

DfE 16-19 Bursary Fund Policy 1.8.2025 – 31.7.2026

The 16 to 19 Bursary Fund provides financial support to help students on DfE 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 transport

This document should be read in conjunction with the DfE guidance '16-19 Bursary Fund – Guidance for 2025/26'. [16 to 19 Bursary Fund guide for academic year 2025 to 2026.](#)

To be eligible to receive a bursary in the 2025/26 academic year a student must be aged 16 or over but under 19 at 31.8.2025.

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. These 2 groups of aged 19 plus students can receive a discretionary bursary while they continue to attend education as long as their eligibility continues and SCT considers they need the additional support to continue their participation.

Payments will only be made for 95% attendance, high standards of reliability and punctuality, completion of SCT Online Learning every month as per the Scheme of Work and an acceptable behaviour record. 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 return 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 transport, meals or equipment:

1) Bursaries for young people in defined vulnerable groups

Students who meet one of the 4 criteria below (plus the other criteria for age and residency) and who have a financial need can apply for a bursary for vulnerable groups of up to £1,200 per year if they are participating on a Study Programme that lasts for 30 weeks or more.

The defined vulnerable groups are students who are:

- in care
- care leavers (a young person aged 16 and 17 who was previously looked after for a period of 13 weeks, which began after the age of 14 and ended after the age of 16; or a young person aged 18 or above who was looked after prior to becoming 18 for

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a period of 13 weeks, which began after the age of 14 and ended after the age of 16)

- receiving Income Support or Universal Credit because they are financially supporting themselves and / or someone who is dependent on them and living with them, such as a child or partner
- receiving Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments in their own right as well as Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit in their own right

Evidence of eligibility

SCT must have proof that students are eligible for a bursary for vulnerable groups. 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 Income Support, a copy of their Income Support award notice. They must be entitled to the benefit in their own right and the evidence must not specify any conditions that prevent the young person from being in further education or training (some young people in receipt of benefits are not allowed to participate)
- for students in receipt of Universal Credit, a copy of their Universal Credit Award notice. They must be entitled to the benefit in their own right. They must also provide additional documentation to confirm their independent status, for example a tenancy agreement in the student's name, a child benefit receipt, children's birth certificates, utility bills etc
- for students receiving Universal Credit/Employment and Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance and Personal Independence Payments, a copy of the student's Universal Credit or ESA award from DWP (UC claimants will be able to print off details of their award from their journal). Evidence of receipt of Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment, must also be provided

Payments

Once a student has been assessed as eligible for vulnerable student payments SCT will submit funding claims directly to DfE at defined points in the year.

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. There will be a maximum monthly allocation of £100.00 per learner following the Study Programme with a 12 month expected length of stay.

2) Discretionary Bursary - targeted at young people outside of the 'vulnerable' groups identified above and who are facing financial barriers to participation. These may be used to help with the cost of transport. SCT may award discretionary bursaries equal to the bursary for vulnerable groups maximum as long as there are clearly identified needs and the individual student requires this level of funding.

SCT uses 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, the number of dependent children in the household or whether the young person has additional responsibilities that may mean they need extra help, for example, they are a young carer or a parent.

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Criteria for Discretionary Awards

Eligible learners can apply for the Bursary Fund up to a maximum of £1200 per year. The eligibility will be assessed using household income as the main eligibility criterion, using Tax Credits forms (TC602), evidence of income from self-employment, a P60, or 3-6 months' worth of bank statements as evidence.

Previous eligibility for Free School Meals will also be considered. No payments will be made where the Household and Learner income exceeds £30,000.

*This is a recommended maximum amount based on actual expenses incurred.

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. There will be 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 DfE on the action to take to gain a satisfactory conclusion. We will write back to you, within 14 days of receiving your complaint.

Transferring Learners

Where a learner changes provider we will work with the other provider to ensure that the learner is not double funded. If they were eligible for the £1200 Vulnerable Bursary we will pro-rata this accordingly. If they receive a Discretionary Bursary, this will also be pro-rated. Any over-claimed amount will be recovered from the learner.

For any queries

Contact Belinda Turner at SCT by telephone on 07894 049647 or email info@stubbingcourtraining.com.

For SCT queries: for the Online Enquiry Form: [16 to 19 Bursary Fund: How to claim - GOV.UK](#)

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.