

Student Finance Information 2023-2024

The College have funds available to support learners who are experiencing financial difficulty meeting the costs associated with learning. These funds are age specific and designed to help learners overcome financial barriers to participation. The College must comply with Funding Body guidance when considering applications and allocations of funding. There are three strands of support available:

1. 16-19 Bursary Fund
2. Discretionary Learner Support Fund (dLSF)
3. Advanced Learner Loan Bursary Fund

1. 16-19 Bursary Fund

The 16-19 Bursary Fund is open to learners aged over 16 and under 19 on the 31st of August 2023. Learners aged 19 or over on 31st of August 2023 who are continuing a study programme they began aged 16 to 18 and those who have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) may also be eligible. There are two types of 16-19 bursaries, those defined as Vulnerable groups and the Discretionary Bursaries. Learners aged 19 or over are not eligible for the Vulnerable Bursary. Learners on apprenticeship programmes are defined as employed and therefore not eligible for bursary funding.

- **Vulnerable Bursary** - Where the eligibility criteria are met and there is an actual financial need, learners can receive a bursary of **up to £1200** to help with College related expenses. This can be paid to full-time learners on a course lasting 30 weeks or more and pro-rata to learners on part-time or short courses. However, as stated in the ESFA Government guidance 'meeting the criteria for vulnerable bursary funding does not automatically mean funding will be awarded'. If there is no specific financial need or the learner's financial needs are already met, for example by the local authority or a partner, the application may be rejected. Eligible learners must maintain **good attendance and progress levels** to receive payment.

To receive the Vulnerable Bursary learners must have a financial need and be:

- In Care, including unaccompanied asylum-seeking children
- A Care Leaver
- In receipt of Income Support or Universal Credit **in their own right**
- In receipt of Employment Support Allowance **or** Universal Credit **as well as** Disability Living Allowance **or** Personal Independence Payments **in their own right**
- **Discretionary Bursary** - Where there is a financial need and funds allow, learners may receive a termly payment to help with course related expenses such as books and stationery. The first payment is made in the Autumn term to learners who meet the eligibility criteria; further payments are made in the Spring and Summer terms to learners who have achieved progress targets and **attendance levels of 90% or above**. Attendance for the Spring term bursary is based on registers from the start of the academic year, or first date of attendance in the Autumn term up until the Christmas holiday. Attendance for the Summer term bursary is based on registers

from the start of the academic year or first date of attendance up until the Easter holiday. Learners are informed if they have qualified for the Spring and Summer bursary via their College email account.

To receive the mainstream bursary learners must have a financial need and be:

- From a household in receipt of an income-based benefit - e.g. Income Support, Universal Credit, Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit **or**
- From a household with a gross annual income below £30,000

Learners must have their own bank account to receive payment via BACS transfer.

- **Travel** - All full-time learners aged 16-18 are eligible for free travel regardless of where they live or household income. The scheme operates in conjunction with Go North East and provides learners with an annual ticket via the **Go North East mobile app**. The ticket allows **weekday travel during term time**. The College request the tickets from Go North East upon receipt of an Application for Financial Assistance from the learner. The application requires the learner to provide their email address which is then forwarded to Go North East. Go North East then email the learner with instructions on how to access their ticket on the mobile app. In exceptional circumstances where a **learner is unable to access the mobile app**, the College will order the same annual ticket on a **Key Card**. This is sent direct to the learner's home address. Returning learners who have a key card from the previous academic year and **who are still unable to access the mobile app** will have the ticket up-loaded on to their existing card.

Learners using their own transport receive a mileage allowance of 30p per mile (home to college/placement miles only). Claims must be made using the Repayment of Learner Expenses form. The forms are available on; StudentNet, the College website or from the main Reception and can be submitted via email to financial.support@derwentside.ac.uk or handed to the main Reception. Payments are made on a Wednesday by BACS transfer upon submission of a fully completed expenses claim form. **Claim forms must be submitted no later than 12 noon on a Wednesday to ensure payment.**

- **Meals** - Learners receive a free meal daily from the College canteen. The college operates a cashless system and learners must consent to have their fingerprint taken to access their allowance. Consent is given as part of the Application for Financial Assistance process and learners/parents should read Appendix 1 of the application for the terms and conditions. There are two streams of funding for meals, 'free meals in further education' and 'bursary funded free meals.' Eligibility is dependent upon the type of benefit the household is in receipt of but both funds provide the same level of support.

To receive support with meals learners must be:

- Aged over 16 and under 19 on the 31st of August 2023.
- From a household in receipt of an income-based benefit, e.g. Income Support, Universal Credit or Housing Benefit.
- Have a gross household income below £30,000 per annum.

- **Equipment / Uniform** - Learners on a vocational programme receive essential kit i.e. items without which they cannot complete their qualification, free of charge. Anything over and above essential items must be paid for by the learner or applied for through the hardship element of the 16-19 bursary fund.
- **Hardship** - Funds are available to support learners in exceptional or emergency situations. Learners can speak in confidence to the Finance Department if they require assistance.
- **Childcare** - Learners aged 16-19 are eligible for free childcare from a national scheme called Care-to-Learn. Information and Applications are available on-line at www.gov.uk/care-to-learn Tel. No. 0800 121 8989

2. Discretionary Learner Support Fund (dLSF)

The dLSF is open to learners aged 19 and over studying a course up to level 2 and learners aged 19 to 23 studying for their first full level 3 qualification.

Learners must be:

- Aged 19+ on the 31st of August 2023 and studying up to level 2
- Aged 19 to 23 on the 31st of August 2023 and studying for their **first full level 3** qualification.
- From a household in receipt of an income-based benefit - e.g. Income Support, Universal Credit, Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit **or**
- From a household with a gross annual income **below £30,000**

Learners aged 19+ who are studying a second level 3 qualification, and in receipt of an Advanced Learner Loan may be eligible for the Advanced Learner Loan Bursary Fund (see section 3).

- **Bursary** - Where there is a financial need and funds allow, learners will receive a termly cash payment to help with course related expenses such as books and stationery. The first payment is made in the Autumn term to learners who meet the eligibility criteria. Further payments are made in the Spring and Summer terms to eligible learners who have achieved progress targets and **attendance levels of 90% or above**. Attendance for the Spring term bursary is based on registers from the start of the academic year, or first date of attendance in the Autumn term up until the Christmas holiday. Attendance for the Summer term bursary is based on registers from the start of the academic year or first date of attendance up until the Easter holiday. Learners are informed if they have qualified for the Spring and Summer bursary via their College email account.
- **Travel** - Learners receive a reimbursement of public transport costs or a mileage allowance of 30p per mile if using their own transport (home to college/placement miles only). Claims are made using the Repayment of Learner Expenses form. Forms are available on StudentNet, the College website or from the main Reception and can be submitted to financial.support@derwentside.ac.uk or Reception. Where public transport is used, bus tickets must be retained and submitted along with the claim form. Payments are made on a Wednesday by BACS transfer upon submission of a fully completed expenses claim form. **Claim**

forms must be submitted no later than 12 noon on a Wednesday to ensure payment.

- **Meals** - Learners receive a free meal daily from the College canteen. The college operates a cashless system. Learners must consent to have their fingerprint taken to access their allowance. Biometric consent is given as part of the Application for Financial Assistance process and learners should read Appendix 1 of the application for the terms and conditions.
- **Equipment/Uniform** - Learners who are fully funded for their course will not be charged for essential equipment i.e. items without which they cannot complete their qualification. Learners who are part-funded or are liable for their course fees may be eligible for support with equipment and/or uniform if they meet the afore mentioned criteria. Anything over and above essential items must be paid for by the learner or applied for through the hardship element of the dLSF.
- **Hardship** - Funds are available to support learners in exceptional or emergency situations. Learners can speak in confidence to the Finance Department if they require assistance.
- **Childcare** - Learners can receive assistance with the cost of childcare for pre-school aged children who are placed with Ofsted registered providers. Funding is available for timetabled hours plus reasonable travelling time. Learners should exhaust all other possible avenues of support (e.g. government funded provision for 2 and 3 year olds) before making an application. Further information and application forms can be found on StudentNet, the College website or upon request from the Finance department.

3. Advanced Learner Loan Bursary

The Advanced Learner Loan Bursary supports learners who have a financial need and who have had an Advanced Learner Loan (A.L.L.) approved by the Student Loans Company. Learners must be:

- Aged 19+ on 31st of August 2023 and studying a **second or subsequent level 3** qualification
- Aged 19+ on 31st of August 2023 and studying a level 4 or above qualification
- Aged 24+ on 31st of August 2023 and studying a level 3 qualification which does not qualify for the 'Level 3 free course for jobs' offer.
- In receipt of an Advanced Learner Loan
- From a household in receipt of an income-based benefit
- From a household with a gross annual income below £30,000

Learners in receipt of state benefits should inform the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) about any learner support they receive, as learner support payments may impact on those benefits.

- **Bursary** - Where there is a financial need and funds allow, learners receive a termly cash payment to help with course related expenses such as books and stationery. The first payment is made in the Autumn term to learners who meet the eligibility criteria. Further payments are made in the Spring and Summer terms to learners who have achieved progress targets and **attendance levels of 90% or above**. Attendance for the Spring term bursary is based on registers

from the start of the academic year, or first date of attendance in the Autumn term up until the Christmas holiday. Attendance for the Summer term bursary is based on registers from the start of the academic year or first date of attendance up until the Easter holiday. Learners are notified if they have qualified for the Spring and Summer bursary via their College email account.

- **Travel** - Learners receive a reimbursement of public transport costs or a mileage allowance of 30p per mile if using their own transport (home to college /placement miles only). Claims are made using the Repayment of Learner Expenses form. Forms are available on StudentNet, the College website or from the main Reception and can be submitted to financial.support@derwentside.ac.uk or Reception. Where public transport is used, bus tickets must be retained and submitted along with the claim form. Payments are made on a Wednesday by BACS transfer. **Claim forms must be submitted no later than 12 noon on a Wednesday to ensure payment.**
- **Meals** - Learners receive a free meal daily from the College canteen. The college operates a cashless system and learners must consent to have their fingerprint taken to access their allowance. Biometric consent is given as part of the Application for Financial Assistance process and learners should read Appendix 1 of the application for the terms and conditions.
- **Equipment/Uniform** - The cost of any essential kit or specialist clothing required for the completion of a course will be included in the A.L.L. amount.
- **Hardship** - Funds are available to help learners in exceptional or emergency situations. Learners can speak in confidence to the Finance Department if they require assistance.
- **Childcare** - Learners can receive support with childcare costs for pre-school aged children placed with Ofsted registered providers. Funding is for timetabled hours plus reasonable travelling time. Learners should exhaust all avenues of support (e.g. government funded provision for 2 and 3 year olds) before making an application. Further information and application forms can be found on StudentNet, the College website or on request from the Finance Department.
- **Learning Support** - Funds are available to make reasonable adjustments for learners who have an identified learning difficulty or disability.

Where an application for financial assistance is unsuccessful, or funding is withheld or withdrawn, learners can appeal. The appeal procedure and form are available from the Finance Department. All applications are treated in confidence and learners can be reassured that applications and supporting evidence are held securely and in-line with data protection regulations.

Completed application forms, supporting evidence, travel claim forms and childcare vouchers can be submitted to:

Main Reception desk

Email: financial.support@derwentside.ac.uk

Post: Finance Department, Derwentside College, Front Street, Consett, DH8 5EE.

Queries: via email as above or caroline.swainson@derwentside.ac.uk telephone 01207 585900, ext. 971

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