16 to 19 Bursary Fund Policy

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CAPA College 16 to 19 Bursary Funding Policy

Contents of Policy

Contents

1. Aims…. ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
2. Guidance ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
3. Definitions ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
4. Roles and responsibilities ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
5. How we use the bursary fund ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
6. Eligibility criteria for the 16 to 19 bursaries ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
7. Bursaries for young people in defined vulnerable groups 7
8. Discretionary bursaries 8
9. Application and payment process 9
10. Change in circumstances 10
11. Record keeping and audit 10
12. Unspent funds 11
13. Monitoring arrangements 11
14. Complaints or Appeals 11

1. Aims

Our College Aims to:

- Have a clear and transparent process for the use and allocation of 16 to 19 process funds
- Make sure that bursary funds are administered appropriately and fairly, with due regard to the Equality Act 2010
- Make clear to parents/carers and students the type of support that is available and the means of applying for it
- Make clear to parents/carers and students the attendance and behaviour conditions for receiving the funds

2. Guidance

This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on the 16 to 19 bursary fund for the 2025 to 2026 academic year.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Definitions

- 'In care' is defined as: children looked after by a local authority on a voluntary basis (section 20 of the Children Act 1989) or under a care order (section 31 of the Children Act 1989)

- 'Looked after child' is defined as: a child in the care of a local authority or who is provided with accommodation by the authority in the exercise of any functions for more than 24 hours (section 22 of the Children Act 1989)

- 'Care leaver' is defined as:
    - 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
    - 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

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 The Governing Board

The governing board has overall responsibility for

- Approving this 16 to 19 bursary fund policy, but can delegate this to a committee, an individual governor or the Principal.
- Monitoring the implementation of this policy.
- Ensuring compliance with relevant requirements

4.2 The Principal

The Principal is responsible for:

- Making sure that staff are familiar with this 16 to 19 bursary fund policy
- Making sure the policy is being applied consistently
- Setting eligibility criteria for bursary funding and making sure these comply with the Equality Act 2010
- Promoting awareness of the 16 to 19 bursary fund to prospective applicants and their parents/carers

4.3 Bursary Panel

The bursary panel is responsible for reviewing applications and supporting evidence in accordance with this policy.

The panel consists of:

- Principal
- Finance Manager

4.4 Finance Manager

The Finance Manager is responsible for ensuring that the bursary funding is accounted for accurately

4.5 Staff

Our staff are responsible for:

- Implementing this 16 to 19 bursary fund policy consistently

4.6 Parents/Carers

Parents/carers are expected to notify staff or the Principal of:

- any concerns or queries regarding this 16 to 19 bursary fund policy.
- Any change in circumstances that might affect eligibility for bursary funding

4.7 Students

Students are responsible for meeting the conditions attached to the receipt of any support from the bursary funding

4. How We Use the Bursary Fund

Financial support is available to eligible students from the 16 to 19 bursary fund. See section 6 below for details of our eligibility criteria.

- The fund is intended to support students aged 16 to 19 in overcoming specific financial barriers to participation so they can remain in education.

- There are 2 types of 16 to 19 bursaries:
  - Bursaries for defined vulnerable groups; and
  - Discretionary bursaries

- We use the fund to provide students with support to fund:
  - Transport
  - Books
  - Equipment
  - Field trips and other course-related costs
  - The costs of attending university interviews and open day

We will provide support for students from the bursary fund by making payments in kind where possible. It will not be provided as regular payments for living costs.

5. Eligibility Criteria for the 16 to 19 Bursaries

Please note: the following eligibility criteria will be assessed **in addition** to the individual student's actual financial needs. This means:

- No student will automatically be awarded an amount of funding without an assessment of the level of actual financial need they have

- Funding provided to each eligible student is based on their actual participation needs (supported by evidence) and not a flat or fixed-rate payment that does not reflect the actual costs they face

6.1 Age

- To be eligible for either bursary in the 2024 to 2025 academic year, students must be at least 16 years old but under 19 years old on 31 August 2024.

- Students aged 19 or over are eligible only for a discretionary bursary if they:
  - Are continuing on a study programme or course that they began when they were aged 16 to 18-years-old, or
  - Have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

Students aged 19 or over are not eligible for bursaries for defined vulnerable groups.

In exceptional circumstances, where students under 16 years old are on a funded 16 to 19 study programme at our college, we may use our discretion to pay bursaries to these younger students. However, if these students are enrolled at another institution that receives public funding for them, they will not be eligible for bursary funding.

Students who are studying via distance learning are eligible for either 16 to 19 bursary, but are likely to require financial help on a more infrequent basis (e.g. travel to exams). If this is the case, we will provide support in-kind, such as a travel pass, details of which shall be decided on a case-by-case basis.

Students aged under 19 enrolled on higher education qualifications are not eligible for support from the 16-19 bursary fund.

6.2 Eligible Education Provision

Students must be participating in provision that is subject to inspection by a public body that assures quality (e.g. Ofsted). The provision must also fall into 1 of these groups:

- Be funded directly by the DfE, or by the DfE via a local authority
- Be otherwise publicly funded and lead to a qualification (up to and including level 3) that is accredited by Ofqual or is on the DfE's list of qualifications
- Non-employed students aged 16 to 19 who are participating in a Prince's Trust Team Programme are also eligible to receive a bursary in the same way as any other student participating in an eligible, publicly funded course.

Students are not eligible if:

- They are on an apprenticeship programme
- They are participating in any waged training

6.3 Residency

Students must meet the residency criteria in the DfE funding rules for 16 to 19 provision.

6.4 Asylum seekers

Accompanied asylum seekers under 18 with an adult relative or partner, and asylum seekers aged 18 and above are entitled to education but are not entitled to public funds. If necessary, they can apply to the Home Office for suitable housing and cash for essentials.

We will provide in-kind support such as books, equipment and a travel pass to asylum seekers who have not had asylum refused.

Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children are:

- The responsibility of the local authority
- To be treated as 'looked after' children
- Eligible for a bursary for vulnerable groups, where they have a financial need

When these students reach 18 years old, we will consider their immigration status. They will still be eligible for a bursary as a student from a defined vulnerable group if the asylum claim is in their favour and will be treated as a 'care leaver' until they reach the upper age limit.

7. Bursaries for Young People in Defined Vulnerable Groups

Students with a financial need, who meet 1 of the following 4 criteria below, in addition to the criteria outlined in sections 6.1 to 6.4 above, can apply for a bursary for vulnerable groups.

The defined vulnerable groups are students who are:

- In care (N.B. those who are privately fostered are not classed as looked after)
- 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 (PIPs) in their own right, as well as Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or UC in their own right

UC has now replaced IS, as well as other benefits above, for current and future young people aged 16 to 18. However, students aged 19 to 25 and funded from the 16 to 19 budget (19+ continuers and students with an EHC plan) may still receive the legacy benefits listed above.

- Students will be funded to reflect the amount of support they need to participate based on an assessment of the actual participation needs and costs they have.
- Students who meet the criteria for a bursary for vulnerable groups are not automatically entitled to a bursary.
- Students will not receive the bursary if they do not have any actual financial need (for example, because their financial needs are met from other sources and/or because they have no relevant costs). Should we refuse the application on this basis, we will discuss this with the student and their support worker/parent/carer where applicable.
- Where a bursary is provided, the funds will generally be up to £1,200 per year for study programmes lasting 30 weeks or more. When calculating the amount, cases will be looked at individually and the outcome based on a particular student's needs. Students will only receive the amount they actually need to participate and will not automatically receive £1,200 if they do not need the full amount.
- We can use our discretion, on a case-by-case basis, to provide more than £1,200 per year if it is necessary, in all the circumstances, for the student to remain in education. Any such additional payment will be paid either from the college's discretionary bursary allocation or the college's own funds.

8. Discretionary Bursaries

In addition to the criteria outlined in sections 6.1 to 6.4 above, students can apply for a discretionary bursary if they satisfy 1 or more of the following criteria:

	Band 1	Band 2	Band 3
Eligibility	Students who qualify for statutory free school meals using the following criteria: Income Support Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance Income-related Employment and Support Allowance Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 The guaranteed element of Pension Credit Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190) Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit Universal Credit - if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)	Students who: have a total annual household income of between **£16,190 and £30,000**	Not means tested Student who: pay **over £6 to/from** CAPA College each day on public transport
Free School Meals at £4 per college day	Yes	Yes	X
Public Transport costs to/from college	**50%** contribution Capped at **£400** per year **Students may claim travel costs under Band 3 if this is more beneficial for them*	**25%** contribution Capped at **£400** per year **Students may claim travel costs under Band 3 if this is more beneficial for them*	A contribution towards the cost of transport equivalent to the **difference between £6 and the total cost of daily travel**. Capped at **£200** per half term
CAPA College Equipment list costs	**50%** contribution Capped at **£150** per year	**25%** contribution Capped at **£100** per year	X
Laptop	**Free loan** of a laptop during time studying at CAPA College *The laptop will be of a specification to suit the requirements of your Pathway*	**Free loan** of a laptop during time studying at CAPA College *The laptop will be of a specification to suit the requirements of your Pathway*	X
UCAS and Audition costs	A contribution towards higher education application costs Capped at **£100** (Year 2 only)	A contribution towards higher education application costs Capped at **£100** (Year 2 only)	X
CAPA College organised trips	**Free of charge** up to a value of **£100** per year	**50%** contribution. Capped at **£100** per year	X
CAPA College Merchandise	**Free of charge**: 1 hoody/sweatshirt & 2 t-shirts per year	**Free of charge**: 1 hoody/sweatshirt & 2 t-shirts per year	X
121 Music lessons	**Free** lesson for one instrument (singing, keyboard or guitar)	**50%** contribution to lesson costs	X

Students who do not satisfy any of the criteria listed in this section, but who are able to demonstrate financial hardship arising from other reasons, may still apply for a discretionary bursary.

In assessing any application for a discretionary bursary, we will consider:

- Level of household income
- Distance to travel between the student's home and the institution, or the location of a placement
- The requirements of their study programme
- Whether the student has additional responsibilities that may mean they need extra help

There is no set limit for the amount of discretionary bursary that can be awarded to students. We will base all decisions around which students receive a discretionary bursary, and how much bursary they receive, on each student's individual circumstances and their actual financial need.

We will review the student's eligibility position each academic year. Students will only continue to receive a discretionary bursary if they continue to satisfy the criteria.

9. Application and Payment Process

9.1 Applications

Applications should ideally be submitted by 4th September 2026 via Applicaa https://capacollegebursary.applicaa.com to allow enough time for our college to assess the overall level of demand and make discretionary awards on a fair basis.

> However, we acknowledge that students' circumstances may change and therefore the application process will remain open for the whole college year.

> Applicants will be notified in writing via email whether their application has been successful, together with the amount of funding awarded. If a student wishes to appeal the outcome of their application for a bursary, they must follow the college's complaints procedure.

Any enquiries about the application process should be directed to bursaryawards@capacollege.co.uk

9.2 Evidence

All applications for 16 to 19 bursaries must be supported by appropriate evidence, which we will verify. Examples of acceptable evidence we may request are:

- A copy of the UC or IS award notice from the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) and/or evidence of receipt of DLA or PIP, in the student's name
- Documents such as a tenancy agreement in the student's name, a child benefit receipt, birth certificate or utility bills
- Written confirmation of the student's current or previous looked-after status from the relevant local authority

9.3 Payment process

Payments are made using the following process:

> All Bursary claims must be supported by receipts. These must be uploaded to the Bursary Portal https://capacollegebursary.applicaa.com for verification and approval. We cannot make bursary payments without valid receipts.

> All Bursary travel claims will be made on a half termly basis by BACS transfer to the parent's bank account.

> All FSM payments are made weekly by BACS transfer to the student's bank account

Cash payments will not be made in any circumstances.

9.4 Conditions for the receipt of bursary payments

Payments of the bursary are conditional on students meeting the following conditions in relation to their standards of attendance and behaviour:

o Bursary payments cannot be paid if a student's attendance drops below 95%

o If you reach Stage 3 of the Behaviour Matrix

o A copy of the UC claim from Department of Work and Pensions

All students are required to sign a declaration confirming that they agree to these conditions.

Students who fail to meet these conditions may have their payment withheld, but we will always take students' individual circumstances into consideration. This includes considering the impact on attendance that might be caused by illness, caring responsibilities or other exceptional circumstances.

If students have received in-kind support such as equipment or travel cards, they will be asked to return these if they fail to meet the conditions.

We will stop payments where students have decided to withdraw from a study programme.

We reserve the right to take back money from students where it is not spent for the reasons it was awarded.

We will consider the impact of such an action on the individual student before taking a final decision to do so, and any decision will be confirmed to the student in writing.

10. Change in Circumstances

If there are changes in circumstances that may affect eligibility for a bursary, applicants and/or parents/carers must notify College without delay.

11. Record Keeping and Audit

The College will maintain comprehensive and accurate records relating to the 16 to 19 bursary fund. These records will be kept securely and be readily available for audit purposes. Records will include, but are not limited to:

- Copies of application forms and supporting evidence
- Proof that students meet eligibility criteria
- Records of 'zero bursary' students
- Details of assessment decisions and rationale for awards
- Records of all payments made to students, including dates, value and purpose
- Copies of documents signed by students to give formal agreement to the conditions of payment
- Evidence of student attendance and progress monitoring

Records will be retained for 6 academic years after the end of the academic year in which the student completed their programme.

12. Unspent Funds

Funding for bursary funding cannot be carried forward by the College for more than 1 year. Unspent funding must be reported to the DfE by the College using the customer help centre, specifying the amount of funding and the year(s) it relates to, no later than 31 March each year. The DfE will recover all unspent funds.

13. Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be monitored by Claire Nicholson.

14. Complaints or Appeals

Where any student or parent is unhappy with how we have managed their application for bursary funding or the support that has been provided, they are free to make a complaint or appeal as per the College complaints policy.