



16-19 Bursary Fund Policy 2023-2024

Terms of Reference

This policy is reviewed and updated annually in conjunction with the latest “16 to 19 Bursary Fund guide” produced by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). The latest guidance can be read [here](#).

This policy sets out the arrangements for administering the Bursary Fund allocation to Montsaye Academy. The scheme will be administered by Sixth Form Staff at Montsaye Academy.

Montsaye Academy cannot guarantee that individuals supported under this fund in one academic year will continue to be funded in the following year, or funded to the same extent.

Montsaye Academy will not discriminate against students on the basis of any protected characteristic as defined in current equalities legislation.

Montsaye Academy will make every effort to publicise the scheme and will adopt an application process which is clear and transparent.

The Academy will retain a small contingency from the bursary allocation, which may be used if the financial or domestic circumstances of individual students change throughout the academic year.

In exceptional circumstances, the Academy will consider “one off” applications from students who do not meet standard eligibility criteria.

What is the 16-19 Bursary Fund?

The fund is allocated to individual schools and colleges that offer a Post 16 provision. The fund is intended to help support young people who face the greatest barriers to continuing in education or training Post-16.

Payments will usually be made directly into a student’s bank account, although “in kind” payments may also be made, e.g. payment for a school trip or the purchase of a revision guide.

Who is eligible for a bursary?

To be eligible to receive a bursary, a student must be aged 16 or over but under 19 on the 31st August of the academic year in question. They must be enrolled on a full-time course at the school. They must be working towards a qualification (up to and including level 3) that is accredited by Ofqual.

Students aged 19 or over are only eligible to receive a discretionary bursary if they are continuing on a study programme they began aged 16 to 18 or have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

Students must meet the residency criteria set out in the “16 to 19 Bursary Fund guide”

Conditions for payment

All bursary payments are subject to meeting the Academy's expectations regarding attendance, conduct, completion of coursework and completion of courses enrolled upon. Students who are awarded support should be aware that to continue to receive funding, they must have:

- At least 95% attendance
- No unauthorised absences
- Punctuality – no more than one late mark per week
- Good attitude to learning

Please be aware that the Academy will stop any payments where a student has been absent for a period of three continuous weeks or more (excluding holidays) and where students have decided to withdraw from a study programme.

Types of Bursary

There are two types of bursary that a student may be eligible for; a **vulnerable groups bursary** or a **discretionary bursary**. Vulnerable group students are considered high priority. Discretionary bursary students are considered either medium or low priority.

Vulnerable groups bursary – High Priority Group

This bursary has a maximum value of £1,200, which is available to support young people in nominated vulnerable groups and who have a financial need. Students will only receive the amount they need to participate in education, and may not be automatically awarded the full £1,200. It needs to be made clear that no bursary will be awarded if the Academy considers that the student has no financial need. Montsaye Academy needs to consider the circumstances of each student on a case-by-case basis

The defined vulnerable groups are as follows:

- Young people aged 16 and 17 in care
- Care leavers aged 16, 17 and 18
- Young people aged 16, 17 and 18 who are in receipt of Income Support (IS) or Universal Credit (UC) in their own right (for example, teenage parents, young people who live independently of their parents)
- Disabled young people in receipt of Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments in their own right, as well as Employment Support Allowance or UC in their own right.

Proof of entitlement (original documentation) will be required and copies will be kept securely on file.

Discretionary bursary – Medium and Low Priority Group

This bursary is intended to support students from lower income families to remain in Post 16 education. The bursary is intended to provide financial support toward items considered essential for the completion of the courses on which the student is enrolled. The bursary is not intended to support extra-curricular activities that are not essential to the students' study programme.

The fund allocated to Montsaye Academy is a fixed sum and allocations cannot exceed the sum available. It may not be possible to support every application, and priority will be given to those students from families with the lowest household income and/or highest demonstrated need. **The amounts paid will be subject to the number of students in the category and the availability of funds.**

Medium Priority Group

Bursary Awards can be made to:

- Students who are in receipt of free school meals
- Students who have been on the Pupil Premium register
- Students who live in a household where the family income is less than £20,000 per annum, and whose parents/guardians are in receipt of any of the following:

Universal Credit
Child Tax Credit
Working Tax Credit

Low Priority Group

In the event of funds remaining once all medium priority awards have been allocated, awards may be made to the following applicants:

- Students who are in receipt of free school meals
- Students of families with an annual household income of between £20,000 and £25,000 and whose parents/guardians are in receipt of any of the following:

Universal Credit
Child Tax Credit
Working Tax Credit

For both medium and low priority groups, proof of entitlement i.e. confirmation from the Local Authority of entitlement to free school meals will be required, along with evidence of receipt of benefits/low income within the household. Copies of all documentation will be kept securely on file.

The payment of the discretionary bursary will be paid by BACS directly to the young person's bank account in five instalments across the academic year. In some circumstances, a proportion of the full award may be paid "in kind", for example, payment towards a school trip.

Eligible students can apply to the 16-19 Bursary for a contribution toward items such as:

- The cost of transport to school
- Dress code items
- Subject related technology
- Subscriptions to magazines, journals, or online learning platforms
- Essential textbooks, revision guides, extended learning texts
- Art materials
- Specialist/essential course equipment

- Course-related trips
- UCAS costs
- Travel to open days and interviews

This is not an exhaustive list, and other expenses may be considered on application.

The Application Process

All students joining or continuing with the Sixth Form at the start of September will be given information about the Bursary. Copies of all documentation can be found on the school website, and can be collected from Mrs McNish, Sixth Form Centre Manager. Applications for an award of a bursary must be made on the appropriate application form.

Application forms need to be handed in to Mrs McNish by the fourth Friday in September. All applications will be reviewed by sixth form staff at the earliest opportunity. Applications will be considered alongside this bursary policy, and the checklist produced by the ESFA. Once all applications have been received and reviewed, a decision will be made about the success of each application and the nature and value of support that will be provided. The available funds are limited and the Academy must target funds to the students with the greatest needs. Eligibility cannot therefore guarantee an award.

For vulnerable group bursary applicants (high priority) we will need original documentation setting out the benefits received, or written confirmation of the student's current or previous looked after status from the Authority which looks after them.

For discretionary bursary applicants (medium and low priority) we will check the list provided by the Local Authority which confirms which students are eligible for Free School Meals or are on the pupil premium register, and are therefore eligible for the bursary. We will need original documentation setting out the benefits received, or proof of low income. The type of evidence required in order to verify household income could include a Universal Credit award notice, P60s, evidence of self-employed income, bank statements or copies of wage slips.

Details of all successful applications will be passed to the Finance Department, together with the amount, timing and conditions of the bursary awarded. Applicants and their parents will be notified in writing whether or not their application has been successful. The letter will set out the full details of the award, and the conditions attached to it.

If a family's financial circumstances change during the year, meaning a student is no longer eligible, the bursary may be withdrawn.

Appeals Procedure

If any young person or their parent / carer are not satisfied with the outcome of their application, they should write to the Principal outlining their reasons why. Two of the following will consider the appeal:

- Principal
- Senior Vice Principal
- Business Manager

The Academy will aim to consider and respond to appeals within **two weeks** of receipt. If the appeal is upheld or partly upheld, it will be referred back to the Assistant Principal with responsibility for the Sixth Form with recommendations.

If the appeal is not upheld, the appealing party will be directed to the Academy's Complaint Procedure.

Fraudulent Claims

Where an application is found on investigation to have been made based on false information, payment may be discontinued. The individual concerned may be subject to disciplinary action and possible referral to external authorities. Montsaye Academy may seek to recover any funds or goods obtained.