

Riddlesdown Collegiate



College VI Bursary Policy

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Reviewed by Staff	December 2022
Reviewed by Students	n/a

College VI Post 16 Bursary Policy

Introduction

The 16-19 Bursary fund was introduced by the government as a replacement for the previous EMA scheme (Education Maintenance Allowance). It was introduced to support students within Sixth Forms to meet the needs of young people facing financial barriers to participation. There are two types of bursary: vulnerable student bursary and discretionary student bursary.

Aims of the Bursary

The bursary aims to pay for:

- Travel expenses e.g. train fares, university open days.
- Supplying textbooks, study guides and stationery
- Providing financial support for any academic trips and activities
- Contributions for meals on days students study

Eligibility

To be eligible for either type of bursary students must:

- Be aged over 16 and under 19 by 31 August 2022
- Meet the residency criteria in ESFA funding regulations for post-16 provision
- Be participating in provision that is subject to inspection by a public body which assures quality (such as Ofsted), the provision must also be either:
 - Funded directly by ESFA or by EFSA via a local authority
 - Otherwise publicly funded and lead to a qualification (up to and including Level 3) accredited by Ofqual.
 - A 16 to 19 traineeship programme
- Students aged 19 or over are only eligible to receive a discretionary bursary if they are continuing on a study programme, they began aged 16 to 18 (19+ continuers) or have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).
- Accompanied asylum seeking children (under 18 with an adult relative or partner)
Generally, asylum seekers are not entitled to public funds. Accompanied asylum seeking children (i.e. Those under 18 with an adult relative or partner) and those aged 18 and above are entitled to education, but not to public funds. If they are destitute they can apply to the Home Office for suitable housing and cash for essentials, but they are not eligible for other income.
- As long as an asylum seeker has not had their application refused, institutions can provide in kind student support such as course related books, equipment or a travel pass. Under no circumstances should an institution give cash to any asylum seeker who is not an unaccompanied asylum seeking child (UASC).
- Unaccompanied asylum seeking children:
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 vulnerable bursary ('in care' group).
When these young people reach legal adulthood at age 18, institutions must consider their immigration status. If the asylum claim is decided in their favour the local authority must provide them with the same support and services as they do care leavers. As such, they will continue to be eligible for a vulnerable bursary until they reach the upper age limit.
Where an asylum claim is not supported, the individual may not be able to stay legally in the UK. When asylum claims have been fully heard and the appeals rights exhausted, an individual has no entitlement to public funds. There are a few exceptions where the withdrawal of support would be seen as a breach of human rights.

Vulnerable Students Bursary

Young people in the defined vulnerable groups are eligible for a Bursary of up to £1,200 if their course lasts for 30 weeks or more. The defined vulnerable groups are:

- Young people in care

- Young care leavers
- Young people getting Income support or Universal Credit in their own right
- Young people getting both Disability Living allowance or personal independent payments as well as employment support allowance (ESA) or Universal Credit as a replacement for ESA in their own right.

Discretionary Bursary

The bursary is available to Riddlesdown Collegiate Sixth Form students whose family income is £24,000 per annum or less and whose parents/carers are in receipt of any of the following;

- Income support
- Income based Job seekers Allowance
- Disability benefit
- Child tax credit(provided there is no entitlement to working tax credit)
- Free school meals

There is no statutory entitlement to a discretionary bursary. The rate will be set in proportion to the funds available and the number of eligible students. If circumstances change through the year which mean that a student is no longer eligible for compensation, the bursary may be withdrawn. If a student drops out of learning, payments will stop.

There will be a limited amount of money in the budget which will be used as an emergency fund to support students and this will be assessed on a case by case basis. Requests for this support must be made to Mrs Philippa Robinson and will be confirmed by the Head of College VI. Any unused funds will, where practical, be pooled for re-allocation.

Riddlesdown Collegiate will make every effort to publicise the scheme and will give details and applications of the scheme to all of those enquiring. Students will also be informed of the scheme in assembly and by their tutors in tutorial time.

Application Process and Evidence

All students who are eligible can apply for the bursary through filling in an application form, submitting bank details and indicating which of the criteria they meet, as well as outlining any costs they incur for travel, books or other expenses as outlined at the top of this document. This should be passed on to the College VI Pastoral Assistant.

The students must then provide official documentation to as evidence that they meet the criteria for either bursary including:

- Household income (preferably P60)
- Income support
- Job seekers' allowance
- Incapacity allowance.
- Guaranteed pension credit
- Universal credit

The College VI Pastoral Assistant will then assess the application and evidence provided for suitability for bursary.

All applications will be reviewed annually at the start of each academic year. In year applications will be considered subject to funds available but cannot be backdated.

Evidence of Eligibility for Vulnerable Student Bursary

Riddlesdown Collegiate will need to obtain proof that students are eligible (such as proof that they are in one or more of the defined vulnerable groups). Riddlesdown will ask for, and retain copies for audit purposes of, evidence from the student. For example:

Commented [KT1]: Better to name roles rather than individuals.

- For students in receipt of qualifying benefits, a letter from DWP which states the benefit the young person is entitled to (they must be entitled to the benefits in their own right), which should confirm that they can be in further education or training as some young people in receipt of benefits are not allowed to participate
- For students who are in care or a care leaver, written confirmation of their current or previous looked-after status from the relevant local authority. This is the local authority which looks after them or provides their leaving care services and could be a letter or an email, as long as it is clearly from the local authority.

Conditions

Payment of a bursary will be conditional on the student meeting agreed standards of attendance, behaviour and completion of work. Medical absences are acceptable if they properly supported by documentary evidence. Students will be expected to:

- Achieve an attendance figure of over 92%
- Be punctual to all lessons
- Meet the deadlines set for homework and coursework
- Make acceptable progress towards academic targets being made, as evidenced in reports.

If a recipient of a bursary does not meet these requirements, payment may be discontinued. The final decision on this will be made by the Head of College.

Commented [KT2]: Who makes this decision?

The bursary fund is not intended to:

- Provide learning support – services that institutions give to students – for example, counselling, mentoring or extra tutoring
- Support extra-curricular activities where these are not essential to the students' study programme
- Support general household incomes

Payments

Payments of the vulnerable student bursary will be made monthly (11 months/September backdated) directly to the student's bank account (subject to receipt of details). Additional discretionary payments may be made in other forms. The release of these payments will be dependent upon the student meeting the standards above.

Availability of Funds

Bursary money is finite. As such, it may not meet all needs or be available for all discretionary payments at all parts of the year.

A student awarded a bursary will sign an agreement undertaking to meet the conditions laid out by Riddlesdown Collegiate, accepting the amount and basis which it is to be paid, and undertaking to notify the Collegiate of any change in his/her/their circumstances.

Confidentiality

Please note that Riddlesdown Collegiate guarantees that all personal information, including household earnings, will be stored securely and will remain strictly confidential.

Fraudulent claims or misuse of funds

Where an application is found to have been made on the basis of false information, payment will be discontinued. Students must only spend the bursary payments they have made to them on the support that has been identified as necessary to help them participate in education. In the event of any misuse of funds or fraudulent claims, individuals concerned may be subject to disciplinary action and the Collegiate may seek to recover any funds or goods obtained. In some cases, a young person may meet the eligibility criteria for a bursary but their financial needs are already met, they have no relevant costs or they do not need the maximum award. In these circumstances, we reserve the right to turn down the application.