The 16 to 19 Bursary Fund provides financial support to help students on ESFA Study Programmes overcome specific barriers to participation so they can remain in education.

There are 2 types of 16 to 19 bursaries:

* bursaries for defined vulnerable groups of up to £1,200 a year
* discretionary bursaries to meet individual needs for example help with the cost of travel or specialist equipment

This document should be read in conjunction with the ESFA guidance ‘16-19 Bursary Fund – Guidance for 2021/22’. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/16-to-19-bursary-fund-guide-2021-to-2022-academic-year>

SCT will assess the actual financial needs of individual students when awarding bursary funding. Both types of bursary funding are designed to help students overcome the individual financial barriers to participation that they face, and funds must go to those who genuinely need them. No student will automatically be awarded a set amount of funding without an assessment of the level of financial need they have.

**Eligibility**

To be eligible to receive a bursary in the 2021/22 academic year a student must be aged 16 or over but under 19 at 31 August 2021.

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).

Students aged 19 or over are not eligible for bursaries for vulnerable groups.

Students must meet the residency criteria in [ESFA funding regulations](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/advice-funding-regulations-for-post-16-provision) for post-16 provision.

**Payments will only be made for high standards of attendance and punctuality, and meeting of targets agreed for SCT Online Learning completion as per the Scheme of Work. Payments will be withheld if these conditions are not met.**

Students on apprenticeship programmes are employed, rather than in education. They are not eligible for the 16 to 19 Bursary Fund.

**Applying for the Bursary Fund**

Learners must complete the Bursary Fund application with necessary documentary evidence attached, and returned to SCT. SCT will notify the learner of their eligibility and level of award within 10 working days of receipt of the application.

**The Awards**

The Bursary Fund has two elements to the funding that may be used to contribute towards the costs of travel or specialist equipment:

1. **Bursaries for young people in defined vulnerable groups**

Students who meet the criteria, and who have a financial need, can apply for a bursary for vulnerable groups. The defined groups reflect that these students are unlikely to be receiving financial assistance from parents or carers, so may need a greater level of support to enable them to continue to participate.

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 their own right as well as Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or UC in their own right

Evidence of eligibility

SCT must obtain proof that students meet the criteria for the bursary for vulnerable groups in full. In other words, that they are in receipt of the specified benefits in their own name or that they fully meet the definitions for in care/care leavers. SCT will ask for evidence from each student and retain copies for audit purposes.

For example:

* 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 that looks after them or provides their leaving care services. The evidence could be a letter or an email but must be clearly from the local authority
* for students in receipt of IS or UC, a copy of their IS or UC award notice. This must clearly state that the claim is in the student’s name/confirm they are entitled to the benefits in their own right. The evidence must not state any conditions that prevent them from participating in further education or training. For students in receipt of UC, institutions must also see a document such as a tenancy agreement in the student’s name, a child benefit receipt, children’s birth certificates, utility bills and so on
* for students receiving UC/ESA and Disability Living Allowance (DLA) and Personal Independence Payments(PIP), a copy of their UC claim from DWP. Evidence of receipt of DLA or PIP must also be provided

UC claimants should be able to print off details of their award from their online account or provide a screenshot to the institution.

**2) Discretionary Bursaries**

SCT make discretionary bursary awards to help students with the cost of travel and specialist equipment or clothing. These are items the student would otherwise need to pay for to participate. SCT must base all decisions about which students receive a discretionary bursary and how much bursary they receive on each student’s individual circumstances and their actual financial need.

Criteria for Discretionary Awards

SCT must ensure funding reaches those students who are most in need of financial support. This means institutions should use household income to establish the amount of support to award to a student. This can be used in conjunction with other factors, such as distance to travel from the institution as well as the actual participation needs the student has.

SCT (recommended by DfE) asks for the 3 most recent monthly award statements for Universal Credit. The take-home pay figure in addition to the amount of UC after all deductions will give a total monthly income. Using 3 months statements will act as a guide to the household income for a quarter of a year, to then estimate assumed income for a full year. Discretionary awards will not be awarded to any student with a household income of more than £25 521.

**Payments**

SCT will pay monthly in arrears for actual expenses incurred, on completion of correctly completed attendance and travel forms, with receipts. Payment will be made by bank transfer directly to the individual student’s bank account. There is a maximum monthly allocation of £100.00 per learner following the Study Programme with a 12 month expected length of stay.

**Appeals Process**

In the event that a learner does not agree with SCT’s decision on the allocation / level of payment of the Bursary, or if payments have been withheld, the learner should follow SCT’s policy:

* raise the issue immediately by telephone. We will try to resolve the issue straight away.
* If you are still not satisfied you should write to us, stating the nature and circumstances of the complaint as clearly as possible.

The appeal will be investigated by a member of staff who was not involved in making the original decision. The complaint will be investigated promptly and thoroughly, and guidance sought from the ESFA on the action to take to gain a satisfactory conclusion. We will write back to you, within 14 days of receiving your complaint.

**For any queries**

Contact Belinda Turner at SCT by telephone on 01246 566193 or email info@stubbingcourttraining.com.

For any questions about completion of the bursary for vulnerable groups funding claim or about bursary for vulnerable groups payments made by the SBSS should contact SBSS on 0300 303 8610 or at: 1619bursary@studentbursarysupport.co.uk.