



THE  
BEDFORD  
COLLEGE  
GROUP

# FINANCIAL SUPPORT



# FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS AGED 16-19

The Bedford College Group offers a range of financial support through our 16–19 bursaries to help young people where household income is £42,500 or less. Students must be aged 16-18 on 31 August 2025 or aged 19 and on the second year of a two-year course.

Funding is provided by the government and enables the Group to make discretionary awards to those young people assessed as facing the greatest financial barriers to participation in their college study programme.

The bursary offers support through the following strands:

## Course Costs Bursary

Some courses have essential costs for books, materials, equipment or uniform. Where these costs present a barrier to participation in learning, we offer a discretionary bursary of up to 75% of costs, subject to a household income of £42,500 or less.

PLEASE NOTE: students on second year of a two-year course will not be eligible for this unless specific costs are specified for the second year.

## Meals Bursary

The Meals Bursary entitles eligible students who qualify for the Vulnerable Learner Bursary or those whose parents are in receipt of one of the qualifying benefits listed below. Students will receive £5.50 a day towards the cost of a meal on the days they attend College or an activity that is part of their course (i.e. industry placements). Qualifying benefits are:

- 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 His 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 per annum (after tax and not including any benefits you get)
- Aged 19-24 with a valid EHCP and qualifying benefit

If you were in receipt of free school meals, we can carry this support forward to your further education studies. Please apply for a bursary so we can make this award.

## Travel Bursary

The Travel Bursary is a means tested bursary of up to £770 available to students studying a full-time study programme (Level 3 or below) who:

- Are aged 16-18 on 31 August 2025 or aged 19 and on the second year of a two-year study programme
- Live more than three miles walking distance from the campus you will be studying at
- Are not eligible for financial support for travel from your Local Authority

For students using the Shuttleworth bus, the award will be used to pay towards the cost of the bus pass. Students attending extended work placements as part of their course can apply for a travel bursary if not already covered by their travel bursary or bus pass.

## Loan Equipment

The College operates a loan laptop scheme for students who have difficulty engaging with remote education at home (for example due to a lack of devices or quiet space to study). The laptop remains the property of the College and must be returned when the student completes their study programme.

## Vulnerable Learner Bursary

Students aged 16-18 could get up to £1,200 if at least one of the following applies:

- You're in or recently left Local Authority care
- You get Income Support or Universal Credit because you are financially supporting yourself (e.g. you live independently or have a child)
- You are in receipt of Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit as well as Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment (PIP) in your own name

### PLEASE NOTE:

You will be asked for documentation to evidence your individual circumstances e.g. tenancy agreement, child benefit letter, Social Worker letter, etc

## Discretionary Hardship

If you are experiencing a sudden change of circumstances which places you in hardship, please speak to your Learning Mentor or a member of the Student Services team.



## FURTHER INFORMATION

Applications for Meals, Travel and Vulnerable Learner bursaries are considered as a priority and are normally processed first. We expect our students to attend all their classes, however if attendance falls below 90%, your bursary payments may be affected.

# FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR ADULTS (19+)

The Bedford College Group offers a range of financial support schemes for students aged 19 or over on 31 August 2025 studying on either an ESFA or Advanced Learner Loans funded course. Students aged 19 on the second year of a two-year study programme need to apply to the 16-19 bursaries.

Our adult support fund is for course-related costs and is dependent on household income of £45,000 or less.

The bursary offers support in the following strands:

## Course Costs Bursary

Students may receive a discretionary bursary to help with up to 75% of the costs of essential course items such as books, equipment and trips, subject to a household income of £45,000 or less.

Where the essential course item is provided by The Bedford College Group, the award will be transferred internally to the departments and the student will be expected to pay the difference. This is not available to students on the second year of a two-year course unless essential costs are specified for the second year.

## Meals Bursary

If you qualify for the Adult Support bursary, the College will award you a meals bursary of £5.50 per day on the days you are timetabled to be in College.

## Travel Bursary

The Travel Bursary is a means tested bursary of up to £980 for students on ESFA funded courses who:

- Live more than three miles walking distance from the campus you will be studying at
- Are not eligible for financial support for travel from your Local Authority.

PLEASE NOTE:

We are unable to pay parking costs and will only support travel costs during term time. The amount you will be awarded will be based on the distance you live from your prime study location.

## Loan Equipment

The College operates a loan laptop scheme for students who have difficulty engaging with remote education at home (for example due to a lack of devices or quiet space to study). The laptop remains the property of the College and must be returned when the student completes their study programme.

## Additional Learning Support (for Advanced Learner Loan students only)

We offer up to £250 towards any learning support requirements for students who have indicated a form of learning difficulty or disability. Access to this support will be through the Additional Support Team at your campus.

## Tuition, Exams and Professional Fees

This is available to students who have been assessed as co-funded only. Please speak to a member of the Student Services team for more details on eligibility.

## Childcare Bursary

Childcare funding is only available for students aged 20+ to pay a contribution towards the cost of a registered childminder, nursery or pre/after school club. The childcare provider must be OFSTED registered.

The Childcare Bursary will be paid in 10 monthly instalments starting from October 2025; these payments will be made in arrears once we have confirmation of students' attendance.\*

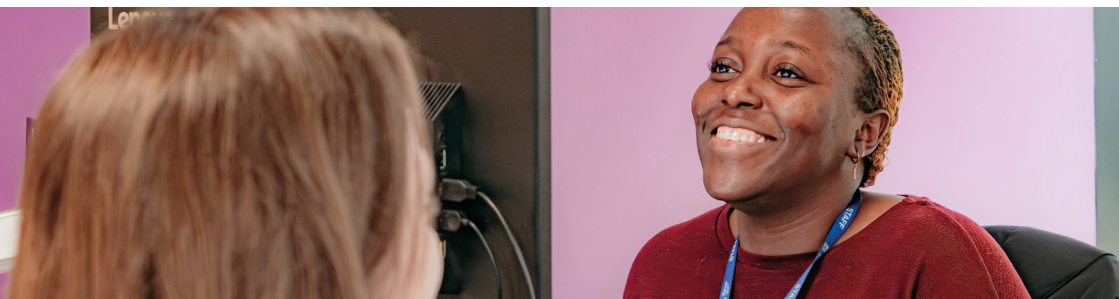
If you are eligible for 2, 3 and 4 year old funding, childcare will only be supported where the student's timetable exceeds the number of government funded hours.

More information can be found at [www.childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk)

*\*The total award for all categories is limited to a maximum of 80% of the income the College receives towards your tuition fees.*

## Discretionary Hardship

If you are experiencing a sudden change of circumstances which places you in hardship, please speak to your Tutor or a member of the Student Services team.



## FURTHER INFORMATION

Applications for Meals, Travel and Vulnerable Learner bursaries are considered as a priority and are normally processed first.

If you have previously been a recipient of the Vulnerable Learner Bursary or have experienced an unexpected change of circumstances, please drop into Student Services or speak to your Tutor to see if there is any financial support available to support you in finishing your studies.

We expect our students to attend all their classes, however if attendance falls below 90%, your bursary payments may be affected.



# OTHER SOURCES OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT

For further details of other sources of financial support, please contact the Student Services team.

## Residential

You can apply for support towards the costs of accommodation at Shuttleworth College and the National College for Motorsport through the 16-19 and Adult bursaries. Income thresholds will apply and are only available to eligible students. Priority will then be given to students who live the furthest from the Shuttleworth and Motorsport campuses with poor or no transport links. Please note, you will need to complete an additional residential form for the National College for Motorsport.

## Care to Learn

If you're a parent aged 16-19 the Government's Care to Learn scheme could pay up to £180 per child per week towards your childcare and travel costs whilst you study. You will need to complete an additional Care to Learn application for support with childcare costs which is available on our student bursary portal.

## The Grand Prix Bursary

The Grand Prix Bursary provides a non-means tested bursary to students who are studying at the National College for Motorsport.

## Connolly Foundation

The Connolly Foundation provide non-means-tested bursaries to students living in the Bedford Borough for apprentices on specified apprenticeship programmes such as Electrical, Engineering, Construction and Plumbing, as well as Health and Social Care students studying on a T-Level programme.

## Brunel Centre of Bedford Bursary

Bedford Training Group provide bursaries to students living in the Bedford Borough studying on our Engineering programmes.



## yourspaceonline.net

Run by Student Services, Yourspace Online is the website for students, parents & carers at Bedford College, Tresham College, Central Bedfordshire College, National College for Motorsport, Shuttleworth College, The Bedford Sixth Form and The Corby Sixth Form. It's packed full of useful information about student life, money, careers and much more.

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## How do I apply for the College Bursary?

You can apply online via Bedford College Group website:  
<https://bedfordcollegigroup.ac.uk/student-life/financial-support/>

## Does my bursary cover essential course costs?

You could get up to 75% towards essential course costs such as hairdressing kits, uniforms, books or trips. Your bursary will be paid directly to you, and you will be required to pay the difference. This is not available to students on the second year of a two-year course unless essential course costs are specified for the second year. Course costs are not normally paid until you have started the course.

## Does a bursary automatically continue from one year to the next?

No, a bursary does not continue automatically. Students need to reapply each year. Normally the bursary portal for the next academic year opens in June and continuing learners are advised to apply early in order to ensure payments are made before the start of the new academic year.

## What evidence do I need to provide?

Depending on your personal circumstances, you will be required to provide evidence accordingly. When completing your application, it is important that you tick all boxes that are relevant to your financial situation as this will prompt you to upload the relevant evidence. Examples of evidence you may be prompted to provide, but is not limited to:

- your last three Universal Credit statements. We need to see the whole statements for the last three months, down to where they say 'if your circumstances change...'
- a letter of proof to say you received Free School Meals stating your full name and date of birth. This can be obtained from your previous school or local authority.
- a letter from the Home Office if you are an Asylum Seeker. If you are in Care/Care Leaver who is seeking asylum you will also need to show evidence of a letter from the local authority or a social worker.
- the three most recent wage slips for every employed member of the household aged 18+.
- all pages of your Tax Credit letter.
- a benefit letter dated within the last three months, including your parent/guardian's or your name and address. These could be letters for benefits such as Income Support Allowance, Employment Support Allowance and Job Seeker's Allowance.
- self-assessment tax calculation or certified accounts for those who are self-employed.
- a Pension statement, showing all pages.

## When providing Universal Credit evidence, what does it need to show?

We would need to see your last three Universal Credit payments. If you have a recent claim and are unable to provide 3 statements, then we will accept less.

We need you to click into each month payment on your Universal Credit account and send us a full statement from each month. You can generally do this by clicking the 'print' button and selecting 'print to pdf' under the printer option. This allows you to save them to your documents to attach to your application.

## Can I still apply for funding without the correct evidence?

No, unfortunately not. The bursary application requires you to submit evidence before we can process your application. If you do not submit the correct evidence at the time of the application, this will delay your application being processed as the Bursary team will contact you to provide the correct evidence.

## What do I do if I do not have a bank account?

We recommend opening a bank account in your own name in preparation for a bursary, as well as any future endeavours, but you can still apply for a bursary as normal. You will however be required to have a bank account in your own name before any direct awards can be made to you.

## If I change course, would my bursary award stay the same?

A bursary tends to stay the same unless your course costs change. If you are in college for fewer or more days, you will need to contact the Bursary team so that they can change your funding accordingly.

## When will I receive my bursary payments?

It is important to apply as soon as possible to guarantee a prompt first payment before your course starts. If you apply during mid-August onwards, your first payment will be paid as soon as possible, but this may not be before your course start date. If you are eligible for monthly travel payments, this is normally paid on the first Friday of a calendar month, dependant on you meeting attendance requirements.

## What travel help can I get from the bursary?

In order to receive support with travel payments, you must live more than 3 miles walking distance, away from college. The travel bursary does not cover all the costs of your travel but provides support towards the cost of travel.

If you are studying a T Level course and require support to get to placement, please contact the Student Services team to see what support is available.

## I have an Advanced Learner Loan; can I still apply for a bursary?

Yes, you can still apply for a bursary. We will need to see an approved learner loan letter from Student Finance England as evidence before any awards will be made to you.

## I am in care/a care leaver aged 16-18, do I need to provide evidence of household income?

No, we will only need to see a document confirming that you are in care/a care leaver. It can be in the form of an official letter from your local authority, or a letter from your social worker confirming you are in care / care leaver. We still need you to apply for the bursary, but this would be the only evidence that we require from you.



## **I am aged 16-18 and claim Universal Credit. Will I qualify for the Vulnerable Learner bursary?**

If you are in receipt of Universal Credit and are either living independently and/or support a child, you will qualify for the vulnerable learner bursary. You will be asked to provide documentation to evidence your circumstances in addition to evidence of Universal Credit e.g. tenancy agreement, child benefit letter etc.

## **I am a care leaver aged 19 and over, do I need to provide evidence?**

Students who are aged 19 and over are required to provide evidence of income even if they are a Care leaver. If you are in receipt of Universal Credit, this is normally your 3 most recent Universal Credit statements. If you are on a waged income, this would be your 3 most recent payslips. If you still receive support from the local authority, e.g. have an assigned Personal Adviser, please do share their details with us.

## **I am aged under 20 and I have child/children in childcare. Is there any support with childcare costs?**

If you are a parent aged 16-19, you can apply to the Care to Learn scheme by completing an additional form on our student bursary portal. If eligible, you can receive a maximum of £180 towards the cost of your childcare and travel costs whilst you study. This needs to be with an Ofsted registered provider.

## **I am aged 20 and over and I have child/children in childcare. Do I receive any support?**

The Childcare bursary does not provide full cost of childcare, it is a contribution towards this, and you will have to pay the remaining balance to your Childcare Provider. On your application, select the option asking for assistance with childcare fees. You will need to fill out the childcare provider form which can be found on our financial page on the website at the bottom under Downloads. This needs to be with an Ofsted registered provider.

You MUST use your free government hours before claiming funding for childcare. Our funding will work as a 'top up' for these hours. We can only provide support towards the days that you are timetabled to attend College.

## **I am in receipt of travel bursary, why am I receiving different amounts of money for each month?**

Each month varies in length, according to the academic calendar and dependant on your timetable in college. Because of this, your first payment may be more or less than your second payment etc. Attendance must be 90% or above to ensure bursary payments are made every month.

## **I am on a work placement and cannot access my meals bursary, what should I do?**

If you have been awarded meals bursary then you will be entitled to £5.50 each day you attend College. If you are on placement, the meals bursary amount can be paid into your account during this period. Please contact the bursary team to let them know when you are on placement so these payments can be made. Alternatively, please contact your campus Student Services team who will be able to give you more information.

## How long does it take for my application to be processed?

Due to the high volume of applications we receive, please allow for 35 working days for your application to be processed. If you have missing evidence, this will delay your application and funding. We will only begin to assess your application once the complete form and correct evidence is received.

## How do I know if my application has been processed?

You will receive an award email to the email address you provided on your enrolment form. Please ensure that you provide us with the correct email address at enrolment so that we are able to communicate with you.

## My bursary application has not been processed, and I have started my course, when will I receive funding?

Applications take up to 35 working days to be processed once we have all the correct evidence. If it has passed 35 working days and you have not received any confirmation, please email the Bursary Team at [bursaries@bedford.ac.uk](mailto:bursaries@bedford.ac.uk) and request an update on your application.



## APPLY NOW

Scan the QR code of visit  
[bedfordcollegigroup.ac.uk/student-life/financial-support/](https://bedfordcollegigroup.ac.uk/student-life/financial-support/)



# DID YOU GET FREE SCHOOL MEALS AT SCHOOL?



**WE CAN CARRY ON THE SUPPORT AT COLLEGE BUT YOU MUST APPLY TO THE BURSARY TO BE AWARDED**



SCAN TO  
FIND OUT  
MORE



THE  
**BEDFORD**  
COLLEGE  
GROUP

**For more information on our bursaries,  
please contact us using the details below:**

**Bedford College**

01234 291770

[studentservices@bedford.ac.uk](mailto:studentservices@bedford.ac.uk)

**Central Bedfordshire College**

01582 349626

[studentservicescbc@bedford.ac.uk](mailto:studentservicescbc@bedford.ac.uk)

**Shuttleworth College**

01767 626232

[studentservicesshuttleworth@bedford.ac.uk](mailto:studentservicesshuttleworth@bedford.ac.uk)

**The Bedford Sixth Form**

01234 291444

[studentservices@bedfordsixthform.ac.uk](mailto:studentservices@bedfordsixthform.ac.uk)

**Tresham College inc. NC4M & The Corby Sixth Form**

01536 413232

[studentservices@tresham.ac.uk](mailto:studentservices@tresham.ac.uk)

**External Sources of Support**

**Grants search tool**

[www.turn2us.org.uk](http://www.turn2us.org.uk)

**Benefits search website**

[www.entitledto.co.uk](http://www.entitledto.co.uk)

**Student Services**

[yourspaceonline.net](http://yourspaceonline.net)

