

Financial Information

For learners aged 16 to 19 in the 2026-2027 Academic Year

The Department for Education (DfE) provide funding to help young people overcome specific financial barriers and remain in education. These funds are managed by the College and used to assist learners with course related costs. Learners can apply for support at any point in the academic year. However, funds are limited and therefore there is no guarantee that late applications will be supported.

All bursary awards are linked to learner attendance, and the College may withdraw support where attendance falls below the College requirement of 90%.

16-19 Bursary Funds

The 16-19 Bursary Fund is open to learners aged over 16 and under 19 on the 31st of August 2026 or learners aged 19 to 24 with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan). There are two types of 16-19 bursary, the Discretionary Bursary and the Enhanced or Vulnerable Bursary. However, learners aged 19 and above are not eligible for the Enhanced (Vulnerable) Bursary. Learners aged 16-19 on apprenticeship programmes are employed and therefore not eligible for any bursary funding.

To apply for support, learners must complete an Application for Financial Assistance. Applications are available from the College Reception or on the College website. Learners must have their own bank account as any payments made will be by BACS transfer.

- **Discretionary Bursary** – Where there is a financial need and funds allow, learners may receive support with travel costs, meals, kit, specialist clothing, equipment, books and stationery. Awards are based upon need and actual cost. Funds are also available to support learners in emergency or exceptional circumstances.

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

- From a household in receipt of an income-based benefit – e.g. Universal Credit, Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit **or**
- From a household with a gross annual income below £30,000
- **Enhanced (Vulnerable) Bursary** – Where there is a financial need and the eligibility criteria are met; learners may receive a higher rate bursary of up to £1200 for the academic year to help with College related expenses. This bursary **includes** any **travel costs, meals and specialist kit and equipment**. Any additional requirements must be applied for in writing and where possible evidenced with receipts. Learners must maintain good attendance and progress levels to receive payment.

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

- In Care, including unaccompanied asylum-seeking children
- A Care Leaver
- In receipt of 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

Categories of Support

- **Travel** – All full-time learners aged 16-18 are eligible for free travel. Learners who meet the eligibility criteria for a bursary will be funded through the Bursary Fund and those from households who do not meet the Bursary Fund criteria will be funded by the College. The scheme operates in conjunction with Go North East and provides learners with an annual ticket via the Go North East app. The **App-Standard ticket** allows **weekday travel throughout the main College catchment area between 6am and 7pm during term time (excluding bank holidays)**. Learners must apply for travel on the Application for Financial Assistance. Upon submission of an application to College, learners will receive an email from Go North East with a gift code and instructions on how to access their ticket via the app.

Where a learner is travelling from outside the main College catchment area, provision can be made to issue a Whole Network ticket or make a reimbursement of costs.

Learners using their own transport receive a mileage allowance of 30p per mile (home to college/placement miles only). Claims are made using the Repayment of Travel Expenses form. Forms are available from the College Reception or the College website and can be submitted via email to financial.support@derwentside.ac.uk or handed in to Reception. Petrol receipts must be submitted to support these claims.

- **Meals** – Eligible learners receive a free meal from the College canteen each day they are timetabled to attend. The College operates a cashless system, and learners must consent to have their fingerprint taken to access their allowance.
- **Uniform and Equipment** – Eligible learners on vocational programmes have the cost of essential kit and equipment i.e. items without which they cannot complete their qualification, met by the bursary fund. Any additional costs over and above essential items must be either paid for by the learner or applied for through the hardship element of the 16-19 bursary fund.
- **Books and Stationery** – Eligible learners who require course materials such as books or stationery must apply for this support via email to financial.support@derwentside.ac.uk and where possible, provide evidence of the cost along with proof of any subsequent purchase.
- **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 or via email at financial.support@derwentside.ac.uk
- **Childcare** – Learners aged 16-19 may be eligible for free childcare through a national scheme called Care-to-Learn. Information and Application Forms are available from the Finance Department in College and on the College website. Further information regarding the scheme can also be found at www.gov.uk/care-to-learn.

Submission of Applications

Completed Applications for Financial Assistance, Care to Learn Application forms and Travel claim forms along with any supporting evidence can be submitted to:

Main Reception in College.

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. 956

Appeals

If a learner/parent wishes to appeal against an unsuccessful application or a withheld payment, they can do so in writing at financial.support@derwentside.ac.uk. All appeals will be considered and the learner/parent informed of the outcome within ten working days.