



Ringwood School

Ringwood School 16- 19 Bursary Fund Policy

POLICY DETAILS

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To be reviewed by	

16-19 Bursary Fund

The 16 to 19 Bursary Fund provides financial support to help students overcome the specific financial barriers to participation they face so they can remain in education.

There are two types of 16 to 19 bursaries:

1. bursaries for defined vulnerable groups
 2. discretionary bursaries which institutions award using policies they set, in line with the funding rules.
- Ringwood School follows the guidance issued by the ESFA to support its students. A link to this guidance is below.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/16-to-19-bursary-fund-guide-2022-to-2023-academic-year/16-to-19-bursary-fund-guide-2022-to-2023-academic-year>

Eligibility for Bursary Awards

A student must be aged 16 or over but under 19 on 31 August 2022 to be eligible for help from the bursary fund in the 2022 to 2023 academic year.

Students aged 19 or over are only eligible to receive a discretionary bursary if they are continuing on a study programme they began aged 16 to 18 (19+ continuers) or have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

These 2 groups of aged 19+ students can receive a discretionary bursary while they continue to attend education (in the case of a 19+ continuer, this must be the same programme they started before they turned 19), as long as their eligibility continues and their institution considers they need the support to continue their participation.

16 to 19 study programmes at Ringwood School are designed to provide students with a structured and challenging learning programme that supports their development and progression in line with their career plans. Study programmes are individually tailored but will typically combine the elements below:

1. substantial qualifications that stretch students and prepare them for education at the next level or for employment.
2. English and Maths where students have not yet achieved a GCSE grade 4.
3. work experience to give students the opportunity to develop their career choices and to apply their skills in real working conditions.
4. other non-qualification activity to develop students' character, broader skills, attitudes and confidence, and to support progression.

Ringwood school places equal value to all aspects of the programmes of study.

Discretionary Bursary

Eligibility Criteria

Available to any student who finds themselves with financial hardship and faces potential barriers to participation. Each application will be considered on an individual basis and discretionary awards made, subject to funding being available.

Students facing financial hardship are invited to apply for assistance with school course-related costs, for example:

- Transport to or from school
- ICT equipment
- Meals at school
- Materials - calculators, art equipment, stationary etc
- UCAS fee and travel to open days
- Course-related protective clothing - sportswear, lab/art coats, safety goggles etc
- Trips, visits and sports activities directly relevant to a course of study
- Clothing
- Examination resit fees

The school may choose to procure any items required by students. All applications will be assessed on an individual basis. The school will also consider other exceptional circumstances when assessing applications for example if the student is providing care to a sick or disabled relative or facing a sudden change in circumstance.

Appropriate evidence confirming income will be required for the School to undertake the ESFA required assessment of financial need. If the student is already eligible for and claiming free school meals or their situation is already known the School from other communications, then no further evidence will be requested. For others, we will seek evidence that household income (including any benefit payments) does not exceed £25,000 whilst also then considering the merits of the application ie meeting the low income threshold does not give entitlement to an award but is one foundation – **the main consideration will be how the requested financial support will help to overcome the specific barriers to participation they face so they can remain in education.**

The sort of information that might be requested includes one or more of the following:

- Universal credit award notices
- Payslips, P60 or other third party confirmation of income
- Self Employment Income – A SA302 form; or accountants letter on headed paper

Vulnerable Student Bursary

Students who meet the criteria, and who have a financial need, can apply for a bursary for vulnerable groups. The defined groups reflect that these students are unlikely to be receiving financial assistance from parents or carers, so may need a greater level of support to enable them to continue to participate. Students should be awarded the amount of support they need to participate based on an assessment of the types of costs they have and must not be automatically awarded £1,200. Ringwood school will ensure students are eligible for the bursary for defined vulnerable groups in each year they require support.

The defined vulnerable groups are students who are:

- in care
- care leavers
- receiving Income Support (IS), or Universal Credit (UC) because they are financially supporting themselves or financially supporting themselves and someone who is dependent on them and living with them, such as a child or partner
- receiving Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payments (PIP) in their own right as well as Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or UC in their own right.

Conditions

Young people who are awarded a bursary will be expected to meet the criteria of the student agreement (signed in September each year). This includes:

- Demonstration of excellent attendance (95% authorised)
- Actively engage in lessons and demonstrate consistently an attitude to learning that ensures progress.
- Actively engage in the pastoral programme, house system, enrichment and volunteering opportunities to enhance your Post 16 experience.

Applications for Bursaries

Students should obtain a 16-19 Bursary Application Form from Mrs Flynn in the Sixth Form. Two opportunities in September and January are offered for students to apply for a bursary. If however, students find themselves in financial hardship at any time during the academic year they should see Mr Walbrin, Director of Sixth Form.

On the application form, students will need to:

- i) State the amount of money that they are applying for.
- ii) Explain why the money is necessary and **provide specific details** of what the money will be spent on e.g. cost of termly bus pass.
- iii) Provide evidence of the financial hardship warranting the award of a bursary.
- iv) Understand and agree that receipts will need to be submitted for items purchased.
- v) Sign acceptance to the terms & conditions of the bursary award (Student Agreement)

Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application by letter or email as soon as reasonably possible after receipt of a correctly completed application, with the target being not longer than 2 weeks. Applications are processed by Mr Walbrin, Director of Sixth Form and approved by both Mr Sismey, Head of Business & Finance and our Headteacher, Mrs Symonds.

Payment of Bursaries

As part of communication of a successful bursary award, the method of payment will also be proposed from the options noted earlier, being:

- The School procuring the item directly for the student or
- The student procuring the items and being reimbursed by the School on presentation of receipts
- The School advancing the funds to the student to purchase the item and retrospectively presenting receipts as proof of purchase

Depending on the size and nature of the award payment schedules may vary to support the student and enable them manage their finances appropriately.

Any student who leaves Ringwood School before the end of the examination year will be required to repay any unspent bursary.

Ringwood School reserves the right to withdraw and seek repayment of any funding if evidence is submitted indicating the bursary has been received under false pretence, or is not being used for the purpose for which it was approved.

Appeals

All students have the right to appeal against any decision made in respect to a bursary award or non-award. Appeals must be made in writing and submitted within 10 working days of the decision. Appeals regarding applications should be sent to Mr Walbrin, Director of Sixth Form.

Appendix 1: Example of Application form for Bursary

Appendix 2: ESFA Checklist on Administering the Bursary Fund

Appendix 3: ESFA Checklist on Validating Applications

Appendix 2: ESFA Checklist on Administering the Bursary Fund



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16 to 19 Bursary Fund: Summary

This is a list of the most important things that institutions should and shouldn't do when administering the 16 to 19 Bursary Fund.

This does not replace the [16 to 19 bursary fund guide](#) which institutions must read in full.

Institutions should:

- Publish a policy or statement on their website setting out how they will use their bursary fund and what eligibility criteria they use.
- Consider the relevant local authority's transport statement when setting their bursary fund policy.
- Ensure application forms, bursary policies and any supporting information are clear that the bursary fund is intended to help students with their actual costs of participating. Institutions should ensure their forms avoid any terminology such as 'guaranteed bursary' or wording such as 'you will automatically get a bursary of £1,200 if you are in one of the defined groups'.
- Base all decisions about which students receive help from the bursary and how much bursary they receive on each student's individual circumstances and their actual financial need. These will vary from student to student. Institutions must carry out a financial assessment for each student to establish their household income, whether there is an actual financial need and what kinds of costs the student has.
- Fully verify each student's eligibility and need for a bursary for vulnerable groups before submitting any funding claim to the [Student Bursary Support Service](#).
- Consider whether they can provide support to students in-kind – by buying a bus pass or books, providing a credit or voucher for a meal, for example.
- Retain evidence to show how they have determined the amount of bursary to pay each student and for cash payments, hold evidence to support the payment made..
- Ensure students are eligible for the bursary fund each year – their circumstances and needs can change so institutions should ensure students complete an application form for each academic year and the form should be signed by the student.
- Retain copies of any documents the student has signed to give formal agreement to their bursary fund conditions, including the impact on payments if they don't attend and the institution's rules about returning equipment paid for from the bursary funds.
- Consider having more than one person who can process bursaries, with segregation of duties or a contingency plan if that person was absent.

Appendix 3: ESFA Checklist on Validating Applications



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16 to 19 Bursary Fund checklist

You should use this checklist when assessing student applications for support from the 16 to 19 Bursary Fund.

Eligibility: All Bursaries

- Student meets the age criteria.
- Eligible education provision.
- Student meets the residency criteria for post-16 provision.
- Evidence of eligibility has been retained.

Bursary for defined vulnerable groups

- Student falls within one of the defined vulnerable groups for example, in receipt of the specified benefits in their own right or in care/care leaver.
- Financial needs assessment carried out to confirm actual financial need and amount of support required. **No student should automatically receive £1,200.**
- Appropriate evidence seen and copies retained to confirm student's eligibility, including the letter to support in care.
- Support awarded in kind (bus pass, meal vouchers, books or equipment purchased on student's behalf). Receipts should be retained.
- Award letter issued to student confirming the amount of support, what support will be made in-kind and payment conditions.

Discretionary bursary

- Evidence to confirm the student meets the institution's bursary fund criteria, including household income and statement of actual participation costs.
- Evidence of income and overall eligibility obtained, and copies retained.
- Assessment of student's actual financial needs carried out. **Block, blanket or flat rate payments are not permitted – the bursary award should reflect the actual costs the student has.**
- Support awarded in kind (bus pass, meal vouchers, books or equipment purchased on student's behalf). Receipts should be retained.
- Award letter issued to student confirming the amount of support, what support will be made in-kind and payment conditions.