

Learner Support Fund Policy

19+ Programme of Study Award and Advanced Learner Loans 2021-2022

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SCOPE AND PURPOSE

To detail how the College will offer financial support to learners across the College through the Learner Support Fund mechanism.

Financial support will be offered to:

- 19+ learners studying a ESFA funded programme of study including those who are funded through an Advanced Learner Loan with a household income of £20,000

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

- Tuition fees
- Accreditation/Exam fees
- Childcare
- Travel
- Personal Hardship (clothing, personal care etc.)
- Essential equipment (including Laptops, iPads and data)

POLICY

The LSF funds are limited and not guaranteed, 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 in relation to funding guidance.

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.

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.

Tuition fee support

Learners can apply for tuition fee support if not eligible for ESFA tuition fee remission. As per Appendix 1.

Examination/Accreditation fee support

Learners who have to pay an Examination/Accreditation fee can apply for assistance with this from the funds as per Appendix 1.

Childcare support

Learners who incur childcare costs with an Ofsted regulated childcare provider whilst studying can apply for assistance from this fund. The level of childcare funding available to a learner will be determined by other sources of childcare support available through government led initiatives, such as the 15-30 hours of free childcare for all 2- and 3-year olds.

The maximum childcare funding available to learners will be as follows:

For children age up to 2 years old:

- The learner is expected to pay 5% of the nursery place directly to the provider.
- The college will pay a maximum of £150.00 per week.

For children aged 2 years and under 11 years:

- The college will support any additional childcare hours above the NEG hours voucher up to a maximum of £150.00 per week, per child.
- The learner is expected to pay 5% of the nursery place directly to the provider.

Where a learner has children both under and over 2 years of age, the maximum that the college will pay is £300 per week.

Any childcare costs incurred by a learner before they have official written confirmation from the college that childcare funding has been agreed and they have returned their signed contract will remain the learner's liability to pay the nursery provider.

The signed contract will need to be fully completed with all relevant information agreed for utilising the NEG vouchers against the childcare whilst studying at The Manchester College.

The Attendance is monitored and acted on in relation to the contract. If a student leaves their course they may incur a notice period cost from the childcare provider. The college will give and pay a notice period according to the terms and conditions of the childcare provider.

Travel Award - as per Appendix 1.

Learners from low income households and studying on a substantial programme of 10 hrs or more per week can apply for support with the cost of travel. The travel award will be provided to learners on the basis of eligibility. Payments and support may stop if attendance falls below college expectations.

Your travel award will now operate 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 SPA bus pass will incur a fee of £2 to obtain a replacement from the bus company. 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. Any learner in extreme hardship will go through an eligibility assessment for additional financial support.

Any student who lives outside the GM area or is studying under the 10-hour threshold and needs travel support must submit, in writing to the Bursary Team explaining why they should be considered for travel support. This will be looked at by the Bursary Appeals Panel and a decision reached.

19 – 24 Unwaged Learners

In some circumstances, for a level 1 or 2 programme of study, a learner aged 19 – 24, unwaged, may be eligible for support should a signed declaration from parents/guardian be in place, confirming that they do not financially support the learner for educational purposes (eligibility criteria apply).

College Hardship Funds

We have increased the Hardship provision to be held centrally to support Students who experience sudden, unavoidable and extreme hardship e.g. homelessness. Furthermore, in reaction to the estimated numbers of job losses due to Covid 19. 243,000 residents in Manchester work in 'Shutdown sectors' that are under threat - including non-food and non-pharmaceutical retail, travel, childcare, arts and domestic services. You can apply through the Careers and Welfare team

Advanced Learner Loans – in Learning Support

Learners who have an Advanced Learner Loan and are eligible for financial support through the Programme of study award can receive additional support to access learning e.g. 1-1 support with a SEN learning difficulty or disability.

PROCESS

Any learners wishing to apply for financial support will need to complete an application at the point of enrolment and produce proof of household income. Any learner applying after enrolment should speak with reception or Careers and Welfare Team

Proof of household income (under £20,000) can be evidenced through:

- Tax Credit Letter (Working or Child))
- Benefit Letters
- Wage slips for the last 3 months or P60
- Self-assessment tax calculation or certified accounts
- NASS Support/Aspen Card
- Bank account details

Written confirmation of the allocation will be sent within 15 working days.

ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for an allocation a learner must be:

- Enrolled to a The Manchester College course
- Eligible for ESFA funding or in receipt of an Advanced Learner Loan
- Have a good attendance Pattern in line with the college expectations
- Meet the minimum criteria relating to household income (under £20,000)

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

APPEALS

Should a student wish to appeal a decision, they will need to put this in writing and send to the Bursary Team email address Bursaryteam@tmc.ac.uk outlining why they feel the decision was incorrect and send to the Bursary Team within 10 days of the decision date. It will then go to an appeal panel and you will be informed of the outcome within 10 days.

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

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

LOCATION AND ACCESS TO THIS POLICY

Student Hub

College Website

Careers & Welfare Service

Customer Services

Appendix 1 – 19+ and Advanced Learner Loans 2021-2022

	19 + Fully Funded Income below £20,000	19 + Co - Funded Income below £20,000	NSF and GM Skills Income below £20,000	Advanced Learner Loan
Tuition fee		Eligible for full tuition fee support	Eligible for full tuition fee support	
Accreditation/ Examination fees		Eligible for full contribution for essential accreditation/exam fees linked to the learner's programme of study except for Professional Body registration.	Eligible for full contribution for essential accreditation/exam fees linked to the learner's programme of study except for Professional Body registration.	Full contribution for essential accreditation/exam fees which are not included within the learning loan amount and are linked to the learner's programme of study except for Professional Body registration.
Travel	Fund bus travel costs for learners studying 10 hrs or more per week	Fund bus travel costs for learners studying 10 hrs or more per week up	Fund bus travel costs for learners studying 10 hrs or more per week up	Fund bus travel costs for learners studying 10 hours or more per week
Extreme Hardship i.e. homeless	To be determined on an individual case by case basis.	To be determined on an individual case by case basis	To be determined on an individual case by case basis	To be determined on an individual case by case basis. Via Careers, Employability and Welfare and Student Experience
Childcare Support	Learners who incur childcare costs with an Ofsted regulated childcare provider whilst studying can apply for assistance with this from this fund. Maximum weekly support payments apply as stated in policy.	Learners who incur childcare costs with an Ofsted regulated childcare provider whilst studying can apply for assistance with this from this fund. Maximum weekly support payments apply as stated in policy.	Learners who incur childcare costs with an Ofsted regulated childcare provider whilst studying can apply for assistance with this from this fund. Maximum weekly support payments apply as stated in policy.	Learners who incur childcare costs with an Ofsted regulated childcare provider whilst studying can apply for assistance with this from this fund. Maximum weekly support payments apply as stated in policy.
Learning Support costs				For learners in receipt of a 19+ Advanced Learner Loan Costs of meeting any additional learning needs, as assessed by the Specialist Support team, will be fully funded.