

16-19 Bursary and Free Meal Policy 2021/2022

Purpose

The purpose of the policy is to provide a set of standards and principles for the administration of the 16-19 Bursary Fund, which provides financial support to help learners overcome specific barriers to participation so that 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 which institutions award to meet individual needs, for example, help with the cost of transport, meals, books and equipment

NB: The 16-19 Bursary Fund is subject to funds being made available from the Education Funding Agency (ESFA) and therefore CTS Training cannot guarantee that it will be able to grant every application made unless in the guaranteed vulnerable group.

Scope

This policy is in line with national ESFA 16-19 Bursary Fund Guide for 2021/2022 and from consultation with the Local Authority and wider provider network.

[16 to 19 Bursary Fund guide 2021 to 2022 academic year - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Principles

- We seek to ensure that the assessment, administration and allocation of the Fund is open and transparent to all parties.
- The Bursary Fund will be targeted at learners who face the greatest barriers to continuing in education or training Post 16.
- CTS Training will pay eligible young people by BACS transfer into their own bank account.
- CTS Training will pay/reimburse eligible young people the Bursary, for costs relating to participation in learning e.g. meals, transport and additional learning costs in line with the 16-19 Bursary Fund Policy. The Bursary Fund is not intended to provide learning support, services that institutions give to students, for example, counselling or mentoring, or to support extra-curricular activities where these are not essential to the learner's study programme.
- CTS Training will ensure that the assessment and allocation of funds is conducted in a professional, timely and responsive manner and in compliance with current ESFA Guidance.
- CTS Training will not discriminate against any learners on the basis of any protected characteristics as set out in the Equality Act 2010 and in CTS's Equality and Diversity Policy [G:\Policies and Procedures\EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY.docx](#)
- All documentation relating to applicants will be treated confidentially in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations from May 2018 (GDPR) [G:\GDPR LIBRARY\3. LEARNER DOCUMENTS\2. PRIVACY POLICY TO LEARNERS_CTS_V1_MAY-18.docx](#)
- CTS Training will raise awareness of the 16-19 Bursary Fund with referral agencies and through recruitment processes amongst young people, particularly the most vulnerable and those that face greatest financial barriers to participation. This will include publishing the information regarding application process on the CTS Website and CTS Bursary Fact Sheet.
- CTS Training will be responsible for ensuring all learners, including those in learning with approved subcontractors are fully aware of the 16-19 Bursary Fund, the assessment criteria and how to make an application.
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The Types of Support Available

The 16-19 Bursary Fund has two elements:

- a vulnerable bursary of up to £1,200 a year for young people in one of the defined vulnerable groups (subject to funds from the Learning and Support Service)
- discretionary bursaries (for learners facing the greatest financial hardship with a threshold of household income below £30,000, which institutions award to meet individual needs, for example, help with the cost of transport, meals, books and equipment (subject to funds made available to CTS Training and there being an assessed need for financial help)

Age

To be eligible to receive a bursary in the 2021/2022 academic year a student must be aged 16 or over but under 19 at 31 August 2021.

Residency

Learners must meet the residency criteria in [ESFA funding regulations](#) for post-16 provision in the 2021-22 academic year.

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 (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 so are not eligible to apply for financial support from the 16-18 Bursary fund.

Bursary for Vulnerable Groups

Learners who meet one of the 4 criteria below 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; a pro-rata amount is paid to students on study Programmes of less than 30 weeks).

This reflects that students in these groups may need a greater level of support to enable them to continue to participate.

The defined vulnerable groups are learners who are:

- in care
- care leavers
- receiving Income Support, or Universal Credit 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 or Personal Independence Payments in their own right as well as Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit in their own right

- CTS Training can pay a bursary to a vulnerable group learner of more than £1,200 if we assess they need extra help to remain in education. Any payments over £1,200 will be paid from our discretionary bursary allocation (subject to available funds)
- Equally, CTS may decide that although a young person may be eligible for a bursary because they are in one or more of the defined vulnerable groups, they do not have any actual financial need and so do not need support from the scheme. For example, their financial needs are already met and/or they have no relevant costs.

Defining in care and care leavers

The ESFA 16 to 19 Bursary Fund defines 'in care' as 'Children looked after by a local authority on a voluntary basis (section 20 of the Children Act 1989) or under a care order (section 31 of the Children Act 1989) - Section 22 of the Children Act 1989 defines the term 'looked after child.'

A 'care leaver' is defined as:

- a young person aged 16 and 17 who was previously looked after for a period of 13 weeks consecutively (or periods amounting to 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 a period of 13 weeks consecutively (or periods of 13 weeks), which began after the age of 14 and ended after the age of 16

In Foster Care

- A young person placed with a foster carer by the local authority, including where the foster carer is on the books of an independent fostering agency, is classed as looked after. They are in a defined vulnerable group ('in care') and eligible for help from the bursary for vulnerable groups.
- A child who is privately fostered (in other words, a private arrangement is made between the parent and the person who will care for the child) is not classed as a looked after child and is not eligible for the bursary for vulnerable groups.
- In some instances, a young person may have been in the care of the local authority and the care transferred to another party via a permanent form of fostering such as a Special Guardianship Order. In these circumstances, the young person is defined as having left care so is now a care leaver. They are in a defined vulnerable group ('care leaver') and eligible for help from the bursary for vulnerable groups

Universal Credit

Universal Credit is being rolled out across the country and will gradually replace Income Support and Employment and Support Allowance as well as other benefits. CTS are aware that there will be an increase in learners claiming bursaries for vulnerable groups based on receiving Universal Credit.

Universal Credit award notifications do not include any information on the benefits they replace. The learner must be receiving Universal Credit because they are financially supporting themselves and anyone who is dependent on them and living with them such as a child or partner.

Evidence of Eligibility

CTS Training will obtain evidence from each learner that they are eligible for a bursary for vulnerable groups and we will retain copies for audit purposes

- Learners 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
- Learners 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 confirm that the young person can be in further education or training (some young people in receipt of benefits are not allowed to participate)
- Learners 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
- Learners in receipt of Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments and Employment Support Allowance – a copy of their relevant award notice. They must be entitled to the payment in their own right and the evidence must confirm this.

CTS Training will only submit a funding claim to the Student Bursary Support Service (SBSS) for bursaries for vulnerable groups when they have seen and verified appropriate evidence to confirm that the learners is eligible.

Pro-rata bursaries for vulnerable groups

Learners who meet the criteria for a bursary for vulnerable groups are eligible for a bursary of £1,200 if they are on a study programme which lasts for 30 weeks or more in the academic year. Learners who meet the criteria and who are on study programmes lasting for less than 30 weeks will be given a bursary on a pro-rata basis. For example:

- a 30 week programme attracts a bursary of £1,200 - if paid weekly, the bursary is $£1,200 \div 30 = £40$ per week
- if a student is on a 10 week programme, the pro-rata bursary would be $£40 \times 10$ weeks = £400

CTS will assess the amount of bursary using an hourly or daily rate if a learner in one of the vulnerable groups is on a part time course. For example:

- a learner on a full-time course which lasts for 20 weeks - their bursary could be calculated at the rate of $£40 \times 20$ weeks = £800
- a student on a part-time course that takes 2 days a week and lasts for 20 weeks - if the daily rate for the bursary is £8 ($£40 \div 5$ days = £8), then $£8 \times 2$ days = £16 a week; $£16 \times 20$ weeks = £320

Learners will be awarded a daily amount of £1.60 per day for each day they are timetabled to attend CTS for Travel Costs x by the number of weeks of their programme. This will be paid weekly into their bank account and is to be used for travel, lunch and any other additional cost incurred.

Young people eligible for a bursary for vulnerable groups but who don't require bursary funding

In some cases, a young person might be eligible for a bursary for vulnerable groups because they meet one or more of the criteria. However, their financial needs are already met and/or they have no relevant costs. For example:

- a learner in local authority care whose educational costs are covered in full by the local authority
- a learner who is financially supported by their partner

In these circumstances, CTS will explain to the learner and/or the learner's parents the aim of bursary funding and why no bursary is being awarded. CTS will ensure that all applicants are made aware that meeting the criteria for a bursary for vulnerable groups does not automatically mean funding will be given.

Discretionary Bursary

CTS Training will ensure all learners who are in financial hardship have the opportunity to apply for financial support from the Discretionary Bursary Fund.

CTS Training will use household income to help establish the amount of support they award to a learner. This will be used in conjunction with other factors, such as distance to travel from CTS Training and the number of dependent children in the household.

CTS Training will ensure that all learners who have a household income below £30,000 have the opportunity to be considered for financial support from the 16-19 Discretionary Bursary Fund to help them overcome the individual barriers to participation they face, for example, help with the cost of transport, meals, books, equipment & Clothing for Placement or Interviews.

3 months wage slips will need to be provided to support a claim for discretionary bursary to evidence that household income is below £30,000

Learners or their parents/guardians receiving one or more of the following benefits may also be eligible to receive discretionary bursary support;

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- Income-related Employment Support Allowance
- Universal Credit
- Pension Credit
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Housing Benefit
- Council Tax Benefit
- Child or Working Tax Credits

Learners will need to provide evidence in the form of letter (dated within the last 3 months, were this isn't possible the most recent letter will be accepted) from the Job Centre, Home Office or Pension Service confirming your/their entitlement in order for their application to be processed.

All decisions about which learners receive a discretionary bursary and how much bursary they receive will be based on each learner's individual circumstances and their actual financial need. The bursary fund is intended to help learners overcome the specific financial barriers to participation they face, these will vary from learner to learner, depending on a range of factors, for example, their household income, the distance they need to travel to the institution and the requirements of their study programme.

Free Meals

Learner who are in receipt or whose parents/guardians are in receipt of the following benefits will also be entitled to apply for Free Meals.

- Income Support
- income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided they are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190, as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC))
- Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for 4 weeks after someone stops qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit with net earnings not exceeding the equivalent of £7,400 pa

Free Meals will be paid at a rate of £2.41 plus £1.99 uplift (£4.40) per day for every day that a learner attends their programme. This will be paid directly into the learner's bank account weekly.

Learners who are entitled to vulnerable bursary due to being in receipt of a benefit will also be entitled to Free Meals.

Travel

Travel assistance

To qualify for assistance with the costs of travel between home and CTS a learner must live at least 1 mile away from their normal CTS Training site.

16-18 year olds living in South Yorkshire

16-18 year olds must apply for a 16-18 concessionary travel pass from www.travelsouthyorkshire.com/mystudentpass

This concessionary pass entitles students to concessionary travel (80p) on buses and trams in South Yorkshire and to half-fare on Northern Trains services in South Yorkshire.

CTS will support all learners who are eligible to apply for a 16-18 travel pass. This will then be paid weekly into a learner's bank account if they are eligible for either the Vulnerable or discretionary bursary.

If a learner is 18+ but under 19 when they enrol on their Study Programme/Traineeship and are not entitled to apply for the 16-18 Travel Pass, CTS will either a) reimburse daily travel costs or b) provide a weekly travel ticket (whichever is the cheapest) for a maximum of 1 month from their start date if they are in financial hardship and have applied for a bursary. Once a learner's bursary application

has been approved then the amount paid out on travel will be deducted from their bursary allocation. If receiving reimbursed travel costs then travel tickets must be submitted daily and this will be reimbursed to the learner weekly into their bank account. If they are receiving a weekly travel pass then the amount of this will be deducted from their allocation.

Section 2 Assessment

Vulnerable learners entitled to a guaranteed *£1200 Bursary

Learners who are eligible for the vulnerable bursary will receive £8.00 per day for the number of days timetabled x number of weeks of their programme. This will be paid weekly for every day they attend CTS Training. If a learner does not meet the expected attendance, behaviour and effort then this could be withheld. It is up to the learner to pay for their travel and lunch and other expenses from this weekly payment. If a learner requires more than this amount due to an emergency and or unexpected costs then they can apply for additional expense from the discretionary bursary fund.

Discretionary Bursary (Learners facing financial hardship, household income below £30,000)

CTS Training will assess the young person's actual need for financial assistance before awarding a Bursary, this will be assessed by:

- Assessing household income by completing a CTS Training 16-19 Bursary Application form and providing evidence such as a benefit entitlement, wage slips, Tax Credit Award Notice or evidence of self-employment.
- The distance a learner has to travel to and from their place of study/placement.

Section 3 Application Process

During the recruitment and interview processes, it will be identified if learners are eligible for the two types of Bursary Fund.

All young people that would like to apply for the Bursary Fund are required to complete an application form and provide evidence for their claim; this includes those learners that are deemed vulnerable.

Once the completed application form is received with supporting evidence, CTS Training will confirm receipt and will assess the application and supporting evidence to determine if eligible and the amount to be awarded.

CTS Training will pay the allocated £1,200 to vulnerable young people in line with the CTS 16-19 Bursary Policy Annex and communicate to the young person the criteria for receiving payment based on attendance and behaviour.

For other young people, CTS training will confirm if applications for Discretionary Bursary have been successful and the amount that has been awarded to young people in line with the CTS 16-19 Bursary Policy Annex and communicate to the young person the criteria for receiving payment based on attendance and behaviour.

Section 4 General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

In accordance to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) personal information collected through the bursary assessment and application process, will only be used for the purpose of determining eligibility for the 16-19 Bursary Fund and when making Bursary payments. We will only keep your personal information for as long as we need it after which it will be securely destroyed.

Section 5 Payment Process

Young people eligible for the 16-19 Bursary Fund will receive weekly payments to reimburse their costs relating to their participation in learning e.g. travel, lunch and other associated costs for attending their course, provided that a young person has adhered to the terms and conditions laid out in the Learner's Induction Checklist. All young people are required to supply valid bank account details in their own name for payments to be made via BACS.

Where there are exceptional circumstances preventing a young person from receiving bursary funds directly CTS has the ability to make alternative payment methods to learners. Any exceptional circumstances must be recorded and retained in the learning funding file.

Once the application has been assessed and approved, CTS will write to the learner informing them of the amount to be awarded. Payments will be received within 10 days of receiving the application. CTS will only back date payments to discretionary bursary learners for a period of one month. For vulnerable learners, payments will be back dated to their start date unless they have had a change of circumstance to deem them vulnerable whilst on programme, in such cases we would back date to when the learner became vulnerable e.g. from when an Income support benefit entitlement is dated.

If/where a learner has been overpaid for whatever reason, CTS Training reserve the right to reclaim the amount overpaid. Where this is not possible, CTS Training will adjust future claims to compensate the overpayment. The following will apply:

- Where CTS Training has paid the learner bursary that they are not entitled to, for example due to incorrect declarations on the application, CTS Training can seek to recover the funds.
- Where CTS Training has made an error, for example the issue was not the learner's, CTS Training would not seek to recover the funds.

***CTS Training make note that the use of the 16-19 Bursary Fund to support transport related cost does not replace the statutory duty on local authorities to set out (in an annually published transport statement) the arrangements they will make to facilitate the participation in education or training of Young People. Bursaries to meet transport costs will be assessed at the application process where the costs have been identified as a barrier to the Young Persons participation.**

Section 6 Approval/Rejection of Payment

Approval of payment is subject to daily attendance which will be confirmed by the learners tutor. Learners will only be paid their bursary fund for the days that they have attended.

Payments can be withheld if learners have been reported to:

- Have had excessive lateness (over 30 minutes late and up to an hour late) (Attendance Code X will need to be used to ensure bursary is stopped)
- Have not contributed to their learning plan
- Broken the behaviour agreement with CTS Training

It is the responsibility of the tutor to record any failings by the learner to adhere to CTS Training terms and conditions of learning. This should be recorded on the daily electronic register within session outcomes. This will be reviewed weekly to ensure bursary payments are aligned to CTS Training policy.

Communication of the terms and conditions of the bursary fund are held within this policy the Bursary fact sheet, and Bursary application form. It is the responsibility of CTS Staff to make candidates aware of these points of reference.

Section 7 Change to Learner Circumstances

It is the learner's responsibility to inform CTS Training where their circumstances change for example, they are no longer deemed as vulnerable or they are no longer in financial hardship. Once a change has been identified, CTS Training will make the necessary arrangements to end a learners claim for the Bursary Fund i.e. no further payments will be made, whatever they may be (transport, meals, contingency fund). It is also a learner's responsibility to inform CTS Training if they fall into the vulnerable category or feel they are in financial hardship whilst on programme, CTS will help and support these learners to apply for the Bursary fund.

CTS Training will promote and support applications to the Bursary throughout the young person's time on programme and respond to any change in a learner's circumstances.

Where a learner changes their bank account for whatever reason, it is the learner's responsibility to notify CTS Training of their new details. If the learner fails to do so, CTS Training will take no responsibility for any loss of funds to the learner as, we would not be aware of the change of circumstances. Thus, payments will continue to be made into the previous bank account until we are notified otherwise. A learner can update their bank account details by asking a tutor for an Update to Bank Account Details form.

Section 8 Appeals/Complaints

Young people who wish to appeal towards decisions with the outcome of the Bursary application or where payment has been withheld due to attendance/behaviour, they should follow the CTS Training complaints procedure, which is made available during induction and throughout the young person's learning programme.

This policy is supported by:

16-19 Bursary Fact Sheet

Free Meals Fact Sheet

16-19 Bursary and Free Meals Application Form

Bursary and Free Meals assessment process

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/16-to-19-bursary-fund-guide-2019-to-2020-academic-year>