

# 16 – 19 BURSARY FUND

## Policy and Guidance 2011/2012

### What is it?

Financial assistance available to help Learners who are finding it difficult to commence or continue their study through financial hardship.

The scheme is made up of 3 categories providing levels of support depending on individual circumstances. All assistance is subject to the availability of funds. Each application is individually assessed and assistance is not an entitlement.

Support is assessed against household income. Means testing will be rigorous but not excessive. Supporting evidence of personal circumstances and/or relevant benefit evidence will be required. Other sources of financial support will be taken into consideration when processing applications.

### Who is eligible?

To be eligible for support you must be classified as

- a 'home' student for fee assessment purposes,
- enrolled on a funded course,
- be in care, a care leaver, receive or be dependent on someone who receives a relevant benefit,
- and/or can demonstrate a genuine financial hardship which is causing a barrier to learning.

### Priority groups

Priority will be given to

- Learners enrolling on to the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of a course
- Existing learners progressing to the next level

The following groups are **not** eligible for financial assistance

- Waged apprentices
- Learners on HE courses
- Learners in prison or released on temporary licence

Assessments will be made within 3 categories.

### CATEGORY 1

Who is eligible?

- a. Young people in care
- b. Care leavers
- c. Young people in receipt of income support
- d. Disabled young people in receipt of **both** Employment Support Allowance **and** Disability Living Allowance

### Level of support

Learners in category 1 will receive a bursary **up to a maximum of £1200** per academic year. This will provide help towards course costs, transport, food and other related costs needed to complete the course. Where appropriate, funds will be paid to a third party, not directly to the student and deducted from the total award. This may include a maximum food allowance of £525 per academic year paid directly on to college cards. Payments will be linked to attendance and meeting college expectations of coursework and behaviour.

## **CATEGORY 2**

Financial help for those who are dependant on someone in receipt of a relevant benefit who would have qualified for free school meals.

Relevant benefits:

- a. Income Support
- b. Job Seekers Allowance - Income Based
- c. Employment Support Allowance - Income related
- d. Child Tax Credits (but not Working Tax Credits) with income under £16,190

### **Level of support**

Learners in category 2 may apply for a bursary **up to a maximum of £800** per academic year for help towards course costs, transport, food and other related costs needed to complete the course. Where appropriate, funds will be paid to a third party, not directly to the student and deducted from the total award. This may include a maximum food allowance of £525 paid directly onto college cards. Payments will be linked to attendance and meeting college expectations of coursework and behaviour.

## **CATEGORY 3**

Financial help for those who are dependent on someone in receipt of Working Tax Credits (with annual income less than £15,276)

### **Level of support**

Learners in category 3 may apply for financial help **up to a maximum of £250** towards course costs, books, transport or other related costs needed to complete the course. Where appropriate, funds will be paid to a third party, not directly to the student. Payments will be linked to attendance and meeting college expectations of coursework and behaviour.

## **What do I do now?**

Check the prospectus carefully to ascertain what costs are attached to the course you wish to study.

See below for how The Bursary Fund can help. **Please note that financial assistance cannot exceed the total amounts awarded for each category.**

## **Learners on full time courses**

**Compulsory course costs / materials / books:** Costs payable at enrolment may be paid from the fund.

**Re-sit examination fees:** Cases will be individually assessed and applications will require supporting evidence of exceptional hardship.

**Travel:** In accordance with funding guidelines, applications for assistance with travel costs must, in the first instance, be made to the Local Education Authority. However, payment of the contribution towards the college travel scheme may be made providing you live further than 1.5 miles from the campus on which you will study and/or there are exceptional circumstances which require reasonable adjustments to the policy.

For more information please refer to the College Travel Scheme.

**Discretionary Payments:** Discretionary payments can be considered for college associated costs which have been identified as a barrier to participating in learning.

### **Regular Bursary Payments**

#### **Category 1**

- Learners will be entitled to a bursary of **up to £1,200** per academic year.
- Associated costs will be deducted from the total award.
- Remaining payments will be calculated and paid half-termly for weeks where conditions have been met.

#### **Category 2**

- Learners can apply for a bursary of **up to £800** per academic year
- Associated costs will be deducted from the total award.
- Remaining payments will be calculated and paid half-termly for weeks where conditions have been met.

### **How do I apply?**

Complete a Financial Support application form. All applications are assessed on receipt of a correctly completed application form, within the priority groups. As funds are limited an early application is advisable.

Applications must be received by 1<sup>st</sup> August 2011. Applications received after this date will not receive priority assessment.

Later applications will be accepted and assessed in order of receipt.

### **Learners on part time courses**

Please note financial assistance is not available to cover personal registrations or membership fees to professional bodies (e.g. AAT).

**Materials / Books:** Costs payable at enrolment may be paid from the fund.

### **How do I apply?**

Complete section 9, (Financial Support) of the part time course application form. Learners enrolling onto the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of a course should complete a 'Financial Support for part-time courses' application form. All applications are assessed on receipt of a correctly completed application form within the priority groups. As funds are limited an early application is advisable.

Applications must be received by 1<sup>st</sup> August 2011. Applications received after this date will not receive priority assessment.

Later applications will be accepted and assessed in order of receipt.

### **When will I know my application has been accepted?**

All assistance is subject to the availability of funds.

Confirmation of the outcome of your application will be sent in writing or emailed after the closing date.

If all funds have been allocated your details will be recorded on a waiting list and you will receive written/emailed confirmation.

### **When do I provide the benefit evidence?**

You will be sent a date and time to attend for enrolment. Please bring the evidence with you. If you do not, you risk reserved funds being reallocated.

If you do not attend for enrolment reserved funds will be reallocated.

At enrolment you will be asked to complete and sign for confirmation of allocated funds. Your benefit evidence will be photocopied and retained on file. Please note that periodically you may be asked to provide evidence that your entitlement to benefit continues.

### **Additional Information**

#### **Bursary Payments**

- Applications for half-termly bursary payments will not be processed at enrolment – dates will be offered during the first week of the autumn term.
- For any BACS payments learners will be required to have a bank account.
- 1st payment will be made w/b 19<sup>th</sup> September 2011 and subsequent payments will be made by the end of the first week following the half-term break.
- Payments will be subject to attending all required lessons and meeting college expectations of coursework and behaviour. Absences need to be discussed with personal tutors and if not authorised may result in non payment of awards.

Where there are exceptional circumstances, reasonable adjustments to the policy can be made.

The information provided is correct at time of publication but may be subject to change in line with Government guidelines.

If you require advice or information please contact Lynne Sterry on ext 3404 or at [sterryl@chelmsford.ac.uk](mailto:sterryl@chelmsford.ac.uk)

This policy applies to the academic year 2011/2012 and is reviewed annually.

**All financial assistance is subject to the availability of funds**

