



THE
BEDFORD
COLLEGE
GROUP

Adult Support Fund Advanced Learner Loans Bursary Policy

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19+ Adult Support Fund / Advanced Learner Loans Bursary Fund

Introduction

1. The ESFA publishes guidance, which set out the criteria for financial support to help students facing financial hardship through the Discretionary Learner Support Fund and the Advanced Learner Loan Bursary. This funding is designed to support those most in need with the associated costs of attending and completing a Further Education (FE) learning programme in College.
2. Support is available to students who are fully funded, co-funded or in receipt of and/or eligible to apply for the Advanced Learner Loan where they meet the criteria for the bursaries.
3. Students on Higher Education (HE) Programmes are not eligible; financial support is available through Student Finance England (SFE). Information can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/student-finance/extra-help> .
4. The criteria for support are the same for both student cohorts. Students in receipt of a loan will be awarded support from the Loans Bursary while eligible non-loans students would be supported from the Adult Support Fund.
5. Support is available to adult learners aged 19years and over, attending all Bedford College campuses, Tresham College and the Bedford Sixth Form.
6. It is the policy of the College to optimise the use of funding to support adult students who have a specific financial need which could prevent them from achieving their qualifications.
7. This policy sets out the financial support available, the eligibility criteria and the conditions for continuous receipt of this support.
8. The 19+ Discretionary Learner Support (DLS) is incorporated into our overall AEB allocation. It is not permitted to vire funds between the Adult Support Fund and the Advanced Loans Bursary Fund.
9. Bedford College brands the 19+ Discretionary Learner Support Fund as the Adult Support Fund and maintains the use of the government-named Advanced Learner Loans Bursary.

Context

9. Awards may only be provided where a vulnerable or disadvantaged learner has demonstrated a financial barrier which impacts on their learning. This includes support for domestic emergencies and emergency accommodation.
10. Students aged 19+ are normally assessed as independent students and household income is assessed on their own income, together with that of their spouse/partner if applicable. However, if a student has no income, household income will be based on the income of the person(s) on whom the student is dependent.
11. Means-testing will be rigorous but not excessive and evidence from other recent income assessments will be used wherever possible.
12. Tuition fees support will be a contribution of approximately 75% of the co-funded rate with no cap in relation to proportion of overall allocation spent on fees, where eligible.
13. Students in receipt of the advanced learner loan can also access **childcare** support through the Advanced Loans bursary – this will be up to a maximum of 80% of the value of the student's course fee.
14. Additional Learning Support (ALS) is available to students in receipt of the advanced learner loan, such as learning support through equipment or teaching assistants and any reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010. This is managed through the Additional Learning Team.
15. Additional funding is received from the Harpur Trust and the Connolly Foundation to help financially disadvantaged students (not in receipt of a loan) studying at the college. Student must meet their specified criteria to qualify.

19+ Adult Support Fund Allocation 2018/19

19+ Hardship	£400,000?
Less 5% Administration	-£20,000
Total funds available	£380,000
HE Access to Learning	£TBC
Harpur Trust (16-18 and 19+)	£20,000
Connolly Foundation (16-18 and 19+)	£50,000

Advanced Learner Loan Bursary Allocation 2018/19

Advanced Learner Loans Bursary	£273,314.00
Less 5% Administration	£13,666.00
Total funds available	£259,648.00

Eligibility Criteria

16. Applications will be judged in line with AEB funding guidance for 2018/19.
17. All full time and part time students (including those in receipt of a loan) studying on an ESFA funded course, including traineeships, at Bedford College and its incorporated sites (Bedford campus, Kempston campuses, Shuttleworth College, UTC, Tresham campuses and the Bedford Sixth Form) are eligible to apply for support where they meet the following criteria:
- are aged 19 or over on 31st August 2018 and not on a traineeship
 - are starting a traineeship on or after 1 August in the year in which they turn 16
 - have lived within the UK / EEA for 3 years prior to the start of the course
 - have a household income of less than £28,000
 - are in receipt of a means-tested benefit or tax credits
- In addition, the following will be considered for the Adult Support Fund, those who:
- have learning difficulties or disabilities
 - are care leavers (previous VLB students)
 - students participating on a Prince's trust Team Programme
 - are on probation or supervised by the Youth Offending Service
 - experience a sudden change in circumstances, such as redundancy

18. **Exceptions:**

The following categories of students are not be eligible for our bursaries:

- Students that have been mandated to training (full-time or part-time) by Jobcentre Plus will have their travel and childcare costs met by Jobcentre Plus (JCP) where required.
- Students on Higher Education (HE) Programmes.
- Students who do not qualify for the Adult Support Fund may be considered for support via external educational charities (where available and subject to conditions).
- International students are not eligible for any financial support.
- If an asylum seeker is eligible for support, we can only provide support in the form of course-related books, equipment or a travel pass. We are not permitted to give these students cash payments.

Bursary Categories

Fees

19. Available to students who have been fee assessed as co-funded only.
20. The guidance permits the use of our funding (in exceptional circumstances) to support tuition fees for 19+ students who are not eligible for full fee remission or for the Advanced Learner Loan.
21. All fees will be awarded at a maximum of 75% of cost. These include tuition, examinations and professional membership fees.
22. In order to manage the limited funds, support for all fees will be by exception and on referral from Student Services, Student Data, Enquiries or Finance Staff. Priority groups will include SLLDD students and those in exceptional hardship who fall outside other sources of funding e.g. fee waivers and entitlement funding.
23. HE students who require support with the cost of course fees should apply to Student Finance England www.gov.uk/studentfinance.

Travel

24. Travel will be awarded at a standard bursary rate in 2018/19. The College's travel bursary will be approximately 70% contribution towards the cost of weekly megarider (Stagecoach) bus pass. This will be the same for the termrider bus pass for those who live outside the local bus routes. We will award £350 for students who live more than 3 miles but local to the Bedford College and £600 for those who live outside of area and beyond. The bursary rates for our Northamptonshire-based sites start at £290 for those who live more than 3 miles from their college location - refer to Annex C.
25. Travel is paid only for students not in receipt of other subsidised travel unless they require support with transport costs incurred as a result of a mobility difficulty. The cheapest form of travel is paid, being travel by bus.
26. For adult students travelling by car, the travel support will be the same as the bursary awarded to those travelling by bus.
27. Students attending extended work placements can apply for a travel bursary if not already covered by their travel bursary or bus pass.
28. Payments for the travel bursary will be made termly, paid directly to the student, unless the student is using the pre-arranged Shuttleworth bus, then the payment is made internally towards the cost of running the service. However, students will be given the option to pay their contribution by monthly/termly instalments.

29. Different arrangements apply for Shuttleworth students travelling on College buses, where there is a system of discounted bus passes. For students with a household income of £28,000 or less the student contribution to the supplementary cost of the bus pass is £300 per year (or £110 per term). For students with a household income of £28,001 or more the cost is £650 per year (or £225 per term). Students choosing to travel to Shuttleworth by alternative means will receive the means-tested travel bursary of £600 where they meet our eligibility criteria.
30. The closing date for the travel bursary for September enrolments is Friday, 19 October 2018 and for the January enrolments is 08 February 2019

Course Cost Bursary

27. Funding for trips, books, kit, materials/equipment and uniform which are deemed by the course manager as essential to the course are prioritised. A discretionary course cost bursary of up to 75% will be awarded, subject to household income and the availability of funds.
28. Counselling supervision is funded up to a maximum of £25 (mainly for advanced loans students) per month up to a maximum of 10 months; usually one session a month. A maximum of £250 per academic year.
29. The College reserves the right to request the return of any equipment, for example where a student withdraws from the course. Such equipment would then be available for reissue. However, due consideration is given to hygiene, health and safety, and wear and tear.
30. All eligible students will be awarded £20 printing credit.
31. The closing date for the course costs bursary is 19 October 2018, subject to funding being available.

Childcare (Advanced Learner Loans only)

31. Students aged 19 but less than 20 years old must apply to the Government's Care to Learn scheme for childcare support.
32. Childcare funding may **only** be used towards the cost of a registered childminder, nursery or pre/after-school club. Only childcare with a provider who is registered with Ofsted may be funded.
33. Enrolment and attendance checks will be made before the first payment is sent.

34. The availability of free childcare and education for all 3 and 4 year olds (and some 2 year olds) is verified with each student, and also with their nursery. If they are eligible for 2, 3 and 4 year old funding, childcare is only supported where the student's timetable exceeds the number of government funded sessions.
35. Confirmation of support for childcare is subject to the student supplying a copy of their childcare contract, birth certificates and proof of childcare registration with Ofsted. Support for childcare is given only for timetabled teaching hours.
36. Nursery deposits and childcare retainers payable during college holidays are not funded. This is communicated to students and childcare providers along with the initial award letter.

Discretionary (Emergency) Hardship Bursary

37. The discretionary bursary is for students experiencing exceptional financial hardship, to help with the additional costs of attending college and achieving their qualifications.
38. The hardship bursary is set aside for those in greatest financial hardship; to support them with the ongoing costs of being at College. The college also acknowledges that students may face exceptional hardship during the course of the academic year due to a change in circumstances domestically or financially. This bursary fund will prioritise help towards the following:
 - non-essential course costs
 - travel costs to university open days/interviews
 - costs of items of stationery and printing
39. In the event that we have sufficient funds further to all other bursaries being fully awarded, a discretionary hardship bursary will be considered for students with a minimum attendance of 90% between January 2019 and April 2019

Accommodation (For adult learners not in receipt of ALL at Shuttleworth only)

40. Fees for halls of residence can be supported, although very limited. Applications are means-tested on household income and prioritised by distance from the student's home and/or availability of transport to Shuttleworth College.
41. Due to the small allocation and high demand for residential funding, financial support for those with a household income less than £16,190 will be capped at £3,000.00 (£320 per term) per year and at £2,040 (£640 per term) for those with higher household incomes but less than £30,000. This is approximately 75% of costs based on a 33 week calendar-year. Students at our Motorsport campus will receive the same level of support, being 75% or 50% of cost for the duration of their course

Meals Bursary (Advanced Learner Loans Only)

42. Students will receive a free healthy meal allowance on each day they attend the college. This will be added to the student's ID card daily.
43. The meals bursary is also available for eligible students aged 19 to 24 subject to a Learning Difficulty Assessment (LDA) or Education Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan). This is a statutory allowance.
44. The meals bursary will be awarded at the level of £3.00 per day for each day of timetabled attendance at College.

Additional Learning Support (Advanced Learner Loans Only)

45. Funding up to £250 will be given towards any learning support requirements for students who have indicated a form of learning difficulty or disability. This would be
 - a. specialist equipment, adapted materials and other resources to support a student's learning
 - b. special exam arrangements if required
 - c. support with accessing the College
 - d. dyslexia, hearing and autistic support specialists

Access to this support will be through the Additional Support Team.

Administration

46. Providers are allowed to use up to 5% of the total spend for administration costs. This will be £20,000 and £13,666 for the respective bursary funds in 2018/19
47. Students must complete a valid application form, which will be reviewed and processed by the Student Finance Team
48. Students will be informed of the outcome of their application within 4-6 weeks of receipt of a correctly completed application.
49. Bursary award letters are sent to successful applicants with details of their bursary payment dates.
50. All payments are made by BACS or by internal transfer to the appropriate department.
51. Continuous receipt of financial support is dependent on 90% attendance and where a student leaves the course or attendance drops below 90%, they may be required to return funds or essential course materials/equipment received from the College.

Other/External Sources of Funding

52. The Harpur Trust has awarded the College £20,000 for 2018/19 to use for students living in Bedford Borough and on a low income. This will be targeted mainly towards students on vocational courses or courses that teach trade skills, including, in exceptional circumstances only, commercial courses or where the student does not qualify for other bursaries.
53. The Connolly Foundation has awarded the College funds for non-means-tested bursaries for apprentices on specific apprenticeship programmes.
54. The Academic Excellence Bursary at the Sixth Form is not means-tested and is available to anyone who meets the criteria and is available to new students to the Sixth Form, starting their course in September 2017. Students must:
 - a. have at least 8 GCSEs A*-B including English Language and *Mathematics, with at least 4 GCSEs at A* or A, AND*
 - *Study our full-time A-Level or equivalent Level 3 programme at The Bedford Sixth Form.*
 - Students who are eligible for the AEB cannot receive DLS.

Data Privacy Policy

55. The privacy and security of our student's personal information is extremely important to us. Our **Student Privacy Notice** sets out what we do with the information we collect and what we do to keep it secure. It also explains where and how we collect this information, as well as the student's rights over their personal information.
56. A full copy of the **Data Privacy Policy** is available on the college website under Downloads: <https://www.bedford.ac.uk/downloads>; please refer to the policy for more information.
57. The policy applies to students at The Bedford College Group (registered Bedford College), which includes the brands Bedford College, National College for Motorsport, Shuttleworth College, The Bedford Sixth Form and Tresham College. It also includes any other brands we add to this group in the future.

Terms and Conditions

58. Applications will be available to continuing students from May 2018 and from 1 June 2018 for new students until the specific fund closure dates or when funds are exhausted, whichever is sooner. The panel reserves the right to extend the closing date subject to availability of funds.
59. The College operates a household income banding system. Band 1 covers all household income less than £16,190 and band 2 covers all household income between £16,191 and £28,000.

60. Payment will generally be around 75% of associated costs.
61. The panel will reserve the right to make awards outside of the criteria to students in income band 1 in cases of extreme or unique hardship which may otherwise result in a student withdrawing from their course.
62. Wherever possible, payments will be made direct to a supplier, including internal transfers.
63. The College reserves the right to suspend or reduce payments where a student's attendance falls below 90%, in consultation with the personal tutor.
64. Students may make more than one application to the fund in an academic year due to a change in their circumstances or for further support on a secondary course.
65. The College does not make bursary fund payments as regular payments for living costs. This is out of scope of the bursary fund and any such payments would be subject to the Social Security Amendment (Students and Income-related Benefits) Regulations 2000.

Monitoring

66. Monitoring of both support funds is the responsibility of the Director of Finance with the Financial Controller. Expenditure is monitored monthly and reported to the Bursary Panel via panel meetings.
67. We reserve the right to request repayment of all or part of any payment received; and/or return of equipment provided if a student withdraws from their course. Students may be asked to return books or equipment at the end of their course.

68. The College reserves the right to suspend or reduce payments where a student's attendance falls below 90% in consultation with the personal tutor. Payments will be stopped where a student has been absent for a period of four consecutive weeks or more.
69. Take-up of the Adult Support Fund is monitored annually in relation to retention and reported in the self-assessment report.
70. In-year management information is required by the Education and Skills Funding Agency in February, with an end of year return due in October. An annual report is completed for Harpur Trust funds.
71. Feedback from students on the impact of the fund on their learning is collected annually.

Appeals

72. Students can appeal their bursary decision in writing.
73. Appeals against decisions must be raised in writing to the Quality Manager within 10 days of the decision being notified. Appeals are acknowledged within 3 working days of receipt and resolved within 21 working days.
74. Appeals are presented at panel meeting. The Chair of the Bursary Panel (Director of Finance) will have the right to waive the College's criteria in cases of extreme hardship providing ESFA requirements are met.

The Bursary Panel

75. The bursary panel comprises the Finance Director (chair), Financial Controller, Student Finance Manager, Student Wellbeing Manager and Student Support Advisers (Bedford, Tresham, Shuttleworth and BSF). A Student Finance Adviser provides administrative support to the panel.
76. The panel meets fortnightly during July, August and September, and thereafter as required, to discuss Bursary matters.
77. Panel dates are published in advance.
78. The panel will reserve the right to make awards outside of the criteria to students in income band 1 in cases of extreme or unique hardship which may otherwise result in a student withdrawing from their course.
79. The panel has the right to vary the above criteria in exceptional circumstances, and chair's action is permitted in cases of urgent hardship. The panel reviews the criteria annually. The panel has the right to vary the above criteria in exceptional circumstances, and chair's action is permitted in cases of urgent hardship. The panel reviews the criteria annually and makes recommendations for changes to the College Executive.

Annex A: Summary of Bursary Provision / Categories

Adult Support Bursary Categories

Bursary Category	< £16,190 (Band 1)	£16,191 - £28,000 (Band 2)
Residential Access (in emergencies only)	75%	50%
Tuition/ Professional/ Exam Fees	75%	50%
Prince's Trust	£500 per student (approx. 35)	
Travel (Bus fare/ Bus Pass)	£350 within Bedford / £500+ beyond	
Essential Course Costs	75%	50%
Discretionary (Emergency) Hardship	Up to £250	Up to £250

Advanced Learner Loans Bursary Categories

Bursary Category	< £16,190 (Band 1)	£16,191- 28,000 (Band 2)
Childcare	Maximum of 80% of ESFA funding received – approx. £3,500	
Travel	£350 within Bedford / £500+ beyond	
Essential course costs	75%	50%
Meals bursary (discretionary)	£3.00/day	£3.00/day
Discretionary hardship	Up to £250	Up to £250
Residential Access	75%	50%
Additional Learning	Up to £250	Up to £250

Annex B: List of Eligible Programme Types 2018/19

The provision must be either:

- funded directly by ESFA or by ESFA via a local authority
- funded or co-financed by the European Social Fund
- otherwise publicly funded and lead to a qualification (up to and including level 3) accredited by Ofqual or is pursuant to Section 96 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000
- a 16 to 19 traineeship programme
- The Prince's Trust Team programmes: Non-employed students aged 16 to 19 who are participating in a Prince's Trust Team Programme are eligible to receive the bursary in the same way as any other student participating in an eligible, publicly funded course.

Annex C: Bus Fare Calculation and Bus Route Maps by region

Bus Fare Rates by Area

MEGA RIDER (within area) - 7 DAY	FARES	70%	Course Weeks (33)	Bursary
BEDFORD	£15.00	£10.50	£346.50	£350.00
CORBY	£12.00	£8.40	£277.20	£280.00
KETTERING	£14.00	£9.80	£323.40	£325.00
WELLINGBOUROUGH	£13.20	£9.24	£304.92	£305.00

TERM RIDER (out-of-area)	FARES	70%	Annual (X3 Terms)	Bursary
BEDFORDSHIRE + COUNTIES	£295.00	£206.50	£619.50	£600.00
CORBY	£234.00	£163.80	£491.40	£500.00
KETTERING				
WELLINGBOUROUGH				
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE + COUNTIES	263.00	184.10	552.30	550.00