

East Sussex College Group

Student Support Funds Policy and Procedure 2020-21

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East Sussex College Group (the College)

Student Support Fund Policy – 2020-21

1. Purpose

The College recognises that Student Support Funds have an important role to play in overcoming barriers to some students accessing and completing Further Education courses. It is the aim of the College to use funds to make the maximum impact on recruitment, attendance, retention, achievement and success rates.

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

Student eligibility will normally be determined through an income-related assessment together with an assessment of the actual need for support. Awards will be calculated on actual need. Where possible and appropriate, awards will be calculated using a standard formula. This process will be managed by the Director of MIS. In exceptional circumstances, the College will also consider applications from students who, during their time at College face significant financial hardship due to changes in personal circumstances and who need support to complete their studies.

In 2020-2021 six funds are available to support students:

1. 16-18 Vulnerable Bursary
2. 16-18 Discretionary Bursary
3. Free Further Education Meal
4. 19+ Adult Education Bursary
5. 20+ Childcare Fund
6. Advanced Learner Loans – Bursary

Payments/ awards from the above named support funds, will be based on 90% attendance at College or at work placements in the current term and acceptable behaviour and conduct. Students who need to make appointments or other absences may be able to have these authorised. Evidence needs to be submitted to the tutor / faculty administrator for authorisation, in order that the payment can be made. Awards may be refused if the student does not meet the required standard.

The budget for the Student Support Funds is finite. Students who are eligible for the discretionary element of the student support funds are not automatically entitled to it. Reduced awards may be given if demand exceeds the available funds. When the fund(s) is/are fully committed no further awards will be made.

If an award is made to an asylum seeker support will be provided in the form of course related books, equipment or travel pass. Support will not be provided in the form of cash.

Policy disclaimer

Covid-19 – **Free meals**; ESCG may at any time should the pandemic continue or revert to previous restrictions, pay students directly to bank accounts the monetary equivalent of a 'free meal'.

Covid-19 – **Bursary awards** - ESCG may at any time should the pandemic continue or revert to previous restrictions, alter or amend the amount and/or payment date of future awards as is appropriate.

Any such amendments will be communicated with students in advance where possible.

2. Vulnerable Bursary for Students aged 16-18 years

Students who meet the eligibility criteria and have a financial need will be entitled to a bursary of UP TO £40 per week up to a maximum of £1,200 per year if their course lasts 30 weeks or more subject to the conditions below.

Students will be eligible if they are:

- Aged 16 or over and under 19 years of age on 31 August 2020 **and** can demonstrate a financial need
- studying on a course funded by the ESFA **or** funded or co-funded by the European Social Fund or otherwise publicly funded and lead to a qualification (up to Level 3) that is accredited by Ofqual or on the ESFA list of qualifications approved for funding 14-19 or on a 16 to 19 traineeship programme
- meet the residency criteria in the ESFA 2020 to 2021 funding regulations

and they are in one of the following categories:

- in care, including unaccompanied asylum – seeking children or care leavers
- in receipt of Income Support or Universal Credit in their own name 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
- in receipt of both Employment Support Allowance (ESA) or Universal Credit (UC) **and** Disability Living Allowance (DLA) OR Personal Independent Payment (PIP) in their own name

Students who are eligible for the vulnerable bursary, are not automatically entitled to it if their financial needs have already been met or they have no relevant costs. In some cases no bursary or a reduced bursary will be paid. An assessment of individual needs will be made to determine the level of award.

Eligibility Evidence

About you	Evidence required
I am in care or leaving care	A letter or email from the Local Authority or Support Worker to confirm your current or previous 'looked after' status
I am in receipt of Income Support/ Universal Credit in place of Income Support in my own name. I am receiving Universal Credit because I am financial supporting myself and anyone who is dependent on me and living with me (e.g. child or partner).	Most recent Income Support/ Universal Credit Letter dated within the last 3 months (For UC this must be in place of Income Support and we will need to see evidence to this effect). This must detail that you are allowed to participate in education. As well as the benefit evidence, the following will also be required: tenancy agreement in the student's name, child benefit receipt or child's birth certificate or a utility bill.
I am in receipt of both ESA/UC and DLA/ PIP in my own name	Most recent Universal Credit based claim awards letter from the DWP confirming which Employment and Support Allowance group. Evidence of receipt of Disability Living Allowance

	<p>or Personal Independence Payment.</p> <p>Evidence or letters to be dated within the last 3 months</p>
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The Vulnerable Bursary will be paid to full-time students monthly, ~~at a rate of £120 per month~~ over a 10-month period. Where possible, payments will be made direct in to the student's bank account and made a month in arrears.

Students who are on courses lasting under 30 weeks or on part time programmes will receive pro rata payments dependent on the number of days/ hours in College and the duration of their course.

In exceptional circumstances if students need extra support to remain in education they may apply for an award from the 16 – 18 Discretionary Learner Support Fund.

3. Discretionary Bursary for Students aged 16-18 years

This Fund is allocated at the discretion of the College and is targeted at students to overcome individual barriers to participation that they face, for example support towards the cost of essential travel, books, equipment, uniforms, compulsory visits and materials.

Students will be eligible if they are:

- Aged 16 or over and under 19 years of age on 31 August 2020
- aged 19 – 24 on the 31 August 2020 and have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)
- aged 19 on the 31 August 2020 and continuing on a study programme they began aged 16 to 18 (19+ continuers)
- studying on a course funded by the ESFA or funded or co-funded by the European Social Fund or otherwise publicly funded and lead to a qualification (up to Level 3) that is accredited by Ofqual or on the ESFA list of qualifications approved for funding 14-19 or on a 16 to 19 traineeship programme
- meet the residency criteria in ESFA 2020 to 2021 funding regulations

and they are in one of the following categories:

Students will be assessed for funding if they or their parents/ spouse/ partner residing at the same address are in receipt of any of the following benefits **and** can demonstrate financial need:

- Income Support
- Income – based Jobseekers Allowance
- Income – related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- Personal Independence Payment
- Child Tax Credit (provided that they are not entitled to working tax credit) and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190-00, as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs.

- Working Tax Credit run – on – paid 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- have a household income £26,000-00 or less (or as stated at time of application) in line with the Income bands, Appendix 1.
- Universal Credits (detailing monthly award & take home pay income/including self – employed income)

Students will be required to produce documentary letters for benefit evidence from one of the following:

- Job Centre Plus
- Department for Work and Pensions
- HMRC Tax credit Award Letter for 2020/21 which shows your income from 2019/20. You must provide the full award letter (Pages 1 – 6).
- Universal credit – last 3 months FULL statements from your online universal credit account

Any letter provided should be dated within the last 3 months and must confirm the name and address of the person receiving the benefit(s).

4. Free Further Education Meals for Students

Free Meals are targeted at disadvantaged students. Free meals in further education defines disadvantaged as students being in receipt of or parents in receipt of one or more of the listed benefits.

Students will be eligible if they are:

- Aged 16 or over and under 19 years of age on 31 August 2020
- aged 19 – 24 on the 31 August 2020 and have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)
- aged 19 on the 31 August 2020 and continuing on a study programme they began aged 16 to 18 (19+ continuers)
- studying on a course funded by the ESFA or funded or co-funded by the European Social Fund or otherwise publicly funded and lead to a qualification (up to Level 3) that is accredited by Ofqual or on the ESFA list of qualifications approved for funding 14-19 or on a 16 to 19 traineeship programme
- meet the residency criteria in ESFA 2020 to 2021 funding regulations

and they are in one of the following categories:

Students will be assessed for funding if they or their parents/ spouse/ partner residing at the same address are in receipt of any of the following benefits:

- Income Support
- Income – based Jobseekers Allowance
- Income – related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guarantee element of State Pension Credit

- Child Tax Credit (provided that they are not entitled to working tax credit) and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190-00, as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs.
- Working Tax Credit run – on – paid 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credits with net earnings not exceeding the equivalent of £7,400 per annum (after tax and not including any benefits you get - see below for self-employed).

Students will be required to produce documentary letters for benefit evidence from one of the following:

- Job Centre Plus
- Department for Work and Pensions
- HMRC Tax credit Award Letter for 2020/21 which shows your income from 2019/20. You must provide the full award letter (Pages 1 – 6).

Any letter provided should be dated within the last 3 months and must confirm the name and address of the person receiving the benefit(s).

Universal Credit

For students that might be eligible for Free Further Education Meals under Universal Credit, students should provide:

- A copy of the Universal Credit award notice which includes details of their monthly earnings. You will need to provide evidence for the most recent complete assessment period and where possible going back a maximum of three assessment periods.

The three relevant Universal Credit assessment periods would be the three complete assessment periods which would immediately precede the date on which the applicant applies for the free further education meal.

A student is only eligible to receive a free meal when they, or a parent/ guardian on their behalf, has made a successful application to the College and are enrolled.

Working Tax Credits is not a qualifying benefit for free meals, and a parent or student who is in receipt of only Working Tax Credits is not entitled to a free meal.

If a parent or student is in receipt of one of the other qualifying benefits (with the exception of Child Tax Credit) as well as Working Tax Credit then they are eligible for free meals. In other words the other benefit takes precedence over Working Tax Credit.

For those students or their parents who are self-employed and in receipt of Universal Credit, they will need to provide evidence that:

- They are in receipt of Universal credit by providing the appropriate award letter(s)
- They are self-employed by providing a copy of their company registration or tax return form
- Their monthly net earnings do not exceed the threshold as set out above
- Provide the self-declaration form

Students will be able to purchase food for each day they attend College to the value of £2-41, from certain College catering outlets, Automotive Centre. At other remote centres students will be able to place an order for food. Access to meals is via Student ID cards. Vouchers may be

issued in exceptional circumstances. Students on educational visits or work placements will receive an award of the value of £2-41 per day. This will be paid into the student's bank accounts in arrears and based on attendance.

4.1 Student who are not eligible for 16 –18 Vulnerable/ Discretionary Bursary/ Free Meals

- Students under 16 except in exceptional circumstance, if they are following a programme of accelerated study
- Students excluded for eligibility of funding as set out in the ESFA Funding Guidance, 2020/21
- Those that are not on fully funded provision
- Non EU/ EEA students
- Young people in prison or a young offender institution or who have been released on temporary licence, for example, day release
- Young people on waged Apprenticeships or any learning or training undertaken whilst a wage is being drawn
- Students on Higher Education courses or other courses with learning aims funded from sources other than the ESFA.
- Students who apply for travel help who are in receipt of a benefit or pension designed to help with travel costs.

5. 19+ Adult Education Bursary Fund for Students aged 19 and over

For Students studying courses eligible for an Advanced Learner Loan, see separate section on Advanced Learner Loans Bursary.

Awards are allocated at the discretion of the College and are targeted at students who are facing financial barriers to participation such as the cost of travel to and from College and other essential course costs such as, books, equipment, uniforms, materials, and compulsory visits. Support with domestic emergencies and emergency accommodation in exceptional circumstance. There is a limited fund to assist with tuition and examination fees for those who are not eligible for a fee waiver/ entitlement.

Students will be eligible if they are:

- aged 19 or over as at 31 August 2020†
- meet the residency criteria in ESFA 2020 to 2021 funding regulations.
- be enrolled to an Adult Education Budget (Classroom based) funded course. For level 3 courses, assistance from this fund is only available if a student is 19 – 23 studying their first full level 3 qualification and the qualification is included in the list of courses included in the entitlements
- can demonstrate a financial need

and they are in one of the following categories:

in receipt of:

- Income Support
- Income based Job Seekers Allowance

- Income related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Universal Credit
- Working/ Child Tax Credit
- Personal Independence Payment
- The guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- have a household income of £20,000 or less (single household) or £31,000 or less (multiple income) (or as stated at time of application) in line with the income bands, Appendix 2

Students will be required to produce documentary letters for benefit evidence from one of the following:

- Job Centre Plus
- Department for Work and Pensions
- HMRC Tax credit Award Letter for 2020/21 which shows your income from 2019/20. You must provide the full award letter (Pages 1 – 6).
- Universal credit – last 3 months FULL statements from your online universal credit account

Any letter provided should be dated within the last 3 months and must confirm the name and address of the person receiving the benefit(s).

Students who are applying on the grounds of 'low income', must submit sufficient evidence for the College to assess income **and** demonstrate a financial need. **Evidence would include:**

- 3 months of most recent payslips at the time of application
- P60
- Previous years Tax Return for those who are self-employed or Certified Accounts
- Private Pension statement.

† Students aged 19 – 23 studying a qualifying level 3 to 6 course will not be eligible for an award from this fund unless it is their first level 3 and the qualification is included in the entitlement list.

6. Discretionary Childcare Fund for Students aged 20 and over

For students funded through the Advanced Learner Loan, please see separate section on loans bursary.

Students may apply for assistance with the cost of childcare for the hours that they are timetabled to be in College. Awards will be made, up to a maximum of £160 per week, for each child (£5,600 per year). This value includes the retainer costs.

Students must use an Ofsted registered childcare provider.

Students with three or more children will be reviewed by the Senior Financial Support Coordinators and will be made awards where demand for the limited budget allows. Childcare costs will not be met where the child is eligible for a local authority school place. Payment will only be made for after school provision in these circumstances.

If required the College will pay a 100% retainer for the Christmas, Easter break and half term breaks. No retainer is paid for the summer holiday period.

If payments are stopped because of poor attendance, behaviour or withdrawal from the course, the student will be responsible for the payment of all outstanding fees to the childcare provider. Payments are made directly to the childcare provider. The College will pay notice periods to a maximum of one calendar month

Students will be eligible if they are:

- aged 20 or over as at 31 August 2020
- meet the residency criteria in ESFA 2020 to 2021 funding regulations.
- be enrolled to an Adult Skills Budget (Classroom based) course (this includes Access to HE courses and those preparing for a professional examination at a higher level). For level 3 courses, assistance from this fund is only available if a student is 19 – 23 studying their first full level 3 qualification and the qualification is included in the list of courses included in the entitlements
- can demonstrate a financial need

and they are in one of the following categories:

in receipt of:

- Income Support
- Income based Job Seekers Allowance
- Income related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Universal Credit
- Working/ Child Tax Credit
- Personal Independence Payment
- The guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- have a household income of £20,000 or less (single household) or £31,000 or less (multiple income) (or as stated at time of application) in line with the income bands, Appendix 2

Students will be required to produce documentary letters for benefit evidence from one of the following:

- Job Centre Plus
- Department for Work and Pensions
- HMRC Tax credit Award Letter for 2020/21 which shows your income from 2019/20. You must provide the full award letter (Pages 1 – 6).
- Universal credit – last 3 months FULL statements from your online universal credit account

Any letter provided should be dated within the last 3 months and must confirm the name and address of the person receiving the benefit(s).

Students who are applying on the grounds of 'low income', must submit sufficient evidence for the College to assess income **and** demonstrate a financial need. ***Evidence would include:***

- 3 months most recent payslips at the time of application
- Previous years Tax Return for those who are self-employed or Certified Accounts
- Private Pension statement.

† Students aged 19 – 23 studying a qualifying level 3 to 6 course will not be eligible for an award from this fund unless it is their first level 3 and the qualification is included in the entitlement list.

Students aged 16-20 years may apply to 'Care to Learn' for assistance with childcare costs.

6.1 Consideration will also be given to students who:

- Are not in receipt of benefits and are living on savings of less than £15,000 and can demonstrate a financial need
- Have been resident in a European Union Country for 3 years or more. However, EU citizens may only apply for one course during their stay in the UK and will not be eligible for funding if a second course is taken.

6.2 Student who are not eligible for 19+ Discretionary Hardship Fund and Childcare

- Students excluded for eligibility of funding set out in the ESFA Funding Rules, 2020/21
- Students on Community Learning courses or full cost courses
- Students in prison or a young offender institution or who have been released on temporary licence e.g. day release
- Students participating in a waged apprenticeship
- Students on Higher Education courses or other courses with learning aims funded from sources other than the ESFA.
- Students under the age of 19
- Non EU/ EEA students
- Students eligible for an Advanced Learner Loan

7. Financial Support for Advanced Learner Loans

The loans bursary is provided to support vulnerable and disadvantaged students who are facing financial barriers to participation in education.

There are two elements to the fund as follows:

1. Discretionary Learner Support Bursary – to provide assistance towards hardship/ travel and childcare
2. Additional Learning Support Bursary- such as in class support or adjustments under the Equality Act.

7.1 The Discretionary Learner Support Bursary

Students will be eligible if they are:

- aged 19 or over as at start of the learning aim
- the named person on the Advanced Learner Loan documentation confirming the loan approval
- can demonstrate a financial need

and they are in one of the following categories:

in receipt of:

- Income Support
- Income based Job Seekers Allowance
- Income related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

- Universal Credit
- Working/ Child Tax Credit
- Personal Independence Payment
- The guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- have a household income of £20,000 or less (single household) or £31,000 or less (multiple income) (or as stated at time of application) in line with the income bands, Appendix 2

Students will be required to produce documentary letters for benefit evidence from one of the following:

- Job Centre Plus
- Department for Work and Pensions
- HMRC Tax credit Award Letter for 2020/21 which shows your income from 2019/20. You must provide the full award letter (Pages 1 – 6).
- Universal credit – last 3 months FULL statements from your online universal credit account

Any letter provided should be dated within the last 3 months and must confirm the name and address of the person receiving the benefit(s).

Students who are applying on the grounds of ‘low income’, must submit sufficient evidence for the College to assess income **and** demonstrate a financial need. **Evidence would include:**

- 3 months most recent payslips at the time of application
- Previous years Tax Return for those who are self-employed or Certified Accounts
- Private Pension statement.

The Learner Loan Bursary includes payment towards kit, materials and travel. This will be paid half termly. Where possible, payments will be made direct in to the student’s bank account.

Childcare

For students who require assistance with the cost of childcare (for the hours that they are timetabled to be in College), awards will be made, up to a maximum of £160 per week, for each child (£5,600 per year). This amount includes retainer costs.

Students must use an Ofsted registered childcare provider.

Students with three or more children will be reviewed by the Senior Financial Support Coordinators and awards will be made where demand for the limited budget allows. Childcare costs will not be met where the child is eligible for a local authority school place. Payment will only be made for after school provision in these circumstances.

If required the College will pay a 100% retainer for the Christmas, Easter break and half term breaks. No retainer is paid for the summer holiday period.

If payments are stopped because of poor behaviour, attendance (i.e. below 90%) or withdrawal from the course, the student will be responsible for the payment of all outstanding fees to the childcare provider. Payments are made directly to the childcare provider. The College will pay notice periods to a maximum of one calendar month

7.2 Additional Learning Support Bursary

This bursary is for the payment of staff and resources to support any additional learning support. Charges for additional learning support will be made on a needs assessed basis. This assessment will be made by the Head of Additional Learning Support based on the student's declaration, independent evidence such as a Statement of Need and any assessment tools the College feels are fit for purpose.

The rate of charges for additional learning support will be set by those agreed for use in the College's main Additional Learning Support claim which will be recorded on the ILR.

These charges will be off-set by the use of Additional Learning Support Bursary and no payments will be made directly to the student.

8. East Sussex College Group Financial Support Appeals Procedure

You have the right to appeal if you believe that your application has been assessed incorrectly, if there is a subsequent withdrawal of support at a later stage, or if you are unhappy with the award made to you. In the first instance, please contact Student Finance at your college campus who will investigate any concern.

If you are unhappy about the decision made following the initial investigation, you may appeal within 15 working days of being informed of the decision, this may include obtaining information about your attendance and behaviour on the College course. You will be advised of the outcome and any action to be taken.

Appeals should be made in writing and signed by the student, to the Student Finance Team at your usual campus, you will be sent an acknowledgement of receipt of the letter of appeal.

A meeting will be convened of the next Appeals Panel as shown below. The Appeals Panel will consider the appeal and rule on the appropriateness of the decision, confirming or amending it as appropriate. You will be advised of the decision and any action taken, but if the decision of the Appeals Panel remains unsatisfactory you will retain the right to a final appeal in writing to the East Sussex College Group, Quality Department.

8.1 Appeals Panel

Membership will be staff impartial to the original bursary assessment.

Terms of reference:

1. Review any appeals and to rule on the appropriateness of the original award decision, confirming or amending it as appropriate
2. Through the Student Finance team to communicate the outcome of the appeal to the appellant.

9. Fraudulent Claims

The College takes fraud seriously and will take action if it is found that a claim for assistance has been made fraudulently. Giving false or incomplete information that leads to incorrect/overpayment may result in future payments being stopped and any incorrectly paid funds being recovered using debt collection agencies if needed and result in a referral to the police with the possibility of the student and/or their family facing prosecution.

10. Monitoring

Monitoring of the Bursaries spend will be conducted through monthly/ quarterly reconciliations. At the end of the year, a monthly return will be completed and returned to the ESFA.

Appendix 1- Important Notes for all Student Support Funds/Free Further Education Meals

- a) The budget for the Student Support Funds is finite. Students who are eligible for the discretionary element of the student support funds are not automatically entitled to it. Reduced awards may be given if demand exceeds the available funds. When the fund is fully committed no further awards will be made.
- b) Payments in subsequent terms (where paid) may be at a lower rate if there is high demand on the funds.
- c) Funds will only be released after the student has enrolled and attended their programme and may take up to 8 weeks of the course start date.
- d) Awards are dependent on the student achieving and maintaining satisfactory progress and 90% attendance in all their classes and will be stopped if either of these is deemed to be unsatisfactory.
- e) Payments will stop where students have been absent for a period of 4 continuous weeks or more (excluding holidays).
- f) The College reserves the right to reclaim awards from students who fail to attend classes. The student will be responsible for the payment of all outstanding fees, including those for childcare, from the date of withdrawal from the course.
- g) Awards are normally available for one programme of study in each academic year. Students are welcome to enrol to more than one course but will be assisted only with costs relating to their main course.
- h) Students on two-year courses will need to re-apply for financial assistance at the beginning of the second year. Criteria and awards made in the second year may differ from first year awards.
- i) Applications from students who are repeating a course, or who are studying a course at the same level but in a different subject area, will be considered on an individual basis. If an award is agreed it may be given at a rate that differs from the published rate.
- j) If a student is in receipt of funding from Job Centre Plus or from any other government scheme, this will be taken into account before any award is made.
- k) Students are expected to use the most cost effective form of transport and take advantage of student concessions and discounts.
- l) Travel awards will be considered if you live 3 miles or more from the College campus where the student studies. Distance is calculated from Google maps using the shortest walking distance from home to the students College site. We will not fund travel for students who live under 3 miles from their College site unless there are exceptional or medical circumstances which will be considered on an individual basis.
- m) Compulsory University Interviews, Assessment Days and Auditions- If students incur travel costs as a result of attending a University interview, admissions test or audition in

the UK then the bursary may be able to help with this expense. Students will need to cover the upfront costs and a refund may be made (dependent on funds available) on production of public transport tickets and/ or an invitation letter or email from the University. If travelling by car we will pay towards travel costs (12p per mile) or will base the award on the cost of public transport whichever is cheapest. Mileage will be calculated using Google maps. We will not pay for overnight accommodation costs associated with University visits, except in exceptional circumstances, we will only fund the student and not those of anybody travelling with them.

- n) Optional University Open Days and Applicant Days - We may be able to help if students incur travel costs as a result of attending a non-compulsory University event such as an Open Day or Applicant Day in the UK. If funds are available the bursary may be able to help with two non-compulsory visits per academic year. The same rules regarding refunds apply as in option m.

<p>Appendix 2 – 2020-21 Student Support Fund Procedures/ Free Further Education Meals</p>
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- a) Students are informed about the Discretionary Learner Support Funds through pre-entry information, induction and guidance and application forms are available for download on the East Sussex College Group website and from Student Finance Advisers.
- b) Students can make an application for funding at any time during their course, but early application is recommended as the fund are infinite.
- c) Students who are eligible for the discretionary element of the student support funds are not automatically entitled to it.
- d) Students are required to complete an application and provide the required evidence with their form. Students requiring support to complete their application should contact the College.
- e) Staff will assess the application against the eligibility criteria; check the evidence and assess the need for funding. S/he may discuss the application with the student if required. Other potential sources of funding will be considered before an award is agreed.
- f) Completed applications are assessed individually and against the Policy by trained members of staff.
- g) If the student is eligible for an award, the application will be processed. Where supplied, copies of proof of income are retained with the application form.
- h) Normally, awards will be based on the list of standard awards published in the application form.
- i) Initial awards will normally be issued within 8 weeks of the course start date.
- j) Applications for bursaries that require special consideration will be referred to the Director of MIS
- k) Students will be notified in writing of the outcome of their application. Applicants may be given an indication of a likely award before starting a course but this will only be confirmed after enrolment.
- l) If an application has been declined reasons to this will be stated in the notification.
- m) The award will be paid in the most appropriate manner, e.g.
 - Transfer to student's College account where there is an outstanding debt to the College
 - Payment direct to student (direct to students bank account)
 - Payment to 'equipment' or childcare provider
 - Transfer to College department
- n) Awards are normally made as follows:
 - Travel awards are made half termly/termly direct to the students bank account

- 16 – 18 Discretionary Bursaries, Adult Education Bursaries and Advanced Learner are paid half termly/termly in arrears to the students bank account
 - Childcare payments are made direct to the childcare provider on a monthly basis.
- o) Free Further Education Meals:
- Students eligible for Free Meals will be able to purchase food in the College catering outlets to the value of £2.41 per day for each day that they are in College
 - Meals can only be purchased in the College catering outlets
 - Meals are not restricted to lunch times
 - Students are encouraged to make healthy food choices and where possible opt for hot meal options
 - Students will not be able to purchase fizzy drinks or confectionary
 - Access to meals will be through the Student ID cards. Vouchers will only be issued in exceptional circumstances
 - If a student spends less than £2.41, no change will be given. Students can choose to spend more than £2.41, but they will need to pay the difference themselves.
 - The allowance is daily and cannot be carried over to another day. This also applies if the student is absent.
 - No cash alternatives are available except for work placement/ visits.
 - If students are on work placement/ trips and unable to come into College for their food/ meal, they will need to see the Student Finance Advisers to discuss an alternative arrangement. This may be a Food outlet/ Supermarket Voucher/ BACS payment into their bank account. This will be paid into arrears to enable the College to check that the student has attended the work placement/ trip.
- p) The outcome of each application will be recorded on the relevant MIS database. This is for the purpose of the end of year returns and for monitoring how monies have been distributed.
- q) Financial records of all awards made will be kept for a minimum period of six years.

1. Version Summary

Version No.	Eff.from	Change summary (The actual change marked in left margin)	Prep by	Approved by
001	2018-19	New Policy East Sussex College Group	G Davis and H King	Corporation June 2018
002	2019-20	Various updates	G Davis; J Porter; T Adams	Corporation June 2019
003	2020-21	Various updates	G Davis; J Porter	

Appendix 3: Support Level Banding 20/21

Discretionary Student Support Fund for Students aged 16-18 years

Household Income Calculations

Students who are not on a means - tested benefit but are on a low income are also eligible for Financial Assistance.

The below table is to be used as a guide to awarding at the following Household income levels:

Discretionary support bands	Lunch card	Transport <i>*capped at £1,000 per annum. Take note of % rates per income band.</i>	Trips <i>*capped at £350 per annum. Take note of % rates per income band.</i>	Essential kit/equip/books <i>*capped at £500 per annum. Take note of % rates per income band.</i>	Art Course Materials Awards <i>*capped at £100 for eligible courses in Art/Photography /Media</i>	HE/Open day/interviews	UCAS fee
						<i>Additional request if funds allow</i> <i>*capped at £100 per annum. Take note of % rates per income band.</i>	<i>Additional request if funds allow</i> <i>Take note of % rates per income band.</i>
If your household Income is £16,190 or under (Band A)	£2.41/ day lunch If in receipt of eligible benefit	If applicant lives more than three miles from the site of study, they may be eligible for an award towards the cost of travel. Learners will receive awards based on how far they live from College and how many days they attend*	100% towards trips that are essential and compulsory to studies*.	Essential kit/Equipment/books for subject/course authorised by a Head of Curriculum (HoC)* 100% contribution*	Art Course Materials Award* GCSE/BTEC/ Vocational/A level £50 Full time Art £100	100% contribution* (Up to a maximum of 2 per year)	100% contribution

<p>If your household Income is between £16,191 - £21,000 (Band B)</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>If applicant lives more than three miles from the site of study, they may be eligible for an award towards the cost of travel.</p> <p>Learners will receive awards 75% of the awards in Band A based on how far they live from College and how many days they attend*</p>	<p>75% towards trips over £50*</p> <p>100% for trips up to £50</p> <p>Must be essential and compulsory to studies</p>	<p>Essential kit/Equipment/books for subject/course authorised by a HoC</p> <p>75% contribution*</p>	<p>Art Course Materials Award*</p> <p>GCSE/BTEC/ Vocational/A level £50</p> <p>Full time Art £100</p>	<p>75% contribution*</p> <p>(Up to a maximum of 2 per year)</p>	<p>75% contribution</p>
<p>If your household Income is between £21,001- £26,000 (Band C)</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>If applicant lives more than three miles from the site of study, they may be eligible for an award towards the cost of travel.</p> <p>Learners will receive awards 50% of the awards in Band A based on how far they live from College and how many days they attend*</p>	<p>50% towards trips over £50*</p> <p>100% for trips up to £50</p> <p>Must be essential and compulsory to studies</p>	<p>Essential kit/Equipment/books for subject/course authorised by a HoC</p> <p>50% contribution*</p>	<p>Art course Materials Award*</p> <p>GCSE/BTEC/ Vocational/A level £50</p> <p>Full time Art £100</p>	<p>50% contribution*</p> <p>(Up to a maximum of 2 per year)</p>	<p>50% contribution</p>

If your household Income is over 26,000 (Band D)							
Not Eligible							

Appendix 3: Support Level Banding 20/21

Discretionary Hardship Fund for Students aged 19 and over & Advanced Learner Loans

Household Income Calculations

Students who are not on a means - tested benefit but are on a low income are also eligible for Financial Assistance.

The below table is to be used as a guide to awarding at the following Household income levels:

Table 1: Single Students (without dependents)

Discretionary support bands	Transport <i>*capped at £1,000 per annum.</i>	Trips <i>*capped at £350 per annum.</i>	Essential kit/equip/books <i>*capped at £500 per annum.</i>	Art Course Materials Award <i>*capped at £100 for eligible courses in Art/Photography/Media</i>	Tuition Fees Not applicable for courses at level 3 and above or non-funded courses See below for maximum	Exam Fees Not applicable for courses at level 3 and above See below for maximum	HE/Open day/interviews	UCAS fee
							<i>Additional request if funds allow *capped at £100 per annum.</i>	<i>Additional request if funds allow</i>
If your household income is £20,000 or under (Band A)	If applicant lives more than three miles from the site of study, they may be eligible for an award towards the cost of travel. Learners will receive awards based on how far they live from	100% towards trips that are essential and compulsory to studies*	100% towards essential kit/Equipment/books for subject/course authorised by a Head of Curriculum (HoC)*	Art Course Materials Award* GCSE/BTEC/Vocational/A level £50 Full time Art £100	75% towards tuition fees Maximum £1000 contribution	100% towards exam fees Maximum £200	100% contribution* (Up to a maximum of 2 per year)	100% contribution

	College and how many days they attend*							
<p>If your household Income is over £20,000 (Band B)</p> <p>Not Eligible</p>								

Table 2: Students who are married or living with a partner/ parents/ dependents/ single with dependents

Discretionary support bands	Transport <i>*capped at £1,000 per annum.</i>	Trips <i>*capped at £350 per annum. .</i>	Essential kit/equip/books <i>*capped at £500 per annum.</i>	Art Course Materials Award* <i>*capped at £100 for eligible courses in Art/Photography/Media</i>	Childcare <i>*capped at £5,600 per annum.</i>	Tuition Fees Not applications for courses at level 3 and above or non-funded courses See below for maximum	Exam Fees Not applications for courses at level 3 and above See below for maximum	HE/Open day/interviews <i>Additional request if funds allow</i> <i>*capped at £100 per annum.</i>	UCAS fee <i>Additional request if funds allow</i>
<p>If your household Income is £31,000 or under (Band A)</p>	<p>If applicant lives more than three miles from the site of study, they may be eligible for an award towards the cost of travel. Learners will receive awards based on how far they live from</p>	<p>100% towards trips that are essential and compulsory to studies*</p>	<p>100% towards essential kit/Equipment/books for subject/course authorised by a Head of Curriculum (HoC)*</p>	<p>Art Course Materials Award* GCSE/BTEC/Vocational/A level £50 Full time Art £100</p>	<p>For timetabled hours* 100% Contribution</p>	<p>75% towards tuition fees* Maximum £1000</p>	<p>100% towards exam fees Maximum £200 100% contribution*</p>	<p>100% Contribution* (Up to a maximum of 2 per year)</p>	<p>100% contribution</p>

	College and how many days they attend*								
<p>If your household Income is over £31,000 or over (Band B)</p> <p>Not Eligible</p>									

No specific guidance is given for Learner Support Fund Financial Assessment; the college has based this on current labour market trends within the current economic climate.

Calculations on salaries are based on a combined net salary not including any overtime or bonuses.