**16-18 Student Finance Policy 2024/2025**

**Scope**

This policy applies to students aged 16 and over but under 19 on 31st August 2024, studying towards Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) funded further education qualifications, that also qualify for bursary support based on funding body criteria.

**Policy context**

Vision West Nottinghamshire College policy is to follow the policy guidelines of the ESFA and openly, fairly and transparently apply the rules set by this government funding agency.

The funds available from the 16-19 Bursary Fund, are managed by the College and are allocated on a first come, first served basis (with the exception of the 16-18 Vulnerable Student Bursary Fund), via an application and assessment process. Students must meet the specified eligibility criteria to be considered for any assistance. The rules within this policy are set out at the time of writing and could be subject to change at any time from the ESFA.

Financial support is intended to remove barriers and support participation, attendance and achievement.

Applications received by the Student Finance Team will be processed within eight weeks of enrolment or of receiving a fully completed application. Applicants will be notified of their application outcome by email.

**Eligibility for 16 – 18 bursaries**

To be eligible for the bursary students must:

* be aged 16 or over but under 19 on 31 August 2024
* meet the residency criteria in ESFA funding regulations for post-16 provision in the 2024 to 2025 academic year
* be participating in provision that is subject to inspection by a public body that assures quality (such as Ofsted), the provision must also be either;
	+ funded directly by ESFA or by ESFA via a local authority
	+ otherwise publicly funded and lead to a qualification (up to and including level 3) accredited by Ofqual or on the ESFA list of qualifications approved for funding
	+ a 16 to 19 traineeship programme

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.

Students on apprenticeship programmes, or any waged training, are employed, rather than in education, **are not** eligible for the 16 to 19 Bursary Fund or Free Meals.

Students on distance learning provision are not normally eligible for support other than travel costs to exams.

**Students aged 19 and over on 31 August 2024 in the 2024 to 2025 academic year**

Students who are aged 19 and over on 31 August 2024 are not eligible for support from the 16 to 19 Bursary Fund unless they:

* are a student who is continuing on an eligible study programme they began aged 16 to 18 (19+ continuers)
* have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and are attending eligible education provision

**No students aged 19 or over are eligible to receive a vulnerable bursary.**

**Overview of funding available; 16-18 Student Support Fund for full-time students**

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| **Funding Overview** | Household Income below £40,000 |
| Help available: | * West Notts College Travel Pass for eligible learners based on distance and income threshold above.
* Discretionary Bursary payment based on individual application identifying hardship and barriers preventing a learner fully engaging with their programme.
* Help with public transport costs if bus travel isn’t available
* Support for compulsory kit/uniform
* A total of £250 towards curriculum-based trips throughout the academic year
* 50% towards UK University interview travel costs
* UCAS fee
* Exams – Pay 100% of exam resit cost.
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To qualify for the bursary support you must have an annual gross household income of below £40,000.

In extenuating circumstances discretion may be given to award elements of the bursary in households exceeding this threshold. An application will need to be submitted with proof of the household income and details of the extenuating circumstances, this will then be individually assessed by the Welfare Manager.

For all applications (excluding Free College Meals) funding is limited; therefore, evidence of eligibility does not guarantee an award. Student’s wishing to apply for financial support should do so as soon as possible from the start of their course. Awards will be made on a first come first served basis. Where funds are scarce, partial awards (West Notts College Travel Card) may be considered to ensure that the maximum number of students can benefit from the bursary.

**Bursary details**

* Discretionary Bursary payment based on individual application identifying hardship and barriers preventing a learner from fully engaging with their programme. The student support team will look at what support can be made available, such as support for meals where free meals are not being provided, additional trip costs for learning related trips, specialist equipment needed to undertake study, etc.
* West Notts College Travel Pass awarded if you live over 2km from your college site.

*If you live within a walking distance of 2km (1.24 miles) or less from the college, you will still be able to purchase a West Notts College Travel Pass but will pay the standard price of £435, payable on*

*TrentBarton’s website over 9 payments of £48.33 of per month (irrespective of whether you qualify for a bursary). However, if there are legitimate reasons preventing you from walking to college, you may be eligible to pay the subsidised price of £216 payable on TrentBarton’s website over 9 payments of £24 per month. If you study at two campuses and one is more than 2km (1.24 miles) walking distance from your home, you will get your travel pass as part of your bursary.*

* 100% support for compulsory kit/uniform (as specified by the Curriculum Area) – internal transfer or reimbursement with receipts. Students who qualify for the bursary can have items purchased/reimbursed for them however, the items will remain the property of the college and they will be expected to return them at the end of the academic year or at any point should they withdraw. Kits/uniforms can be retained for further use to enable them to complete their studies if they are progressing onto the next level.

**Kit/uniform will not be purchased on the student’s behalf until the start of the academic year**

* 50% paid towards curriculum-based trips to a maximum funding of £250 per year. (These must be link to the learners learning)
* 100% towards curriculum-based trips costing under £50
* 50% towards curriculum-based trips costing over £50 (provided the total including any previous trip cost award does not exceed £250)
* UK University interview travel costs – 50% of the total travel costs reimbursement with receipts and letter confirming interview date, time and venue. Public transport costs only.
* UCAS – Pay £27 application fee.
* Exams – Pay 100% of exam resit cost for students in receipt of a bursary.

**All above payments will be awarded based on 90% attendance rate except exam resit support which will have no attendance threshold. The award you receive will be based upon you attending all your planned classes, behaviour and discipline will also be considered. Your attendance will be monitored by the online college register system.**

* 100% support with public transport costs for those in receipt of a bursary, but do not live on a route covered by the West Notts College Travel Pass. Student must live more than 2km away from the furthest college base they attend. If a travel card is available to reduce the cost of travel a student will be expected to purchase/apply for this. If the travel card incurs a cost this can be reimbursed as part of the bursary funding when a receipt is submitted. Travel cards available;
* 16-17 Saver Railcard <https://www.thetrainline.com/trains/great-britain/railcards/16-17-saver>
* 16-25 Railcard <https://www.thetrainline.com/trains/great-britain/railcards/16-25-railcard>

**Full monthly payment in relation to transport costs is made if attendance is 90% or above. If attendance falls below 70% no payment is made. Attendance between 70% and 90% the student will receive that percentage of payment.**

**Overview of funding available; 16-18 Vulnerable Student Bursary**

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| **Funding Overview** | **16-18 Vulnerable Student Bursary Fund** |
| Help available: | Up to £1200, which will be a combination of the following;* A student welcome pack
* Course related book voucher
* Weekly BACS payment if assessment and attendance meets requirements

The maximum £1,200 will be paid where a learner is on a programme of 30 weeks or more studying more that 480 hrs. The sum will be pro rata where the hours / weeks are lower. Students in receipt of the Vulnerable Student Bursary are eligible to receive the following in addition to the above (funded through the discretionary 16-18 Student Support Fund);* West Notts College Travel Pass
* Help with public transport costs if bus travel isn’t available
* Support for compulsory kit/uniform
* A total of £250 towards curriculum-based trips throughout the academic year
* 50% towards UK University interview travel costs
* UCAS fee
* Exams – Pay 100% of exam resit cost
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Students who meet one of the 4 criteria below and who have a financial need can apply for a bursary for vulnerable groups.

The defined vulnerable groups are students who are;

* in care
* care leavers
* receiving Universal Credit (UC) 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
* receiving Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payments (PIP) in their own right as well as Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or Universal Credit (UC) in their own right

***Please note that eligibility is not a guarantee of the full £1200 award from the vulnerable bursary fund. There is the possibility of a limited award or even no award at all if there is no financial need and/or the financial needs are covered from other sources. For example***

* attending specialist residential provision that covers their educational costs in full
* taking a distance learning programme who has no financial barriers to participation (for example, they don’t have any travel costs or meal costs)
* in the care of the local authority whose educational costs are covered in full by the local authority
* who is financially supported by their partner

The amount of any bursary award will be based on need, and will be assessed individually and awarded the following;

* **A student welcome pack** – This includes items such as stationary, laptop, etc.

* **West Notts College Travel Pass** awarded if you live over 2km from your college site.
* *If you live within a walking distance of 2km (1.24 miles) or less from the college, you will still be able to purchase a West Notts College Travel Pass but will pay the standard price of £435, payable on TrentBarton’s website over 9 payments of £48.33 of per month (irrespective of whether you qualify for a bursary). However, if there are legitimate reasons preventing you from walking to college, you may be eligible to pay the subsidised price of £216 payable on TrentBarton’s website over 9 payments of £24 per month. If you study at two campuses and one is more than 2km (1.24 miles) walking distance from your home, you will get your travel pass as part of your bursary.*
* **100% support for compulsory kit/uniform** (as specified by the Curriculum Area) – internal transfer or reimbursement with receipts. Students who qualify for the bursary can have items purchased/reimbursed for them however, the items will remain the property of the college and they will be expected to return them at the end of the academic year or at any point should they withdraw. Kits/uniforms can be retained for further use to enable them to complete their studies if they are progressing onto the next level.

***Kit/uniform will not be purchased on the student’s behalf until the start of the academic year***

* **50% paid towards curriculum-based trips** to a maximum funding of £250 per year.
* 100% towards curriculum-based trips costing under £50
* 50% towards curriculum-based trips costing over £50 (provided the total including any previous award does not exceed £250)
* **UK University interview travel costs** – 50% of the total travel costs reimbursement with receipts and letter confirming interview date, time and venue. Public transport costs only.
* **UCAS** – Pay £27.50 application fee.
* **Exams** – Pay 100% of exam resit cost for students in receipt of a bursary.
* **If you do not live a route covered by the West Notts College Travel Pass** then 100% support with public transport costs for those in receipt of a bursary. Student must live more than 2km away from the furthest college base they attend. If a travel card is available to reduce the cost of travel a student will be expected to purchase/apply for this. If the travel card incurs a cost this can be reimbursed as part of the bursary funding when a receipt is submitted. Travel cards available;
* 16-17 Saver Railcard <https://www.thetrainline.com/trains/great-britain/railcards/16-17-saver>
* 16-25 Railcard <https://www.thetrainline.com/trains/great-britain/railcards/16-25-railcard>

**Full monthly payment in relation to transport costs is made if attendance is 90% or above. If attendance falls below 70% no payment is made. Attendance between 70% and 90% the student will receive that percentage of payment.**

* If a student has any further costs associated with their college course not covered by the support outlined above, they must contact the Student Finance Team.
* **Weekly BACS payment** to the students bank account.
* Students’ income under £3,000 = ***(£27 per week)***
* Students’ income between £4,000 and £3,001 = ***(£25 per week)***
* Students’ income between £5,000 and £4,001 = **(£*22 per week)***
* Students’ income between £5,000 and £9,999 = ***(£20 per week)***

If the Students income is over £10,000 then **NO BACS payments** will be awarded, but all the other elements of the bursary will still be awarded. Payment dates are published and available to all students and can be found at the end of this document.

**Weekly payments are only made if the attendance is 90% or above for the week in question.**

**The award you receive will be based upon you attending all your planned classes, behaviour and discipline will also be considered. Your attendance will be monitored by the online college register system.**

**Free College Meals**

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| **Funding Overview** | Free College Meals |
| Help available: | * £4.00 per day for timetabled days at college
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**Eligible benefits**

Free meals are targeted at disadvantaged students. Free meals in further education defines disadvantage as students being in receipt of, or having parents who are in receipt of, one or more 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 they are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190, as assessed by Her Majesty’s Revenue and Customs (HMRC))
* Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for 4 weeks after someone stops qualifying for Working Tax Credit
* Universal Credit with net earnings not exceeding the equivalent of £7,400 pa (after tax and not including any benefits you get)
* Transitional protection – The protection means that all students already receiving free meals on or after 1 April 2018 continue to be eligible whilst Universal Credit continues to roll out until March 2025 and then until the end of the course they are enrolled on at this point.

A student is only eligible to receive a free meal when they, or a responsible adult on their behalf, have made a successful application to Vision West Nottinghamshire College.

* Allocations will be made to students aged between 16 and 18 on 31st August 2024 who are or whose parent/carer are in receipt of a qualifying benefit.
* Students aged 19 or over are only eligible for a free meal if they or their parent/carer are in receipt of a qualifying benefit and they:
* Are continuing on a study programme they began aged 16 to 18 (‘19+ continuers’) or
* Have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)
* The allocation will be £4.00 per timetabled day at college, this will be credited weekly on to the student’s college lanyard and allow them to make food purchases in any of the college diners.
* Eligible students attending placement will receive payment of £4.00 per day paid into their nominated bank account on production of a copy of their signed placement log to the student finance team.

**Exceptional Hardship Award**

For students who are find themselves in exceptional financial barriers a standalone hardship application can be submitted by a member of the support staff up to a total of £250 in any one year

**Ineligible Expenditure for Bursary**

Specialist tuition provided by external organisations
Courses that are externally delivered and certified
Support with accommodation / living costs
 Using bursary for operational costs (other than bursary admin)

**Appeals/Complaints procedure**

Any disagreement with a decision made by the Student Finance Team in relation to an application should be made in writing to the Student Welfare Manager, Vision West Nottinghamshire College, Derby Road, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire NG18 5BH.

**Student Finance Team contact details**

Student Finance Team

Vision West Nottinghamshire College

Derby Road

Mansfield

Nottinghamshire

NG18 5BH

Telephone: 01623 900455

Email: studentfinance@wnc.ac.uk

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| **Vulnerable Student Bursary - weekly pay dates** |
| **Week number** | **Monday wc date** | **Weekly Pay Dates - Monday** |  |
| 1 | 02/09/2024 | 16/09/2024 |  |
| 2 | 09/09/2024 | 23/09/2024 |  |
| 3 | 16/09/2024 | 30/09/2024 |  |
| 4 | 24/09/2024 | 07/10/2024 |  |
| 5 | 30/09/2024 | 14/10/2024 |  |
| 6 | 07/10/2024 | 21/10/2024 |  |
| 7 | 14/10/2024 | 28/10/2024 |  |
|  | 21/10/2024 |  | Half term |
|  | 28/10/2024 |  | Half term |
| 8 | 04/11/2024 | 18/11/2024 |  |
| 9 | 11/11/2024 | 25/11/2024 |  |
| 10 | 18/11/2024 | 02/12/2024 |  |
| 11 | 25/11/2024 | 09/12/2024 |  |
| 12 | 02/12/2024 | 16/12/2024 |  |
| 13 | 09/12/2024 | 23/12/2024 |  |
| 14 | 16/12/2024 |  |  |
|  | 23/12/2024 |  | 25/12 + 26/12 BH |
|  | 30/12/2024 |  | Xmas holidays |
| 15 | 06/01/2025 | 20/01/2025 |  |
| 16 | 13/01/2025 | 27/01/2025 |  |
| 17 | 20/01/2025 | 03/02/2025 |  |
| 18 | 27/01/2025 | 10/02/2025 |  |
| 19 | 03/02/2025 | 17/02/2025 |  |
| 20 | 10/02/2025 | 24/02/2025 |  |
|  | 17/02/2025 |  | Half term |
| 21 | 24/02/2025 | 10/03/2025 |  |
| 22 | 03/03/2025 | 17/03/2025 |  |
| 23 | 10/03/2025 | 24/03/2025 |  |
| 24 | 17/03/2025 | 31/03/2025 |  |
| 25 | 24/03/2025 | 07/04/2025 |  |
| 26 | 31/03/2025 | 14/04/2025 |  |
|  | 07/04/2025 |  | Easter holidays |
|  | 14/04/2025 |  | GF-BH 18/04 |
| 27 | 21/04/2025 | 06/05/2025 | 21/04 -Easter mon |
| 28 | 28/04/2025 | 12/05/2025 |  |
| 29 | 05/05/2025 | 19/05/2025 | BH - 05/05 |
| 30 | 12/05/2025 | 26/05/2025 |  |
| 31 | 19/05/2025 | 02/06/2025 |  |
|  | 26/05/2025 |  | Half term BH 26/05 |
| 32 | 02/06/2025 | 16/06/2025 |  |
| 33 | 09/06/2025 | 23/06/2025 |  |
| 34 | 16/06/2025 | 30/06/2025 |  |
| 35 | 23/06/2025 | 07/07/2025 |  |