



Summary

Middlesbrough College recognises that financial support for students has an important role to play in removing barriers for some students accessing and completing further education courses. It is the aim of the College to use allocated funds to make the maximum impact on recruitment, attendance, retention, and achievement.

These funds will be distributed in a consistent and transparent way and in accordance with the guidance issued by the Education, Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).

Funding is intended to help with the financial hardship needs of individual young people studying a programme at College. Financial support awarded to individuals will be used towards essential course related costs such as travel, meals at college if eligible, equipment, trips and other costs associated with learning (see Types of Support).

Financial support will be subject to sufficient funds being available, are not guaranteed and eligibility is based on need. Please note that this is a discretionary fund, approval is based on the assessment of personal circumstances and the availability of allocated funding through the Financial Assistance application.

Statement of Principles

- Financial support should be applied fairly and consistently.
- The process must be easily understood and accessible to young people. All relevant information will be publicised via Student Services information leaflets, MyMbro and the college website.
- The process should identify eligible students in a timely fashion.
- There is a commitment to ensuring funds allocated to the College are fully distributed in order to support as many students as possible, however, budgets are provided by the ESFA and therefore, the college can only make payment if there is sufficient funds.
- Bursary guidance is subject to change.

General Eligibility

To be eligible to apply for the Student Bursary students must be:

- Enrolled on a course within the College.
- Their place on the course must be funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)
- HE courses are not eligible to apply.
- Students following an Apprenticeship, or any waged training are not eligible to apply
- Students must be aged 16 years or over on 31st August.
- They must be a "home" student, i.e. having been 'ordinarily resident' in the British Isles
- Accompanied asylum-seeking children (under 18 with an adult relative or partner) - As long as an asylum seeker has not had their application for asylum refused, institutions can provide in-kind student support such as books, equipment or a travel pass.
- Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children do not receive cash support from the Home Office and are the responsibility of the local authority. They are treated as looked after

children and are eligible for a bursary for vulnerable groups ('in care' group), where they have a financial need.

- Meet specific eligibility for each key element (see below)

The Bursary Fund has Four Key Elements.

A. Vulnerable Bursary

B. 16 -18 Discretionary Bursary

C. 19+ Discretionary Bursaries

D. Advanced Learner Loan Bursary Funds

Types of support funded by these bursaries are outlined in Section E.

A. Vulnerable Bursaries are available for up to £1200 a year for students aged 16 to 18 (at the start of the academic year) 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

Vulnerable Bursaries are available for up to £1200 and are designed to help students overcome the individual financial barriers to participation that they face and institutions must ensure the funds go to those who genuinely need them. No student will automatically be awarded a set amount of funding without an assessment of the level of need they have and therefore applicants will need to provide evidence to support their claim for transport, meals, equipment or educational visits up to the value of £1200.

Evidence must be provided by a students Social Worker to determine need.

B. 16 -18 Discretionary Bursaries

Can be awarded to any student aged 16 to 18 (at the start of the academic year) who face genuine financial barriers to staying on in education and training to help with costs related to your timetabled study.

16-18 Discretionary Bursary awards will only be made subject to a fully completed application with supporting evidence and will only be made to support genuine financial barriers to continuing studies and will be subject to financial limits.

A student must be aged 16 or over but under 19 at 31 August to be eligible for help from the bursary fund in the academic year. (If a student turns 19 during their programme of study, they can continue to receive the bursary until the end of the academic year in which they turn 19).

Students must be:

From a household income of less than £25,000 per year and/or: whose parents are in receipt of one of the following:

- Universal Credit
- Income Support
- Income Based Job Seekers Allowance
- Disability Living Allowance (Must be in receipt of another benefit alongside)
- Personal Independent Payments (PIP) (Must be in receipt of another benefit alongside)
- An income-related employment and support allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit (provided they are not entitled to Working Tax Credit) and have an annual income which does not exceed £16,190 as assessed by His Majesty's Revenue and Customs
- Guarantee element of Pension Credit

C. 19+ Bursaries

19+ students who are from a household with an income of below £30,000 per year will be eligible to apply for support towards study costs related to your timetabled study.

Students aged 19 or over are only eligible to receive a 16-18 bursary if they are continuing on a study programme they began aged 16 to 18 (19+ continuers), have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and meet the household income criteria as detailed in Section B (see section B above).

Assistance with tuition fees may also be available; this will depend on your personal circumstances and is not guaranteed. All applications must be submitted via the Financial Assistance application form within 8 weeks of your course start date, any claims after this deadline will be looked into on an individual basis and could be refused.

If you are successful with your claim, the normal amount we award is 75% towards the cost of your tuition fee; you will be liable for any outstanding amount. In exceptional circumstances full payment may be granted based upon individual need.

D. Advanced Learner Loan Bursary Funds (Awarded to students who have successfully funded their course through an Advanced Learner Loan)

The ALLB is designed to support students who have taken out an Advanced Learner Loan to pay for course related costs such as fees, books, equipment etc. If you qualify for the support we can help with childcare, travel and a meal entitlement on your timetabled study days.

If you are 20+ at the start of your course and require assistance with childcare, the same process in key element C as above needs to be followed.

E - Types of Support

Uniform, PPE, Kit, Equipment and Books

If students are required to purchase uniform, PPE, kit, equipment or books as part of their course then they will be able to submit a receipt for reimbursement, or the college will purchase on a student's behalf. Depending on funds available we may not be able to reimburse 100% of the costs.

Travel to College or Work Placements

All 16-18 students can purchase a bus pass which entitles them to term time, timetabled day weekday travel up to 9pm effective from Monday 4th September 2023 until Friday 28 June 2024 inclusive, on the Arriva and Stagecoach North East services and college commissioned routes.

Bus passes for students eligible for bursary types A and B are funded through their bursary.

Train routes may be reimbursed where bus journeys to college are not available. Middlesbrough College reimburses train tickets upon receipt of proof of travel and eligibility.

In exceptional circumstances, 19+ students may be eligible for support with travel costs on an individual basis.

Educational Visits and Trips

If students are required to attend an educational visit or trip, they will be able to submit a receipt for any additional costs. In some cases, teaching staff will advise the Student Services Team of the cost and the department will be reimbursed if they are purchasing the tickets on the student's behalf.

Meals

16-19 year olds may be eligible for support with food costs on your timetabled days depending on eligibility as set out below.

Eligibility Criteria 1 - You will be awarded £6* per timetabled day if you or your parent(s) are in receipt of one or more of the following benefits:

- Universal Credit (Not exceeding £7,400pa earned income)
- Income Support
- Income Based Job Seekers Allowance
- Disability Living Allowance (Must be in receipt of another benefit alongside)
- Personal Independent Payments (PIP) (Must be in receipt of another benefit alongside)
- An income-related employment and support allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit (provided they are not entitled to Working Tax Credit) and have an annual income which does not exceed £16,190 as assessed by His Majesty's Revenue and Customs
- Guarantee element of Pension Credit

*£2.41 of this allowance is funded by Free Meals in Further Education. When you submit a Financial Assistance application we will automatically assess your eligibility for Free College Meals.

Eligibility Criteria 2 – you will be awarded £3 per timetabled day if you are from a household income of less than £25,000 per year and/or your parents are in receipt of one of the following:

- Universal Credit
- Income Support
- Income Based Job Seekers Allowance
- Disability Living Allowance (Must be in receipt of another benefit alongside)
- Personal Independent Payments (PIP) (Must be in receipt of another benefit alongside)
- An income-related employment and support allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit (provided they are not entitled to Working Tax Credit) and have an annual income which does not exceed £16,190 as assessed by His Majesty's Revenue and Customs
- Guarantee element of Pension Credit

Support for food costs will be adjusted downwards based on non-attendance at college.

In exceptional circumstances, 19+ students may be eligible for support with meals on an individual basis.

Childcare

Care to Learn (Childcare for students aged under 20 year old)

Care to Learn provides financial support to parents under the age of 20 years at the start of their course with the costs of childcare to ensure they are able to continue in education. The young parent must be taking an eligible full-time course and must be using an Ofsted registered childcare provider, who is not a relation. Care to Learn is administered by an external funding body. The weekly payment depends on the cost of childcare but can be up to £180 per child per week.

Care to Learn only covers childcare costs for teenage parents. Details are available from Student Services. Some young parents will also be eligible for Income Support or Universal Credit, in which case they are entitled to a £1,200 Bursary.

Care to Learn use an online Student Bursary Support Service which enables students to apply and check the status of their application as well as allowing Childcare Provider(s) and the named administrator for the Learning Provider to upload the information immediately which speeds up the process. As the Learning Provider signs to confirm they have seen the child(ren)s original birth certificate and Child Benefit, this must still be brought to Student Services.

You must be receiving the Child Benefit for the child to be eligible for Care to Learn

20+ Childcare Support

Funding for childcare support for students over the age of 20 years who are at risk of not participating or remaining in learning is provided on a discretionary basis. Students who are from a household with an income of below £25,000 per year will be eligible to apply. 20+ childcare funding will only be awarded to fund childcare with an Ofsted registered provider.

Students who are entitled to the free government childcare (15/30hrs) are expected to use this entitlement before any funding is applied for through the College.

If your application is successful, Middlesbrough College can pay up to £180 per child per week for your timetabled lessons only. To support your application, we require certain evidence. Please note we cannot assess an application without all of the evidence:

- Child's full birth certificate
- Student's birth certificate or passport
- Income evidence
- Copy of student's course timetable

If your attendance falls below 90%, you will be asked to meet with the Senior Student Services Assistant to discuss the matter. Middlesbrough College reserves the right to withdraw childcare funding and you will be liable for any outstanding fees. Any changes to timetable must be given to Student Services in advance of these being implemented. All payments will be paid directly to the Childcare provider.

Please note that this is a discretionary fund and not guaranteed. Approval is based on the assessment of personal circumstances and the availability of allocated funding.

You must not start using the childcare provider until confirmation of funding has been provided by the Senior Student Services Assistant as you will be liable for any costs incurred before approval.

Application Procedure

We encourage all prospective and returning students who think that they might be eligible to apply for financial support to complete and submit the financial support application form as soon as possible. You can apply for one of these bursaries via the college website www.mbro.ac.uk/services-and-support/financial-support-and-fees. You will need to upload evidence of your household financial earnings or income to check your eligibility. If the correct evidence is not submitted the form cannot be assessed and an award cannot be made. If this is the case, we will write to or email the student to inform them of what further evidence they need to submit. It is the responsibility of the student to make sure that they do this promptly.

We will write to or email all students informing them of the outcome of their application. Successful students will get an award notice which tells them what their award is including where applicable if they are entitled to free college meals.

We will also communicate with all unsuccessful students informing them of the reasons for the College's decision.

Please only complete an application form if you are studying on a full time course up-to Level 3 only (this does not include Apprenticeships). Funding for Level 4 courses and higher must be applied for through Student Finance England.

Appealing a decision when the application for support was declined.

Students can submit an appeal if their application is declined to the student services team via studentservices@mbro.ac.uk. The applicant must state the reasons for disagreeing with the decision and why it is deemed unfair, and evidence must be submitted to support the claim and confirm that the bursary claim is for educational costs.

A panel will be convened within 20 working days. The panel will consist of the Director of Student Services and Vice Principal for Students and Communication.

The panel will review the decision and the applicant will be notified of the panel's decision in writing within 5 working days.

The decision of the panel will be final.

Appealing for additional funds following a successful application and bursary payment

Due to limited funds and high volumes of applications for financial support that are received by the College each year we have imposed strict limits for each of the Bursary elements listed in the policy above. It will therefore not be possible to submit an appeal for additional funds from the bursary until after 31st January 2024.

Any student wishing to appeal for additional support must submit an appeal in writing to studentservices@mbro.ac.uk and must specify how much support they require and what the additional support is required for. Additional payments will only be made where the requested support is for educational purposes only and only where evidence is provided and will be limited depending on the Bursary funds available.