



Walsall College

## Bursary and Free College Meals

- Free College Meals
- 16-18 Discretionary Bursary Fund
- 16-18 Vulnerable Bursary
- 19+ Bursary Fund
- Higher Education
- Advanced Learner Loan
- Childcare
- Community Transport Provision
- T Level Industry Placement

## Policy and Procedure

DEPARTMENT	MIS: STUDENT DATA AND CUSTOMER SERVICE TEAM
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VERSION	1

Bringing talent to life...



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**Summary Of Changes**

<b>Section/Page</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Rationale</b>
Page 3	Definition of vulnerable bursary	To give clarity to users of the policy
Page 8	Clarification on satisfactory attendance and indication of %	To give clarity to users of the policy
Page 9	Additional section of priority groups if bursary funds became under financial pressure	To give a contingency plan for funds
Pages 10 &	Increase of free meals to £5.50 in 2 pots to include increased breakfast offer (i.e. £1 breakfast)	To focus available funds on those most in need
Page 11, 16 & 20	Change to be all travel and not 1.5 miles based on household income	To ensure that students are supported to attend college and to recognize the impact of the cost of living
Page 12, 16, 18 & 20	Changes to bursary grant to be course/curriculum area specific to comply with audit requirements	To recognize the impact of the cost of living
Pages 12 & 17	Insertion of loan for laptops, WIFI access and trips (16-18 only) to be covered by bursary	To recognize the impact of the cost of living
Page 14	Additional Section of 16-18 emergency meal support	To recognize the impact of the cost of living
Page 21	Amendments to maximum per day for childcare. Expectation of using government free hours for 2 -4-year old's and clarification on under 19 childcare	To ensure that childcare provision and costs are maintained and add clarification
Page 23	Amendment from T level to cover all substantial Industry Placements	To reflect current curriculum design
Page 24	Additional section College "Charity" fund	To recognize the impact of the cost of living

**Summaries of Bursaries**

Bursary Type	Who may be able to access this?
<a href="#">Free College Meals</a>	<p>Students aged 16-18 may be eligible if they/their Parent/Carer receives one of the benefits listed in <a href="#">section 4</a> of this document.</p>
<a href="#">16-18 Discretionary</a>	<p>Students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• aged 16 or over but under 19 on 31 August 2023 in the year of their course start date</li> <li>• Students aged 19 or over are only eligible if they are continuing on a study programme when they were 16-18 or have an EHCP</li> <li>• Who are not defined as ‘vulnerable students’ based on Government criteria.</li> <li>• must be fully enrolled on a full-time course/traineeship.</li> <li>• individual circumstances include distance from campus, course of study and gross annual income (maximum £40,000) with ‘home’ student status/full ‘refugee’ or ‘asylum seeker’ status (British Citizens normally have ‘home student’ status).</li> <li>• that have been resident in the UK for the last three years.</li> </ul>
<a href="#">16-18 Vulnerable</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Looked after young people (in care) aged 16, 17 and 18.</li> <li>• Care-experienced aged 16, 17 and 18.</li> <li>• Young people aged 16, 17 and 18 on 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.</li> <li>• Disabled young people in receipt of ESA (Employment Support Allowance) and DLA (Disability Living Allowance).</li> <li>• Get Personal Independence Payment in the students own right and either ESA or Universal Credit in their own right.</li> </ul>

<a href="#">19+ Bursary</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eligible students aged 19+ on 31 August that is approved for funding by the Education &amp; Skills Funding Agency (we will check this before making any awards).</li> <li>• The student must have ‘home’ status or have been granted full ‘refugee’ or ‘asylum seeker’ status (British Citizens normally have ‘home student’ status), and not exceed the following income threshold limits:</li> <li>• <b>Income Eligibility</b> – Household income of £40,000 or less per annum</li> </ul>
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<b>Bursary Type</b>	<b>Who may be able to access this?</b>
<a href="#">Higher Education</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be eligible students must have had a Higher Education Loan approved by the Student Loans Company for your tuition fee. You will need to provide evidence of this.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Income Eligibility</b> – Household income of £40,000 or less per annum</li> </ul>
<a href="#">Advanced Learner Loan</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be eligible students must have had an Advanced Learner Loan approved by the Student Loans Company for your tuition fee. You will need to provide evidence of this.</li> <li>• <b>Income Eligibility</b> – Household income of £40,000 or less per annum</li> </ul>

<p><a href="#">Childcare</a></p>	<p>To be eligible for childcare students must provide their child’s birth certificate and a copy of their timetable for the days when they are in college and meet the below criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be age 20 or over on 31 August (students under this age can apply to Care to Learn.</li> <li>• have ‘home’ student status or have been granted full ‘refugee’ or ‘asylum seeker’ status (British Citizens normally have ‘home student’ status);</li> <li>• have been ‘ordinarily resident in the UK continuously for the last 3 years before the start of the course, with ‘pre-settled or settled status’ which means having indefinite leave to enter or remain (ILE/ILR);</li> <li>• not exceed these income threshold limits – Household income of £40,000 or less per annum</li> </ul>
<p><a href="#">Industry Placements</a></p>	<p>Students aged 16-19 who are required to complete work placements as part of their course. It is intended to reimburse reasonable travel costs incurred in getting to and from their placements over and above what they would incur coming into college.</p> <p>As part of their application for travel reimbursement, students are able to provide the relevant supporting evidence to also be assessed for other aspects of the 16-19 bursary including termly payments, Free College Meals and help with travel to and from College itself.</p> <p>Students are eligible to make a claim for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Petrol – this will be based on a mileage system with reimbursement at 45p per Mile.</li> <li>• Train fare - to and from placement.</li> <li>• Bus ticket - to and from placement, although if a student is eligible for a bus pass from the bursary, we would expect this to be used in the first instance.</li> <li>• Metro - to and from placement.</li> </ul> <p><b>Income Eligibility</b> – Household income of £40,000 or less per annum</p>

<p><b>Household Income</b></p>	<p>Household income is the total income of all people living within a single household that are financially interdependent on each other For example living with a;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Spouse/partner</li> <li>- parents/guardians/other family members who have financial responsibility for you.</li> </ul> <p>A household is <b>not</b> considered to be;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Shared accommodation with friends or relative where there is no financial interdependency</li> <li>- Living in hostel or care home</li> </ul>
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## 1. Purpose

- 1.1 Walsall College recognises that the cost of coming to College can place an extra financial burden on students. The College aims to provide all students in need of financial support with impartial advice and guidance in relation to available bursary support and how to access it, in accordance with regulations and criteria for distributing funds. For full details see [www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk)
- 1.2 Bursaries are used to support Walsall College students who may be experiencing financial hardship to complete their course with the essential costs of attending College, such as transport and equipment, where no other financial support is available. We consider the availability of any other financial support when making decisions and awarding public funds. Bursary funding comes from the Government and so the College has a duty to ensure that the funds are awarded fairly to students deemed most in need.
- 1.3 Bursary funding is public funding that is available as a last resort to households who are still experiencing hardship, despite having accessed all forms of Government funding such as Tax Credits/Universal Credit. A household which is eligible to receive these benefits and chooses not to do so are unable to receive bursary funding.

## 2. Responsibility

- 2.1 The Director of Finance & MIS has overall responsibility for this procedure.
- 2.2 The Assistant Principal – MIS, Information and Student Services (MIS) and MIS Manager (Business Services) has direct responsibility for the its implementation and the Customer Service Team have operational responsibility.
- 2.3 **The College will:**
- 2.3.1 Operate the Bursary Funds in accordance with regulations and criteria for distributing funds. For full details see [www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk)
- 2.3.2 Help those most in need of financial support in accordance with funding criteria for the discretionary bursary.
- 2.3.3 Highlight availability of bursary funds by making relevant information available to students via the Walsall College website (<https://www.walsallcollege.ac.uk/financial-help/>) at all points through the academic year but especially during the enrolment period.
- 2.3.4 Provide students with information and support on all how to apply for bursary and supporting evidence required.
- 2.3.5 Will open the bursary system before the start of the academic year (as soon as possible in early June to allow progression students to apply) to allow students to make their application in good time. We will also highlight the specific closing date for new bursary applications each

academic year, this may differ for different bursaries.

2.3.6 Provide students with information on how to appeal against decisions if their circumstances change or they are unhappy with the outcome of their original application. Those students whose bursary payments have been cancelled will be provided with specific details of a 2-week window in which they are able to appeal the decision.

**2.4 Students are expected to:**

2.4.1 Students should apply for both bursary and travel reimbursements via the Online Bursary Applications System at <https://walsall.paymystudent.com/portal>

2.4.2 Provide all information needed to enable us to process the bursary application.

2.4.3 Be truthful in their application and tell us if their circumstances change. The college reserves the right to demand return of any bursary awarded, whether in cash or kind, in the event that a fraudulent claim is made.

2.4.4 Be responsible and update the relevant bodies if any monetary awards are made to them. It is the students' responsibility to inform the DWP/Benefits agency of any bursary awards made.

2.4.5 Provide relevant documentary evidence as requested.

2.4.6 Adhere to the Student Support and Discipline Policy.

2.4.7 Tell us what you think, by responding to focus groups and surveys.

**3. Procedure**

3.1.1 We will open the bursary system before the start of the academic year as soon as possible in early June to allow progression students to apply) to allow students to make their application in good time.

3.1.2 We will also highlight the specific closing date for new bursary applications each academic year, although this will usually be around the time of the final termly bursary payment. This closure period will allow any system updates to be in place ready for each new academic year's applications.

3.1.3 Students will be notified of cancelled bursary payments via email and informed of the appeal deadline date. The email will include the [Bursary Appeal Form](#) which must be filled in by the student, along with any accompanying evidence. It is not the responsibility of the Customer Service Team to gather references for student appeals.

3.1.4 Bursary awards will be paid at the beginning of each term subject to satisfactory attendance. Satisfactory attendance is deemed to be above 90%, however particularly at the start of the year, a days absence has a bigger % impact and a lower threshold may be used. Below

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80% all bursary payments will be stopped, unless consideration for disabilities has affected attendance. This includes all bursary payments, travel and childcare payments. Due to administrative pressures the first payment may be made before verification of evidence, if the evidence does not support the student's eligibility all further payments will be stopped and bus passes cancelled.

#### 4. Priority Groups

4.1 In the event of limited availability of funds, priority will be given to the following groups:

- 4.1.1 Students in care or care leavers
- 4.1.2 Vulnerable learners including those with safeguarding cases
- 4.1.3 Students of low-income families, with household income below £20,000 and/or in receipt of free school meals
- 4.1.4 Unemployed in receipt of means tested benefit
- 4.1.5 Unwaged dependents of persons in receipt of the above.

#### 5. Free College Meals

5.1 Students who receive free college meals will still also be able to take advantage of the College's Free Breakfast Scheme, which is available to all students.

5.2 Students aged between 16–18 may be eligible for free college meals if they or their Parent/Carer receives one of the following benefits;

- Job Seekers Allowance (Income Based).
- Income Support.
- Child Tax Credit (but not Working Tax Credit) provided annual income, assessed by the HMRC does not exceed £16,190 (please note: this amount is subject to change in April every year).
- Employment Support Allowance (income related).
- Guarantee Element of State Pension Credit.
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for four weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit.
- Universal Credit with net earnings (earnings as employee) not exceeding £7400 per Annum.

5.3 **Students will not qualify for free college meals if:**

- They do not receive any of the benefits listed above;
- The household receives Working Tax Credit – this is a disqualifying benefit;
- They are enrolled onto an Apprenticeship or Traineeship;
- They withdraw from their course;
- They (or their household) are over the earnings threshold.

5.4 **19-25-year old students who are subject to a Learning Difficulty Assessment (LDA) or Education Health Care Plan (EHC Plan) may also be eligible for free college meals.** The student is **not** automatically entitled to free college meals if they have an EHCP. The student will still need to meet the bursary criteria.

5.5 Successful applicants will receive £5.50 per day (credited to their student card in 2 allocations, £1 breakfast and £4.50 for main meal) this will be redeemable at Wisemore, Green Lane, Hawbush and Portland Street Campuses. This allows students to purchase any food or drink that is available at these sites, including a hot meal 'meal deal' and/or enhanced breakfast selection.

### 6. 16-18 Discretionary Bursary Fund Policy

6.1 This bursary is available for eligible students aged 16-18 who are not defined as "vulnerable students" based on the criteria supplied by the Government.

6.2 Whilst the College recognises that some students face financial pressures, the funding you are applying for comes from a Government fund and is public money. It is not a right. The College has a duty to ensure that the funds are awarded fairly to students most in need.

6.3 All awards are made subject to satisfactory attendance, good progress and behaviour. They may still be awarded, but this will be subject to approval by the Bursary Panel.

6.4 Funds are cash limited and cannot be guaranteed, so early application is advised.

6.5 To be eligible students must:

- be 16 -18 on 31<sup>st</sup> August;
- be enrolled to a full-time course or traineeship;
- have 'home' student status or have been granted full 'refugee' or 'asylum seeker' status (British Citizens normally have 'home student' status);
- have been 'ordinarily resident in the UK continuously for the last three years before the start of the course, with 'pre-settled or settled status' which means having indefinite leave to enter or remain (ILE/ILR);
- live in a household where the total gross household income is £40,000 or less (see section x for a definition of household income).
- Complete the 16–18 Bursary Application Form  
<https://walsall.paymystudent.com/portal>

6.6 Who is not eligible to apply?

- Students on Work Based Learning/Waged Apprenticeships;
- Students aged 19+ on 31 August (separate Bursary Funds are available);
- Students on Higher Education Courses (separate Bursary Funds are available);
- Students should check that they meet the eligibility criteria and apply online through the Online Bursary Applications System by visiting  
<https://walsall.paymystudent.com/portal>

- 6.7 Forms will need to be completed and signed before submission.
- 6.8 Fully completed forms, with all the supporting evidence and bank details attached, will usually be processed within 10 working days. You will be sent an award notification email informing you of your award from the Bursary Fund. Please ensure you provide an email address that you check regularly.
- 6.9 No awards will be made until you are fully enrolled and have started your course.
- 6.10 If your application is not successful you will be notified by email. You will then need to decide if you are able to enroll to your course without financial support from the fund.
- 6.11 The award will depend on individual circumstances, such as distance from campus, the course being studied and the gross annual household income (maximum £40,000).
- 6.12 Equipment and Bursary Payments are paid directly into a bank account. Students will need to provide bank account details and ensure these are kept up-to-date.
- 6.13 **You are expected to:**  
Provide all information needed to enable us to process your application;
- Be truthful in your application and tell us if your circumstances change;
  - Provide relevant documentary evidence as requested;
  - Adhere to the Student Support and Discipline Policy.
- 6.14 Students may be awarded one or more of the following categories:

Category	Criteria
Bus Pass	<p>Students must meet the relevant household income criteria for bursary to be eligible for a bus pass.</p> <p>There are two options for a bus pass; a mobile ticket on a smartphone or a physical SWIFT card. Students who are applying for mobile bus passes must have the NXBus App installed on <b>their own</b> mobile device(s) in readiness for September. They will need to create an account within the App using their Walsall College Student Email Address. Students will only be able to register on the App once they have completed their enrolment.</p> <p>We do not offer a train pass, however for those students living outside of the local NXBus area there is the option of an alternative travel payment which will be assessed on individual need.</p>

Equipment & Uniforms	A payment towards the cost of equipment for specific courses where there is a need to have such equipment in order to participate. This is paid after the October half term holiday, subject to satisfactory attendance.
Bursary payment to help with College costs, such as stationery, Books, USB devices, print credits, lunches etc.	<p>First Term payment subject to satisfactory attendance and household income of £40,000 or less per annum</p> <p>All students are assessed for their individual needs subject to course maximums and will be awarded a grant up to a maximum of £400 per annum.</p> <p>Amounts per course are based on agreed values &amp; needs assessed on an annual with curriculum leads.</p>
Trips	<p>Any trip which is a compulsory part of a study programme, which means learners can not achieve the qualification without attending the trip will be paid for by the bursary fund for learners meeting the household income threshold.</p> <p>The following payments will be supported:</p> <p>Household income less than or equal to £30,000 = 100% grant will be awarded</p> <p>Household income between £30,000 and £40,000 = 50% grant will be awarded</p>
Laptops and Internet Access at Home	The college will loan devices to learners for use at home and where learners do not have access to the internet at home, will provide mobile internet access paid from bursary funds, where the student meets the household income threshold
Free College Meals	Please see <a href="#">section 4</a> for full information on Free College Meals criteria.

## 7. 16-18 Vulnerable Bursary Fund Policy

7.1 The defined vulnerable groups are students who are:

- Care-experienced aged 16, 17 and 18.
- Young people aged 16, 17 and 18 on 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.
- Disabled young people in receipt of ESA (Employment Support Allowance) and DLA

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(Disability Living Allowance).

- 7.2 **Funds are cash limited and funding cannot be guaranteed, so early application is advised.**
- 7.3 Vulnerable bursary students will be eligible to a maximum of £1200 bursary per learner.
- 7.4 Vulnerable bursary students will get non-grant support with equipment, stationary, books, travel and laptops as per the 16-18 discretionary support learners. This will have a value of between £400 - £600.
- 7.5 Vulnerable bursary students will also receive a grant of £400, paid in 3 termly instalments of Term 1 £150, Term 2 £150 and Term 3 £100. Attendance will be monitored and payments may be stopped for poor attendance. Payments will not be made if learners withdraw.
- 7.6 Additional payments may be made if a vulnerable bursary learner has not received £1200 or additional equipment may be purchased dependent on the individuals need and circumstances.
- 7.7 Students will need to provide up-to-date evidence to confirm receipt of the above Benefits, or a recent letter from Social Services confirming their care status.
- 7.8 Funds will be allocated to provide a bus pass, equipment costs, monthly payments and an additional winter payment – paid in arrears directly into your bank account. You will need to provide your bank account details.
- 7.9 Walsall College operates the Bursary Fund in accordance with regulations and criteria for distributing funds. For full details see [www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk)
- 7.10 Students should check that they meet the eligibility criteria and apply online through the Online Bursary Applications System by visiting <https://walsall.paymystudent.com/portal>
- 7.11 Forms will need to be completed and signed before submission.
- 7.12 Fully completed forms, with all the supporting evidence and bank details attached, will usually be processed in no longer than 10 working days. You will be sent an award notification email informing you of your award from the Bursary Fund. Please ensure you provide an email address that you check regularly.
- 7.13 You are expected to:
- Provide all information needed to enable us to process your application;
  - Be truthful in your application and tell us if your circumstances change;
  - Provide relevant documentary evidence as requested;
  - Adhere to the Student Support and Discipline Policy.
- 7.14 No awards will be made until you are fully enrolled and have started your course.
- 7.15 If your application is not successful you will be notified by email. You will then need to

decide if you are able to enroll to your course without financial support from the fund.

### 8. 16-18 Emergency Meal Support

A flexibility was introduced during 2022/23 to enable colleges to use their bursary fund in individual cases of severe hardship to provide meal support on the days student attends their study programmes for learners considered to be in real need without checking evidence on household income or gathering evidence. This flexibility is only available to apply to a very small number of the total 16-19 cohort.

The safeguarding team will have the authority to support students in this way and will keep the relevant records for this fund for audit purposes.

The safeguarding team must record the following for audit purposes:

A record of number of students supported in this way

The number of days support given

The £ value of support given to each student along with a rationale for the meal support

The signed confirmation by the student of receipt of funding to be spent on food that day, if actual spend receipts are not obtained

It is expected that this is a **short-term** arrangement and this flexibility relates to food support only.

### 9. 19+ BURSARY FUND POLICY

- 9.1 Available for eligible students aged 19+ on 31 August and enrolled to a course that is approved for funding by the Education & Skills Funding Agency – we will check this before making any awards.
- 9.2 The student must have 'home' status or have been granted full 'refugee' or 'asylum seeker' status (British Citizens normally have 'home student' status).
- 9.3 Have a household income of £40,000 or less.
- 9.4 Who is **not** eligible to apply?
  - Students on Higher Education Courses (Students can apply to the HE bursary fund);
  - Students on Work Based Learning/Waged Apprenticeships;
  - Students aged 19 and over at the start of their course studying at level 3 who are funding their course with an advanced learner loan (Students can apply to the Advanced Learner Loans Bursary Fund);
  - Students aged under 19 on 31 August (Students can apply to the 16-18 bursary fund).
  - Students on full cost courses or non AEB funded courses, such as bootcamps and swaps.
- 9.5 Funds are cash limited and funding cannot be guaranteed, so early application is advised.

Students should check that they meet the eligibility criteria and apply online through

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the Online Bursary Applications System by visiting <https://walsall.paymystudent.com/portal>

9.6 You are expected to:

- provide all information needed to enable us to process your application;
- be truthful in your application and tell us if your circumstances change;
- provide relevant documentary evidence as requested;
- tell us what you think by responding to focus groups and surveys.

9.7 Forms will need to be completed and signed before submission.

9.8 Fully completed forms, with all the supporting evidence and bank details attached, will usually be processed in no longer than 10 working days. You will be sent an award notification email informing you of your award from the Bursary Fund. Please ensure you provide an email address that you check regularly.

9.9 No awards will be made until you are fully enrolled and have started your course.

9.10 If your application is not successful you will be notified by email. You will then need to decide if you are able to enroll to your course without financial support from the fund.

9.11 The award will depend on individual circumstances, such as distance from campus, the course being studied and the gross annual household income.

9.12 Equipment and Bursary Payments are paid directly into a bank account. Students will need to provide bank account details and ensure these are kept up to date.

9.13 Available awards for 19+ students

Students may be awarded one or more of the following categories:

Equipment & Uniforms	<p>A payment towards the cost of equipment for specific courses where there is a need to have such equipment in order to participate.</p> <p>This is paid after the October half term holiday, subject to satisfactory attendance.</p>
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Bursary payment to help with College costs, such as stationery, Books, USB devices, print credits, examination fees, registration fees, etc.	<p>Available for courses of 6 or more guided learning hours.</p> <p>First term payment subject to satisfactory attendance and household income of £40,000 or less per annum.</p> <p>Amounts per course are based on agreed values &amp; needs assessed on an annual with curriculum leads.</p> <p>The maximum grant available will depend upon the size of course and will be pro-rated for courses that are less than 36 weeks/3 terms in duration.</p>	
	<p><b>Full Time</b> (at least 16 hours per week)</p>	<p>Maximum grant available £400</p>
	<p><b>Part Time</b> (between 6 and 15 hours per week)</p>	<p>Maximum grant available £200</p>
	<p><b>Short Course</b> (less than 6 hours per week)</p>	<p>No grant available, (eligible for travel and childcare support only)</p>
Bus Pass	<p>Students must meet the relevant household income criteria for bursary to be eligible for a bus pass.</p> <p>There are two options for a bus pass; a mobile ticket on a smartphone or a physical SWIFT card.</p> <p>Students who are applying for mobile bus passes must have the NXBus App installed <b>on their own mobile device(s)</b> in readiness for September. They will need to create an account within the App using their Walsall College Student Email Address. Students will only be able to register on the App once they have completed their enrolment.</p> <p>We do not offer a train pass, however for those students living outside of the local NXBus area there is the option of an alternative travel payment which will be assessed on individual need.</p> <p>Additional travel costs may be met in exceptional</p>	

	circumstances, such as a requirement to attend at an alternative campus.
Laptops and Internet Access at Home	The college will loan devices to learners for use at home and where learners do not have access to the internet at home, will provide mobile internet access paid from bursary funds, where the student meets the household income threshold

- 9.14 Students will not be eligible for all of the above and will be awarded based on their individual circumstances.
- 9.15 It is the students responsibility to inform the Department for Work and Pensions about any bursary support they receive.
- 9.16 Students with Asylum seeker status will not be given cash payments but will be provided with course-related books, equipment and or a travel pass dependent upon need and course requirements.

## **10. Higher Education Bursary Funds Policy**

- 10.1 Available for eligible students who are funding their course with a Higher Education (HE) Loan.
- 10.2 Whilst the College recognises that some students face financial pressures, the funding you are applying for comes from a Government fund and is public money. It is not a right. The College has a duty to ensure that the funds are awarded fairly to students most in need.
- 10.3 Funds are cash limited and funding cannot be guaranteed so early application is advised.
- 10.4 **To be eligible students must** have had a Higher Education Loan approved by the Student Loans Company for your tuition fee. You will need to provide evidence of this.
- 10.5 **To be eligible** students must have a household income of £40,000 a year or less.
- 10.6 Who is **not** eligible to apply?
- Students on Work Based Learning/Waged Apprenticeships.
  - Students aged under 19 on 31st August of the academic year in which the course starts (Students can apply to the 16-18 bursary fund).

**10.7 Available awards for Higher Education Loan funded students**

Equipment & Uniforms	<p>A payment towards the cost of equipment for specific courses where there is a need to have such equipment in order to participate.</p> <p>This is paid after the October half term holiday, subject to satisfactory attendance.</p>	
Bursary payment to help with College costs, such as stationery, Books, USB devices, print credits, examination fees, registration fees, etc.	<p>A maximum annual grant of £900 for a full-time course and £500 for a part-time course.</p> <p>Termly payments subject to satisfactory attendance and conduct.</p> <p>Dependent upon financial need between 50% and 100% of the grant applied for will be awarded.</p>	
	Household income below £25,000	100% of grant
	Household income between £25,000 and £30,000	75% of grant applied for
	Household income between £30,000 and £40,000	50% of grant applied for
Childcare	<p>Is not available through the bursary; however additional funding may be available through the Higher Education maintenance loan.</p>	

**10.8 You are expected to:**

- Apply through <https://walsallpaymystudent.com/portal>;
- Provide all information needed to enable us to process your application;
- Be truthful in your application and tell us if your circumstances change;

- Provide relevant documentary evidence as requested;
- Tell us what you think by responding to focus groups and questionnaires.

### **11. Advanced Learner Loan (All) Bursary Funds Policy**

- 11.1 Available for eligible students who are funding their course with an Advanced Learner Loan (ALL).
- 11.2 Whilst the College recognise that some students face financial pressures, the funding you are applying for comes from a Government fund and is public money. It is not a right. The College has a duty to ensure that the funds are awarded fairly to students most in need.
- 11.3 All Advanced Learner Loan awards are made subject to attendance good progress and behaviour. They may still be awarded, but this will be subject to approval by the Bursary Panel.
- 11.4 Funds are cash limited and funding cannot be guaranteed so early application is advised.
- 11.5 **To be eligible students must** have had an Advanced Learner Loan approved by the Student Loans Company for your tuition fee. You will need to provide evidence of this.
- 11.6 To be eligible students must have a household income of or less than £40,000 per year.
- 11.7 Who is **not** eligible to apply?
- Students on Work Based Learning/Waged Apprenticeships.
  - Students age 19 and over at the start of their course studying at level 3 who are not funding their course with an advanced learner loan (Students can apply to the 19+ bursary).
  - Students studying a course that is eligible for a Higher Education Loan (students can apply to the HE bursary)
  - Students aged under 19 on 31st August (Students can apply to the 16-18 bursary fund).

### **11.8 Available awards for Adult Learner Loan funded students**

Equipment & Uniforms	<p>A payment towards the cost of equipment for specific courses where there is a need to have such equipment in order to participate.</p> <p>This is paid after the October half term holiday, subject to satisfactory attendance.</p>
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Bursary grant to help with College costs, such as stationery, Books, USB devices, print credits, examination fees, registration fees, etc.	<p>Available for courses of 6 or more guided learning hours.</p> <p>First term payment subject to satisfactory attendance and household income of £40,000 or less per annum.</p> <p>The maximum grant available will depend upon the size of course and will be pro-rated for courses that are less than 36 weeks/3 terms in duration.</p>	
	<p><b>Full Time</b> (at least 16 hours per week)</p>	<p>Maximum grant available £400</p>
	<p><b>Part Time</b> (less than 15 hours per week)</p>	<p>Maximum grant available £200</p>
Bus Pass	<p>Students must <u>meet</u> the relevant household income criteria for bursary to be eligible for a bus pass.</p> <p>There are two options for a bus pass; a mobile ticket on a smartphone or a physical SWIFT card.</p> <p>Students who are applying for mobile bus passes must have the NXBus App installed <b>on their own mobile device(s)</b> in readiness for September. They will need to create an account within the App using their Walsall College Student Email Address. Students will only be able to register on the App once they have completed their enrolment.</p> <p>We do not offer a train pass, however for those students living outside of the local NXBus area there is the option of an alternative travel payment which will be assessed on individual need.</p> <p>Additional travel costs may be met in exceptional circumstances, such as a requirement to attend at an alternative campus.</p>	
Childcare	<p>Please see <a href="#">section 10 of this document</a> for full information on childcare.</p>	

You are expected to:

- Apply through <https://walsallpaymystudent.com/portal>;
- Provide all information needed to enable us to process your application;
- Be truthful in your application and tell us if your circumstances change;
- Provide relevant documentary evidence as requested;
- Tell us what you think by responding to focus groups and questionnaires.

## 12. Childcare

12.1 To be **eligible for childcare** students must provide their child's birth certificate and a copy of their timetable and meet the below criteria:

- be age 20 or over on 31 August (students under this age can apply to Care to Learn. Details can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/care-to-learn>);
- have 'home' student status or have been granted full 'refugee' or 'asylum seeker' status (British Citizens normally have 'home student' status);
- have been 'ordinarily resident in the UK continuously for the last 3 years before the start of the course, with 'pre-settled or settled status' which means having indefinite leave to enter or remain (ILE/ILR);
- not exceed the household income threshold limit of £40,000

Childcare through Care to Learn (C2L) is available for students aged 19 or under at the start date of their course by direct application to [www.gov.uk/care-to-learn](http://www.gov.uk/care-to-learn)

12.2 Who is not eligible for childcare:

- International (overseas) students.
- Students on higher education courses.
- Students on worked based learning/waged apprenticeships.

12.3 No awards will be made until you are fully enrolled and have started your course.

12.4 It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that free government childcare funding available for 2- to 4-year-olds is fully utilized prior to applying for support from the college. This is subject to any Government changes in support schemes.

12.5 Funding will only be provided for timetabled hours that the student has on the system along with reasonable travel time. Funding is only available for a maximum of 2 children up to the age of 7 years old at a maximum rate of £65/day per child.

12.6 We will fund childcare costs for examinations regardless of whether these are within timetabled hours or not. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that agreement has been received from the Student Data Team before booking the additional childcare. Failure to do so, could mean the additional hours are not funded.

- 12.7 Once funding is awarded, this cannot be increased during the academic year, any fee increases from the nursery will need to be paid by the student.
- 12.8 Payments will only be allocated for the duration of the course the student is enrolled on to. If funding is allocated for a term and the student continues studying into a second term, it is their responsibility to advise the customer service team and request additional funding.
- 12.9 Those using an external nursery will receive 95% of weekly funding with the remaining 5% to be funded by the student.
- 12.10 **External childcare providers must be registered with Ofsted**
- 12.11 The bursary does not fund any additional costs such as drop off/pick up etc., these need to be covered by the student.
- 12.12 If the student is eligible for government funded hours, these should be used first to cover the days the student is in college with the bursary funding any additional hours.

### **13. Community Transport Provision**

This procedure note relates only to Community Transport arranged by the College.

#### **13.1 Eligibility**

This provision is only available to students who are:

- Based at the Hawbush campus
- Funded via AEB either ESFA or WMCA
- 19+ and do not have an EHCP
- In receipt of a disability benefit such as PIP (DLA mobility allowance)

*Students who are under 19 or 25 with an EHCP should have their travel needs met by the Council.*

#### **13.2 Funding**

The majority of the cost will be funded via the 19+ Bursary Fund (DLSF). However, students are required to contribute towards this cost as follows:

<b>Number of days</b>	<b>Cost per term</b>	<b>Cost per year</b>
1	£100	£300
2	£150	£450
3	£200	£600
4	£250	£750
5	£300	£900

Additional financial support to help with the contribution may also be available via the 19+ Bursary Fund (DLSF) if the eligibility criteria including the financial thresholds are met.

Students **will be invoiced** termly for their contribution.

### 14. Substantial Industry Placement Policy/Work Experience

**14.1** Industry placement funding is for those students aged 16-19 who are studying a T Level or other course with substantial work experience and are required to complete work placements of over 315 hours. It is intended to reimburse reasonable travel costs incurred in getting to and from their placements.

14.2 As part of their application for travel reimbursement, students are able to provide the relevant supporting evidence to also be assessed for other aspects of the 16-19 bursary including termly payments, Free College Meals and help with travel to and from College itself.

14.3 Students should apply for both bursary and travel reimbursements via the Online Bursary Applications System at <https://walsall.paymystudent.com/portal>

14.3.1 Students are eligible to make a claim for:

- Petrol – this will be based on a mileage system with reimbursement at 45p per Mile (based on the most reasonable distance between the two points).
- Train fare - to and from placement.
- Bus ticket - to and from placement, although if a student is eligible for a bus pass from the bursary, we would expect this to be used in the first instance.
- Metro - to and from placement.

14.3.2 Students are **unable** to claim for the below;

- Use of Toll Roads **unless agreed and authorised prior to use.**
- Excessive transport (the College will use Google Maps to calculate this).
- Taxi's (including Uber) unless agreed and authorised prior to use.
- Food (unless receiving Free College Meals).

Please Note:

If students are eligible to receive free college meals from the bursary fund they will be paid a daily cost of £5.50 for each day of their confirmed placement.

If students already receive a bus pass from the college this should be used to get to and from their placement. We will not ordinarily fund any additional travel.

### 15. College “Charity” Funded Support

The college, through donations from local companies, donations from conference events, student/staff fund raising, will hold a small exceptional circumstances fund to fund any real needs of

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students, where they are not covered by the Bursary Policy.

It is expected that these will be “one off” exceptional interventions for a small number of students and will be administered in a similar way to the 16-19 exceptional meal support through the safeguarding team. The same audit logs and rationale for support will be used and any decisions will need the approval of the Head of Student Well-being, Inclusion and Safeguarding, to ensure decisions are consistent and exceptional.

### 16. Bursary Decisions/Appeal

#### Step 1 – Bursary Panel (Internal)

- 16.1 Students must complete a [Bursary Appeal Form](#) and bring the complete form with any accompanying evidence to the Customer Service Desk at their campus, or email it to [bursary@walsallcollege.ac.uk](mailto:bursary@walsallcollege.ac.uk) within ten working days of the date of your refusal letter.
- 16.2 All complete forms will then be taken to an Appeal Committee, including College managers, who will decide if bursary can be awarded, based on the evidence provided. The committee will always try to meet the week after the appeal deadline.
- 16.3 Students will be notified of the decision via email within five working days of the Appeals Committee. Payments will also be reinstated in this time, if the appeal is successful.

#### Step 2 – Bursary Appeal (Internal)

- 16.4 It is important that students know they have the right to appeal to the **Director of Finance** and that the appeal will be treated fairly. The appeal should be emailed to [feedback@walsallcollege.ac.uk](mailto:feedback@walsallcollege.ac.uk) and must be received by the College within ten working days of the date of the outcome email.
- 16.5 The student has lost their right to appeal, if no communication is received within the above timescale.
- 16.6 A formal appeal meeting does not have to be held but the Appeal Lead may feel they need to interview those involved to help them make a decision.
- 16.7 **Appeals will only be considered if:**
  - New evidence that was not provided to the Bursary Panel has become available;
  - It can be proven that College processes were not adhered to in a way that could have affected the outcome.

If the appeal is successful then the decision can be either overturned completely or amended.

- 16.8 The Appeal Lead must keep a written record of the review process.

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16.9 The outcome of the appeal concludes the internal process.

**Step 3 – Appeal (External)**

16.10 If your complaint relates to a course funded by the **Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)**, and Stages 1 and 2 have been fully exhausted, you can contact the ESFA using the contact details below:

Complaints Team  
Education and Skills Funding Agency  
Cheylesmore House  
Quinton Road  
Coventry  
CV1 2WT

[complaints.ESFA@education.gov.uk](mailto:complaints.ESFA@education.gov.uk)

You can also complete their [online enquiry form](https://form.education.gov.uk/service/Contact_the_Department_for_Education)  
[https://form.education.gov.uk/service/Contact the Department for Education](https://form.education.gov.uk/service/Contact_the_Department_for_Education)

You can access their Procedure for dealing with complaints about Providers of Education and Training by using this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/education-and-skills-funding-agency/about/complaints-procedure>

The ESFA will acknowledge your complaint and will let you know what will happen next. Please note, the ESFA states that they cannot help with issues that are more than **12 months old**, except for exceptional cases related to some Advanced Learner Loans.

16.11 If your complaint relates to a Higher Education (HE) course and Stages 1 and 2 have been fully exhausted, you can contact the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) using the OIA Online Portal: <http://www.oiahe.org.uk/myoia.aspx>

You can also download a PDF version from the OIA website:  
[http://www.oiahe.org.uk/media/34411/oia\\_digital\\_complaint\\_form\\_and\\_guidance\\_notes.pdf](http://www.oiahe.org.uk/media/34411/oia_digital_complaint_form_and_guidance_notes.pdf)

Please return PDF versions by email to [enquiries@oiahe.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@oiahe.org.uk) or by post to:

OIA  
Second Floor Abbey Gate  
57-75 Kings Road  
Reading  
RG1 3AB

Please note, the OIA states that the form must be received **within 12 months** of the date of the Completion of Procedures Letter issued by your provider (Walsall College).

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<b>Name:</b>	<b>Student No:</b>
<b>Address:</b>	<b>Age:</b>
<b>Postcode:</b>	<b>Date Received:</b>

**Please ensure this form is completed and accompanied with any supporting evidence before the closing date provided on your cancellation email**

We cannot consider an appeal without the following information:

- **The reason for your appeal** including exceptional circumstances for example, long term or serious illness, substantial unexpected reduction to household income etc.
- **Dates of absence and supporting evidence** for example, appointment letters, letters from Doctor or Hospital, new income details, supporting statement from your tutor etc.

Please continue overleaf if necessary. You may attach a supporting statement from your course tutor

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Termly/Monthly Attendance for appeal period	
Current overall attendance	
Bursary Type/Fund (e.g. 16-18 Equip)	
Appeal Committee date	
Appeal Committee Decision	Approved - Declined

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