WHAT IS THE 16-19 SUPPORT FUND?

The 16-19 Support Fund (DLS) is provided by the government (EFA) to help Warwickshire College Group students overcome specific barriers to participation so that they can stay in education. In other words, provide financial help for things like transport and equipment.

The Bursary has two elements:

1. A bursary of £1,200 a year for young people in the following defined vulnerable groups: in care, care leavers, young people in receipt of income support or Universal Credit and disabled young people in receipt of Employment Support Allowance who are also in receipt of Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments.

2. Discretionary awards to young people facing the greatest financial barriers to participation; such as the costs of transport, materials and equipment.

WHO CAN APPLY?

- Students under the age of 19 on 31 August 2017 who are participating on a course that is subject to inspection by a public body (eg Ofsted) can apply if they have been in full-time residence in the EU/EEA for the last 3 years and have a low income.
- Applicants under 18 need parent(s)/guardian(s) signature on all application forms.
- The low income threshold is a household income of £16,190 net, increased by £1,500 for each dependent under 18.
- If your income is higher but you are in hardship, you can still apply and have your case considered if a supporting statement and evidence of serious financial difficulties is included. This will be considered by the Support Fund panel who mostly meet every Tuesday.
- Learners who are eligible for support are not automatically entitled to it.
- Attendance is expected to be 85% at any time to receive funds.
- Priority payments (only to those in the defined vulnerable group as in 1) above) will be given in six instalments over the year subject to attendance, the first around October half term.
- Further Education Free Meals can be applied for on the Support Fund application form.

WHO CANNOT APPLY?

- Those not resident in the EU/EEA for the last 3 years (except where a refugee status was confirmed in the 3 years prior to starting the course).
- Learners on HE courses, (except for HE access), Level 4 courses, apprenticeships or any waged training.
- Learners serving a custodial sentence, have been released on temporary licence, or have been remanded to a secure institution.
- Courses which are not subject to inspection by a public body, eg full cost recovery courses.

WHEN CAN I APPLY?

You can apply for help between August 2017 and June 2018. Applications for recommended costs, ie equipment, fees and transport, are considered a priority. These will be processed at or after enrolment on presentation of a fully completed, signed and dated application form and evidence of income.

Applications from those with a very good attendance in the summer term could be reviewed after Easter subject to available funds and good attendance when basic costs have been allocated.

Applications will only be considered for the current year September 2017 – July 2018. If you need advice you can contact us at any time.

Students must be enrolled and beginning a course before an award can be made.
**WHAT WILL THE FUNDS HELP ME WITH?**

The funds will not normally help with ALL the costs. The maximum assistance is 75% for materials and equipment, 75% of essential trip costs to a maximum total of £255. Public transport costs as detailed below (to maximum similar cost of a bus pass).

The 16-19 Support Funds will be prioritised to help with specific financial need:

- Any costs not included in your fees at enrolment.
- Most equipment recommended for the course (the College reserve the right of ownership).
- Residential/trips which are confirmed by the tutor to be an essential part of the course.
- Public transport costs. If studying 2 days or more per week, we will pay most of the cost of a bus pass but you will have to pay £25 towards the cost of your first term pass. A good attendance will ensure 100% of the cost will be paid for spring and summer terms **BUT MUST be applied for EACH term**. Train travel considered (cheapest return only and evidence of cost essential).
- **Emergency Accommodation/food costs.**

**HOW DO I APPLY?**

- Requests for extra help - statement of details of need, name, ID, address, date and signed.
- All applicants MUST be enrolled/enrolling on a Warwickshire College Group course.
- If you have costs to pay (equipment, bus pass etc) and are not yet enrolled, bring your enrolment form (from your tutor) and evidence of household income/benefits with you to Student Services for authorisation before going to enrolment.
- All forms to be fully completed and **brought** to Student Services **when you come to enrol** / your first class together with relevant up-to-date proof of household income including salaries and/or income-based benefit. Applicants who are just outside the eligibility criteria or have other specific hardship are considered by the Support Fund panel who meet most Tuesdays - a signed, dated statement giving your specific circumstances is required.
- Applicants MUST tell us their financial need, ie their particular financial barriers to learning.
- As well as your application form, bring proof of costs to Student Services/enrolment, ie bus pass application, equipment list or letter (from your tutor), enrolment form, trip information (from your tutor). We **cannot** know your specific costs unless you tell us what they are.
- Hair, Beauty and Therapy kits and uniform will be ordered by the department at enrolment if eligible for Support Funds. The College reserves the right of ownership.
- Equipment from college shop/department to be authorised on internal form from department.
- If you are applying for a bus pass, complete the bus company form (eg Stagecoach) and bring it to Student Services for authorisation. **We can ONLY pay for termly passes** which MUST be renewed through Student Services within the 3 weeks before term ends - subject to attendance and available funds. You are responsible for completion of the correct bus pass form for you.
- **What you MUST pay at enrolment** 25% of materials or equipment costs. £25 towards your autumn/first term bus pass. We can only make payments if you have paid your share.

Applications will only be dealt with on presentation of a fully completed 16-19 Support Fund form and evidence of household income and costs.

**Payments** are made within college, to a 3rd party or by BACs into student’s own bank account. Refunds (min £20) are not guaranteed, paid in March and are subject to attendance and receipts.

**Appeals Procedure**

If you are unhappy with a decision you can appeal informally to the Student Services and Welfare Manager on 01926 318028. Or formally to the Customer Services Manager, Warwickshire College Group, Warwick New Road, Leamington Spa, CV32 5JE, or call 01926 318059, or complete an on-line feedback form at [http://www.warwickshire.ac.uk/about_us/customer_services.aspx](http://www.warwickshire.ac.uk/about_us/customer_services.aspx).

For Support Fund queries call into Student Services at any WCG Centre or ring 01926 318049.