

# Learner Support Fund Policy

## 16-18 Study Programme 2021/2022

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Principalship Lead	Vice Principal
Accessible to Students	Yes

## SCOPE AND PURPOSE

The policy details how the College will offer financial support to Students across the College through the Learners Support Fund mechanism.

Financial support will be offered to:

- 16-18 Students (including Students aged 19 progressing from Year 1 to Year 2 of a 2-year enrolled programme)
- 19-24 Students with Education Care and Health Plan (EHCP)

The LSF helps to provide financial support towards the cost of studying and more specifically will offer support for:

- Travel for Students (Not including Students who are eligible for “OUR PASS”)
- Subsistence
- Personal Hardship (clothing, personal care etc.)
- Additional Support for the most vulnerable students
- Essential curriculum kit and equipment

The College helps to provide financial support for the following:

- Tea & Toast to all 16 to 18-year olds
- Student Ambassadors

## POLICY

The LSF funds are limited and not guaranteed and these will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis and will close when the full allocation has been spent. The fund will be reviewed on a Monthly basis. The college reserve the right to adjust the criteria in year according to funds available, individual needs and personal circumstances.

### EU and EEA students

The United Kingdom (UK) left the European Union (EU) and free movement between the UK and the EU has ended. The UK's new points-based immigration system applies and treats EU (other than Irish citizens) and non-EU citizens equally. Students who are nationals of EU (or European Economic Area (EEA)) countries (other than Irish citizens) who enter the UK after 31 December 2020 are not automatically eligible for funding and must be able to demonstrate that they are legally resident in the UK to be funded. All EU/EEA students living in the UK before 31 December 2020 and wish to live, work and study must apply for EU settlement to be eligible for funding.

Students who are nationals of EU (or EEA) countries or children of Turkish workers who are living in the UK and have started their programme before 31 December 2020 must be treated equally to UK residents. Once enrolled they will be eligible for funding for the full duration of their study programme. All Irish citizens continue to be automatically eligible for funding under immigration concessions agreed with the Irish Government before the UK was a member of the EU.

### Vulnerable Support Bursary

The most vulnerable Students are defined as: **(Evidence will be required to support your application)**

- in care (including unaccompanied Asylum Seekers)
- care leavers (including unaccompanied Asylum Seekers)

- receiving Income Support, or Universal Credit 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 or Personal Independence Payments in their own right as well as Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit in their own right.
- Young Caring Responsibility

The College may decide that although a young person may be eligible for a Vulnerable bursary because they are in one or more of the defined vulnerable groups, they do not have any actual financial need. This might be because their financial needs are already met and/or because they have no relevant costs. The College reserves the right to refuse a student's application on this basis. Similarly, students will only receive the amount they need to participate, and the College will not automatically award students £1,200 if they do not need the full amount. Students living independently will be expected to provide evidence of this with a valid Tenancy agreement or Supported housing agreement.

Students studying for at least 30 weeks per year will be eligible for the Vulnerable support bursary of up to, but not a guaranteed sum of £1,200 a year (Travel support will be provided via the "OUR PASS") For students aged 18 on or after 31 August 2021, the college will provide travel support. All Students in receipt of the Vulnerable support bursary will receive, as a maximum of 8 x £150 or a pro rata payment based on the award. Payments will start in November 2021 and will continue to June 2022. Students studying for less than 30 weeks will be entitled to pro rata of £1,200.

The Vulnerable support bursary is based on a financial assessment and need. Eligible Students in receipt of the additional support bursary may also receive support with meals but will only be eligible for other financial support in exceptional circumstances.

### **LEARNERS SUPPORT FUNDS (LSF)**

- Students aged 16-18 (Students must be under 19 on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021 or on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022 for Students progressing from Year 1 to Year 2 of a 2-year enrolled study programme) and with a household income of £20,000 are eligible for financial support as per Appendix 1. Students who become 19 during the year will continue to receive financial support until the end of the academic year.

### **Free travel for 16 to 18-year olds**

The "OUR PASS" Scheme was in operation throughout Greater Manchester as of 01/07/2019 and will provide Manchester's 16-18-year old's free bus travel on all local bus services across the region, making it easier to access education, work, training, culture and leisure opportunities in the city.

1. Students must be a Greater Manchester resident, and aged at least 16 and under 18 on Saturday 31 August 2021.
2. There is a £10 administration fee to be paid by the student. (refunds can be applied for via SPA)
3. "OUR PASS" will be valid until 31 August after the Students 18<sup>th</sup> birthday (or until their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, if this is 31 August).

4. Lost or stolen cards will cost £10 to replace, which will not be covered by the College. Any Student found misusing their bus pass will be subject to the Student disciplinary procedures.

### **16 to 18 College travel (SPA)**

College Travel award will only be provided to Students who are not eligible for “OUR PASS” this will usually be students who live outside the GM area or are 18 on or after 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021.

Your travel award will now operate on an ITSO card which will be the college ID badge. This will be used on public transport as a travel card. Students will be able to renew the travel award every 28 days using a smart phone or tablet.

Students who lose or misplace the ITSO bus pass will incur a fee of **£2** to obtain a replacement from the college. Refunds are not available if a bus pass is later found. Whilst the bus pass is being replaced, there will be no replacement funds available. Any Student found misusing their bus pass will be subject to the Student disciplinary procedures.

### **Subsistence – Meal Allowances**

#### **EFA Free Meal Allocation**

Students in receipt of a **means tested benefit, child tax credits Or Universal Credit with net earnings not exceeding £7,400** are entitled to £3.50 meal allowance per day that they are in College and when they are off-site as part of their Programme of Study e.g. when carrying out a work placement or work experience.

Students will receive their allocation loaded onto their ID card. Where Students cannot access the cashless vending system, such as those students on work placement or who are based in community provision, appropriate alternative payment methods will be put in place.

All payments will be operated using the BACS payment system by the Bursary Team. Attendance will be monitored, allocations reviewed on a regular basis and students informed of any changes. The College reserves the right to stop payments.

#### **19-24 Students with Education Care and Health Plan (EHCP)**

Students are entitled to £3.50 meal allowance per day that they are in College and when they are off-site as part of their Programme of Study e.g. when carrying out a work placement or work experience.

Students will receive their allocation loaded onto their ID card. Where Students cannot access the cashless vending system, such as those Students on work placement or who are based in community provision, appropriate alternative payment methods will be put in place.

All payments will be operated using the BACS payment system by the Bursary Team. Attendance will be monitored, allocations reviewed on a regular basis and students informed of any changes. The College reserves the right to stop payments.

### **Personal Hardship**

We have increased the Hardship provision to be held centrally to support Students who experience sudden, unavoidable and extreme hardship. You can apply through the Careers and Welfare Teams.

## Desirable Kit & Equipment

kits and equipment for a course can be funded up to a maximum cost of £75 per learner depending on curriculum area. Payments will be operated in conjunction with curriculum areas by the Bursary Team

Current allocations where specialist kit and or equipment are required:

Catering	£71.85
Construction	£20
Hair and Beauty	£75
Travel and Tourism	£16.90

## Laptops, iPads and data

If a student does not have access to a piece of IT equipment for independent study then students can book college computers or lap tops through the Learning Resource Centres to work on whilst on college campus.

Students can also apply for data support where required

*Before the college provides any equipment, students will be expected to sign the College Acceptable Use of IT Policy and the College IT Agreement Form.*

## PROCESS

Any Students wishing to apply for Students Support Funds will need to complete an application form and produce proof of household income.

Proof of household income can be evidenced through:

- P60
- Tax Credit Award Letter (Child or Working)
- Benefit Award Letter
- Universal Credit
- Part IV Immigration & Asylum Act 1999
- Guaranteed element of the State Pension Credit
- Wage slips for last 3 months
- Self-assessment tax calculation or certified accounts
- Evidence of self-employment
- Tenancy agreement (for vulnerable support bursary)

To be eligible for an EFA Free meal allowance (**means tested benefit**) a learner must be in receipt of, or having parents who are in receipt of, one or more of the following benefits:

- Income Support
- Income based JSA
- Income related ESA
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guarantee element of the State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit
- WTC run-on
- Universal Credit

Where a Student is in receipt of any of the above AND working tax credits, the above benefits override the WTC and entitle the learner to a meal allowance.

Confirmation of the allocation will be sent to the student's email within **15 working days**.

## **ELIGIBILITY**

To be eligible for an allocation Students must be:

- Aged over 16
- Aged under 19 on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021 (or 31<sup>st</sup> August 2020 for those Students progressing to a 2<sup>nd</sup> year of a 2-year enrolled study programme)
- Aged between 19 and 24 and subject to a LDA or EHCP
- Aged 16 to 18 and enrolled to an ESF programme
- Enrolled to a The Manchester College course
- Eligible for ESFA or ESF funding
- Have a good attendance Pattern in line with the college expectations
- Meet the minimum criteria relating to household income

Young Offenders are eligible for the Learners Support Funds if they are:

- serving a non-custodial sentence
- redeemed early from a custodial sentence
- remanded to a non-secure institution
- Work based Students will only be eligible for the Learners Support Funds in exceptional circumstances.

## **Appeals**

Should a student wish to appeal a decision, they will need to put this in writing outlining why they feel the decision was incorrect and send to the Bursary Team at this email address [butrsaryteam@tmc.ac.uk](mailto:butrsaryteam@tmc.ac.uk) within 10 working days of the decision date/letter. An appeal panel will re-assess and the outcome decision will be communicated within 10 working days from the date the appeal letter is received.

**Eligibility criteria apply subject to status and all funding rules and regulations correct at time of publication.**

## **EQUALITY & DIVERSITY**

Students can expect an inclusive and supportive learning environment whatever their background.

## **LOCATION AND ACCESS TO THIS POLICY**

Student Hub  
Staff Hub  
College Website

### Appendix 1 - 16-18 Programme of Study Award

	<b>Income below £20,000</b>	<b>Income Above £20,000</b>
<b>Travel</b>	Only if not eligible for "OUR PASS"	N/A
<b>Meal Allowance – Means Tested Benefits</b>	EFA will fund the cost of meals whilst in College up to £15 per week	N/A
<b>Desirable Kit and Equipment</b>	The Programme of Study Award will fund desirable kit and equipment only up to a maximum value of £75 per learner depending on curriculum area	N/A
<b>Hardship</b>	Allocated on a case by case basis	Allocated on a case by case basis. Via Careers, Employability and Welfare and Student Experience.
<b>Ambassador Awards</b>	£10 WHSmith voucher per event – maximum of 10 events in any academic year	£10 WHSmith per event – maximum of 10 events in any academic year