16-19 Bursary Fund Guidance 2026-2027

What funds are available?

16-19 Bursary Fund provides financial support to help learners overcome specific financial barriers to participation they face so they can remain in education. There are 2 types of 16 to 19 bursaries:

- **Bursaries for defined vulnerable groups:** learners in care, care leavers, in receipt of benefits such as UC/PIP/ESA because they are financially supporting themselves

- **Discretionary bursary awards** are made to help learners with cost of travel, food and course related costs (books, equipment or specialist clothing). Funds are not to support extra-curricular or non-compulsory activities that are not essential to learner's study or to provide living costs support.

What help can I apply for?

Course related costs

Approved books that are required for your course and are not being provided by the college, **approved** materials and equipment for course

You must speak to your Curriculum Manager before you purchase any materials or apply for the Bursary to cover the cost of these materials. They will guide you on what will be covered and will confirm to the Learner Services team that you are able to apply for this help. All receipts must be kept and approved by the Curriculum Manager.

Travel

Normally you will be able to apply for help **if you live one mile or more away from the college site you attend.** Please note that travel costs will be based on standard Oyster card fares and are only available for travel made by public transport.

Subsistence

Some learners may be eligible for help with meals while they are studying in College. If you had free school meals when you were in school or at another college and your circumstances have not changed, you will be eligible at WM College. If you are not eligible, we may be able to refer you to outside agencies for support.

Who is eligible to apply?

To qualify, you must:

- have been resident in the UK or the EEA for the last 3 years and
- be aged 18 or under 19 on 31st August 2026 or be aged 19-24 and have an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) and
- have a household income less than £30,000 per annum (gross) or

- you or a member of your household be in receipt of a **means tested benefit*** or on a low income. (You will need to show evidence to support your application, e.g. a benefit letter, payslip, bank statements or a P60.) and
- have attendance and punctuality that is no less than 80%** and
- have all the required evidence in support of your application and completed all the relevant sections of the application form.

**** A means tested benefit is a payment which is available to people who can demonstrate that their income and capital (their 'means') are below specified limits.***
*****Financial support may be withdrawn if your attendance falls below 80%***

Who is not eligible to apply?

- Learners who are from outside the EEA
- Learners who are aged 19 or over on 31st August 2026

How can I apply?

- Application forms are available at Reception desk at the Crowndale Road site.
- Hand in your completed application form with any supporting evidence to the Learner Services team at Reception.

What evidence do I need to provide?

- Evidence of recent household income or benefit e.g., a current benefit letter, bank statements or payslips, dated within the last 3 months.
- If applying for course materials and/or books, the Curriculum Manager for your course must have agreed that you may apply for a bursary to cover these costs.
- Bursary applications **cannot** be backdated where a learner's circumstances changes after the start of their course unless the benefit is also backdated

How will I know if my application is successful?

The Learner Services team will review your application and aim to advise you straightaway whether your application is likely to be approved. We will formally confirm the outcome as follows:

- If your application is successful, we will write to you within 14 days to let you know and to arrange payment.
- If your application is unsuccessful, we will write to you within 14 days with the reason(s) for rejection.

How will I receive payment?

Payments will be made by bank transfer (BACS) directly into your bank account.
Payments are made initially at half term and then at the end of term.

Important notes:

The funds are discretionary. We will try to support as many eligible learners as possible, but funds are limited so we operate on a first-come, first-served basis.

If all the funds have been allocated, your application will be placed on a waiting list, and we will contact you if more funds become available.

You must advise benefit agencies of any support you receive from the 16-19 Bursary Fund as this might affect you or your household's benefit eligibility.

Your bursary may be withdrawn if your attendance and punctuality fall below 80% or your college work is not submitted on time.

You will be required to repay funds awarded to you in the event of non-attendance or withdrawal from the course.

If the College is closed for any reason and/or your lessons move online, we will contact you to confirm what the arrangements are in respect of your bursary. Some financial support may be suspended if you are no longer coming into the College.

For more information, please contact our Learner Services team at Reception or by calling 020 7255 4700.