



TITLE	REF	VERSION	
Financial Support Policy	LS006	4.0	
APPROVAL BODY:	DATE	REVIEW DATE	
Corporation	02 September 2020	02 September 2021	
LEAD PERSON	Group Director of Student Services		
EQIA DATE	18 May 2020	DPIA DATE	18 May 2020

STUDENT FINANCIAL SUPPORT POLICY

Policy Statement

Activate Learning is committed to encouraging and enabling participation in education. We recognise that money issues can be a significant barrier to participation, particularly for the most vulnerable people.

We use our allocation of Government Discretionary Bursary Funds to offer Activate Learning Bursary Schemes that target students most in financial need, following Government guidance on how the funds should be used.

The Activate Learning Bursary Schemes are reviewed and relaunched each year once our annual allocation is known, so the funds are used in the most effective and efficient way possible to support the maximum number of eligible students.

Clear eligibility criteria, application processes and timescales are published on the website, in application communications and during induction. When assessing eligibility, we will take the individual circumstances and needs of each student into account.

Purpose

This policy document outlines how Activate Learning intends to use its allocation of Discretionary Bursary Funds and Bursaries for Vulnerable groups during the 2020/21 academic year. The bursary schemes for future years will be confirmed once the group's bursary allocation for the year is announced.

Scope

This policy applies to all further education students at Activate Learning and its subcontracted provision, except for students aged 14-16.

We promote the following bursaries:

- Travel Bursary
- Course Costs Bursary
- Bursary for Vulnerable groups
- Meal Credits
- Childcare Bursary
- Accommodation Bursary
- Hardship Bursary
- The Governments Care to Learn scheme.

A number of bursaries and other financial support schemes are also provided by Activate Learning and/or our University partners to support higher education students. For further details please contact

HE@activatelearning.ac.uk

Commitment Statement

Activate Learning will:

1. Annually review eligibility criteria and publish these on our Student Financial Support Procedure and student financial support application form.
2. Incorporate the Government eligibility criteria in our scheme:

- Students must be enrolled on a funded further education programme and have right to study, this does not include apprenticeships.
 - Students must be considered a 'home' student for the purposes of further education funding. 'Home' status is the same for the bursary as it is for enrolment fee eligibility purposes.
 - Eligibility under a low-income criterion assumes that students have applied for all other statutory government financial support, evidence of this will be required.
3. Ask students continuing to the second year of their programme to apply and will assess them using the previous year's rules.
 4. Publish clear and accurate information about the annual bursary schemes and actively promote these to new and continuing students across multiple platforms - throughout the admissions process, via the website, social media, prospectuses, leaflets, keep warm communications and open event advice sessions.
 5. Provide opportunities for students to find out more via email, phone or in person.
 6. Provide a user-friendly application form and fair process with clear and accurate communication including the terms and conditions of each scheme. Communication will be by email unless otherwise stated and all applications will remain confidential please refer to our privacy policy.
 7. Process applications on a first come first serve basis and aim to confirm the outcome of any application within four weeks of a complete application being received, which must include all required evidence.
 8. Keep bursary applications confidential and store all records securely in line with the Student Privacy Policy.
 9. Ensure that students whose need has been identified by the Student Support Team may not necessarily be required to provide evidence of household income as we recognise that these students may not have evidence to hand.
 10. Make awards proportionate to the student's actual financial need. Students may be required to provide additional information with support from Group Student Support regarding their financial need.
 11. Monitor the attendance of students accessing financial support as good attendance is a criterion of continued receipt of funds.
 12. Cancel (or ask the student to cancel) any bought in services such as travel and childcare if they are no longer eligible for whatever reason and we will let the student know that they will then be responsible for ongoing payments if they wish to continue to use the services.
 13. Confirm by email if an application has been unsuccessful, including details on how to appeal this decision. Once their appeal has been considered and a decision has been communicated, there is no further right of appeal.

Responsibilities

1. Students must ensure that their application is completed in full and that all evidence is provided. Incomplete applications or applications without all the required evidence will not be processed. The address on any evidence that is provided must match that of the student applying for the fund.
2. Students must adhere to the Student Standards of Behaviour and Code of Conduct. Students' attendance will be monitored, and financial support could be withdrawn if attendance drops below this level or if a student fails to adhere to the Standard of Behaviour. No funding will be withdrawn without consideration of all the relevant factors or without notification. Payments will be stopped if students have been absent for a period of 4 continuous weeks or more.
3. The Student Finance Team may recover payments made to students if they have not spent it for the

reasons it was awarded to them. Consideration of the impact of such an action on the individual student will be considered before taking a final decision to do so.

4. Students are responsible for planning their journey to college, informing us of the travel company and where they will embark on their journey. They are required to liaise directly with the travel company if they require a replacement pass. If they withdraw from their programme students are required to return their travel pass to Activate Learning.
5. The Student Finance team may seek to recover any overpayments of bursary funds if a student fails to notify Activate Learning of any changes affecting their bursary award or withdraws from their course and any ongoing scheduled payments will stop on the last day the student attended their programme.
6. Students are responsible for providing correct bank details to enable bursary payments to be made. Any bursary payments withheld due to student's providing incorrect bank details will be back dated to a maximum of four weeks.
7. Students are responsible for informing the DWP about any financial support payments they receive, as these payments may affect their eligibility to some benefits
8. The Student Finance team will confirm by email if an application has been unsuccessful, including details on how to appeal this decision. Once their appeal has been considered and a decision has been communicated, there is no further right of appeal.
9. Provide an opportunity, if an applicant is dissatisfied with the service provided, to make a complaint through our complaints procedure.

Definitions

ESFA	Education and Skills Funding Agency
Bursary	This is provided to colleges to remove financial barriers to participation.
FE	Further Education
BACS	Bank Automated Clearing Services
DWP	Department for Work and Pensions

References

Government Guidance

- [16 to 19 Bursary Fund](#)
- [Free meals in further education](#)
- [Residential Bursary Fund](#)
- [Care to Learn](#)
- [Adult Education Hardship](#)

Linked policies and procedures

- Complaints Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Student Privacy Policy
- Attendance, Punctuality and Absence Management Procedure
- Student Bursary Procedure
- Student Bursary Scheme and Application Form (16-18)
- Student Bursary Scheme and Application Form (19+)