

19+ Bursary Policy

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.

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.

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

Application Procedure

We encourage all prospective and returning students who believe they may face financial barriers to participation in education to apply for financial support by completing and submitting an application via the PayMyStudent system as soon as possible. The application can be accessed via the Middlesbrough College website or by scanning a QR code available from Student Services.

We guarantee that any applications made on or prior to 30th October 2026 will be assessed for financial support, with relevant funds applied and bursary backdated to the beginning of the academic year. This backpay does not include free meals.

Applications received after 30 October 2026 will be assessed subject to funding availability and may not be eligible for backdated financial support.

Students must confirm that they have read and understood this guidance as part of their application. 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 this decision.

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.

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- 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 the college can only make payment if there is sufficient funds.
- Bursary guidance is subject to change.
- Applications for funding will close during May Half Term 2027.

Governance, Roles and Responsibilities

To ensure separation of duties and compliance with audit expectations, the following arrangements apply:

- Applications are assessed by the Student Services Team
- Bursary awards are authorised by the Executive Director of Student Services (or delegated senior manager)
- Payments are processed by the Finance Team
- Audit checks are completed independently of assessment and payment functions.

All bursary awards are made in accordance with the Department for Education's 16–19 Bursary Fund Guidance 2026–27.

The College must be able to demonstrate that all awards:

- Address a genuine financial barrier to participation.
- Are supported by evidence.
- Represent value for money.
- Are capable of withstanding external audit scrutiny.

Bursary guidance is subject to change.

General Eligibility

The following are not eligible

- Students following an Apprenticeship, or any waged training are not eligible to apply
- HE courses are not eligible to apply for this funding, however there is a HE bursary which is a one-off yearly £500 payment for Level 4-6 students (starting 2025-2026) with a household income of less than £45,000, applications to be submitted via PayMyStudent

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)
- Students must be aged 19 years or over on 31st August.
- They must be a “home” student, i.e. having been ‘ordinarily resident’ in the British Isles
- Meet specific eligibility for each key element (see below)

The 19+ Bursary Fund has Two Key Elements.

1. 19+ Discretionary Bursaries
2. Advanced Learner Loan Bursary Funds (Awarded to students who have successfully funded their course through an Advanced Learner Loan)

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1. 19+ Bursaries

19+ students who are from a household with an income of below £45,000 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.

2. Advanced Learner Loan Bursary Funds

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

If you are 20+ at the start of your course and require assistance with childcare, please see the process below. If you are aged 19 at the start of your course and require childcare, please follow the same process but this will be funded through Care to Learn and not the College.

Free College Meals

Students who are 19-23 years old and subject to an Education, Health and Care Plan will also receive FCM; you must still meet the household income criteria to be eligible outline below. You, or your household must receive one of the following qualifying benefits:

- Universal Credit
- Income Based Job Seekers Allowance
- An income-related employment and support allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Guarantee element of Pension Credit

If you are successful, £4 credit per day will be uploaded on to your College ID Card for use in any of the College's food outlets. Any unspent money will be removed at the end of each day.

From academic year 2026 to 2027, all students from households receiving Universal Credit are eligible for free meals.

Eligibility will be checked prior to the start of the academic year where possible and must be reviewed at least annually.

Items from the Costa concession hut are not included and must be paid for separately.

Support with Study Costs

19+ students who are from a household with an income of below £45,000 per year will be eligible to apply for support towards study costs e.g. purchases of equipment, uniforms, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), mandatory course related residential costs.

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 maximum we can award is 75% towards the cost of your course; you will be liable for any outstanding amount.

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Please note that support with study costs is from a discretionary fund and not guaranteed. Approval is based on the assessment of personal circumstances and the availability of allocated funding.

Visits and Trips

If students are required to attend a visit or trip for educational purposes, volunteering activities and work placements, the full or partial cost of this can be covered under this funding (subject to funds). Teaching staff will be required to advise the Student Services Team of the learning aims and cost and where these are approved, the department will be reimbursed if they are purchasing the tickets on the students' behalf.

Bursary funding must support essential participation costs (e.g. travel, equipment, course-related costs). It must not be used for non-essential extra-curricular activities or general enrichment.

All awards must be:

- Based on individual need
- Evidence-led
- Not blanket or assumed costs

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 19+ discretionary bursary for those with a household income up to £100,000.

Childcare

Care to Learn (Childcare for students aged 20 years old or under at the start of their course)

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. You **should 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.

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

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- Income evidence including Child Benefit letter
- Copy of student's course timetable
- Completed Provider Form

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 £45,000 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. You **should 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. Childcare funding **is not** backdated. Once funding is approved, any changes required to days/times need to be requested at least 2 weeks in advance of any change.

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
- Completed Provider Form

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.

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.

Travel

Bus travel

Eligible students, enrolled on a full-time programme, receive free transport for the days their timetable requires them to be in college - funded through the bursary.

Weekday travel on a student's timetabled day, travel up to 7pm effective from Monday 7th September 2026 until Friday 25th June 2027 inclusive, on the Arriva and Stagecoach North East services and college commissioned routes.

Please note, if your household income is above the income threshold there is a £60 fee for your travel sticker, and this is payable each term.

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We also offer a number of direct bus services to Middlesbrough College with Arriva on a morning, as follows:

- MC1 – Ingleby Barwick
- MC2 – Easington, Brotton, Skelton, Guisborough & Ormesby
- MC3 – Great Ayton via Stokesley & Hutton Rudby
- MC4 – Saltburn, Marske, New Marske & Redcar

Train travel

Students in **full time** study, whose journey commences from the following stations (terminating at Middlesbrough Central Station) are eligible for rail refunds:

Darlington North Road, Darlington Bank Top, Dinsdale, Allens West, Seaham, Hartlepool, Seaton Carew, Thirsk, Northallerton, Yarm, Eaglescliffe, Thornaby and Stockton.

Eligible refunds will be refunded by our Student Services department and are paid from Middlesbrough College funds. You must pay for the ticket(s) up front and bring to Student Services for reimbursement the following week. Tickets must be handed in on a weekly basis to ensure reimbursement, there is also an option to email tickets to studentservices@mbro.ac.uk, you must ensure your name, price and journey is clearly stated. Any tickets that are received by 5pm on a Monday will be paid on the Friday. Failure to hand tickets in regularly may result in you not receiving reimbursement - we will not backdate refunds more than 4 weeks. Only requests for train refunds submitted before October half term will be considered.

College ID cards will not give students discounted train travel.

For further information on eligibility and the process of refunds, our Student Services department will be happy to help on 01642 333606.

HE Bursary (Level 4 or higher)

Students enrolled on full-time regulated Higher Education programmes at (levels 4-6), starting 2025-2026 onwards, may be eligible to apply for a Higher Education Bursary of £500 per academic year. To qualify, students must have a household income of less than £45,000 per annum. Applications must be submitted through the PayMyStudent portal and will be subject to assessment. Applicants are required to provide appropriate evidence of household income to support their application. Bursary payment will not start being processed until after October Half term once confirmation of Term 1 fees is in place. Self-funding student must be on track with their agreed payment plan. Bursary awards are made annually; students must reapply for each year of study.

Other Benefits

You may also be eligible for discretionary funding through the Student Support Scheme and/or Student Union budgets for University interviews etc. Applications need to be submitted in advance. Please see Student Services for more information.

Part-time students can apply for assistance with travel expenses, and this is based on household income and the distance a student lives from the College.

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All full-time students are also entitled to a free College gym membership on payment of a £10 administration fee, 20% discount on hair & beauty treatments plus 1 free haircut per year and a printing allowance.

Access to buy a TOTUM Card for only £14.99 online, entitling you to hundreds of discounts.
<https://cards.totum.com/join>

All students also receive 10% discount in the College's food outlets when their ID card is scanned.

Appealing a decision when the application for support was declined.

In line with DfE guidance, appeals are managed internally by the College. The decision of the panel is final.

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 Executive Director of Student Services and Deputy Principal for Students.

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 2027.

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.

Household income thresholds are used as an initial indicator of potential eligibility. Meeting an income threshold alone does not guarantee support. Awards are determined following assessment of individual financial need, course-related costs and available funding.

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	Household income		
	<£45,000*	£45,001 – £100,000*	Over £100,000*
Free College Meals (16-18 students / 19-23 with EHCP only)	Eligible for £4 per day if the household is in receipt of a means tested benefit** including Universal Credit		
Bus Travel (Arriva & Stagecoach)	FREE	FREE	£60 per term***
Train Travel****	Reimbursed	Reimbursed	X
MC Bursary (if not receiving Free Meals)	£3 per day ^Δ	X	X
Specialist Equipment	YES	X	X
Mandatory Trips / Visits	YES*****	X	X
UCAS Fee	YES	YES	X
Childcare – Care to Learn (16-19yr old student)	YES	X	X
Childcare – College Funded (20yrs+ student)	YES	X	X

* Earned income plus Universal Credit amount (if applicable)

** Universal Credit / State Pension / Asylum Support

*** Payment due after October half term / after Christmas holidays / after Easter holidays

**** Designated train stations only. Students are required to purchase the 16-17 saver rail card. Tickets must be handed in weekly

***** The bursary fund can only be used to support learning activities and experiences that are clearly mapped to the student's study programme goals or course objectives therefore, each trip award is assessed on an individual basis and is not guaranteed

Δ Bursary paid weekly and based on positive attendance