

CAPITAL CITY COLLEGE GROUP

Learner Financial Support Policy

2024-25

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1. Purpose and Scope

- 1.1 Capital City College Group (the 'Group') is committed to broadening access to its college to enable learners to take advantage of the opportunities on offer and ensure finance is not a barrier to learning.
- 1.2 The Group receives funding allocations from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and the Greater London Authority to assist eligible learners in covering the costs associated with their education. The criteria for financial support are established in alignment with government guidelines.
- 1.3 This policy and procedures aim to:
 - Address learners' needs through timely assessment, allocation of financial support, and ensure financial hardship does not impede learning.
 - Comply with the funding requirements of the Greater London Authority and the Education Skills Funding Agency.
 - Adhere to CCCG's financial and audit standards.
- 1.4 The policy includes provisions for:
 - 16-19 Bursary Fund / 16-19 Vulnerable Bursary,
 - 19+ Discretionary Learner Support Fund (including 20+ childcare support),
 - Advanced Learner Loan Bursary and
 - Free College Meals.

2. Information

- 2.1 Capital City College Group is committed to providing clear and transparent information to learners and their parents/guardians regarding the administration of bursary funds and Free College Meals. This includes details on eligibility criteria and assessment procedures. Information will be disseminated through various channels, including literature, the college website, during enrolment and induction sessions, at interviews, and during promotional events such as Open Evenings.
- 2.2 Learners aged 16 and over who meet the income and residency criteria outlined in the national funding guidance and are enrolled on ESFA or ASF-funded courses, are eligible to apply for financial support. Bursaries are awarded at the discretion of Capital City College Group and are designed to support learners with specific financial needs to cover the costs associated with their studies

3. Equality & Diversity and Inclusion

- 3.1 The Group will ensure that all bursary applications are assessed equitably, regardless of age, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, belief, or faith, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

4. Application Process

- 4.1 PayMyStudent online portal is the bursary application form and is accessible to enrolled learners via the Student Finance portal on MyDay. Learners seeking childcare support must complete an additional form, obtainable from their study centre or downloadable from the Student Finance portal on MyDay. Returning learners must reapply for support each new academic year.
- 4.2 Application guides are provided, and assistance is available to help learners complete their applications.

4.3 Applicants must submit up-to-date and valid supporting evidence (as detailed in Appendix 1) with their application forms by the published deadlines. Applications submitted after these deadlines may not be processed.

4.4 It is the applicant's responsibility to upload all relevant eligibility documents. Missing documents may prevent a decision from being made and delay any support due. Learners must provide accurate information; any discrepancies discovered will result in the immediate suspension of the application.

5. Eligibility

5.1 Eligibility is determined based on age, residency, household income, and the programme of study. For travel-related bursaries, the distance from the learner's home to the centre of study is also considered.

5.2 The 16-19 Bursary Fund/16-19 Vulnerable Bursary, the 19+ Discretionary Learner Support Fund, and the Advanced Learner Loans Bursaries are means-tested, requiring applicants to provide evidence verifying their total household income. However, learners applying for Additional Learning Support costs through the Advanced Learner Loan Bursaries will not be subject to means testing.

5.3 The College's eligibility criteria (Appendix 1) are reviewed and updated annually based on the published government guideline for that year.

5.4 Age and Income eligibility

5.4.1 Discretionary Bursary (16-19 & 19-25 with EHCP)

Learner

- is aged 16-18 or is aged 19 if they are continuing a study programme, they began aged 16-18, or
- is aged 19-25 with an education, health and care plan or
- has household income up to £33,500 net per year, or
- whose parents/guardians receive out of work benefits.

5.4.2 Vulnerable Group Bursary (16-19)

Learner

- is at least 16 and under 19, and
- in care or care leaver, or
- 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.

5.4.3 Discretionary Learner Support (19+)

Learner:

- is aged 19 and over (is aged 20 and over for childcare support), and
- has a household income of up to £33,500 net per annum, or
- receives out of work benefits, or
- receives NASS support if an asylum seeker.

5.4.4 Advanced Learner Loan Bursary

Learner:

- is aged 19 and over and has been approved for Advanced Learner Loan, and
- a household income of less up to £33,500 net per annum, or
- receives out of work benefits, and
- can evidence UK/EEA residency for 3 years or more.

5.4.5 Free College Meal

Learner:

- is age 16 or over but under 19 on 31 August 2024 or
- is 19 or over and continuing a course they began aged 16 to 18 or
- is 19 and over and has an educational, health and care plan (EHCP), and
- is or whose parents/guardians are in receipt of qualifying benefits (Appendix 2).

5.5 Study programme

5.5.1 Learners must be enrolled on ESAF or ASF-funded courses to be eligible for bursary fund support. Apprenticeship courses, Higher Education courses, and full-cost courses do not qualify for bursary funding.

5.5.2 Learners must be enrolled on a programme of study that is at least 10 weeks, with the number of course hours exceeding 4 guided learning hours (GLH) per week, or 6 hours per week for childcare support.

5.6 Residence eligibility

5.6.1 Learners must have been ordinary residents in the British Isles or the European Economic Area (EEA) for purposes other than education for the past three years. EEA nationals are eligible if they have obtained either pre-settled or settled status under the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) and have lived continuously in the EEA for at least the previous three years as of the first day of learning.

6. Allocation of Awards

6.1 In all cases, the application will be judged on its individual merits as outlined in the ESFA guidelines. The amount awarded will be specific to each individual application. Applicants will be advised in writing of their full award. Awards are subject to learners meeting attendance and behavioural standards.

6.2 Help towards meals

6.2.1 The College provides support towards the cost of meals on days when learners are scheduled for lessons or activities that are part of their course, such as work experience. This support is based on age and household income.

6.2.2 Learners who are ineligible for Free College Meals but qualify for bursaries may receive meal support based on their need.

6.3 Help towards meeting course related costs

6.3.1 The 16-19 Bursary Fund, 16-19 Vulnerable Bursary, 19+ Discretionary Learner Support Fund (DLSF), and Advanced Learner Loan Bursary are designed to assist learners with course-related expenses such as books, equipment, travel, and exam fees. Support for books and equipment may involve direct payment to suppliers or procurement by the college.

- 6.3.2 Support for travel will be based on how far a learner travels to their centre of study. When determining support for travel, the College will consider TFL and other transport provider discount schemes, such as free bus travel or 18+ discounts.

6.4 Help towards childcare costs

- 6.4.1 Learners under the age of 20 at the start of the academic year should apply for support with childcare costs through the Care to Learn scheme, accessible via [Care to Learn: Apply for Care to Learn - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/care-to-learn).
- 6.4.2 For learners aged 20 and over, support with childcare costs can be sought through the Discretionary Learner Support Fund or Advanced Learner Loans Bursary.
- 6.4.3 Childcare providers must be registered and accredited by OFSTED.
- 6.4.4 Learners are required to use their entitlement of 15 hours of free childcare or early years education funded by the government and may apply for childcare support from the college for additional hours needed due to attending college.

6.5 Help towards tuition fees

- 6.5.1 There are limited funds available to assist with tuition fees for learners aged 19 and over who are not fully funded for their course expenses. Financial support will be provided only in cases where alternative sources of funding are unavailable, and when exceptional circumstances can be substantiated.
- 6.5.2 Learners who qualify for an Advanced Learner Loan are not eligible to apply for financial support towards their course fees.

6.6 Financial Hardship

- 6.6.1 Assessment to establish financial hardship is usually based on income and evidence, except in exceptional circumstances. In this instance, awards can be made on a discretionary basis according to the individual's circumstances and financial hardship.
- 6.6.2 Any exceptional circumstances will be considered on an individual basis and approved by the Department Head.

7. Payments

- 7.1 Payments will typically be deposited into the bank account provided by the learners during the application process. Bursary payments are made weekly in arrears. Accompanied asylum-seeking learners will receive support in-kind.
- 7.2 Payments designated for childcare costs will be directly transferred to the childcare provider.
- 7.3 Free College Meals are generally provided in the form of credit on the College ID cards, redeemable at college canteens. In cases where canteen facilities are unavailable or during work experience placements, vouchers or BACS payments may be issued.
- 7.4 Payments can be retroactively applied from the date of a fully completed application, including submission of all required evidence documents and bank details.
- 7.5 It is the responsibility of learners to promptly notify the college of any changes to their bank account details. Payment is normally only made into the learner's bank account.
- 7.6 Learners will receive notification of payment schedules and details of their full awards.

8. Withdrawn learners

- 8.1 Learners must be fully enrolled at the time when the bursary payment is scheduled to be made. Payments will not be issued to learners who have interrupted, suspended, or withdrawn from their studies.
- 8.2 If a learner withdraws from the College, they may be required to return any purchased items or reimburse any financial assistance received in full.

9. False or fraudulent applications

- 9.1 If learners are found to have intentionally provided misleading or inaccurate information, the College will require the return of any awards granted. Additionally, submitting false statements may result in sanctions under the College Disciplinary Policy and/or legal prosecution.

10. Right of Appeal

- 10.1 In the event that the learner disagrees with the financial assessment made by the College, they should in the first instance seek to resolve the matter with the member of the Student Finance Team. If the learner does not agree with the outcome, the learner may make a formal appeal to the Appeal's Panel in writing by letter or email to the Department Head.
- 10.2 The decision of the Appeal's Panel is final. Details of the appeal process are outlined in Appendix 2.

11. Monitoring

- 11.1 The Deputy Principal for Student Services, the Director of Finance, and the Accounts Manager will have oversight of the bursary funds.
- 11.2 The Student Finance Teams are responsible for recording, tracking, and monitoring all commitments made against available funds monthly to prevent overspending.
- 11.3 Internal audits will be conducted to verify the accurate and effective implementation of bursary eligibility assessments and the distribution of awards.

Appendix 1: Eligibility, Evidence and Awards

16-19 Discretionary Bursary		Subject to assessment and need, learners may be eligible for support.		
Age & Income Eligibility	Evidence types	Course costs	Travel	Other
<p>Learner</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is aged 16-18 or is aged 19 if they are continuing on a study programme they began aged 16-18, or is aged 19 to 25 and have a valid Education and Health Care Plan, and has a household of income up to £33,500 net per annum, or parents/guardians receive out of work benefits (Income Support, Universal Credits, ESA, Pension Credits, or Working Tax Credits). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recent payslips /P60 showing household income from work, or A recent DWP letter (all pages) showing qualifying benefit received. A valid EHCP if aged 16-25. <p>Recent = within the previous three months of bursary application.</p>	<p>Up to 100% essential course equipment/materials.</p> <p>Accompanied asylum seeking learner support is in kind.</p>	<p>Contribution based on distance from the study centre and taking into account learner's eligibility for TFL discount schemes (i.e. Free bus travel):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> £10 per week 1 to 3 miles from college £15 = 3-10 miles £20= 10-15 miles £25= 15 – 20 miles £30= more than 20 miles <p>£20 Oyster Card application fee.</p> <p>Up to 100% Additional travel support for mandatory work experience or field trips.</p> <p>Accompanied asylum seeking learner support is in kind, i.e. Oyster Card top up.</p>	<p>£3 per timetabled day or work placement for meals subject assessment of need. and if ineligible for FCM).</p> <p>Accompanied asylum seeking learner support is in kind, i.e. vouchers.</p>

16-19 Vulnerable Bursary Fund		Subject to assessment and need, learners may be eligible for support.		
Age & Income Eligibility	Evidence types	Course costs	Travel	Other
<p>Learner:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is at least 16 and under 19, and in care or recently left local authority care, or receives Income Support or Universal Credit because they are financially supporting themselves, or receives Disability Living Allowance (DLA) in their name and either Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or Universal Credit in their own right 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A recent DWP letter (all pages) showing qualifying benefit received. A recent letter (Section 20 or 23) from a Local Authority confirming the learner is in care or a recent care leaver and details of any financial support the learner is receiving. 	<p>Up to 100% essential course equipment/materials</p>	<p>Contribution based on distance from the study centre and taking into account learner's eligibility for TFL discount schemes (i.e. Free bus travel):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> £10 per week 1 to 3 miles from college £15 = 3-10 miles £20= 10-15 miles £25= 15 – 20 miles £30= more than 20 miles <p>£20 Oyster Card application fee.</p>	<p>£3 per time-tabled days for food (based on need and if ineligible for FCM).</p>

	Recent = within the previous three months of bursary application.		Up to 100% Additional travel support for mandatory work experience or field trips.	
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Free College Meal		Subject to assessment and need, learners may be eligible for support.		
Age & Income Eligibility	Evidence types	Meals	Field Trips/Work Placements	
Learner is <ul style="list-style-type: none"> aged 16-18 or Learners aged 19 if they are continuing on a study programme they began aged 16-18, or Aged 19-25 and have a valid EHCP, and Learner or parents/guardians are in receipt of one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 guaranteed element of State Pension Credit Child Tax Credit (provided they are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of up to £16,190, UC with net earnings not exceeding the equivalent of £7,400 for each year (after tax and not including any benefits they get). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A recent DWP letter (all pages) showing qualifying benefit received. <p>Recent = within the previous three months of bursary application.</p>	<p>£4 per timetabled day in the form of credit on College ID to be used in college canteens. Where canteen facility is not available, FCM will be provided in the form of vouchers or BACS payment.</p> <p>Free College Meal credit must be redeemed on the timetabled day and cannot be carried into another day.</p>	<p>£4 for each day of work placement or course related trips paid in the form vouchers or BACS.</p>	

19+ Learner Support Fund		Subject to assessment and need, learners may be eligible for support.		
Age & Income Eligibility	Evidence types	Course costs	Travel	Other
Learner: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is aged 19 and over, and has a household income of up to £33,500 net per annum (£25,642.50 if single), or Receives out of work benefits out of work benefits (Income Support, Universal Credits, Income-related ESA, Pension Credits, Working/Child Tax Credit, Income-based JSA), or NASS support if an asylum seeker. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recent payslips /P60 showing household income from work, or A recent DWP letter (all pages) showing qualifying benefit received, or Section 95 letter if an asylum seeker. <p>Recent = within the previous three months of bursary application.</p>	<p>Up to 100% essential course equipment and materials.</p>	<p>Contribution based on distance from the study centre and taking into account learner's eligibility for TFL discount schemes.</p> <p>£3 per timetabled day for 1-3 miles from the college. £5 per timetabled day for more than three miles.</p>	<p>£3 per timetabled day or work placement for meals subject assessment of need.</p>

20+ Childcare Fund		Subject to assessment and need, learners may be eligible for support.
Age & Income Eligibility	Evidence types	Childcare
Learner: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is aged 20 and over, and Has a household income of up to £33,500 net per annum (£25,642.50 if single), or Receives out of work benefits out of work benefits (Income Support, Universal Credits, Income-related ESA, Pension Credits, Working/Child Tax Credit, Income-based JSA). For learner under the age of 20, applications should be made via Care to Learn.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recent payslips /P60 showing household income from work, or A recent DWP letter (all pages) showing qualifying benefit received, and Child's birth certificate, and Confirmation the childcare provider is Ofsted registered. Recent = within the previous three months of bursary application.	Support will be up to 100% of costs taking into account other support schemes e.g. Government Free Childcare hours. <p>Only hours on a Learner's timetable will be considered for support. Nursery deposits and childcare retainers payable during college holidays are not funded.</p> <p>Where there is a request for Childcare support for more than 3 children, applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>Childcare support must be approved by the college prior to the child starting their placement.</p>

Advanced Learner Loan Bursary Fund		Subject to assessment and need, learners may be eligible for support.		
Age & Income Eligibility	Evidence types	Help with course materials	Travel and Childcare	Other
Learner: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is aged 19 and over and has been accepted for Advanced Learner Loan and has a household income of up to £33,500 net per annum (£25,642.50 if single), or receives out of work benefits (Income Support, Universal Credits, Income-related ESA, Pension Credits, Working/Child Tax Credits, Income-based JSA). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A letter for Student Finance England confirming Advanced Learner Loan, and Recent payslips/P60 showing household income from work, or A recent DWP letter (all pages) showing qualifying benefit received, or Recent = within the previous three months of bursary application.	Up to 100% essential course equipment and materials.	Contribution based on distance from the study centre and taking into account learner's eligibility for TFL discount schemes. <p>£3 per timetabled day for 1-3 miles from the college. £5 per timetabled day for more than three miles.</p> Support will be up to 100% of costs taking into account other support schemes e.g. Government Free Childcare hours. <p>Only hours on a Learner's timetable will be considered for support. Nursery deposits and childcare retainers payable during college holidays are not funded.</p> <p>Where there is a request for Childcare support for more than 3 children, applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>Childcare support must be approved by the college prior to the child starting their placement.</p>	£3 per timetabled day or work placement for meals subject assessment of need.

Appendix 2: Appeals Procedures & Form

Stage 1: Informal Stage

If the learner is dissatisfied with the outcome of an application to the Discretionary Learner Support Fund, s/he should in the first instance seek to resolve this informally by discussing the matter with a member of the Student Finance Team at their college centre within 10 working days of having received the decision. If the learner does not agree with the outcome of the informal stage, then the learner may make a formal appeal against the decision to the Appeals Panel.

Stage 2: Appeals Panel

A notice of appeal should be logged with a member of the Student Finance at the learner's main center of study within ten working days of the outcome of the PayMyStudent application. This notice should be in writing in the form of an email, outlining why they are disputing the rejection of their application.

The purpose of the Appeals Panel is to establish whether or not the grounds of the appeal are valid. The learner making the appeal may be asked for further information for clarification purposes.

- The Department Head will write to confirm to the learner the outcome of the appeal within five working days of the Appeals meeting, including the decision, and reasons for the decision.
- The decision of the Appeals panel is final.

APPEAL FORM

Below are some suggested contents to be included on an email/letter when lodging an appeal. This email is to be submitted to a member of the Student Finance Team at your Study Centre. If you require help with this process, please contact a member of the Student Finance Team.

Stage 2 Formal Appeal Email Template

My name is and I wish to appeal the rejection of my application to The Bursary/Learner Support Fund.

College ID number is

I do not agree with the decision and wish to share additional information with you.....

Please sign your email and date it.

Appendix 3: Eligibility Assessment Checklist



Education & Skills
Funding Agency

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.

Appendix 4: Useful Document

Document	Link
16-19 Bursary guide for learners	16 to 19 Bursary Fund: Overview - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
Adult skills funding rules 2024 to 2025	Learner Support: Overview - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
Under 20 Childcare support guide for learners	Care to Learn: Overview - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
16-19 Bursary Fund guide for staff 2023-2024	16 to 19 Bursary Fund guide 2024 to 2025 academic year - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
Free College Meals guide for staff	Free meals in further education funded institutions guide 2024 to 2025 academic year - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)