



16-19 BURSARY FUND POLICY

2026/27

Author: Executive Team Member with Responsibility for Admissions
Approved: 12 May 2026 (Resources Committee)
Review: May 2027 (Annually)

16-19 Bursary Fund Policy 2026/27

Introduction

There are two types of 16-19 bursary, Vulnerable Bursary and Discretionary Bursary. One application form is completed and will be considered against both criteria. If successful in applying for the Vulnerable Bursary applications may be considered for support with the costs of essential educational visits and meals through the discretionary bursary.

To be eligible applicants must:

- Be an enrolled student on a further education full time government funded course (this does not include Apprenticeships or Higher Education)
- Be aged 16-18 on 31st August 2026 or 19+ with an education health and care plan (EHCP), or continuing on a study programme which began when aged 16-18.
- Have *home student* status or have been granted *full refugee/asylum seeker* status and in the EU/EEA for the last 3 years.
- Have been *ordinary resident* in the UK continuously for the last three years with *settled status* which means having indefinite leave to remain.

16-18 Vulnerable Bursary

Students in one or more of the groups below can apply for a bursary of up to a maximum of £1,200, which will be used towards the costs of attending College such as equipment and travel costs.

The defined vulnerable groups are students who are:

- in care
- care leavers
- receiving Income Support, or Universal Credit 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 or Personal Independence Payments in their own right as well as Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit in their own right

The fund is to support the learners in full time education by providing a contribution towards the costs of attending the College such as transport, meals costs, equipment and other course related costs. Students must meet the eligibility criteria and maintain a minimum of 80% attendance.

Submission of an application does not guarantee funding. Eligibility for this fund does not mean the full £1,200 will automatically be given.

Bursary payments above the £1,200 limit may be available from the discretionary fund under exceptional circumstances.

Learners aged 19 or over are not eligible for the Vulnerable Bursary.

16-19 Discretionary Bursary

The 16-19 Bursary Fund is available to students aged 16-18 (under 19 on 31st August 2026) and students aged 19+ with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP), or are continuing on a study programme which began when aged 16-18, that have a total household income of less than £30,000 per year.

If students are a young parent (aged 19 and under on 31st August 2026), and meet the eligibility criteria, Care to Learn can help pay for their childcare whilst they are at College.

To apply for support with Childcare students will need to go onto www.gov.uk/care-to-learn

The Discretionary Bursary consists of two categories:

Category	
Tier 1	<p>A learner living in a household that is in receipt of one or more of the following benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Universal Credit (with net earnings not exceeding the annual equivalent of £7,400) - Child Tax Credit (with an annual gross income of no more than £16,190 and not receiving Working Tax Credit) - Income Support - Income-based Jobseekers Allowance - Income-related Employment & Support Allowance - the guarantee element of State Pension Credit - support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
Tier 2	<p>A student living in a household that has a total income, including means-tested benefits, of less than £30,000 per year. Housing benefit is not included when assessing this.</p>

What Support is Available?

	Travel	Work Placement Travel	Meals	iPad Deposit	UCAS Application	Course Specific Materials	Essential College Trips	Maximum Award Cap
Tier 1	Yes	Yes	£6.00 per day	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	£1000 Excluding Meals & iPad deposit
Tier 2	Subsidised	50%	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	50%	£750 Excluding Meals & iPad deposit

Travel support is only issued to students living over 1 mile from the College. This is worked out using Google Maps.

Discretionary bursary payments above the maximum may be available under exceptional circumstances. Student will be charged £10 if they lose or break more than 2 bus passes in a term.

How do students apply?

Once enrolled on a course at Harlow College for 2026/27 students can apply for financial support. To apply, students must complete and submit an online application form and upload the required evidence (see table below). A link to apply will be sent by the Bursary Team prior to enrolment. A paper version of the application form is available on request.

Please note that students must have evidence of eligibility in order to apply.

Returning Learners

Students who applied and qualified for bursary in the 2025/26 academic year and are returning to College in 2026/27 will need to re-apply for bursary. Bursary can be rolled over and will reflect the same tier of bursary received previously, provided that the student (and parent if under 18) sign a self-declaration to confirm that their household circumstances have not changed. If the household situation has changed students are still welcome to re-apply as usual and submit new evidence.

What Evidence Can I Provide to Support My Bursary Application?

Name of Income / Benefit	Evidence Needed (photocopies accepted)
Income	3 months of payslips for all household bill payers
Support under pt. VI of the immigration and asylum act 1999	A letter from the Home Office showing immigration status
Tax Credit Award	All pages of most recent Tax Credit Award Notice dated tax year 2024/2025
Income Support	Letter confirming benefit and amounts (no more than 3 months old)
Employment Support Allowance Income Based (ESA)	Letter confirming benefit and amounts (no more than 3 months old)
Universal Credit	Last 3 months' worth of statements in full
Job Seekers Allowance Income Based (JSA)	Letter confirming benefit and amounts (no more than 3 months old)
Pension Credit	Letter confirming benefit and amounts (no more than 3 months old)
Authority letter (vulnerable bursary)	Letter from Local Authority confirming looked after status
ESA or UC plus DLA or PIP (vulnerable bursary)	Letter confirming benefit (no more than 3 months old)

What happens next?

We will write to the students to advise them what support they are entitled to and how this will be provided. If their application is not successful or further information is required, they will be notified in writing.

How will students be paid?

Where possible, the uniform and equipment will be ordered directly through the College. If direct payments are to be made this will be indicated on the award sheet and will be made as indicated on the Terms & Conditions on the back of the award sheet. Bursary payments are paid directly into the student's bank account, so they must have an account in their own name. If students cannot open a bank account, they will be required to inform a member of the Bursary department and if there is a legitimate reason for them not to have a bank account, alternative arrangements will be made.

The Vulnerable Bursary is paid on a monthly basis and the first payment is paid to every eligible student who applies and meets the criteria specified. All following payments are dependent on their attendance and behaviour. ALL students MUST have a minimum monthly attendance of 80% to receive each payment.

Bursary awards are subject to the availability of funds and The College reserves the right to make discretionary award in exceptional circumstances.

Can students appeal against the College's decision?

In the event that a complainant is dissatisfied with the decision taken by the College, and decides to appeal, a member of the Executive will review the decision and will carry out any further investigation deemed necessary, and will decide to either endorse or modify the decision, and will inform the complainant accordingly. The complainant must appeal (in writing) within 15 working days of receiving their decision.

TRACKING and REFERENCE INFORMATION

Date Approved: 27 June 2023, 9 May 2024, 14 May 2025, 12 May 2026 (Resources Committee)

Next Review Date: May 2027 (annually)

Author/Responsibility: Executive Team Member with Responsibility for Admissions

Equality Impact Assessment: August 2023

List of related policies, procedures and other documents:

Complaints Procedure

Equality & Diversity Policy

Equality and Diversity Scheme

Data Protection Policy

Safeguarding and Prevent Policy

Complaints: If you wish to submit a complaint about the application of this policy or the procedure of it, please send your request in accordance with the provisions of the Grievance Procedure.

Monitoring: The application of this policy and associated procedure will be monitored by Vice-Principal with Responsibility for Finance

Easy reading: To receive this policy/procedure in a different format, please contact: HR Services