



16 – 19 Bursary Fund Policy

The 16 to 19 Bursary Fund provides financial support to help students overcome specific financial barriers to participation they face so they can remain in education.

The college offer 3 types of 16 to 19 bursaries:

- Targeted bursaries for defined vulnerable groups
- Discretionary bursaries
- Free meals bursary

Targeted Bursaries

Targeted bursaries are available to those students in defined vulnerable groups, including students in care, care leavers, students in receipt of Income Support or Universal Credit in their own name. Disabled students in receipt of both Employment Support Allowance (or Universal Credit) AND Disability Living Allowance (or Personal Independence Payments).

Funds are drawn down from SBSS where the financial need is identified. The maximum amount of financial support from the SBSS is £1,200 per annum. The college supplement this where necessary by a further £200 from discretionary funds.

Payments are made over ten months of the academic year, Sept – June.

Students 19 or over at 31st August are NOT eligible for the target/vulnerable bursary.

Discretionary Bursaries

There are 3 elements to the discretionary bursary award. The college promote and award discretionary bursaries based on the following criteria:

- Students must be 16 or over but under 19 on 31 August
- Students aged 19 or over ONLY if they are continuing on the same programme of study they started aged 16 to 18 (19+ continuers) or have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan
- Students must be on a full-time course of study
- Student or parents in receipt of:
 1. Income Support
 2. Income based job seekers allowance
 3. Income related Employment Support Allowance (ESA)
 4. Personal Independence Payment (PIP)
 5. The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
 6. Support under part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
 7. Child Tax Credit
 8. Working Tax Credit
 9. Universal Credit

General Award

General bursaries are awarded to financially assist students with the cost of books, equipment, course relevant trips and visits and other essential college related costs to enable them to remain in education and complete their course.

Payments are tiered based on the assessment of household income and paid in 6 half-termly amounts. Payments can be offset against indirect costs such as exam resit or remark fees if preferred.

Payments made twice per term over the course of the academic year, a total of six payments.

24-25 Band	24-25 Threshold	24-25 Annual Award	24-25 Amount (issued in 6 half-termly payments)
	£	£	£
A	17,850	1,050	175
B	17,851 - 26250	786	131
C	26,251 - 31,500	528	88

Transport Award

Students meeting the eligibility criteria and using public transport or college contracted services and living outside a 2-mile radius of college, will qualify for a public bus pass (Merseytravel or Arriva) and/or the cost of a college contracted service. This is paid to the 3rd party provider in all cases and is valued on average at £400 per annum depending on which service is required.

Free Meal Award

Eligible students must be aged 16 or over on 31 August to qualify. Students aged 19 or over are only eligible to receive free meals if they are continuing on a course of study they began whilst aged 16-18 (i.e. 19+ continuers) or have an EHC plan. Free Meals are awarded to disadvantaged students meeting the eligibility criteria:

- 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 (UC) with **net earnings not exceeding the equivalent of £7,400** for each year (after tax and not including any benefits they get)

Students must also satisfy the 3-year residency criteria set out in the Government funding regulations guidance.

Government funding is based on a meal valued at £2.53 per day. The college choose to increase this and meet the difference to the value of £4.00 per day from discretionary funds.

Transitional Arrangements for free meals

To ensure students do not experience a sudden loss of free meals, the following protection arrangements are in place:

- all students already receiving free meals from 1 April 2018 will continue to receive free meals until March 2025 and then until the end of the course they are enrolled on at this point. This will apply even if their household earnings rise above the new threshold during that time
- any student who becomes eligible for free meals after the threshold has been introduced will also continue to receive free meals until March 2025 and then until the end of the course they are enrolled on. This will apply even if they subsequently become ineligible during this period because their household earnings rise above the new threshold

A student who has not previously claimed free meals is only eligible to receive one when they, or a responsible adult on their behalf, has submitted an on-line bursary fund application form. Once UC is fully rolled out, any student receiving free meals who no longer meets the eligibility criteria at that point (because they are earning above the threshold) will continue to receive protection until they complete their 16 to 19 funded education. 19+ continuers and students aged 19 and over with EHC plans will continue to receive protection until the end of their current programme of study.

Assessment and Awards

Targeted and general bursaries are conditional on the following:

- Student eligibility (as outlined above)
- Student attendance (must be in line with college attendance policy)
- Student behaviour
- Funding availability. The college reserve the right to reduce/limit/cease paying awards if Government resources expire.

Administration and Distribution of Awards

The college apply 5% of the total bursary fund allocation on an annual basis to support administrative costs.

Applications MUST include all supporting evidence/documentation to assess.

The Bursary Fund Manager and Bursary Officer make up the Bursary Panel for assessment of applications. It is the aim to notify students of panel decisions within 10 working days of receipt of a completed application form, however there are pinch points at the beginning of the academic year when due to the volume of applications received this may take a little longer.

Incomplete applications without supporting evidence cannot be assessed. Once all supporting evidence is attached applications will be assessed within 10 working days wherever possible. In

this instance, however, payments will commence from the date of evidence submission and will not be backdated.

Direct payments are made into student bank accounts via BACS. Indirect payments for transport, free meals and equipment are made to contractors.

Attendance

The college will continue to monitor student attendance in line with scheduled awards. Attendance below 50% will be flagged with students' Personal Achievement Tutor and Snr Tutor, however funds will not be withheld without specific instruction, as often these are the students in most financial need and the college encourage attendance rather than penalise non-attendance. As soon as the Bursary Team are notified of student withdrawals, bursary awards are stopped.

Appeals Procedure

Students have the right of appeal against their bursary award decision. Appeals should be in writing by email to:

michelle@carmel.ac.uk – Vice Principal (Finance, Resources & Systems)

kathryn@carmel.ac.uk – (Exec. Coordinator to the Principalship) should be copied in

Or by letter, addressed to the college and marked:

FAO - Mrs M Williams (Vice Principal (Finance, Resources & Systems))

Appeal responses may take up to 10 working days to action. Response are usually via student email address. Decisions may be upheld (i.e. unchanged) or, in certain circumstances, overruled and a bursary award approved/changed. Any decision will be fully explained in the appeal response.

Students who have previously been unsuccessful in obtaining bursary awards may reapply if there is a change in personal circumstances at any point during the year.

Any questions or concerns can be directed to bursary@carmel.ac.uk

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