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16 to 19 Bursary Fund

1. Overview

You could get a bursary to help with education-related costs if you're aged 16 to 19 and:

- studying at a publicly funded school or college in England - not a university
- on a training course, including unpaid work experience

A publicly funded school is one that does not charge you for attending it.

There's a different scheme in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland (<https://www.gov.uk/education-maintenance-allowance-ema>).

If you're 19 and over

You could also get a bursary if you either:

- are continuing on a course you started aged 16 to 18 (known as being a '19+ continuer')
- have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) (<https://www.gov.uk/children-with-special-educational-needs/extra-SEN-help>)

What a bursary is for

A bursary is money that you, or your education or training provider, can use to pay for things like:

- clothing, books and other equipment for your course
- transport and lunch on days you study or train

2. What you'll get

There are 2 types of 16 to 19 bursary.

Bursary for students in vulnerable groups

You could get a bursary worth up to £1,200, depending on your circumstances and benefits (<https://www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund/eligibility>).

Discretionary bursary

You could get a discretionary bursary if you need financial help but do not qualify for a bursary for students in vulnerable groups. Your education or training provider decides how much you get and what it's used for.

If you're over 19, you'll only be eligible for a discretionary bursary.

How your bursary is paid

Your provider will decide how you get your bursary. You might be:

- paid in full or in instalments
- paid in cash, by cheque or through a bank account
- given things like a travel pass, free meals or books instead of money

Some providers also offer one-off payments to cover study trips or travel for university interviews.

Your provider could stop payments if you break their rules, for example about attendance or how your bursary is used.

3. Eligibility

You must:

- be at least 16 and under 19 on 31 August 2019
- study at a publicly funded school or college, or be on an unpaid training course
- meet the residency requirements - your school or college can check this

Bursary for students in vulnerable groups

You could get up to £1,200 if at least one of the following applies:

- you're in or recently left local authority care
- you get Income Support or Universal Credit because you're financially supporting yourself
- you get Disability Living Allowance (DLA) in your name and either Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or Universal Credit
- you get Personal Independence Payment (PIP) in your name and either ESA or Universal Credit

You may get the full amount if you have expenses and study full-time on a course of at least 30 weeks.

You'll usually get less than the full amount, or no bursary, if one of the following apply:

- your course is shorter than 30 weeks
- you study part time
- you have few expenses

You'll be told what evidence you need, for example benefit letters.

Discretionary bursary

Your school or college will have their own criteria for discretionary bursaries. They'll look at your individual circumstances - this usually includes your family income.

Ask student services about their criteria and any evidence you'll need.

You can apply to a discretionary bursary if you're over 19 and either:

- continuing on a course you started aged 16 to 18 (known as being a '19+ continuer')
- have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) (<https://www.gov.uk/children-with-special-educational-needs/extra-SEN-help>)

4. How to claim

Apply to your school, college or training provider. Ask student services or your tutor to explain what you need to do.

When to apply

Apply once you know where you'll study or train, so you'll get your bursary as soon as possible.

You might need to reapply for a bursary for each year of your course. Check with your provider.

5. Help

Your tutor or student services can help you decide if you're eligible for a bursary and explain how to apply.

Read more detailed guidance (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/advice-for-young-people-16-to-19-bursary-fund-guide>) on the 16 to 19 Bursary Fund.

Contact the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) (https://form.education.gov.uk/en/AchieveForms/?form_uri=sandbox-publish://AF-Process-f9f4f5a1-936f-448b-bbeb-9dcdd595f468/AF-Stage-8aa41278-3cdd-45a3-ad87-80cbffb8b992/definition.json&redirectlink=%2Fen&cancelRedirectLink=%2Fen&consentMessage=yes) if your tutor or student services cannot answer your question.

You think a decision is unfair

Speak to student services if you're unhappy with a decision. Follow their complaints process if you cannot resolve the problem.

Emergencies and hardship

You might be able to get more support if your circumstances change or you have an emergency. Your provider might also have a separate hardship fund. Speak to student services if you need extra help.