

Learner Bursary Guidance 2026-27

What is the Bursary Fund?

The bursary fund is financial support that helps learners who may struggle with the **costs of attending college**.

It can help pay for things like:

- Travel to and from college
- College meals
- Essential course equipment or materials (Kit Reimbursement required for Access Sport and SGA Academy is to be purchased through your Centre or approved by your tutor beforehand)
- Educational trips essential to the course (If a trip has been approved, your Centre will keep you updated as to what Bursary Support may be available.)
- Childcare in some cases

The bursary is meant to support **study-related costs**, not general living expenses.

Bursary funds must only be used for the purpose for which they are intended i.e. Payments for meals or travel payments for bus & train tickets. Misuse of Bursary funds will result in the cancellation of further payments.

Learners **MUST** be able to fund travel and meals themselves until they are approved for Bursary Support. Where eligible learners will be reimbursed from receipt of their application and supporting evidence.

Who Can Apply?

You may be able to apply if you:

- Are studying on an **eligible course**
- Are **aged 16–18, or 19+ continuing a course with us started aged 16–18**
- Are **19–24 with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)**

- Are receiving Income Support or Universal Credit in your own name
 - Are receiving ESA and DLA/PIP
 - Live in the UK and normally have lived here for **at least 3 years**
 - Have a **household income of £45,000 or less (including benefits)**
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16-18 Vulnerable Bursary

The 16-19 Vulnerable Learner Bursary provides up to £1,200 per year for learners facing high financial barriers to education. It is for those in care, care leavers, or receiving benefits (Income Support, Universal Credit, or disability benefits) in their own name.

You must fall into one of the following "vulnerable groups":

- In care or a care leaver
 - Are young person placed with a foster carer by the local authority. A child who is privately fostered (in other words, a private arrangement is made between the parent and the person who will care for the child) is not classed as a looked after child and is not eligible for the bursary for vulnerable groups.
 - A young person receiving Income Support or Universal Credit in their own right.
 - A young person receiving both Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payment (PIP) AND Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or Universal Credit in their own right.
 - **Learners aged 19 or over are not eligible for bursaries for vulnerable groups.**
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Free College Meals

You may be able to receive **free college meals** if:

- You are **16–18**
- Your household receives **Universal Credit**

Learners normally receive **£5.50 per day** for each day they attend college.

All college meal awards are provided via an evoucher.

Travel Support

You may receive help with travel if you:

- Have a financial need
- Live more than 1 mile from college

The maximum support is:

- **£75 per week or £3,000 per year**

Travel support is based on your **actual travel costs**.

Awards for use towards public transport costs will only be based on **learner/discounted rate tickets**. It is the learner's responsibility to apply for this directly from the relevant organisation.

Equipment and Course Costs

Some courses require **special equipment, uniforms, or materials**.

The bursary may help pay for these costs (up to **£185 per year**).

You must **keep receipts** if you are claiming reimbursement.

Childcare Support

If you have children, you may be able to get help with **childcare costs**.

If you are 20 or under

You can apply for the **Care to Learn scheme**, which helps pay for childcare while you study.

<https://www.gov.uk/care-to-learn>

If you are 20 or older

You may receive support if:

- You are the **main carer of a child**
- You use an **approved childcare provider**

You can receive up to £200 per week. The total College contribution towards childcare costs is capped at £6800 per academic year per household.

Advanced Learner Loan Bursary (19+)

Learners aged **19 or older** with an **Advanced Learner Loan** may receive bursary support if they have **low household income**.

Support may help with:

- Travel
 - Essential equipment
 - Childcare
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Trips and Industry Placements

The bursary may also help with:

Educational trips essential to your course

Support may be available depending on your financial situation.

Industry placements

If your course includes a work placement, you may claim:

- Travel costs (excluding parking). Petrol reimbursement may be considered in exceptional circumstances and on a case-by-case basis
- Meal costs

You must **keep receipts** and submit claims **monthly**.

How to Apply for Bursary Support

You must complete an **application and provide evidence of income**.

- Complete the **bursary application form here**: <https://accesscreative.paymyLearner.com/portal/>
You must use your college email address to log in to the portal and apply.
- Provide the required **evidence of household income**.
- Complete the **Travel Questionnaire** if applicable.
- Submit your application as early as possible.

If you need help completing your application or have questions, **contact your Centre Administrator or Learner Services Team**. They can help you understand what support is available, what evidence you need and how to apply

How Payments Work

To receive your Bursary payments, you must have your own bank account; this must be a current account (not savings or Post Office account or similar).

If there is a reason as to why you cannot have your own bank account, we will require signed authority to confirm your agreement to payments being made to a third party of your choice. If the latter is applicable, please make this known as early as possible.

Bursary support is usually provided as:

- Meal vouchers
- Payments to your bank account

Bursary payments are made over 10 months from September to June. They are usually paid **monthly in advance**. Bursary payments are directly linked to attendance.

Attendance and Behaviour

To continue receiving bursary support, you must:

- Attend college regularly (**at least 80% attendance**) - from a bursary perspective any type of absence whether Authorised or Non-Authorised counts as an absence.
- Follow the **college rules and code of conduct**
- Use the money for the **correct purpose**
- Adhere to the Terms and Conditions of Bursary Support
- Sign a declaration confirming that you agree to these conditions

Payments may be stopped or reduced if these conditions are not met. The College cannot pay out DfE funds for non-attendance and if you do not attend college, you will not be paid.

If Your Circumstances Change

Tell the college if your situation changes, such as:

- Household income changes
- You move house
- Your travel costs change
- Your timetable changes
- You leave your course
- You are not attending college for a period of time due to holidays or illness.

This may affect your bursary support.

Appeals and Complaints

If your bursary application is refused, you can **appeal the decision**.

To do this, submit a **written appeal with supporting evidence** to the bursary team.

bursarysupport@accesscreative.ac.uk

If you wish to lodge a formal complaint after the appeals process, please contact

<mailto:ccc.admin@accesstomusic.ac.uk>

Need Help?

Contact bursary Support on Bursary.Support@accesstomusic.ac.uk.

Bursary Policy

The full Bursary Policy can be found on our website <https://www.accesscreative.ac.uk/policies-procedures/>
