



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 Department for Education.

HE courses, students following an Apprenticeship, or any waged training are not eligible to apply.

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 Support).

We recommend that all students with a household income of £100,000 or less apply for financial 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.

Payments will be made to students based on the following attendance criteria.

88-100% attendance = full payment

80-88% attendance = 50% payment

Under 80% attendance = no payment

This policy is subject to a time limited pilot for funding and may be subject to change at any time.

Funds will be awarded on a needs basis in line with government guidance.

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 Department for Education and therefore, the college can only make payment if there are 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 Department for Education
- 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 care experienced children and are eligible for a 16-18 Priority Bursary where they have a financial need.
- Meet specific eligibility criteria (see below)

16-18 Priority Bursary

This is for students who are 16-18 year-old and who are:

- in care
- care leavers / care experienced (in care for 13 weeks or more since the age of 14)
- 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 alongside Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit in their own right.

This Bursary is based on financial need and is not automatically awarded. Students will also qualify for the 16-18 discretionary bursary subject to an evidence of need assessment.

16 -18 Discretionary Bursaries

Can be awarded to any student aged 16 to 18 (at the start of the academic year) who faces genuine financial barriers to staying on in education and training to help with costs related to your timetabled study. This can include students who are care experienced e.g. living in the care of the local authority, have left care or are claiming Universal Credit in their own right.

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 £100,000 per year and/or: whose parents/carers 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

M C Middlesbrough College Group		Household income				
		Under £16,190*	£16,190 – £25k	£25k – £30k	£30k – £100k	Over £100k
Bus travel Arriva and Stagecoach		FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE	£60 per term**
Train travel***		FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE	X
Equipment		FREE	FREE	FREE	X	X
Trips and visits		FREE	FREE	FREE	X	X
College meals		£4 per day	£10 ^A per week	10% discount	10% discount	10% discount
UCAS fee		FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE	X
MC Click laptop****		FREE	FREE	FREE	£50 one off fee	£50 one off fee

* You must be in receipt of an eligible means tested benefit

** First payment due after October half term

*** Listed stations and subject to purchase of a 16-17 saver rail card which will be refunded

**** 2025/26 first year students only

^A paid in half termly instalments

Uniform, Kit, Equipment and Books

If students are required to purchase uniform, kit, equipment or books as part of their course then they will either be able to purchase all items via Pay My Student (located on the Middlesbrough College website) or in exceptional circumstances submit a receipt for reimbursement. 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 7pm effective from Monday 8th September 2025 until Friday 26th June 2026 inclusive, on the Arriva and Stagecoach North East services and college commissioned routes.

Bus passes for students with household income of less than £100,000 are funded through this fund upon successful application (no payment required), students with household income of over £100,000 are required to pay £60 per term for their bus pass.

**Train routes may be reimbursed where bus journeys to college are not available (check website for eligible stations). Middlesbrough College reimburses train tickets upon receipt of proof of travel

and eligibility; students must purchase the 16-17 Saver Rail Card (this will be reimbursed for students with household income of less than £100,000).

Visits and Trips

If students are required to attend a visit or trip for educational purposes or enrichment, volunteering and work placement (including international trips) the full or partial cost of this can be covered under this funding (subject to funds). 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 students' behalf.

UCAS

Students who are eligible for free school meals are also eligible for an application fee waiver for UCAS applications, the bursary will pay for those ineligible for the fee waiver under the 16-18 bursary for those with a household income up to £100,000.

MC Click Laptops

Students on eligible courses will be issued a laptop at enrolment, if you take a laptop you agree to:

- Pay £50 at point of issue
- Pay £50 before 31/12/2025
- Apply for financial assistance using the the application form on PayMyStudent to see if you are eligible for help. If you are not eligible then you will need to pay the £50 before 31/12/2025

Failure to do one of the above will result in your device being blocked and deactivated.

If your household income is below £30,000 you may be eligible for financial assistance. This is subject to successful assessment through the funding application on PayMyStudent and available funds.

Meals and other costs associated with attending college

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 £4* per timetabled day if you or your parents/carers are in receipt of one of the following:

- 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

*£2.61 per day 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 the equivalent of £10 per timetabled week 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

This amount will be added to your college card on a half termly basis. Support for food costs will be adjusted downwards based on non-attendance at college.

Students may purchase meal deals, drinks, toiletries, stationery and other college items on their college card. Any remaining balance on college cards will be cleared at the end of each term (Christmas / Easter / End of year).

Only Free College Meals £4.00 per day or £10 per week will be awarded to students.

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 parent must be taking an eligible full-time course and must be using an Ofsted registered childcare provider, who is not a relation. The weekly payment depends on the cost of childcare but can be up to £180 per child per week. Childcare providers will need to invoice the college monthly, in arrears and payment will be sent direct to the 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.

Care to Learn only covers childcare costs for teenage parents. Some young parents will also be eligible for Income Support or Universal Credit, in which case they could apply for the Priority Bursary too.

You must be receiving the Child Benefit for the child to be eligible for Care to Learn. 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 including Child Benefit letter
- Copy of student's course timetable
- Completed Provider Form

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 your application via the PayMyStudent system 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 2025.

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.

Travel for all students is subsidised through college funds and commercial income.