



16 to 19 Bursary Fund Policy Statement

Status: Advisory

Member of Staff responsible: Principal

Associated Policies and documentation:

Pupil Premium Statement
Charging & Remission Policy

Implementation date: September 2014

Review Date: Sept 2020

Next Review Date: Sept 2021

Introduction

1. The 16-19 Bursary Fund exists to help students continue with and complete their course where they would otherwise be prohibited from doing so on financial grounds.
2. The Bursary is intended to help with the hardship needs of individual students and enable a student to continue with his or her education. It is not an incentive to attract young people into any particular institution. Generally, awards from the Bursary will be used towards essential course related costs such as books, equipment, travel, field trips, visits and other costs associated with living and learning.
3. Sheffield schools and academies, including the UTC ('the institutions') will seek to ensure that the funds available are:
 - distributed fairly through a process which is transparent and easily understood. Information about the application process is available from the institutions;
 - assessed and allocated, based on each individual's need, taking into account the financial circumstances of the applicant, the intended use of the award and affordability;
 - used to widen access to, and participation in, post-16 education;
 - available to students at the following institutions : All Saints, Bents Green, Bradfield, Forge Valley, High Storrs, King Egbert, King Edward VII, Meadowhead, Notre Dame, Seven Hills, Silverdale, Talbot, Tapton and the University Technical College City and OLP.
4. 16-19 Bursary Fund guidance, setting out operational arrangements, priority groups and monitoring / financial assurance activity is issued by the Education Funding Agency (EFA).

Please note: there is a limited amount of funding which means that it may not be possible to support every application. Applications from learners whose circumstances change during the year will be considered. However, funds may be exhausted and it may not be possible to make an award in all cases.

The 16-19 Bursary Fund has two elements:

Vulnerable student bursaries

5. Some students will be eligible to receive a bursary of £1,200 per year, if agreed standards of behaviour and attendance are met. Those groups are listed in the Guide.

Discretionary student bursaries

6. These awards will be targeted towards young people facing financial barriers to participation in post-16 education. Agreed standards of behaviour and attendance must be met. In the main, students in households where income is at or below the Free School Meals (FSM) threshold (currently £16,190) will be eligible to apply. Passing the eligibility test does not guarantee funds. Equally, those in households where income is well-below the FSM threshold can receive a top-up based on their individual needs.
7. Attendance and behaviour standards can be found in the UTC Post 16 Learning Agreement and align with that expected of all students attending the institution.

8. The Bursary Fund application form should be accompanied by **evidence** of entitlement. Sheffield City Council (SCC) administers the Fund on behalf of the institutions listed at paragraph 3 above and will liaise with students to ensure the appropriate level of evidence is supplied to support the application.

Process

9. Learners in receipt of a 16-19 Bursary in 2016/17 and continuing in learning during 2017/18 will not be required to submit a new application, but are required to complete and submit a Renewal Application.

Making the Application: Procedures for Students

- Complete the application form including details of known and likely costs
- Take the application form to the institution's office together with proof of your designated bank account (a copy bank statement) detailing:
 - Account number
 - Sort Code
 - Name and Address
- The application form will be checked by the office and stamped with the school stamp to confirm the student is in attendance.
- The UTC will then send the application form to SCC at :

Floor 5, West Wing Moorfoot Sheffield S1 4PL
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- SCC will either approve or reject the application and inform the student and the school of the decision.
10. Successful applicants will receive their Bursary in monthly payments directly into the designated bank account. The 1st payment will only be made after the 6-week School Census point and will be back dated to the start of the academic year.
11. Students in receipt of financial support will be expected to comply with the behaviour and attendance guidelines as outlined in the Post 16 Learner Agreement. The Business & Operations Director will liaise with the Learning Manager for KS5 to assess if these obligations have been met.
12. All applications will be treated in the strictest confidence.
13. **Please note that in submitting an application, each student is confirming his or her agreement to the conditions attached, outlined in this Policy Statement concerning behaviour, attendance and any other conditions imposed by the institution.**

Awards

14. Bursary awards are made for specified course related costs and/or other costs viewed as presenting a barrier to the individual student's participation in education. The amount of each award will be assessed and disbursed on an individual, case by case basis.

15. The institution **may**, on occasion, offer bursaries in the form of non-cash 'in kind' payments where appropriate, such as travel passes, meal vouchers, attendance on course related school trips, etc. Any equipment purchased by the institution for use by an individual student remains the property of the institution and must be returned upon completion of, or withdrawal from, the course.
16. The institution may also offer an award in the form of a short-term loan to help a student bridge a temporary financial hardship where this is deemed appropriate and agreed by the student. In this case, the institution will draw up an agreement with the student clearly stating the use of and the conditions surrounding the reimbursement arrangements, which the student should sign, indicating he or she understands the conditions of the loan. The student should be able to provide evidence that the award has been used as intended.
17. In line with the "something for something" ethos, receipt of bursary payments are conditional upon a student meeting attendance and behaviour standards agreed in advance.
18. Attendance and behaviour requirements generally align with the conduct standards expected of all students who are part of the institution community and can be found in Post 16 Learner Agreement. Where the student does not meet the agreed attendance or behaviour standards, which will be monitored, the institution will make every effort to advise the student and help resolve any issues, but retains the right to rescind or suspend bursary payment(s).

The guidance for eligibility has been provided by Chris Fox at the SCC Post-16 Support Office address at paragraph 9 above. Chris can also be contacted by telephone (0114) 2735479 or e-mail : Christopher.fox@sheffield.gov.uk. Please be aware that all decisions about eligibility for financial support will be made by SCC.

Appeals

19. Where a payment has been withheld due to attendance or behaviour issues, students may wish to appeal against the decision. In these cases, they should follow the institution's complaints procedure. The final decision rests with the institution.

False or incomplete information

The Bursary Fund Guidance document issued by EFA, see paragraph 4 above, includes the following statement : Students and their families should be aware that if false or incomplete information is submitted, or if they do not tell the institution about any part of their income that is relevant, the matter may be referred to the Department for Education or the police. The student could face prosecution and institutions will seek to recover any payments the student was not eligible for.

Review of Policy

20. This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis, taking into account the views of the institutions at paragraph 3 above, students and their parents and guidance from the Department for Education and the Education Funding Agency.