.

3.2 Part Time Students

- Kits/residentials as per the information in 2.6.
- £3 per day attending College travel costs.

3.3 16-18 Guaranteed Bursary

Students who are in care, care leavers, receive income support (or Universal Credit (UC) as and when introduced – must be allowed to study and show evidence of independence such as a rental agreement) or are disabled and in receipt of both ESA/UC and DLA qualify for a guaranteed bursary of up to £1200 per annum (including any kit and/or residential awards) for a course of at least 30 weeks. This amount can be pro-rata for shorter courses. They may also be eligible for the Free Lunches from the separate budget.

Students may also be able to receive help towards kits/residentials as detailed in table 2.6.

3.4 Free Lunches

If a student received free school meals previously and their circumstances have not changed, they may be entitled to free lunches at College up to a maximum of £3.20 each day they attend classes. This will be included on the Student ID card which they will then “swipe” at the refectory/Starbucks.

4. Students aged 19 and over

If your total household income is below £26,000 (we take into account all income coming into the household except Disability Living Allowance/PIP and Child Benefit) you may be entitled to some funding. (NB: different income thresholds are applicable in section 4.4 Remission of Fees)

If you are 19 and on the 2nd year of an extended diploma or A levels, or are 19-24 and have an EHCP, then you may also be entitled to help towards meals costs, or free lunches dependent on household income.

4.1 Full and part time students not in receipt of the advanced learner loan (ALL) (all courses which attract the ALL are not funded by the ESFA so if a student chooses not to take out a loan, or cannot take one out, then we cannot help with any additional costs)

- Kits/residential awarded if gross income as above as per the information in 2.6.
- Travel - £6 per day (maximum £24 per week).
- Payment of exam re-sits (full cost).
- Domestic emergencies (i.e. accommodation, living costs) – after referral by counsellors and/or attendance mentors.

4.2 Full and part time students in receipt of the advanced learner loan (income under £26,000)

- Travel - £6 per day (maximum £24 per week)
- Childcare costs (as per 4.3)

4.3 Childcare Funds (students aged 19 and over)

If FE learners are not receiving funding through Working Tax Credits or Care to Learn they may be entitled to help towards childcare as follows:-

- A maximum of 80% paid towards qualifying childcare costs.
- Learners with income over £26,001 may be considered on discretion.

The maximum we can fund per child is £5,000, and the maximum per family is £10,000 per academic year.

Financial Support will consider each application individually and also take into account the amount being charged by the childcare provider to see if we can reduce this in any way. If attendance drops below 70% the childcare award may reduce to this amount unless any extenuating circumstances are given. There will be a chance to appeal if the decision is made to reduce funding.

Students applying for help towards childcare costs must provide:

- A copy of a Registration Certificate from the Childminder or Nursery
- A letter from the Childminder or Nursery which provides information on charges and the cost for the applicant's child(ren)
- The childcare section on the application form is to be completed by the Nursery or Childminder.
- An Amendment form is sent to the successful applicant who applies **before** the start of the course. The applicant is advised to take this to the Nursery for completion when confirmation can be made of the number of hours the child is in the Nursery.
- Information is requested on any changes which occur during the academic year, e.g., Education Vouchers, childcare support through Working Tax Credit or a change in course hours. Any changes which necessitate an increase in hours will only be funded if Childcare Funds remain. If students do not advise us of any changes their childcare provision may be suspended.
- If a student uses Education Vouchers at a nursery they must ensure that wherever possible they do this to cover their course times. LSF may be used to top up childcare fees only if the private nursery is used for any course hours where this is not possible.

4.4 Remission of Fees (students aged 19 and over at the start of their course)

Due to the introduction of Advanced Learner Loans from 19 years old, there is no fee remission for Level 3-6 courses (further education only).

Applications will only be considered for courses that attract funding and which are listed in the College prospectus as having fees of £150 and over.

For all courses £150 and over the student contribution is 25% and the College will fund 75% for those that qualify for funding.

Learners can apply who are aged 19+ who meet the following criteria and do not already qualify for help with fees through other areas (such as income based benefits, first Level 2 or 3, Advanced Learner Loans etc, the new Government criteria where the student has low earned income).

The College income threshold in considering applications is as follows:-

- Applicants and their partner (if appropriate) gross income up to £18,500.
- Families, the above figure will be increased by £1,000 for each dependent child.
- Applicants under 25 still living with parents, parental income up to £26,000.

Remission is not available for full cost or Higher Education courses (HND, HNC, Foundation Degrees etc) regardless of your financial circumstances. Remission of fees is available to home students and students from the EU. Remission of fees is not available to international students or students of compulsory school age.

6. Crisis Fund

The College receives donations to the Crisis Fund and this fund is managed by the Financial Support Team. Students of any age are eligible for possible assistance.

Funding is awarded to students who may have no bus fares or lunch money whilst they are studying at College. The funding is also awarded to students in crisis who may have been referred by the Counselling Team to help them with any general costs whilst they attend their course at College.

Slips are completed for each student and if the amount given is as a “loan” rather than a “grant” a date for the money to be refunded must be given.

If the student does not return the money when stated, the student must be contacted and advised to bring the money in as soon as possible. Students cannot receive further help if they have not refunded money previously given.

Students must not borrow money on a regular basis for bus fares and/or lunch as this fund is to be used for situations where they may have forgotten their money not as a regular source of funding.

7. Contact Details

For more information on the Higher Education bursaries and scholarships please contact the Higher Education Student Engagement Team on 01924 789317 or email hebursaryfund@wakefield.ac.uk

For all other aspects of financial support as detailed above please contact the Financial Support Team for more information or to request an application form:-

Financial Support
2nd Floor Harrison Building
Wakefield College
Margaret Street
WAKEFIELD
WF1 2DH

01924 789304/01924 789549

student.finance@wakefield.ac.uk

Appendix One: Screening Tool

Public sector equality duty

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires College to have **due regard** for the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010;
- advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups; this involves considering the need to:
- remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics;
- meet the needs of people with protected characteristics;
- encourage people with protected characteristics to participate in activities where their participation is low; and to
- foster good relations between people from different groups - this involves tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people from different groups.

Consequently, we need to assure ourselves that our policies will not have an adverse differential impact on any particular group. This pre-screening section will enable you to identify whether your policy is likely to have an adverse differential impact.

Please use the following template to help determine whether an equality analysis is required

Name of the policies: Financial Support Policy 2018-21 and Criteria for the Allocation of Learner Support Funds 2019/20
Author(s): Head of Student Experience Support Services

Author(s) of Equality Analysis:
Name: Leigh Allsopp
Job title: Head of Student Experience Support Services
Date: 28/08/19
Signature: <i>Leigh Allsopp</i>

In order to decide whether the policy requires further action, please complete the following questions:

1. What are the main aims, purpose and outcomes of the policy?

The policy sets out the criteria for allocating funds to students to ensure fair and consistent treatment of applicants and to ensure compliance with funding guidance.

2. Will these aims affect our duty to:

	Yes / No	How?
advance equality of opportunity?	No	
eliminate discrimination?	Yes	Funds are allocated by age.
eliminate harassment?	No	
foster good relations between people from different groups?	No	
tackle prejudice and promote understanding between people from different groups?	No	

3. What aspects of the policy, including how it is delivered, or accessed, could contribute to inequality?

The funding comes in more than 1 pot – for students aged 16-18, 19+ and 24+. There are different amounts of money available and the funding guidance is different for each age group.

4. Will the policy have an impact (positive or negative) upon the experience of people, including those who share a protected characteristic?

Please complete the following table:

Protected characteristic	Meet needs of people with this characteristic	Encourage participation (if under-represented)	Remove or minimise disadvantages	Possible negative impact
Race	Yes	No	No	No
Gender	Yes	No	Yes	No
Disability	Yes	No	No	No
Religion / belief	Yes	No	No	No
Sexual orientation	Yes	No	No	No
Gender reassignment	Yes	No	No	No
Pregnancy /maternity	Yes	No	Yes	No
Age	Yes	No	No	Yes
Marriage / civil partnership*	Yes	No	No	No

Evidence:

Childcare funding is available which may help more parents who have childcare responsibilities to study. Different funding is available to different age groups.

6. What different needs, experiences or attitudes are particular communities or groups likely to have in relation to this policy?

Students over 19 may have a less favourable experience as there is generally less funding for 19+.

Next steps

If your answers to these questions have identified potential negative impacts, then you should consider further consultation, for example with the Disability Equality Advisory Group or action to minimise the differential impact. Please consult the Equality and Diversity Co-ordinator.

If no further action is required, please print and sign the declaration below.

Declaration

The policy does not have a significant impact upon equality issues and therefore does not require any further action.

Author(s) of Equality Analysis:
Name: Leigh Allsopp
Job title: Head of Student Experience Support Services
Date: 28/08/19
Signature: <i>Leigh Allsopp</i>