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# 16 – 18 Bursary Policy 2021-2022

# Northumberland Skills 16-18 Bursary Policy 2021/22

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## 16-18 BURSARY POLICY FOR 2021/22

### 1. Introduction

The aim of the 16-18 bursary is to assist in the removal of financial barriers that might not otherwise prevent young learners from fully participating in education. This policy aims to provide clarity on use and allocation of the bursary fund in accordance with the guidance provided by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). There are 2 types of 16-18 bursaries:

- **Discretionary bursary**
- **Defined vulnerable groups bursary**

### 2. Discretionary Bursary

#### 2.1 About the Grant

This grant is available to all full time Learners aged 16-18 attending Learner Responsive Programmes. The **grant is not guaranteed**, even to eligible learners. There is a limited amount of money available, and awards will be made at our discretion. It must be deemed that the young person has a financial need that is not being met elsewhere.

## 2.2 Eligibility - Discretionary Bursary

The learner must meet the criteria shows below:

Essential Criteria	Other Criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <b>Age</b> - <i>Be at least 16 but under 19 years of age at the start of their course. Two groups of aged 19 plus learners can receive a discretionary bursary, they are:</i><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <i>Aged 19 and they are continuing on a study programme that they began aged 16-18</i></li><li>○ <i>Aged 19 to 24 and have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)</i></li></ul></li><li>● <b>Residency</b> – <i>learners must meet the residency criteria in ESFA funding regulations for post 16 provision in the 2021/22 academic year.</i></li><li>● <b>Eligible education provision</b> – <i>Learners must be participating in provision that is subject to inspection by a public body i.e. Ofsted. The provision must also be either</i><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <i>Funded directly by the ESFA</i></li><li>○ <i>Funded or co-financed by the European Social Fund</i></li><li>○ <i>Otherwise publicly funded and lead to a qualification (up to and including level 3) accredited by Ofqual or is pursuant to Section 96 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000</i></li><li>○ <i>A 16-19 traineeship programme</i></li></ul></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <b>Full Time Learner</b></li><li>● <b>Financial Need</b>– <i>learner must evidence financial need. This is based on a household income of less than £31k</i></li></ul>

The final decision on eligibility and awards made will be made by Northumberland Skills.

## 2.3 Financial Need Assessment

Eligibility for discretionary bursaries is based on annual household incomes of less than £31K this will be verified by Tax Credit forms, benefit award notices, a P60, or 3-6 months' worth of bank statements. Eligible learners will fall into one of the following four bands:

- Band 1 - Annual household income of £16k or less. These learners will receive a £10.00 weekly payment subject to attendance and behaviour conditions.
- a daily lunch allowance of £3.00
- Band 2 - Annual household income of between £16k to £21k. These learners will receive
  - A £8.00 weekly payment subject to attendance and behaviour conditions
  - A daily lunch allowance of £3.00
- Band 3 - Annual household income of between £21k to £26k. These learners receive
  - A £6.00 weekly payment subject to attendance and behaviour conditions
  - A daily lunch allowance of £3.00
- Band 4 - Annual household income of between £26000.00 to £31000.00. These learners receive
  - A daily lunch allowance of £3.00

Learners can apply more than once if their circumstances change. Learners will be advised in writing on the outcome of their application

## 2.4 Payment Arrangements - Discretionary Bursaries

Receipt of bursary payment is conditional. The learner must meet the agreed standards of conduct, behaviour, effort and attendance. These conditions will be set at campus.

Learners weekly payment will then be calculated by the Fund Administrator. Payments will be made by BACS transfer into the learner's nominated bank account. In order to avoid discrimination, where the learner does not have their own, or a nominated bank account, the campus should provide support to help them obtain one wherever possible.

For any week where both conditions have not been met, payments will not be made. There will be no way of 'earning back' missed payments due to learners not meeting the conditions.

If the learner leaves Northumberland Skills before completing the course, payments will be stopped.

The information on the application form must be correct to the best of the learner's knowledge. They will be asked to sign a declaration that if they are found to have knowingly made false declarations or fail to report to Northumberland Skills their circumstances having changed and they no longer need or are entitled to support, they will be required to repay the entire grant and may be asked to leave the course. If they have received financial assistance and leave before the completion of the course, they will be required to repay any overpayment of grant. If progress or attendance proves to be unsatisfactory, money will be withheld.

### 3. Bursaries for Defined Vulnerable Groups

#### 3.1 About the Grant

This grant is for vulnerable learners and is guaranteed to all those who meet the eligibility criteria and have a financial need. The grant is a weekly payment to a maximum grant of £1200 per year and can be used to help with participation costs such as travel, books, equipment and materials, or anything else that they need along the way.

#### 3.2 Eligibility - Vulnerable Groups

Learners must meet all of the essential criteria and fall under at least one of the 4 defined vulnerable groups shown in the table below. For those who qualify **and** who have a financial need, they can apply for a bursary for vulnerable groups of up to £1,200 per year. Young people claiming Vulnerable Bursary may also apply for 16-18 Discretionary Bursary as long as they meet the criteria for each group.

We must obtain proof that the learner is eligible for a vulnerable groups bursary each year they wish to claim and retain the evidence for audit purposes.

Essential Criteria	Evidence of eligibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <b>Age</b> - <i>Be at least 16 but under 19 years of age at the start of their course. Learners aged 19 plus are not eligible for vulnerable bursary</i></li><li>● <b>Residency</b> – <i>learners must meet the residency criteria in ESFA funding regulations for post 16 provision in the 2021/22 academic year.</i></li><li>● <b>Eligible education provision</b> – <i>Learners must be participating in provision that is subject to inspection by a public body i.e. Ofsted. The provision must also be either</i><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <i>Funded directly by the ESFA</i></li><li>○ <i>Funded or co-financed by the European Social Fund</i></li><li>○ <i>Otherwise publicly funded and lead to a qualification (up to and including level</i></li></ul></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <b>Care or Care Leaver</b> - <i>Written confirmation of their current or previous looked-after status from the local authority responsible for their care.</i></li><li>● <b>Income Support</b>- <i>A copy of their Award Notice. Learner must be entitled to the benefit in their own right and the evidence must not specify any conditions that prevent the young person from being in further education or training</i></li><li>● <b>Universal Credit</b>- <i>A copy of their Award Notice (UA claimants will be able to print off details of their award from their journal). Learner must be entitled to the benefit in their own right. They must also provide additional information to confirm their independent status, for example tenancy agreement in the learners name, utility bill.</i></li></ul>



<p>3) accredited by Ofqual or is pursuant to Section 96 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ A 16-19 traineeship programme</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Defined Vulnerable Group –</b> Learners must meet one of the 4 criteria below <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ In care</li> <li>○ Care leaver</li> <li>○ Receiving Income Support or Universal Credit because they are financially supporting themselves or financially supporting themselves and someone who is dependant on them and living with them such as a child or partner</li> <li>○ Receiving Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments in their own right as well as Employment Support Allowance or Universal Credit in their own right</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Universal Credit/Employment Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance/Personal Independence Payment - A copy of their Award Notices</b></li> </ul>
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Learners will be advised in writing on the outcome of their application.

### 3.3 Payment Arrangements - Vulnerable Group

Receipt of bursary payment is conditional. The learner must meet the agreed standards of conduct, behaviour, effort and attendance. These conditions will be set at campus.

Learners weekly payment will then be calculated, using the following method:

- a 30 week programme attracts a bursary of £1,200 - if paid weekly, the bursary is £1,200 ÷ 30 = £40 per week
- if a student is on a 10 week programme, the pro-rata bursary would be £40 x 10 weeks = £400

- a learner on a part-time course that takes 2 days a week and lasts for 20 weeks - if the daily rate for the bursary is £8 ( $£40 \div 5 \text{ days} = £8$ ), then  $£8 \times 2 \text{ days} = £16$  a week;  $£16 \times 20 \text{ weeks} = £320$

Payments will be made by BACS transfer into the learner's nominated bank account. In order to avoid discrimination, where the learner does not have their own, or a nominated bank account, the centre should provide support to help them obtain one wherever possible

For any week where both conditions have not been met, payments will not be made. There will be no way of 'earning back' missed payments due to learners not meeting the conditions.

If the learner leaves Northumberland Skills before completing the course, payments will be stopped.

The information on the application form must be correct to the best of the learner's knowledge. They will be asked to sign a declaration that if they are found to have knowingly made false declarations or fail to report to Northumberland Skills their circumstances having changed and they no longer need or are entitled to support, they will be required to repay the entire grant and may be asked to leave the course. If they have received financial assistance and leave before the completion of the course they will be required to repay any overpayment of grant. If progress or attendance proves to be unsatisfactory, bursary will be withheld.

#### **4. Application Process**

Application forms and supporting materials including the terms and conditions of the grant programme for applicants will be placed on Northumberland Skills website and provided at Campus's.

They must fill out their details in the form and send their completed application and supporting evidence to

Northumberland Skills  
Northumberland County Council  
Blyth Campus within Blyth Sports Centre  
Bolam Park  
Blyth  
Northumberland  
NE24 5BT

Or email to [nlssfinance@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:nlssfinance@northumberland.gov.uk)

Once the application has been received and is fully completed it will be judged for financial support. Incomplete applications must be returned to the applicant with a letter explaining the missing information or evidence to give the applicant an opportunity to complete the application process.

## 7. Appeals and Complaints

If a young person feels aggrieved about how their request for a bursary was handled, they should follow Northumberland Skills complaints procedure.

## 8. Learner Terms and Conditions

Successful bursary applicants will be supplied with an award letter including the conditions and agreed standards that must be met to receive the bursary payment.