



SARACENS
HIGH SCHOOL

16-19 BURSARY POLICY

Approved by Local Governing Body 13 March 2023

To be reviewed: March 2025

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1. Aims

Our policy aims to:

- have a clear and transparent process for the allocation and use of 16 to 19 bursary funds
- make clear to parents and pupils the type of support available and the means of applying for it
- make clear to parents and pupils the attendance and behaviour conditions for receiving the funds

This policy is based on advice from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) on 16-19 Bursary funding and complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

2. How we use the bursary fund

Financial support is available to eligible students from the 16 to 19 bursary fund to support them to remain in education.

There are 2 types of 16 to 19 bursaries:

- **Bursaries for defined vulnerable groups; and**
- **Discretionary bursaries**

We use the fund to provide students with support for:

- Transport
- Books
- Equipment
- Businesswear and job interview expenses
- Meal vouchers
- Field trips and other course-related costs
- The costs of supercurricular activities, such as attending university interviews and open days

3. Eligibility criteria for the 16 to 19 bursaries

3.1 Age

To be eligible for either bursary in the 2023 to 2024 academic year, students must be at least 16 years old but under 19 years old on 31 August 2023.

Students aged 19 or over are eligible only for a discretionary bursary if they:

- are continuing on a study programme or course which they began when they were aged 16 to 18 years old, or
- have an education, health and care (EHC) plan

Students aged 19 or over are not eligible for bursaries for defined vulnerable groups.

In exceptional circumstances, where students under 16 years old are on a funded 16 to 19 study programme at our school, we may use our discretion to pay bursaries to these younger students. However, if these students are enrolled at another institution that receives public funding for them, they will not be eligible for bursary funding.

3.2 Eligible education provision

Students must be participating in provision that is subject to inspection by a public body that assures quality (e.g. Ofsted). The provision must also fall into one of these groups:

- Be funded directly by the ESFA or by the ESFA via a local authority;
- Be funded or co-financed by the European Social Fund;
- Be otherwise publicly funded and lead to a qualification (up to and including level 3) that is accredited by Ofqual or is on the ESFA's list of qualifications approved for funding 14 to 19; or
- Be a 16 to 19 traineeship programme

Non-employed students aged 16 to 19 who are participating in a Prince's Trust Team Programme are also eligible to receive a bursary in the same way as any other student participating in an eligible, publicly funded course.

Students are not eligible if:

- they are on an apprenticeship programme; or
- are on any waged training

3.3 Residency

Students must meet the residency criteria in the [ESFA funding regulations for post-16 provision](#).

3.4 Asylum seekers

Accompanied asylum seekers under 18 with an adult relative or partner and asylum seekers aged 18 and above are entitled to education but are not entitled to public funds. If necessary, they can apply to the Home Office for suitable housing and cash for essentials.

We will provide in-kind support such as books, equipment and a travel pass to asylum seekers who have not had asylum refused.

Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children are eligible for a bursary for vulnerable groups, where they have a financial need

When these students reach 18 years old, we will consider their immigration status. They will still be eligible for a bursary as a student from a defined vulnerable group if the asylum claim is in their favour and will be treated as a 'care leaver' until they reach the upper age limit.

3.5 Bursaries for young people in defined vulnerable groups

Students **with a financial need**, and who meet one of the following 4 criteria below, in addition to the age, eligible education and residency criteria outlined above, can apply for a bursary for vulnerable groups.

The defined vulnerable groups are students who are:

- in care (this does not include students who are privately fostered);
- care leavers;
- receiving Income Support (IS) or Universal Credit (UC) 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; or
- receiving Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payments (PIPs) in their own right as well as Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or UC in their own right

UC has now replaced IS, as well as other benefits above, for current and future young people aged 16 to 18. However, students aged 19 to 25 and funded from the 16 to 19 budget (19+ continuers and students with an EHC plan) may still receive the legacy benefits listed above.

Students who meet the criteria for a bursary for vulnerable groups are not automatically entitled to a bursary. Students will not receive the bursary if they do not have any actual financial need (for example, because their financial needs are met from other sources and/or because they have no relevant costs).

Where a bursary is provided, the funds will generally be up to £1,200 per year for study programmes lasting 30 weeks or more. When calculating the amount, cases will be looked at individually and the outcome based on a particular student's needs. Students will only receive the amount they actually need to participate.

We will use our discretion, on a case-by-case basis, and may provide more than £1,200 per year if such would be necessary in all the circumstances for the student to remain in education. Any such additional payment will be paid either from our discretionary bursary allocation or our own funds.

If a student's study programme lasts for less than 30 weeks, they will be paid a pro-rata amount.

We will provide this support for students from the bursary fund by making payments in kind where possible. It will not be provided as regular payments for living costs.

3.6 Evidence

All applications for 16 to 19 bursaries must be supported by appropriate evidence. Examples of acceptable evidence we may request are:

- A copy of the UC award notice, in the student's name
- Documents such as a tenancy agreement in the student's name, a child benefit receipt, children's birth certificates or utility bills
- Written confirmation of the student's current or previous looked-after status from the relevant local authority

3.7 Discretionary bursaries

Students can apply for a discretionary bursary if their household income is below a certain amount per year to be determined after applications are received.

However, students who are able to demonstrate financial hardship arising from other reasons, may also apply. In assessing any application, we will consider:

- Level of household income
- Distance to travel between the student's home and the institution, or a location for a placement
- The number of dependent children in the student's household
- The requirements of their study programme
- Whether the student has additional responsibilities that may mean they need extra help.

We will base all decisions around which students receive a discretionary bursary, and how much they receive, on each student's individual circumstances and financial need.

3.8 Evidence

To assess household income we will request a copy/screenshot of the three most recent monthly UC award notices to enable an estimate of annual household income.

4. Application and payment process

4.1 Applications

Applications should be submitted by 1st September of Year 12 and 13 at the latest to allow enough time for us to assess the overall level of demand and make discretionary awards on a fair basis.

However, we acknowledge that students' circumstances may change and therefore the application process will remain open for the whole school year.

Applicants will be notified in writing (either via email or via letter) whether their application has been successful, together with the amount of funding awarded. If a student wishes to appeal the outcome of their application for a bursary, they must follow the school complaints procedure.

4.2 Payment process

Payments are made half termly, by BACs, to the student's bank account. Some payments may be made in kind such as for travel passes, books, equipment or meal vouchers.

4.3 Conditions for the receipt of bursary payments

Payments of the bursary are conditional on students meeting the following conditions:

- Attendance above 97%, subject to mitigating circumstances
- Behaviour consistent with school expectations
- Attitude to learning consistent with school expectations

All students are required to sign a declaration confirming that they agree to these conditions.

Students who fail to meet these conditions may have their payment withheld or stopped, but we will always take students' individual circumstances into consideration.

We reserve the right to take back money from students where it is not spent for the reasons it was awarded.

Students will be required to sign a self-declaration to confirm that their household circumstances have not changed each academic year. Students will only continue to receive a discretionary bursary if they continue to satisfy the criteria.

5. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by the Local Governing Body in two years once the Sixth form is operational.