

SHARNBROOK ACADEMY - 16-19 BURSARY POLICY

REVISED JUNE 2023

Students classed as being vulnerable who without support may be unable to complete their studies may be entitled to up to £1,200 in support from the 16-19 Vulnerable Group Bursary.

We also offer students the opportunity to apply for the Discretionary bursary, designed to support students with one off purchases of equipment, books or trip/visit costs, who may not be in a financial position to fund them from their own or their family's finances

We would encourage all those who think they may be eligible to apply, students will need to apply once each year, and will need to inform the school if their financial circumstances change.

1.1 Background

Sharnbrook Academy Sixth Form receives a financial allocation known as the 16-19 Bursary fund, under arrangements set out by the Secretary of State under section 14 of the Education Act 2002. The government provides funding to close the gap in attainment between those from poorer and more affluent backgrounds and to ensure every young person participates in and benefits from a place in 16 – 19 education and training.

There are two types of bursary available:

- A) the Vulnerable Group Bursary
- B) the Discretionary Bursary

1.2 What the bursary cannot be used for

The bursary fund is not intended to

- provide learning support – services that institutions give to students – for example, counselling, mentoring or extra tutoring
- support extra-curricular activities where these are not essential to the students' study programme
- support general household incomes

1.3 General eligibility rules

To be eligible to receive a bursary the young person must be over 16 on 1st September and under 19 on 31st August in the academic year in which they start their programme of study. Where a young person turns 19 during their programme of study, they can continue to be supported to the end of the academic year in which they turn 19 or to the end of the programme of study, whichever is the sooner.

Young people must satisfy the residency criteria and defined in the EFA Funding guidance available on the EFA website. They must be participating in provision that is subject to inspection by a public body that ensures quality (Ofsted) and is funded by the EFA or via a local authority. Funded or co-financed by the European Social Fund; or otherwise publicly funded and lead to a qualification (up to level 3) that is accredited by Ofqual or is pursuant to Section 98 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000.

1.4 Continuing Qualifying Conditions

Once eligibility has been established the young person will be expected to comply with the following conditions in order to qualify for payment:

- Qualifying period – satisfy a qualifying period of the course of the school year
- Attendance – No unauthorised absence, overall attendance 90% or doctor's certificate
- Behaviour – No cause for concern
- The student must be achieving the required standard in all subjects

Any bursary allowance may be withdrawn, or repayment requested if these criteria are not met.

2.1 Vulnerable Group Bursary

Bursaries of £1,200 available to all young people in the nominated vulnerable group (i.e. in care, care leavers, those in receipt of income support (in their own name). This funding is held centrally by the Education Funding Agency and must be applied for separately.

2.2 Eligibility

Defined vulnerable groups are:

- Young people who are looked after (in care)
- Care leavers
- Young people in receipt of Income Support (IS) or Universal Credit (UC) in their own name
- Disabled young people in receipt of both Employment Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance (or Personal Independence Payments) in their own right.

2.2.1 A care leaver is defined as:

1. a young person aged 16 and 17 who was previously looked after for a period of 13 weeks consecutively (or periods amounting to 13 weeks), which began after the age of 14 and ended after the age of 16; or
2. a young person aged 18 or above who was looked after prior to becoming 18 for a period of 13 weeks consecutively (or periods amounting to 13 weeks), which began after the age of 14 and ended after the age of 16

2.2.2 Evidence of eligibility

Proof must be provided that students meet the criteria for the bursary for vulnerable groups in full. In other words, that you are in receipt of the specified benefits in your own name or that you fully meet the definitions for in care/care leavers.

For example:

- for students who are in care or a care leaver, written confirmation of your current or previous looked-after status from the relevant local authority – this is the local authority that looks after you or provides your leaving care services. The evidence could be a letter or an email but must be clearly from the local authority
- for students in receipt of UC or IS, a copy of your UC or IS award notice. This must clearly state that the claim is in your name/confirm they you entitled to the

benefits in your own right. The evidence must not state any conditions that prevent you from participating in further education or training. For students in receipt of UC, we must also see a document such as a tenancy agreement in the student's name, a child benefit receipt, children's birth certificates, utility bills and so on

- for students receiving UC/ESA and DLA and PIP, a copy of your UC claim from DWP. Evidence of receipt of DLA or PIP must also be provided

UC claimants should be able to print off details of their award from your online account or provide a screenshot to the institution.

Students can also contact your UC work coach (or relevant benefit office if you are receiving getting IS or ESA) and ask them for help in providing evidence of receiving benefits.

2.3 Funding

Funding for students in defined vulnerable groups are held centrally by the school. Applications must be made direct to the school as soon as possible for assessment.

3.1 Discretionary Bursary

This Bursary award is targeted towards young people facing financial barriers to participation, such as the costs of transport, books, equipment, field trips etc. This bursary is awarded by the school, after an application has been made, and in line with the guidance outlined below.

3.2 Eligibility

The eligibility criteria for the award of the discretionary bursary is set by the school and takes into account a number of factors including household income, individual circumstances and need.

Defined groups may include one of the following:

- Young people who are looked after (in care)
- Care leavers
- Young people in receipt of Income Support (IS) or Universal Credit (UC) in their own name
- Disabled young people in receipt of both Employment Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance (or Personal Independence Payments) in their own right.
- You are currently classed as homeless
- You are a young carer for a member of your immediate family
- The total household income is less than £27,500 per year

3.2.1 Evidence of eligibility

Proof must be provided that students meet the criteria for the bursary for vulnerable groups in full. In other words, that you are in receipt of the specified benefits in your own name or that you fully meet the definitions for in care/care leavers.

3.3 Funding

Funding for students in for discretionary bursaries groups are held centrally by the school. Applications must be made direct to the school as soon as possible for assessment.

4.1 Process for Application

Applications for an award of a bursary should be made using the application forms available on this website or from any member of the Sixth form Team.

All applications must be supported by appropriate evidence of eligibility and completed in full including the applicant's bank details. Completed applications should be passed to the Mr Baxby (Director of Sixth Form)

Details of all successful applications will be passed to the Finance department, together with the level, timing and conditions of the bursary awarded.

Applicants will be notified in writing whether their application has been successful, together with the level of award. If a young person feels aggrieved about how their application has been handled, they should follow the school's normal complaints procedure.

5.1 Payments

All payments will be agreed in relation to the purchase of a good or service as agreed as part of the application process. In the first instance the school will look to purchase agreed goods and services on behalf of the student.

If an application is agreed and an item has already been purchased for example a bus pass that had to be bought before the next application qualifying period opens, then a refund may be given. This will only be refunded to the student concerned who made the application. Please note there is no automatic agreement that this purchase will be authorised as part of a bursary application. Please seek advice beforehand.

Any monetary payment will be paid by BACS payment direct to the young person's bank account.

6.1 Retained Contingency

The school will retain a contingency to cover the cost of bursaries awarded throughout the academic year due to changes in the financial or domestic circumstances of individual students.

7.1 School transport funding

Bedfordshire Council provides some support for post 16 travel costs. Further information can be found here: [Post Statutory School Age Transport Policy 202324 \(bedford.gov.uk\)](https://www.bedford.gov.uk/post-statutory-school-age-transport-policy-202324)

Students must check their eligibility based on these criteria first and apply if appropriate before requesting help with transport funding via the bursary

Updated 5 June 2023