



16 – 19 Bursary Fund

POLICY & APPLICATION FORM 2025 - 2026

1. Introduction

The Government has set aside some money for schools to allocate to young people who need financial support to stay on in further education or training, this is called the 16-19 Bursary Fund. The 16-19 Bursary Fund is designed to help support those young people who face the greatest barriers to continuing in education or training post-16.

Students who are eligible for this bursary must **apply by 30th September 2024** and must also supply the required evidence to support their application. Students who meet the requirements of the funding will be allocated a sum of money that they can access throughout the current academic year to support their post 16 education, which is subject to 'Conditions of Funding', see below.

You must read this document carefully to ensure that you fully understand the requirements of the bursary and that you do not miss important application deadlines which are non-negotiable. To further assist you, a frequently asked questions (FAQ) document is attached at the back of this application form and should hopefully answer any queries or concerns that you may have.

2. Criteria and Eligibility

To be eligible to receive a bursary the student must be:

- Aged over 16
- Under 19 on 31st August in their final year of study (If a student turns 19 during their programme of study, they can continue to get the bursary to the end of the academic year in which they turn 19, or to the end of the programme of study, whichever is sooner.)
- Students must meet the residency criteria set out by the EFA (A person on 1 September who is settled in the UK, and has been ordinarily resident in the UK and Islands for the three years preceding the 1 September.)
- Aged 16 or over and have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) due to their high needs.

The 16-19 Bursary Fund has two elements:

1. Bursary for Defined Vulnerable Group:

Defined Vulnerable Group bursary students are those who meet the criteria below and have a financial need:

- Young people in care
- Care leavers
- Young people **personally** in receipt of income support or Universal Credit
- Young people **personally** in receipt of Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments as well as Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit.

These students may receive up to £1,200 for the year which will be paid on a monthly basis via BACs (one week in arrears) provided the student meets the 'Conditions of Funding', see below.

Please note that original documentation will be required by the school at the point of application, refer to the application form to determine the evidence required.

2. **Discretionary bursary Group:**

Eligible applicants are identified as those who have a financial need and fall under one of the three 'Student Tiers of Need' and the bursary payment levels will be assessed for each eligible student and prioritised as follows;

- **Student Tier A** – Students who have successfully claimed Free School Meals* for the current academic year whose home Household income is less than £16,480.
- **Student Tier B** – Students whose home Household income is between £16,481 - £21,589.
- **Student Tier C** - Students whose home Household income is between £21,590 - £26,554.

Please note: Original sources of evidence of household income will be required by the school at the point of application. Please refer to the application form to determine the evidence required.

***Free School Meals**

Existing Rushden Academy students who have claimed free school meals in Year 11 can continue to do so into the Sixth Form, subject to the usual periodic re-assessment of eligibility.

External students into our Sixth Form who have been eligible for free school meals at their previous school, or whose circumstances have changed and who feel that they may now be eligible, will need to apply for FSM. The free school meal entitlement is currently £2.30 per day and can only be used to offset items purchased at lunchtime; purchases above this value or items purchased at break times will require payment.

Any additional funding will need to be in agreement with, and authorised by, the Director of Sixth Form and will be allocated on the basis of need and availability of the funds.

3. **Conditions of Funding**

Students will be reviewed termly and must meet the academy's agreed standards of academic progress, learning, behaviour and good attendance (minimum attendance of 90% with zero unauthorised absences). If a student fails to meet these conditions, then the bursary may be withdrawn.

In order to access funding, students, parents or carers must submit a request and all items will be ordered through the Director of ks5. In cases where this is not possible, i.e. online ordering is not available then receipts will be accepted and refunds given through BACCs payments.

UCAS payments – these will be paid by the student on application and refunded via BACCs.

4. **Criteria for Financial Support**

The bursary is to be used to provide financial support for:

- Clothing/uniform which meets the Sixth Form dress code
- Course related equipment or resources, excluding laptops which are available from the Sixth Form office

- Resit examination fees
- Assistance with costs of subject specific educational visits
- University open days associated costs
- University & apprenticeship interview travel costs
- UCAS application cost
- Work Experience risk assessment and travel/uniform costs
- Assistance with ongoing transport costs
- Specific costs linked to costs related to family emergency or change in circumstance

In order to access the funding, the student must submit requests for the items needed and we will order and pay from them for you. They will be delivered to the sixth form office where applicable for collection.

Wellbeing

Bursary funding will be used to finance resources and experiences to benefit student wellbeing. These will include:

- Chamber wellbeing presentations and practical PT sessions
- Furnishings to improve communal areas – common room
- Rewards
- Staff training and resources for students with medical needs who are in receipt of bursary

Students in receipt of this bursary will not be eligible or granted any further financial support from the academy with help towards additional wellbeing costs.

5. Applications

Applications to the 16-19 Bursary Fund will be accepted from 1st September each academic year through to the end of the academic year or until the funding has been fully allocated, whichever is sooner.

Students must complete the application form in full and provide evidence of household income and/or benefits as requested.

Students will also be required to inform the school of any changes in their financial circumstances during the academic year and may also make more than one application to the fund if their circumstances change significantly.

Where the student's circumstances change in-year and they become eligible as a vulnerable learner, they will receive a pro-rata amount of the vulnerable learner bursary, which will be from the date the student became eligible to the end of the academic year. Where a student is enrolled and there are less than 30 weeks of the academic year remaining then the vulnerable group bursary will be adjusted to an appropriate pro-rata amount.

We reserve the right to request repayment of all or part of any payment received and/or return equipment provided if a student withdraws from their course. Students may be asked to return books or equipment at the end of their course.

The final decision of the level of bursary support will be at the discretion of the Director of Sixth Form and is non-negotiable

5. In year applications

Applications which are received after 30th September 2024 will be considered and students will receive a reduced bursary.

6. Procedure for application

To make an application, a student should first obtain advice from the Sixth Form support team. Students are advised to clarify they have the correct evidence before submitting their application forms as inadequate evidence will not be accepted and those students who miss the initial deadline of 30th September 2024 will then receive a reduced bursary amount.

Evidence of income will be required for each application, e.g. Evidence of benefits, P60, tax credit award notice and evidence of self-employment. At the bursary Panel’s discretion, the above criteria may be waived in the event of students facing a unique financial barrier to learning. Each case will be considered individually and further information may be required to support the application.

Once the application form is complete with the evidence of eligibility attached, these should be placed in an envelope marked ‘Private and Confidential’ and handed in to the Sixth Form office.

All applications for a bursary will be assessed by the bursary panel, consisting of:

- *Director of Key Stage 5*
- *6th form administrator*

The panel will meet termly to review the bursary fund to ensure it is being optimised to support all students who are eligible.

Appeals

The student or their parent/guardian/carer have the right to appeal against the decision made about their application. The appeal should be in the form of a letter to the Director of Sixth Form who, with the bursary panel and Sixth Form designated Governor or Chair of Governors, will consider and respond to the appeal within two weeks of receipt.

All information supplied will be treated in the strictest confidence throughout the process and all original documentation will be returned once the applications have been verified.

7. Further Information

Any unallocated funds from the Discretionary Bursary Contingency Fund will be spent at the discretion of the Director of Sixth Form solely for the benefit of those students in receipt of the bursary.

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| Next review: | June 2027 |
| Abbie Owen (Director KS5) | |

16 - 19 Bursary Fund Application Form

| Part 1: Student Details | |
|-------------------------|----------------|
| Name: | Date of Birth: |
| Address: | |
| Post Code: | |
| Contact Number: | |

Please complete Part 2 or Part 3 to confirm your eligibility:

| Part 2: Defined Vulnerable bursary Group | Mark (X) | Evidence Required |
|---|----------|---|
| Young People In Care | | Written confirmation of students' current looked after status from the relevant local authority. |
| Care Leavers | | Written confirmation of students' previous looked-after status from the relevant local authority. |
| Young people personally in receipt of income support or Universal Credit | | Income support or Universal Credit award notice in the student's name. |
| Young people personally in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payments (PIP) as well as Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit. | | Universal Credit Claim in student's name from DWP plus evidence of receipt of DLA or PIP. |

| Part 3: Discretionary bursary Group | Mark (X) | Evidence Required |
|---|----------|---|
| Student Tier A - Students who have successfully claimed Free School Meals for the current academic year or whose home <u>Household income</u> is less than £16,480 | | Original Local Authority Free School Meals letter /school transition data / Original Tax Credit Award Notice annual statement for the period 06/04/2022 to 05/04/2023 from HMRC clearly showing household income / Universal Credit award notices for the 3 most recent months. |
| Student Tier B – Students whose home <u>Household income</u> is between £16,481-£21,589 | | Original Tax Credit Award Notice annual statement for the period 06/04/2022 to 05/04/2023 from HMRC clearly showing household income / Universal Credit award notices for the 3 most recent months. |

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| Student Tier C - Students whose home <u>Household income</u> is between £21,590-£26,554 | Original Tax Credit Award Notice annual statement for the period 06/04/2022 to 05/04/2023 from HMRC clearly showing household income / Universal Credit award notices for the 3 most recent months. |
|--|---|

| Part 4: Living arrangements | Mark (X) | Part 5: My house is in receipt of Evidence will be required, this may include the following: P60, recent payslip, free school meal eligibility) | Mark (X) |
|---|----------|--|----------|
| Living with both parents | | Universal Credit | |
| Living with single parent | | Working tax credit | |
| Living alone or in shared accommodation | | Job seekers allowance | |
| Living in care or leaving care | | Employment support allowance | |
| | | Council tax benefit | |
| | | Housing benefit | |
| | | Guaranteed Element of Pension Credit | |
| | | Not in receipt of any of the above | |

Please note: **Original sources of evidence will be required by the school at the point of application.** These will be returned to you.

Declaration

I declare that the statements made on this form are true, and to the best of my knowledge and belief, are correct in every respect. I undertake to supply any additional information that may be required to verify the particulars given. I understand that if I refuse to provide information relevant to my claim the application will not be accepted. I also undertake to inform the school of any alteration to any of the particulars in writing.

I agree to repay the school in full and immediately any sums/resources advanced to me if the information I have given is shown to be false or deliberately misleading.

I am aware that should I fail to meet the 'Conditions of Funding' then my bursary may be greatly reduced or withdrawn.

I am aware that the funding covers only this school year and that I must reapply next year; there is no guarantee that I will receive funding for future years even if I am eligible for the current year.

Students and their families should be aware that if false or incomplete information is submitted, or if they do not tell institutions about any part of their income that is relevant, the matter may be referred to the Department for Education or the police. The student and/or their family could face prosecution and institutions will seek to recover any payments the student is not eligible for.

- I have read and agree fully to the terms and conditions of the 16 -19 Bursary Fund
- I have attached original evidence as required

Signed:

Date:

Print Name:

Signature of Parent/Carer

Please return this completed application in an envelope marked Private & Confidential to Director of ks5.

| | | |
|------------------------|--|--------------|
| Authorised: | | Date: |
| Counter signed: | | Date: |
| Amount awarded: | | |

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)

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| Q: | How much money will I receive? |
| A: | Unless you fall into the Defined Vulnerable Group, the amount of funding you will receive will be dependent on which tier you fall into, but also how many students apply for the funding as the calculation used is split between the numbers of applicants. Those students who fall into the Defined Vulnerable Group may receive an annual payment of goods and services of up to £1,200 provided they meet the criteria and have a financial need. |
| Q: | I qualified for the bursary last year – do I still need to apply? |
| A: | Yes – to qualify for any funding from September 2022, everyone will need to submit a new application with original HMRC evidence for this current year. You will also need to bear in mind that if you still qualify, the amount of monetary support you receive may differ to what you received last year. |
| Q: | Who has decided the income thresholds for eligibility for the different Tiers of funding? |
| A: | The income thresholds have been agreed based on the first threshold of the tax credit rates published by HMRC. |
| Q: | When will I get my allocation? |
| A: | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. You will need to check with the Sixth Form support team that the items you wish to purchase are eligible. 2. Submit your request to the 6th form office and the items will be purchased on your behalf. |

Further guidance can be obtained by looking on the website: www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund