

Policy Name	16-19 Bursary Policy
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E & D Policy Disclaimer	<p>This policy has been reviewed in line with the Equality Act 2010 which recognises the following categories as Protected Characteristics: Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion and Belief, Sex (gender) and Sexual orientation. We will continue to monitor this policy to ensure that it provides equal access and does not discriminate against anyone, especially any person/s listed under any protected characteristic.</p>

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1. Introduction

1.1. This policy explains the financial support available to students aged 16 to 19 during the 2025–26 academic year. It sets out who can apply, what support is available, and what students need to do to keep receiving help.

1.2. The aim of the bursary fund is to help students overcome financial barriers so they can take part in education, succeed in their studies, and achieve their goals.

1.3. There are three types of support available:

- **Discretionary bursary** – to help with costs like travel, meals, books, equipment, trips, and other course-related expenses.
- **Vulnerable student bursary** – for students in specific circumstances, such as those in care or receiving certain benefits. This is worth up to £1,200 a year depending on need.
- **Residential bursary** – to help with accommodation costs if a student needs to live away from home to attend a course.
- **Care to Learn** – support for students under 20 with childcare and travel costs, now administered by the College

1.4. This policy applies to all eligible students studying at any of the Bedford College Group campuses, including Bedford College, Central Bedfordshire College, Shuttleworth College, The Bedford Sixth Form, The Corby Sixth Form, and the National College for Motorsport.

2. Eligibility

2.1. To apply for support from the 16–19 Bursary Fund, students must meet the following general conditions:

- Be aged 16 or over but under 19 on 31 August 2025.
- Be aged 19 or over and continuing a course started when they were under 19 (known as a “19+ continuer”), or
- Be aged 19 to 24 and have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).
- Meet the residency requirements set out in the government’s funding rules.
- Be enrolled on an eligible course funded by the Department for Education (DFE). This includes most publicly funded qualifications up to and including Level 3.

2.2. Students must also provide information about their household income or other circumstances to help the College assess their level of need. Details about what evidence is required can be found in Annex A.

2.3. Students taking part in a King’s Trust Team Programme can apply for support in the same way as other students.

2.4. To qualify for the Vulnerable Student Bursary, a student must be in one of the following groups and be able to provide the right evidence:

- In care or a care leaver
- Receiving Income Support or Universal Credit because they are financially supporting themselves (or themselves and someone else who depends on them)
- Receiving Disability Living Allowance (or Personal Independence Payment) and Employment and Support Allowance (or Universal Credit) in their own right

2.5. Students applying for the Residential Bursary Fund must meet the above criteria and need to live away from home to attend a specialist course not available locally or that requires unsociable hours. The accommodation provider must be approved by the college to offer residential support.

2.6. If you are a parent aged under 20 on the day your course starts, you may be eligible for help with childcare and travel through the government's Care to Learn scheme. From 2025–26, this scheme is managed directly by the College. You must complete a separate application form and provide evidence of your childcare arrangements and timetable.

Funding is awarded based on need and regular attendance, and payments are made directly to approved childcare providers.

Care to Learn is separate from the 16–19 Bursary Fund. You may apply for both if eligible, but they are assessed independently.

2.7. The following students are not eligible for bursary support:

- Those on an apprenticeship or waged training programme
- Those on higher skills (university-level) courses
- Those aged 19 or over on 31 August 2025 who do not have an EHCP and are not continuing a course started before their 19th birthday

2.8. Students can apply more than once in the same academic year if their circumstances change or if they join a new course.

2.9. In exceptional cases of demonstrable hardship, support may be awarded to students who do not meet the standard eligibility criteria or would not usually receive a particular type or level of support, provided this is in line with current DFE guidance. The Bursary Appeals Panel may exercise this discretion on a case-by-case basis. Any wider or ongoing changes to eligibility or support arrangements must be agreed by the full Bursary Panel and approved by the Chair.

2.10. Any decisions made under discretionary arrangements must be clearly documented, with the rationale recorded on the student's bursary record. This ensures transparency and allows for internal monitoring and audit. All such decisions will be reviewed periodically by the Bursary Panel to ensure consistency and alignment with policy objectives.

3. Assessment Criteria

- 3.1. All bursary applications are assessed based on total gross household income. This ensures that support is targeted to those with the greatest financial need.
- 3.2. Students from households with a total income of up to £42,500 per year may apply for bursary support. Awards are based on assessed need and the availability of funds and are not guaranteed.
- 3.3. New applicants must provide up-to-date evidence of household income. A full list of acceptable documentation is provided in **Annex A**.
- 3.4. Returning students who received bursary support in the previous academic year do not need to resubmit income evidence unless their circumstances have changed. They will be required to complete a self-declaration confirming their situation remains the same.
- 3.5. All students applying for help with residential costs must provide full household income evidence, regardless of whether they received support previously.
- 3.6. Household income includes earnings from employment, taxable benefits such as Universal Credit, and self-employment income. Child Benefit, Disability Living Allowance (DLA), and Personal Independence Payment (PIP) are excluded.
- 3.7. For households in receipt of Universal Credit, the College will usually require the last three full monthly award statements. Income is calculated by adding net earnings (take-home pay) and the Universal Credit payment (after deductions) and multiplying the total by four to estimate annual income.
- 3.8. For self-employed individuals, gross profit (total income minus allowable business expenses) is used. Personal living costs such as food or mortgage payments are not considered business expenses.
- 3.9. A declaration must be completed and signed by the student (or their parent/guardian) to confirm that the information and evidence provided is complete and accurate. Applications cannot be processed without this.
- 3.10. Continued eligibility for bursary support is conditional on meeting College expectations for attendance and conduct, as outlined in the Code of Conduct and **Annex B**.
- 3.11. The College reserves the right to reduce, withhold, or reclaim bursary payments if attendance or behaviour standards are not met.
- 3.12. Applications submitted by the guaranteed deadline of **15 August 2025** will be given priority. Later applications will only be considered if funding remains available.
- 3.13. Online applications will remain open until the fund is fully allocated or until the published closing date. The College reserves the right to close or extend the application window depending on the availability of funds.

4. Discretionary Bursary Funds

- 4.1. The discretionary bursary is for students who need financial help to take part in their course. It is awarded based on individual need and household income.

4.2. Support may be provided in the following areas:

- Travel to and from college or work placements
- Course-related costs (such as books, equipment, or uniform)
- Help with meals during the college day
- Loan of IT equipment
- Emergency support during times of financial difficulty
- Specialist equipment for industry placements
- Help with exam resit or registration fees (where applicable)
- Support with internet access or mobile data
- In-kind support for students without access to a UK bank account

4.3. The amount awarded to each student should be based on what they need and how much funding is available. Awards must be reasonable in relation to the government funding the College receives for the student's course and should reflect good use of public funds.

4.4. The College may set notional budgets for each area of support. Once a budget is fully used, no more awards can be made for that category unless funds are reallocated.

4.5. Transfers between categories (for example, from travel to emergency support) may be made where permitted under government rules. These transfers must be recommended by the Bursary Panel and authorised by the Chair. All transfers should be clearly recorded and must not compromise the overall integrity of the scheme or any funding conditions.

Travel Support

4.6. Students who live more than three miles from their main study site or placement can apply for help with travel costs. Distances are calculated using the shortest safe walking route.

4.7. Support may include a bus pass, fuel payment, or other travel help depending on what is most suitable and cost-effective.

4.8. Travel support is based on where the student studies. Full details are in **Annex C**.

4.9. The College may offer different support if it is more suitable or better value.

4.10. Travel support is usually only provided during term time.

4.11. Students on extended work placements (such as T Levels) can apply for additional travel support if it is not already covered. See **Annex D** for more information.

Essential Course Costs

4.12. The College works with teaching staff to identify what course costs are essential and how much support students may need. This includes costs for items such as equipment, protective clothing, study visits, and other materials directly required to complete the qualification.

4.13. Bursary funding can only be used to support learning activities and experiences that contribute to a student's study programme goals or course objectives. Activities must be clearly linked to at least one of the qualifications in the student's study programme and help to break down barriers to opportunity. Support for overseas trips will only be considered where the same learning experience cannot reasonably be accessed in England at a lower cost.

4.14. Details of available support by course or subject area are listed in Annex F.

Loan Equipment

4.15. The College operates a loan scheme for IT devices and other learning equipment.

4.16. Students can apply if they need a laptop or other equipment to access online learning or complete their course. Priority is given to those with the lowest household income and greatest need.

4.17. All loaned items remain the property of the College and must be returned when the student finishes or leaves their course.

4.18. Full details of the scheme and eligibility are in Annex E.

Meals

4.19. Students may be entitled to free meals if they or their parent or guardian receive certain benefits. Free meals are provided on the days the student is attending a study programme or placement that is part of their course. This also includes days where the student is attending exams, revision sessions, or planned College events that are linked to their course but not part of their normal timetable.

4.20. To qualify, a student must be aged 16–18 on 31 August 2025, or be a 19+ continuer, or have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). They must also be in receipt of, or have parents who receive, one of the following:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided they are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190 as assessed by HMRC)
- Working Tax Credit run-on (paid for four weeks after someone stops qualifying for Working Tax Credit)
- Universal Credit with net earnings not exceeding £7,400 per year (after tax and not including benefits)

4.21. Free meals are usually provided through the College's catering outlets. If this is not possible, the College will agree an alternative arrangement.

4.22. Students receive a daily meal allowance. The current value and payment method are shown in Annex C.

- 4.23. Students who were eligible for free meals before April 2018 are protected under transitional arrangements. They will continue to receive free meals for the duration of their current study programme, even if their household circumstances change, in line with current DFE guidance.

Emergency Hardship Support

- 4.24. The College sets aside a small emergency fund for students facing sudden or severe financial hardship during the academic year.
- 4.25. Students can apply at any time. Awards are made to help with essential costs such as food, transport, or other urgent needs that would otherwise stop a student from attending college.
- 4.26. Emergency meals can be provided even if household income evidence is not available. Students will be asked to confirm the number of days the meals were received and sign a short declaration.
- 4.27. These awards are temporary and based on a student's immediate need. The level of support available is shown in **Annex C**.

Additional Support

- 4.28. Students on industry placements (such as T Levels) may also apply for help with specialist equipment or clothing needed for their placement. The amount of support will depend on household income and the actual cost.
- 4.29. Students who are charged for exam resits or registration fees may apply for help with these costs if they are necessary to complete their course and they cannot afford them.
- 4.30. Students who do not have access to broadband at home may be able to receive help with mobile data or a Wi-Fi dongle. This is subject to availability.
- 4.31. Students who are unable to open a UK bank account can still receive in-kind support such as travel passes, meal credits, or loaned equipment. BACS payments will not normally be made in these cases unless approved under exceptional circumstances as outlined in Section 4.31 and 8.5.
- 4.32. Where a student is unable to open a UK bank account and in-kind support is not appropriate or sufficient, a payment to another person's bank account may be considered in exceptional cases. These must be approved by the Bursary Panel and will follow the rules set out in Section 8.5.

5. Vulnerable Learner Bursary

- 5.1. Students in certain circumstances may be eligible for a Vulnerable Student Bursary of up to £1,200 per academic year. This funding is to help with the cost of essential course-related expenses, such as travel, meals, and equipment.
- 5.2. The bursary is only awarded based on need. Students will be asked to provide information about their actual participation costs, and the amount awarded will reflect what they require to take part in learning. The full £1,200 is not awarded automatically.

- 5.3. To qualify, students must be aged 16 to 18 on 31 August 2025 (or a 19+ continuer or have an EHCP) and be in one of the following groups:
- In care or a care leaver
 - Receiving Income Support, or Universal Credit because they are financially supporting themselves (or themselves and someone else who depends on them, such as a child or partner)
 - Receiving Disability Living Allowance (or Personal Independence Payment) and Employment and Support Allowance (or Universal Credit) in their own right
- 5.4. Students must provide the appropriate evidence to support their application. The list of accepted documents is included in Annex A.
- 5.5. If a student joins a vulnerable group during the academic year (for example, they move into care or start receiving a qualifying benefit), they may become eligible for a bursary at that point. The amount will be adjusted based on the number of weeks remaining in the year.
- 5.6. If a student is studying on a course that is fewer than 30 weeks long, their award will be calculated on a pro-rata basis. For example, a student on a 15-week course may receive up to £600.
- 5.7. The College claims funding for each eligible student through the DfE sign in account.
- 5.8. If a student leaves their course early, any unspent bursary funds will be returned to the College and can be reallocated to support other vulnerable students.
- 5.9. If a student receiving a vulnerable bursary needs additional help that exceeds the value of £1,200 (for example, because of high travel or residential costs), they may also apply for further support from the Discretionary Bursary Fund. This will be assessed separately based on need.

6. Residential

- 6.1. The Residential Bursary Fund (RBF) helps eligible students with the cost of accommodation so they can attend a specialist course that is not available locally.
- 6.2. This support is available only for students studying at a campus approved to deliver residential bursaries. At Bedford College Group, this includes Shuttleworth College and the National College for Motorsport.
- 6.3. Students can apply if they meet the general bursary eligibility criteria (see Section 2) and need to live away from home because:
The course is not available locally, or
They need to attend early or late sessions and cannot reasonably travel each day
- 6.4. Students must also show that they would not be able to continue their education without help towards accommodation costs.
- 6.5. Priority is usually given to students who live furthest from the campus and have limited or no access to public transport.

- 6.6. Students receiving a residential bursary may also apply for help with travel. Travel between their accommodation and study or placement site may be funded through the Residential Bursary Fund (RBF), provided it falls within DFE limits. However, travel between the student's home and their term-time accommodation must be supported through the Discretionary Learner Support (DLS) fund and assessed separately. In both cases, students must live more than three miles from their study location, measured using the shortest safe walking route, to be eligible.
- 6.7. Students receiving residential support may also apply for support with course costs or meals through the Discretionary Bursary Fund.
- 6.8. If a student qualifies for both a Vulnerable Student Bursary and a Residential Bursary, the College will assess their needs to decide how best to support them. They may receive a combination of both bursaries, but the funding must not duplicate the same costs.
- 6.9. Support is awarded termly or monthly, depending on the study site. Details of the amounts available are shown in **Annex C**.
- 6.10. Travel costs paid from the Residential Bursary Fund must stay within DFE limits. This means no more than 15% of the College's residential bursary allocation can be spent on travel support, or a maximum of £25,000 — whichever is lower.
- 6.11. Students receiving RBF support must provide evidence of income, even if they received bursary support last year.
- 6.12. If a student leaves their course early or changes to a non-residential course, their bursary may be adjusted or stopped. Any unused funds must be returned to the DFE.

7. Care to Learn

- 7.1. The Care to Learn scheme provides help with childcare and related travel costs for students aged under 20 at the start of their course. It is designed to support young parents to stay in education.
- 7.2. From 2025–26, Care to Learn is managed directly by the College. If you would like to apply, you must complete a separate application form and provide evidence of your childcare provider, your child's details, and your weekly timetable.
- 7.3. To be eligible, you must:
- Be aged under 20 on the day your course begins
 - Be the main carer of your child
 - Be enrolled on a publicly funded course in England at a provider subject to inspection by Ofsted (this includes most courses funded by the DFE)
- 7.4. If your application is approved, funding can help pay for:
- Childcare costs (up to £180 per child per week)
 - Travel between your home, childcare provider, and the College
- 7.5. Payments will be made directly to your childcare provider, not to you. The College will confirm your attendance before any payment is released.

- 7.6. If your attendance drops or your course ends, support may be reduced or stopped. It is your responsibility to let the Bursary Team know about any changes to your childcare arrangements.
- 7.7. The College receives a small administration contribution from the government to help run the scheme. This does not affect the amount of support you can receive.
- 7.8. Care to Learn is separate from the 16–19 Bursary Fund. If you meet the criteria, you can apply for both types of support, but they are assessed and awarded independently.
- 7.9. If you need help with your Care to Learn application or want to speak to someone about childcare options, please contact the Student Services Team.

8. Payments

- 8.1. Bursary awards are paid using a clear schedule, depending on what the support is for. Some items (like equipment or course costs) may be paid as one-off awards, while others (like travel or meals) may be paid regularly across the academic year.
- 8.2. Students will receive a bursary award letter showing the amount awarded and how the support will be provided.
- 8.3. Most bursary payments will be made by BACS transfer into the student's own UK bank account. If a student is unable to open a bank account, alternative in-kind support (such as meal credits or travel passes) may be provided instead in line with Clause 4.30. If you are receiving support through the Care to Learn scheme, your childcare provider will be paid directly after your attendance is confirmed. Care to Learn payments are managed separately from the bursary and are not paid to students.
- 8.4. Bursary payments are usually made to the student's own UK bank account. If a student provides bank details that are not in their name, the Bursary Team will contact the student to request updated details. Payments will not be released unless appropriate authorisation is in place. If the student is unable or unwilling to update the details, the case will be reviewed under Clause 8.5. Where necessary, the matter may be referred to the Bursary Appeals Panel or Student Bursary Panel for a final decision.
- 8.5. In exceptional circumstances, payments may be made to another person's account. This will only be allowed in the following cases and must be approved by the College:
 - Students receiving a Vulnerable Student Bursary
 - Where there is a safeguarding concern
 - Other exceptional cases considered on a case-by-case basis by the Student Bursary Panel.
- 8.6. Students are strongly encouraged to open their own bank account as early as possible. If students do not yet have a bank account, the College can offer guidance. We may also invite local banks to attend Discovery Days to help students open accounts on site.
- 8.7. Some types of support are not paid directly to students. For example:
Meal awards are usually loaded onto the student's ID card to use in the College catering outlets

Equipment and IT devices are issued on loan and must be returned
Travel support may be provided as a travel pass or monthly allowance

8.8. Payments are linked to attendance and behaviour. Students are expected to:

- Attend at least 90% of their timetabled lessons and placements (including exams and scheduled College events)
- Follow the standards set out in the Student Charter. If attendance or behaviour falls below expectations, bursary payments may be paused or stopped.

8.9. The College will consider any mitigating circumstances (such as illness, bereavement, or caring responsibilities) before deciding to reduce or stop a bursary. Students should speak to their Tutor or the Student Services Team if they are concerned.

8.10. Bursary payments will not be made during periods when a student is absent from College, unless authorised by the College in advance.

8.11. The payment profiles for travel support and other recurring awards are listed in Annex G.

8.12. Students must inform the College immediately if their bank account details change during the academic year. Payments made to an incorrect or closed account because of outdated or incorrect details may not be recoverable. In such cases, the student may be asked to repay the value of the lost bursary where recovery is not possible.

8.13. The College may ask students to repay part or all of a bursary if:

- The student withdraws from their course early
- The student fails to return loaned equipment
- The student receives funding they were not entitled to
- A bursary payment was made to an incorrect or closed bank account because the student did not notify the College of updated bank details

8.14. Where travel support has been awarded in the form of a bus pass or equivalent, and the student's attendance falls below the minimum expected threshold, the College reserves the right to adjust future travel support. If the value of support provided exceeds the most cost-effective method available, an alternative form of travel support may be offered instead. This will be based on attendance monitoring and the student's ongoing need, and will always comply with DFE guidance.

9. Governance and Discretion

9.1. The Student Bursary Panel is responsible for ensuring bursary decisions align with College policy, DFE guidance, and available funds.

9.2. In exceptional cases of extreme hardship, the Chair of the Panel may approve support outside standard eligibility rules (see section 2.9), provided such decisions comply with funding requirements and are appropriately documented.

- 9.3. The Panel may also recommend procedural changes or temporary flexibilities, where justified, without requiring Executive approval, as long as no core policy principle is compromised

10. Other sources of financial support

- 10.1. In addition to the 16–19 Bursary Fund, there are other types of financial support that may be available to students. These include national schemes, external bursaries, and awards for specific groups or study areas.

10.2. Connolly Foundation Bursary

A non-means-tested bursary for students living in Bedford Borough who are studying certain vocational courses, such as Electrical, Engineering, Construction, Plumbing, and Health & Social Care. Applications must be made separately, and students must meet the Foundation's eligibility criteria.

10.3. Brunel Centre of Bedford Bursary

Available to students living in Bedford Borough who are studying Engineering at the Brunel Centre. This award is not based on income and supports course-related costs.

10.4. Grand Prix Trust Bursary

A non-means-tested award funded by the Grand Prix Trust, available to students studying at the National College for Motorsport. It supports additional course costs and requires a separate application.

10.5. Higher Education Bursaries

Learners enrolled on Higher Education courses may be eligible for the Higher Skills Progression Bursary, Higher Skills Travel Bursary and the Higher Skills Hardship Bursary.

10.6. Additional Targeted Awards

The College or its partners may offer other bursaries or incentives during the year. These may be based on the course you are taking, your location, or other specific circumstances. Details will be shared directly with eligible students.

10.7 How to Get Advice

If you are unsure what support you might be entitled to, contact the Student Services Team. They can explain your options and help you apply.

11. Administration

- 11.1. Applications for Vulnerable Learner Bursaries and Emergency Hardship Bursaries are processed centrally by the Student Services Team, regardless of where a student studies.

- 11.2. All other bursary applications will be processed by the Finance Team, who also maintain financial oversight of the fund.
- 11.3. In cases of extreme hardship where a student is facing exceptional circumstances that create a barrier to learning or participation, a member of the Student Services Team may process the application directly. This is permitted where the request aligns with the bursary policy but needs to be escalated due to the urgency or nature of the student's situation.
- 11.4. Bursary funds cannot be transferred between scheme types. In particular:
- Residential Bursary Fund (RBF) allocations must not be used for any other purpose
 - Discretionary and Vulnerable Learner Bursary funding cannot be transferred into the Residential Fund
 - Any unspent RBF funds must be returned to the DFE at year-end
- 11.5. From May 2025 onwards, any unspent Vulnerable Learner Bursary (VLB) funds claimed through the DfE Sign In may be added to the College's Discretionary Bursary allocation, in line with DFE rules.

12. Monitoring

- 12.1. The Student Bursary Panel meets fortnightly during August, September, and October to review applications and discuss bursary matters. From November onwards, the panel meets at least once per half term or as needed. The panel's Terms of Reference are set out in Annex H.
- 12.2. The Financial Accountant and the Accounts Manager are responsible for monitoring the fund. The Finance Team record, track, and review all bursary commitments each month to ensure spending remains within the available allocation.
- 12.3. An annual bursary funding return is submitted to the DFE in February, with a final year-end reconciliation due in October.
- 12.4. The College monitors take-up of the bursary fund each year. This includes reviewing how bursary support has contributed to student retention and participation. Findings are included in the College's annual Self-Assessment Report (SAR).
- 12.5. The Head of Student Services collects feedback from students each year to understand how bursary support has helped them. This feedback is used to review the effectiveness of the fund and improve how it is delivered.
- 12.6. Quarterly performance reviews are conducted to assess how the bursary fund is being managed against key performance indicators (KPIs). These reviews consider fund utilisation, processing times, student satisfaction, and impact measures. Outcomes are reported to senior leaders and inform continuous improvement.

13. Appeals

- 13.1. If you disagree with a bursary decision, you have the right to appeal.

13.2. Appeals must be made in writing within 10 working days of the decision being communicated. You should explain why you believe the decision was incorrect and include any supporting information or evidence.

13.3. Appeals should be addressed to the Student Bursary Panel and emailed to: bursaries@bedford.ac.uk

13.4. Appeals will be acknowledged within 3 working days by the Student Finance Team. A final decision will be issued in writing within 14 working days.

13.5. Appeal decisions will be made by a Heads of Student Services and the Financial Accountant. These individuals will not have been involved in the original decision.

13.6. The appeal will consider:

- Whether the decision followed the bursary policy
- Any new or previously unconsidered evidence
- Whether there were exceptional or mitigating circumstances

13.7. If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your appeal, you can submit a formal complaint using the College's Complaints Procedure.

13.8. If you need help submitting an appeal, you can speak to your Tutor or a member of the Student Services Team.

14. Data Privacy Policy

13.1. The privacy and security of our student's personal information is extremely important to us. Our **Student Privacy Notice** sets out what we do with the information we collect and what we do to keep it secure. It also explains where and how we collect this information, as well as the student's rights over their personal information.

13.2. A full copy of the **Data Privacy Policy** is available on the college website under Downloads: <https://www.bedford.ac.uk/downloads>; please refer to the policy for more information.

13.3. The policy applies to students at The Bedford College Group (registered Bedford College), which includes the brands Bedford College, National College for Motorsport, Shuttleworth College, The Bedford Sixth Form, The Corby Sixth Form, Tresham College and Central Bedfordshire College. It also includes any other brands we add to this group in the future.

Annex A – Supporting evidence requirements for DFE funded bursaries

New 16-19, and all Residential bursary applicants only.

We assess total gross household income before any deductions. This includes the income of parents, guardians, carers, or partners (if the student lives with them). Where parents are separated, only the income of the parent the student lives with most of the time will be considered. If care is shared equally or there is significant support from both households, we may ask for evidence from both.

Source of income	Acceptable evidence
Waged income *	Payslips for the last 3 months consecutive months
Tax Credits **	2024/25 Tax Credits Notifications - all 6 pages required 2024/25 Provisional Tax Credit - all 6 pages required
Income from self-employment ^	Annual tax review (if self-employed) Most recent audited accounts (within past 12 months) Letter from a qualified accountant confirming income
Benefits - IS, JSA, ESA & LASS, Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit *	Letter from Job Centre plus/DWP/Local Authority showing means tested benefit
Universal credits *	Universal Credit Award – full award information for the last 3 months
Guaranteed Pension Credit *	Pension credit - guaranteed element
Nil income (both required) *	Self-declaration form (completed via Pay My Student) Please provide evidence of income for the rest of the household
Asylum Seeker *	Local Authority Letter/ Letter from Home Office
I am in care or am a care leaver *	Local Authority Letter
No UK bank account	Self-declaration form (completed via Pay My Student) Letter from bank declining bank account or evidence of a recent application for a UK bank account.

* All evidence provided must be dated within the last three months

** Tax Credit notifications must be for the current tax year starting April 2025.

^ Annual tax review must be the most recent document submitted to HMRC or Companies House.

Examples of non-typical household scenarios.

Scenario	Acceptable Evidence
Student supported by grandparents or extended family	Letter confirming informal care arrangement and relevant income documents from the carer
Parent on maternity/paternity leave	Recent payslip and evidence of statutory maternity/paternity pay from employer
Zero-hour contracts	3 months of payslips or a signed letter from employer confirming average hours and earnings
Foster care	Letter from Local Authority confirming student is in foster care; no income evidence is required
Estranged students (not in care)	Letter from GP, college welfare staff, or recognised support agency confirming estrangement.

Annex B – DFE funded bursaries terms and conditions

General

1. Applications are usually available to all students until the published closure dates or when funds are exhausted, whichever is sooner. The Bursary Panel may extend the closing date if funding remains available.
2. The amount a student receives will depend on their assessed need and the funding available. Awards must be proportionate to the public funding the College receives for the student's course and represent appropriate use of bursary funds in line with government guidance.

Assessment

3. Financial support is assessed against total gross household income.
 - Students aged under 19 and living at home or supported by parents/guardians are assessed based on their own and their parents'/guardians' income, unless exceptional circumstances apply.
 - Students aged 19 or over are normally assessed as independent. If they have no income, household income will be based on the income of the person(s) they depend on, such as a parent or carer.
4. The College uses a household income banding system:
 - Band 1: Income under £16,190
 - Band 2: Income between £16,191 and £42,500
5. Receiving a bursary does not affect other means-tested benefits such as Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance, Child Benefit, Working Tax Credit or Housing Benefit. However, if a student receives Disability Living Allowance (or Personal Independence Payment) and Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit in their own right, their parent(s) may no longer receive certain family-related benefits such as Child Benefit.
6. For students claiming to live independently (e.g. due to estrangement or other exceptional circumstances), the College may request evidence such as tenancy agreements, Child Benefit statements, birth certificates, utility bills, or supporting letters from relevant professionals.

Payments

7. Awards may be provided via BACS payment, internal transfer, or direct support (e.g. travel passes or meal credits), as set out in the student's award letter.
8. BACS payments are made to the student's UK bank account unless an exception has been approved (see main policy). Students must update their online bursary account if they change their bank details. The College cannot recover payments made to closed or incorrect

accounts due to outdated information. Failure to update your bank details may result in delayed payments or unrecoverable losses. The College is not liable for missed payments caused by inaccurate or outdated account information.

9. Payments will only be made to a bank account in the student's name. If the student submits bank details that are not in their name, the Bursary Team will ask them to update their details. Payments will be paused until this is resolved. In exceptional circumstances only (e.g. safeguarding concerns, vulnerable learner status), payments may be made to another person's account. These cases will be reviewed by the Student Bursary Panel and must be agreed in advance.
10. Internal transfers will be processed by the Student Finance Team to pay for items such as course materials or IT equipment directly to College departments or third parties.
11. Meals awards are loaded to student ID cards for use in College catering outlets on days the student is expected to attend, including exams and planned off-timetable events. Funds are valid for 24 hours and do not roll over.
12. Bursary payments depend on good attendance and behaviour. Students are expected to attend at least 90% of their timetabled lessons and meet the standards set out in the Student Charter.
13. Mitigating circumstances (e.g. illness, bereavement, or caring responsibilities) will be considered before reducing or pausing support. Students should speak to a Tutor or Student Services if concerned.
14. Bursaries are not intended to cover general living costs. Regular payments for living expenses are outside the scope of the scheme and may affect benefit entitlements.
15. For eligible asylum seekers, bursary support may be offered in the form of travel passes, equipment or books.

Changes in Circumstances

16. Students must inform the College of any change in circumstances that could affect their eligibility. This includes household income changes, course withdrawal, or changes to bank account detail.
16. The College may ask for the return of equipment or repayment of some or all of an award if the student withdraws from their course early or was awarded funds in error.

Childcare Awards

17. Financial support is available for students of all ages who meet the eligibility criteria, including those under 20 (via the Care to Learn scheme) and those aged 20 or over (via the College's childcare bursary).

18. Support will only be provided for childcare during the student's timetabled study hours during term time.
19. Payments are made directly to Ofsted-registered childcare providers in arrears, usually during the first week of each month.
20. Students must use any free government childcare hours (15 or 30 hours) towards their study time at College before additional costs can be covered. Bursary funds cannot duplicate support already available from government schemes.
21. The College will pay a maximum notice period of up to four weeks if a student leaves without informing the childcare provider. Providers are asked to inform the College of any child absences lasting one week or more.
22. The bursary does not cover deposits, retainers, or childcare costs outside of the student's agreed timetable and eligible study hours.
23. A copy of the student's childcare award letter will be shared with the provider. It will confirm:
 - The number of days per week covered
 - The number of weeks supported
 - The value of the award
 - Planned payment dates

Annex C – Discretionary Learning Support by primary study location

Table 1 – Bedford Borough campuses

Primary study location Cauldwell Street Campus, Brooks Hair & Beauty, Bedford Sixth Form (a), Vehicle Technology Centre + Gas & Plumbing Centre			Band 1 Less than £16,190	Band 2 £16,190 - £42,500
Travel (annually)*	A	Core Travel Zone	£530 per annum payment profile shown in Annex G	£530 per annum payment profile shown in Annex G
	B	Outside of Core Travel Zone (a)	£770 per annum payment profile shown in Annex G	£770 per annum payment profile shown in Annex G
	C	Central Bedfordshire Residents	£350 per annum payment profile shown in Annex G	£350 per annum payment profile shown in Annex G
Course costs (one-off)		Banded by course	See Annex F	See Annex F
Trip Costs (one-off)		Banded by course	See Annex F	See Annex F
Meal bursary (daily)			£5.50 per day	
Print Credits (one-off)			£20	£20

(a) To see if you live in the Stagecoach megarider zone visit their website

[MegaRider tickets for Bedfordshire | Stagecoach \(stagecoachbus.com\)](https://www.stagecoachbus.com/megarider/tickets/bedfordshire)

[Bedford - JAN 2022.pdf \(tiscon-maps-stagecoachbus.s3.amazonaws.com\)](https://www.tiscon-maps-stagecoachbus.s3.amazonaws.com/Bedford-JAN-2022.pdf)

* Travel awards are based upon a full-time student, awards for part time students will be made on a pro rata basis.

Table 2 – Shuttleworth Campus

Primary study location Shuttleworth College			Band 1 Less than £16,190	Band 2 £16,190 - £42,500
Travel (annual)*	A	College bus pass (a)	£800 per annum	£800 per annum
Travel (monthly)*	B	Non-College bus pass	£770 per annum payment profile shown in Annex G	£770 per annum payment profile shown in Annex G
	C	Central Bedfordshire Residents (not using College Bus)	£350 per annum payment profile shown in Annex G	£350 per annum payment profile shown in Annex G
Course costs (one-off)		Banded by course	See Annex F	See Annex F
Trip Costs (one-off)		Banded by course	See Annex F	See Annex F
Meal bursary (daily)			£5.50 per day	
Print Credits (one-off)			£20	£20
Residential support (termly)			£1,266 per term	£883 per term

(a) To see college bus routes and timetable please visit

[Travelling to Shuttleworth | Shuttleworth College | Further & Higher Education \(bedfordcollegegroup.ac.uk\)](http://bedfordcollegegroup.ac.uk)

* Travel awards are based upon a full-time student, awards for part time students will be made on a pro rata basis.

Table 3 – Northamptonshire County Council Campuses

Primary study location Kettering - Windmill Avenue Campus Corby - Oakley Road & Corby Sixth Form Wellingborough - Church Street Silverstone – National College for Motorsport			Band 1 Less than £16,190	Band 2 £16,190 - £42,500
Travel (Termly) *	A	Core Travel Zone (b)	Free (a) or £530 per annum payment profile shown in Annex G	£530 per annum payment profile shown in Annex G
	B	Outside of Core Travel Zone (b)	Free (a) or £770 per annum payment profile shown in Annex G	£770 per annum payment profile shown in Annex G
Course costs (one-off)		Banded by course	See Annex F	See Annex F
Trip Costs (one-off)		Banded by course	See Annex F	See Annex F
Meal bursary (daily)			£5.50 per day	
Print Credits (one-off)			£20	£20
Residential support (monthly)			£380 per month	£265 per month

(a) To see if you are eligible for a bus pass funded by West Northamptonshire Council or North Northamptonshire Council, please see their website

West Northants - [Post - 16 travel assistance - Schools and Education \(West Northamptonshire Council\)](#)

North Northants - [Post-16 travel assistance - Schools and Education \(North Northamptonshire Council\)](#)

(b) To see if you live in the Stagecoach megarider zone see their website.

Kettering & Corby

[MegaRider tickets for Kettering | Stagecoach \(stagecoachbus.com\)](#)

[KC MegaRider Map Jan 2022 \(tiscon-maps-stagecoachbus.s3.amazonaws.com\)](#)

Wellingborough

[MegaRider tickets for Wellingborough | Stagecoach \(stagecoachbus.com\)](#)

[Wellingborough MegaRider Jan 2022 \(tiscon-maps-stagecoachbus.s3.amazonaws.com\)](#)

* Travel awards are based upon a full time student, awards for part time students will be made on a pro rata basis

Table 4 – Central Bedfordshire College Campuses

Primary study location Kingsway, Dunstable The Incuba, Dunstable Leighton Buzzard Campus			Band 1 Less than £16,190	Band 2 £16,190 - £42,500
Travel (Termly) *	A	Core Travel Zone (a)	£530 per annum payment profile shown in Annex G	£530 per annum payment profile shown in Annex G
	B	Outside of Core Travel Zone (a)	£770 per annum payment profile shown in Annex G	£770 per annum payment profile shown in Annex G
	C	Central Bedfordshire Residents	£350 per annum payment profile shown in Annex G	£350 per annum payment profile shown in Annex G
Course costs (one-off)		Banded by course	See Annex F	See Annex F
Trip Costs (one-off)		Banded by course	See Annex F	See Annex F
Meal bursary (daily)			£5.50 per day	
Print Credits (one-off)			£20	£20

(a) To see if you live in the Luton and Dunstable zone see their website.

<https://www.arrivabus.co.uk/buy-tickets/region/beds-and-bucks/zone/ats012>

* Travel awards are based upon a full-time student, awards for part time students will be made on a pro rata basis

Annex D – Support for Industry placements

1. Travel

- 0 - 3 miles - no support (in line with main policy).
- 3 - 6 miles - £4/day whilst on placement
- 6 - 10 miles - £8/day whilst on placement
- 10+ miles – £10/day whilst on placement, or 80% of costs whichever is greater

Support will be paid monthly in advance and split evenly over the months where support is required.

2. Specialist equipment

- BAND 1 Household income range £0 - £16,190 = 75% of evidenced costs.
- BAND 2 Household income range £16,190 - £42,500 = 50% of evidenced costs.
- BAND 3 Household income range £42,500 + = 25% of evidenced costs.

Up to a maximum of £100 per learner

This award will be paid in a single BACS payment on the next available payment run after the award is approved

3. Meals

This will only be awarded if a student is entitled to Meals Bursary. £5.50 per day whilst on placement.

Support will be paid monthly in advance and split evenly over the months where support is required.

Annex E – Loan IT device Scheme

The College operates a loan IT device scheme for vulnerable children and young people to include those who may have difficulty engaging with remote education at home.

The Department for Education provide examples of disadvantaged students as:

- with no digital devices in their household
- whose only available device is a smartphone
- with a single device in their household that's being shared with more than one other family member
- who do not have a fixed broadband connection at home

The loan IT device scheme is initially opened to students who,

- ***Studying on a full-time programme***
- ***Have an approved vulnerable bursary for the current academic year.***
- ***Have not been issued with a laptop by their local authority / virtual school.***
- ***Have no device, be predominantly using a smart phone or tablet or are sharing a device with more than 1 member of their household (as per DfE guidelines) to access online resources.***
- ***Are studying for a GCSE or Functional Skills in English or Mathematics, or an eligible course.***

or,

- ***Studying on a full-time programme***
- ***Submitted and application on or before the guarantee discretionary bursary deadline***
- ***Have an approved discretionary bursary for the current academic year.***
- ***Have a household income of less than £16,190.***
- ***Have no device, be predominantly using a smart phone or tablet or are sharing a device with more than 1 member of their household (as per DfE guidelines) to access online resources.***
- ***Are studying for a GCSE or Functional Skills in English or Mathematics, or an eligible course.***

All applications are to be submitted online on bursary portal.

Awards will be made on a first come first served basis until all IT devices are allocated.

IT devices will be available to collect from Student Services by appointment only no earlier than the **w/c 06 October 2025**.

All students will be required to sign a loan agreement before the IT device is issued to them.

Students must return the device when their learning has been completed, or if they leave the course before completion. The device must be returned in the same condition as it was received.

Annex F – Course costs and trip support

Course costs

Level of support by band

	Band 1	Band 2
A	£0	£0
B	£20	£15
C	£30	£20
D	£50	£35
E	£80	£55
F	£120	£90
G	75% of fee	50% of fee

To find out the support available for your course please click [here](#).

If your course is not listed, please contact bursaries@bedford.ac.uk for advice on the level of support available.

Trip costs

Level of support by band

	Band 1	Band 2
A	£0	£0
B	£20	£15
C	£30	£20
D	£50	£35
E	£80	£55
F	£120	£90
G	75% of fee	50% of fee

To find out the support available for your course please click [here](#).

If your course is not listed, please contact bursaries@bedford.ac.uk for advice on the level of support available.

Students without a UK bank account will be issued 100% support towards trip fees.

Annex G – Travel payment profiles

Travel support award will be paid on the following profiles

In Zone awards

Month	Profile	£
September	10%	53
October	10%	53
November	15%	79
December	5%	27
January	15%	79
February	10%	53
March	10%	53
April	5%	27
May	10%	53
June	10%	53
July	0%	0
Total	100%	530

Out of Zone awards

Month	Profile	£
September	10%	77
October	10%	77
November	15%	115
December	5%	39
January	15%	115
February	10%	77
March	10%	77
April	5%	39
May	10%	77
June	10%	77
July	0%	0
Total	100%	770

Central Bedfordshire Residents

Month	Profile	£
September	10%	35
October	10%	35
November	15%	52
December	5%	18
January	15%	52
February	10%	35
March	10%	35
April	5%	18
May	10%	35
June	10%	35
July	0%	0
Total	100%	350

Travel award profiles are based upon a full-time student, awards for part time students will be made on a pro rata basis

Annex H

Student Bursary Panel Terms of Reference

Purpose

To provide strategic oversight and ensure that all bursary awards made by the College are compliant with published policies, allocated budgets, and DFE guidance.

Delegated Responsibilities

The Student Bursary Panel is authorised to:

- Oversee the fair, transparent, and consistent allocation of bursary funding across the Group.
- Review and approve exceptional or complex cases that fall outside normal policy parameters.
- Monitor overall bursary budget performance to ensure funding is used effectively and remains within DFE guidelines.
- Recommend enhancements to bursary processes, communications, and system functionality to improve access, compliance, and value for money.

Reporting arrangements

- The Panel shall report quarterly to the Chief Financial Officer and the Executive Director for Student Experience and Inclusion.
- Updates may also be provided to the College Executive as required, especially where risks, trends, or significant changes in demand are identified.

Meeting Frequency

- The Panel will meet fortnightly during July, August, and September to manage the high volume of bursary applications.
- From October onwards, the Panel will meet at least once per half term, or more frequently if needed to review in-year changes, appeals, or budget monitoring.

The panel will meet fortnightly during July, August and September and at least once per half term thereafter to review progress and budgets.

Membership

Role	Full Panel Member	Appeals Subgroup
Director of Finance (Chair – designated by CFO)	✓	
Director of Student Services	✓	
Financial Accountant	✓	✓
Head of Student Services	✓	✓
Student Services Managers	✓	✓
Accounts Manager	✓	
Student Bursaries Lead	✓	

Other staff may be invited to attend when required (e.g. a representative from MIS or a local Student Support Advisor).

Review

These Terms of Reference will be reviewed annually by the Director of Finance and Director of Student Services to ensure they remain fit for purpose.

The Bursary Panel may exercise discretion to flex specific eligibility criteria or assessment processes in response to exceptional or unforeseen circumstances. Such decisions must be clearly documented, applied consistently, and remain within the scope of the College's bursary policy and national funding rules