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# Advice for young people: 2015 to 2016 16 to 19 Bursary Fund

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# 1.

## Introduction

The 16 to 19 Bursary Fund is money the government has given to local authorities, schools, colleges and other education and training providers (education institutions) to give to students who need financial help to stay in education.

There are 2 types of 16 to 19 bursaries:

- a vulnerable bursary of up to £1,200 a year for young people in one of the defined vulnerable groups
- discretionary bursaries that institutions award to meet individual needs. For example, transport, meals, books and equipment.

Your education institution is responsible for managing both types of bursary.

# 2.

## Vulnerable bursary

If you are in one of the groups below, you can apply for a vulnerable bursary.

- in care
- care leaver
- getting [Income Support](#) or [Universal Credit](#) in place of Income Support in your own name
- getting [Employment Support Allowance](#) (or Universal Credit in place of ESA) and Disability Living Allowance or [Personal Independence Payments](#) in your own name

## **2.1 Amount paid**

You could get up to £1,200 if you study full time for a minimum of 30 weeks. If your course is only for a few hours a week or less than 30 weeks, you will probably get less.

If you don't have costs, for example you're a residential student who doesn't travel, and all your meals and equipment are provided, you could get less than £1,200 or nothing at all. If this is the case your institution must say why.

## **2.2 Proof you're eligible for a vulnerable bursary**

Your institution will need proof you're eligible. This could be a letter from your local authority showing you're in care or a care leaver. It could be a letter from the Department of Work and Pensions showing the benefits you get. Your institution will tell you what you need.

## **2.3 Benefits that qualify for a vulnerable bursary**

Benefits must be in your own name to get a vulnerable bursary.

If you don't get them in your name, you won't get a vulnerable bursary. Instead you may be able to apply for a discretionary bursary from your education institution.

## 2.4 Young carer

As a young carer you won't get a vulnerable bursary, unless you fall into one of the other defined vulnerable groups.

Instead you may be able to apply for a discretionary bursary from your education institution.

## 2.5 Young parent

If you're a young parent getting Income Support or Universal Credit in your own name you may get a vulnerable bursary. If you don't get a vulnerable bursary, you may be able to apply for a discretionary bursary from your education institution.

You might also get help with childcare costs through [Care to Learn](#).

# 3.

## Discretionary bursary

If you don't fall into one of the vulnerable groups, but you need financial help to stay in education, you can apply for a discretionary bursary from your education institution. You must be between 16 and 19 years old and in full or part-time further education or training.

Your education institution is responsible for setting the eligibility criteria. Examples of what it could be based on are:

- your family's income
- if your parents get benefits

- if you currently receive free school meals or have had them in the past.

Institutions set eligibility criteria for the bursary because funds have to be targeted at students who need the most help to stay in education.

How much you get is up to your institution. They decide who gets a bursary, how much, when it's paid and what it should be spent on.

## 3.1 Family's finances

If you apply, your institution may ask for evidence of your family's household income. Examples include;

- a letter from the Department of Work and Pensions showing receipt of benefits
- a P60
- a Tax Credit Award Notice
- evidence of your family's annual income
- 3 months worth of payslips or bank account statements

Your institution will let you know what you need to show them.

## 3.2 Help to pay for 'one-off' things

Some institutions offer 'one-off' payments for things like educational trips or to attend university interviews. This might be in addition to help with longer-term costs for things like bus fares.

Ask your student support services at your educational institution for more information.

# 4.

## Eligibility

### 4.1 Age

You must be aged:

- over 16
- under 19 at 31 August before the start of the academic year

There is other support for older students. Student support services at your educational institution will tell you what to apply for.

### 4.2 Residency

You must meet the residency requirements for enrolment; your institution will check this.

### 4.3 Resident of Scotland

If you live in Scotland and travel to England to study, you should contact your home local authority in Scotland to apply for [Scottish EMA](#) \_\_\_\_. You can't get the bursary fund.

If you live in England and travel to Scotland to study, you should contact your

home local authority in England to apply for a bursary. You can't get EMA.

If you're from England and live in Scotland temporarily to study, for example at a residential college, you will be treated as a Scottish resident and should apply to your host local authority in Scotland for EMA. You can't get the bursary fund.

## 4.4 Residents of Wales

If you live in Wales and travel to England to study, you should contact your home local authority to apply for [Welsh EMA](#).

You may also apply to your institution for a discretionary bursary, but not a vulnerable bursary.

If you live in England and travel to Wales to study, the support you should apply for depends on the type of institution you're attending:

- if you attend an FE college you should apply for discretionary student support from your college, via the Welsh institution's Financial Contingency Fund
- if you attend a special college or school sixth form you should approach your home local authority in England to apply for a discretionary bursary

All students living in England and travelling to Wales to study who are in one of the defined vulnerable groups, are eligible for a vulnerable bursary and should approach their local authority in England to apply.

## Types of Study

# 5.

## 5.1 Eligible education provision

Your institution should be inspected by a public body such as Ofsted that checks quality.

It must also be either:

- funded by the Education Funding Agency directly or via a local authority
- funded or co-financed by the European Social Fund
- otherwise publicly funded and lead to a qualification (up to level 3) accredited by Ofqual or is pursuant to Section 96 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000
- on the list of employers, training organisations and subcontractors eligible to deliver the [traineeship programme](#)

## 5.2 Studying part time

You can be studying full or part time. The amount of time you're studying will be looked at when deciding if you will get a payment and how much you will get.

## 5.3 Distance learning

If you're studying on a publicly funded distance learning course, you may be eligible for the bursary fund.



However, if you don't have any costs related to your education you won't get any bursary funds.

If you want to apply, you should speak to student support at your education institution. They will look at your individual case. When they have done this they will let you know if you can apply and how much you could get.

Please note that the bursary cannot be used to pay for course fees or exam re-sits.

## 5.4 Young offender

If you're a young offender you can apply if:

- you're serving a non-custodial sentence
- you've been released early from a custodial sentence (except on temporary licence)
- you've been remanded to a non-secure institution

Institutions should provide you with in-kind support, if possible. This is where you get the things you need such as a meal, course material or a travel pass, instead of money.

You can't apply if:

- you're serving a custodial sentence
- you've been released from a custodial sentence on temporary licence
- you've been remanded to a secure institution

## 5.5 Higher Education

The bursary is for students in further education or training. There is separate support for [higher education students](#).

## 5.6 Independent (private) institutions

If you go to an independent institution that charges fees, you won't normally get a bursary. However, if you've been referred to the institution by your local authority and they pay your fees, you may get a bursary. Your education institution will be able to tell you if you can apply and how.

## 5.7 Apprenticeship

Students on apprenticeship programmes, or paid learning or training, can't get a bursary.

## 5.8 Traineeships

Students on a traineeships programme are not paid so they are eligible to apply for a bursary.

# 6.

## Further information

## 6.1 How to apply

To apply you need to contact student support services or your tutor at your education institution. They will tell you what to do. There should also be information about applying for the 16 to 19 Bursary Fund on institution websites.

You must be at least 16 and under 19 years old at the start of the academic year.

You must be studying full or part time further education or training, such as A levels or vocational qualifications.

You should apply as soon as you know where you're going to study. The sooner you apply, the sooner your support can start. Some institutions may have limited funds available and it could be allocated on a first come first serves basis.

Some institutions ask for a new application every year, some only at the start of a course. If you're unsure, talk to your education institution.

## 6.2 Payment of the bursary

How the bursary is paid is up to individual institutions. It may be paid into your bank account in a lump sum or instalments. You may get cash or a cheque. Or, it might be paid 'in kind', which means instead of getting money, you could get a travel pass, meal vouchers or course equipment. You might get paid partly in money and partly 'in kind'.

All payment queries should be directed to your institution. This is because institutions are responsible for deciding who is eligible for the bursary fund,

as well as how much a student should be awarded, and when the payments will be made.

## **6.3 Bank account**

If you're 16 years old you can open a basic bank account. This will allow BACS transfers and allow you to withdraw money. If you can't open a bank account you will need to speak to student support services or your tutor to work out another way for them to pay you.

## **6.4 Need more support?**

Some institutions keep some bursary fund to help students who need emergency help because their circumstances have changed. Others provide one-off support through separate funds which aren't connected to the bursary. If your circumstances change, speak to student support services at your education institution straight away. They will be able to tell you what to do.

## **6.5 Impact on household benefits**

Bursary fund payments do not affect your right to Department of Works and Pensions income-related benefits. They are paid directly to students in addition to other means-tested benefits and do not affect them.

However, if you're getting Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments and Employment Support Allowance or Universal Credit, your parents can't get certain benefits for you like child benefit.

The bursary is not a substitute for other support such as [Care to Learn](#), or [Residential Support](#).

Getting other support does not mean you can't get a bursary. For example if you get Care to Learn you may also get a bursary if you need help to stay in education.

# 7.

## Rules on payments

### 7.1 What the bursary is for

As the bursary is to help pay for things you need to stay in education, institutions can say what you should spend it on. They may also ask for receipts for what you've spent it on.

### 7.2 Attendance and behaviour

Education institutions can set conditions on your bursary. These are rules you need to stick to so you can receive support from the bursary fund. The conditions they set could cover attendance or standards of behaviour. If you don't stick to them, your payments may be stopped.

### 7.3 Illness or authorised absence

If you're ill or have an authorised absence, your education institution will tell you if this will affect your payments.

## **7.4 Who will know you get a bursary**

Your application should be confidential. Your education institution should make sure you're not singled out.

If you're worried, talk to student support services or your tutor.

# **8.**

## **Fraud**

### **8.1 Declaration**

If you or your parents or carers provide false or incomplete information on your bursary application you may be committing fraud. Details of your application may be passed to the Department for Education or the police. You and your parents or carers could be prosecuted. Your institution will ask you to pay back any payments you should not have had.

As part of the assessment of your application your education institution may do a sample checks. They could ask you for further evidence. If that evidence is not provided, or results in a lower award being due, they may stop payments and ask you to pay back any payments you should not have had.

## 8.2 Fraudulent claim

If you think someone has made a fraudulent claim, speak to student support services or your tutor in confidence. They will need to look into it.

You can also report it directly to the [Department for Education](#).

# 9.

## Complaints and questions

If you've any problems with how the bursary is paid, how much money you get or other general questions, you need to talk to student services or your tutor at your education institution because they manage the funds.

# 10.

## Institutions not managing the bursary correctly

If you feel your institution is not managing it correctly, you should talk to student support services or your tutor. If they can't help, you can make a formal complaint, by using your institution's formal complaints procedure

# 11.

## Other financial support

- [Transport](#)
- [Care to Learn](#)
- [Residential Support scheme](#)
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