

**Policy/Procedure Name:** Bursary Policy

**Policy/Procedure Number:** Number

**Date of Approval:** January 2026

**Review Date:** January 2029

**Role Responsible:** Head of Admissions & Marketing

**Approved by:** Executive Team

## Policy Version Control & Worksheet

Please ensure you complete the below table once you have checked this policy, to log acknowledgement of the sign off process.

Name	Date	Comments Made (Y/N)
Christine Ricketts	16/12/2025	Yes
Sarah Clancey	13/01/2026	No
Allan Tyrer	14/01/2026	No
Lorne Richardson	14/01/2026	Yes

# Bursary and Financial Support Policy

## Introduction and Policy Aims

Brooklands Technical College is committed to ensuring that financial barriers do not prevent eligible students from accessing and succeeding in further education. This policy outlines the criteria for accessing financial support through various government and college-administered funds.

All funds awarded under this policy are designed to help students overcome financial difficulties relating directly to their participation in a study programme which may create barriers to engagement. Awards are not automatic; they are based on a formal application process and an assessment of genuine financial need and are allocated due to specified need at the discretion of the College.

**Bursary provision adheres strictly to the guidelines set out by the government and the College can only provide support where there are sufficient funds available.**

## Section 1: Core Eligibility and Application Process

### 1.1 General Eligibility

To be eligible for support from the 16-18 Bursary Fund, a learner must be aged 16 or over but under 19 on 31 August of the academic year in which they start their course. Exceptions apply for 19+ continuers and students with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) up until the age of 24.

#### 1.1.1 Residency Eligibility (16-18 and VYP Bursary Fund)

Students must meet the residency criteria in [DfE funding rules](#) for post-16 provision.

#### 1.1.2 Residency Eligibility (19+ Bursary)

For the **19+** Bursary, simplified residency rules apply effective from 1 August 2025, in non-devolved areas of England.

The primary test for eligibility is that the individual must be **ordinarily resident in the UK on the first day of learning** and the learning must be **taking place in England**. This simplification is intended to ease access for many adult learners by focusing on day-one residency rather than three years of prior residence.

**Ineligibility:** Individuals remain ineligible for 19+ Bursary if they fall into one of the following categories:

- They are in the UK without authority or lawful status.
- They are resident in the UK on a Student Visa (unless eligible through an EHC plan or another specific protected category).
- They are in the UK on a Visitor or Sponsorship visa, or their residence permit imposes a study prohibition or restriction.

**Note:** If the learner is resident in an area covered by a Devolved Authority (such as the Greater London Authority), they must meet the specific residency rules published by that local authority.

### 1.2 Household Income Threshold (Discretionary Funds)

For eligibility to apply for the college's Discretionary Bursary, Free Meals provision, and 19+ Adult Skills Fund, the gross annual household income (including all benefits received) must be **£28,000 or below**.

### 1.3 Application Process and Evidence Requirements

Information on eligibility, available funds and how to apply are all available on the College website. All students wishing to apply for any form of financial support must:

1. Complete the online [bursary application form](#) available on the College website.
2. Applications must be submitted prior to the course start date or as soon as a change in financial circumstances occurs. Retrospective claims may be refused. Crucially, if a student who started college at the beginning of the term completes their application and provides all necessary evidence after the first half-term, they will not receive backdated payments to the start of the term. Payments will only commence from the beginning of the next half-term. This rule applies consistently throughout the academic year.
3. Provide all required supporting evidence to verify income and status (details below).

#### Required Evidence Checklist:

Requirement	Details
<b>Household Income Evidence</b>	Provide the <b>last 3 months'</b> evidence of household income. This could include payslips, Universal Credit statements, a self-assessment tax form, or other benefits documentation. Please ensure these are ready in <b>PDF format</b> before you apply.
<b>Universal Credit Statements</b>	To download your UC statement in PDF format: Log in to your Universal Credit account, go to the Statement Summary page, click on the most recent statement, select the option to <b>Print to PDF</b> or <b>Save as PDF</b> , and save the document to your device.
<b>Supporting Documents (if applicable)</b>	This may include a Proof of Care Status (letter from social worker or local authority), PIP/DLA letter (in the student's name), or Free School Meal certificate of eligibility (or letter from previous provider).
<b>Student Bank Account</b>	Bursary payments <b>must</b> be paid into the student's own bank account. We will not be able to process your application without bank details that match the student's name. It is strongly advised to have this set up prior to applying.

### 1.4 Appeals Procedure

If a student's bursary application has been declined due to being ineligible for bursary support, they have the opportunity to appeal the decision. This appeal must be submitted in writing by emailing [bursary@brooklands.ac.uk](mailto:bursary@brooklands.ac.uk). The appeal will be reviewed by the Head of Marketing and Admissions and the Director of Student Support Services, who will assess the grounds for the appeal and the

presented evidence. The student will be informed of the outcome of their appeal request within 10 working days. Once this decision has been made, it is final.

## 1.5 Data Integrity and Compliance

All evidence documents and student data provided during the application process are securely stored within the **PayMyStudent** system. Access to this information is strictly limited to the Head of Admissions & Marketing and the **Admissions and Bursary team** personnel directly involved in financial assessments. According to guidance, this will be retained for a maximum of 6 years.

The College is required by statute to share specific information with the Government for audit and compliance purposes. Further details are available in the **16 to 19 Bursary Fund Guide available from the GOV.UK website**. Furthermore, the College will always fully cooperate with criminal investigations and reserves the right to share relevant information with appropriate authorities where it may assist in the prevention or detection of a crime.

Bursary assessments are based entirely on the evidence provided by the student. If, following an external audit, it is identified that incorrect or fraudulent evidence has been submitted, the student may be held liable to repay the full amount of funding provided to date.

## Section 2: Funding Streams

### 2.1 16–18 Vulnerable Young Person (VYP) Bursary

This is a fixed award of **up to £1,200 per year** (based on individual need, paid in instalments subject to attendance and conduct) for young people who are most in need. Eligible students must fall into one of the following defined groups:

- In Care – Looked After (Section 20 of the Children Act 1989 or Section 22 of the Children Act 1989)
- Care leavers (Section 31 of the Children Act 1989)
- Receiving Income Support or Universal Credit in their own right (financially supporting themselves).
- Receiving Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payments (PIP) in their own name, *and* either Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or Universal Credit (financially supporting themselves).

### 2.2 16–18 Discretionary Bursary Fund

This fund provides assistance to eligible students whose household income meets the threshold outlined in Section 1.2, to help meet the costs of essential items for their course (see Section 3).

### 2.3 Free Meals in Further Education (FMFE)

Students aged 16-18 and 19-24 students with an EHCP or those continuing a programme started before age 19, are eligible for free meals if their household's total earned income (not including benefits received) is below £7,400 or if they were receiving free meals from 2018 onward.

**Policy update (effective September 2026):** From September 2026, all students living in a household that receives Universal Credit will be eligible to receive free meals.

### 2.4 19+ Bursary

This fund supports eligible learners aged 19 and over enrolled on an adult learning programme. The fund is used to help with course-related costs such as travel, materials and childcare (for those aged 20+).

## 2.5 Specific Student Groups Eligibility

- **Pre-16 Students on School Roll:** Students aged under 16 who are enrolled at a school but attending the College as part of a Pre-16 programme should speak directly to a representative at their current school about accessing financial support through the Pupil Premium fund. This includes free meals and potential further financial support based on eligibility, individual needs and available funding at the school level. The school will need to inform the College of the required need and available funding and the College will then arrange for the support to be provided (including free meals).
- **Pre-16 Home-Educated Students:** Home-educated students who meet the age and residency criteria are eligible to apply for 16-18 Bursary support and Free Meals via our online application process (Section 1.3).

## Section 3: Specific Categories of Support

All support listed below is subject to the learner meeting the eligibility criteria (Section 1) and demonstrating an assessed need, up to the maximum capacity of the respective Bursary Fund.

### 3.1 Support Available for 16-18 and Vulnerable Young Person (VYP) Students

#### 3.1.1 Travel Support

- **Public Transport:** Where necessary, the College may provide assistance with the cost of daily travel, typically by providing bus or train fare via BACS transfer fortnightly to the student.
- **Mileage Allowance (Private Vehicle):** Mileage allowance is strictly limited and provided **only** if:
  1. A student is unable to use public transport due to a documented disability, high needs or has an EHCP.
  2. The student has applied for the **Surrey County Council post-16 transport scheme** and has been **unsuccessful** in their application.
  3. The award is discretionary, paid at a rate of **25p per mile**, up to a maximum limit of **£50 per month**.

#### 3.1.2 Free Meals Provision

- Eligible students will receive a daily meal allowance of £4.00 for each day they attend the College.
- This allowance is non-transferable; any unused portion of the £4.00 allowance **will not roll over** to the next day.
- Free breakfast is provided to all learners attending College between 8.15am and 9am weekday mornings.

#### 3.1.3 Uniform and Kit

- The College may provide essential, curriculum-required equipment and protective clothing/uniform. Funds for these items will be provided *in-kind* (purchased by the College) to ensure the funds are used for their intended purpose.

#### 3.1.4 Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks

- Where a DBS check is a mandatory and non-negotiable requirement for a specific course (e.g., Childcare, Health and Social Care, certain work placements), the College may cover the cost of the required check.

### 3.1.5 Educational Trips

- Support may be provided for the mandatory cost of essential educational trips directly linked to the achievement of the qualification. Support for voluntary or leisure trips will not be provided.

### 3.1.6 Hardship Fund

- A limited Hardship Fund is available within the Discretionary Bursary for students facing acute, unforeseen and exceptional financial crises that threaten their ability to remain in learning. **Urgent hardship funds** are available and learners must speak directly to the College's **Safeguarding & Wellbeing team** to discuss the available funding options for this immediate support.

### 3.1.7 Electronic Devices

- Where a digital device (e.g., a laptop) is deemed essential for the successful completion of the study programme and the student has no adequate access to one, the College may provide a loaned device, depending on the available budget and the student's needs assessment.
- **VYP Bursary funds will not be used for the outright purchase of electronic devices.** VYP students should contact their social worker regarding the national scheme available to provide this equipment to vulnerable young people. Students not supported by their own social worker, or those requiring alternative advice, should speak to an **Inclusion Mentor** for further information and guidance on accessing available resources.

### 3.1.8 Childcare Support (Care to Learn - CtL)

- Care to Learn is a separate government-provided fund designed to help young parents **aged under 20** cover the costs of childcare while they study. This fund is **not administered by the College Bursary Team**.
  - **How to Apply:** Students must apply directly via the official GOV.UK website. You will need to provide details of your course, the college, and your Ofsted-registered childcare provider.
  - **College Role:** The College will confirm your attendance and course enrolment to the Care to Learn administrators. Payments are made directly from the government to your childcare provider.
  - **Further Information:** For full eligibility criteria and to apply, please visit the [GOV.UK Care to Learn website](https://www.gov.uk/care-to-learn).

## 3.2 Support Available for 19+ Students

### 3.2.1 Travel Support

- **Public Transport:** Where necessary, the College may provide assistance with the cost of daily travel, typically by providing bus or train fare via BACS transfer fortnightly to the student.
- Mileage allowance is not provided to 19+ learners (only to 19-24 learners with an EHCP eligible for the 16-18 Bursary fund).

### 3.2.2 Exam Costs, Membership Fees and Books

- The College may contribute to essential exam fees where non-payment would prevent qualification completion.
- The Bursary may also assist with mandatory professional body membership fees where this is an explicit requirement for the course or an industry placement.
- Assistance may also be provided for course-required books and materials.

### 3.2.3 Meal Allowance

- For eligible 19+ students a daily meal allowance of **£4.00** is provided for each day they attend College if they are due to be at college over the lunch period and are required to eat at the College.
- This is provided via BACS transfer fortnightly to the student.

### 3.2.4 Childcare Support (20+ Only)

- For learners aged **20 and over** who are eligible for the 19+ Bursary, assistance may be provided for Ofsted-registered childcare costs, subject to availability of funds and assessed need.

#### Eligibility criteria:

- Aged 20 and over
- Considered a 'home student' for fee purposes
- Enrolled onto a course funded by the Adult Skills Fund or in receipt of a 19+ Advanced Learner Loan
- Have confirmation of funding for childcare support before enrolment by our bursary team
- Have evidence of being on a low income or dependent of those on a low income
- Have evidence of receiving means-tested benefits, such as: Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance, Employment and Support Allowance or Housing Benefit

#### When choosing an appropriate childcare provider, students must:

- Find their own OFSTED registered childcare provider
- The childcare placement is only available for term time only
- The childcare payment will only be paid for the days that the student is required to attend college or their work placement, based on the student's timetable.
- If the student is in receipt of 2 or 3+ Government funding, they must use this for the days they are timetabled to attend college. Our support payments will only cover the additional hours needed to study at the college.
- The college will provide up to 15 hours of childcare a week. This is dependent on the amount of days the learner is due in college and will only cover the hours necessary to attend scheduled lessons.
- Payments will be arranged and made directly with the agreed childcare provider. No funds for childcare will be paid directly to the learner.
- If the learner chooses to arrange additional hours with the childcare provider outside what is necessary to attend college, this will be the learner's responsibility to pay for.
- Students must reach an 80% class attendance on a fortnightly basis to receive this provision. Should the learner's attendance fall below 80% over a two-week period, we will not be able to continue providing this support.

If the student decides to stop attending college, they **must** inform the College immediately. For any lessons unattended childcare will not be paid for.

### 3.2.5 Advanced Learner Loan (ALL)

Advanced Learner Loans are designed to help learners aged 19 and over cover the cost of course fees for eligible college or training courses at Level 3, 4, 5 or 6. The course must have started on or after 1st August 2016. Your loan application will last for the duration of the course, meaning there is no need to reapply if your course is longer than one year.

#### Application Process

If you are eligible, you will be able to apply [here](#). You will require a Learning and Funding Information Letter (LAFIL) from the College to complete your application. Please prepare your household evidence (Section 1.3) ahead of time as the ALL process may require similar documentation.

#### Requirement to take the Loan

Taking out an Advanced Learner Loan is entirely optional; it is up to you to decide on your best option depending on your financial circumstances.

### Section 4: Conditions of Award, Payment and Attendance

All students are expected to maintain **100% attendance** for their full study programme commitments.

#### 4.1 Reimbursement Model

The Bursary Fund, including travel support, is paid on a reimbursement model. Funds are calculated based on incurred costs and are paid in scheduled fortnightly instalments directly into the student's bank account.

#### 5.2 Attendance Policy for Payment

Continued Bursary payments are strictly conditional on meeting the required attendance percentage for the study programme in the fortnight immediately prior to the next scheduled payment date.

Fortnightly Attendance	Payment Status
80% and above	Full payment received
50% - 79%	Payment halved (50%)
0% - 49%	Payment cancelled (0%)

**Authorised Absences:** Due to the reimbursement nature of the fund (e.g., travel costs are not incurred if the student is absent), authorised absences will still be included in the attendance calculation and count against the percentage for payment purposes.

**Reinstatement:** If a payment is halved or cancelled due to low attendance, full payments will only be reinstated when the student's attendance percentage improves to **80% or above** in the subsequent review period.

## Policy Schedule Of Changes

This document outlines the proposed changes to Bursary Policy and the timeline for their implementation. It serves as a centralised reference point for all stakeholders involved in the policy revision process to highlight all key changes.

This document must be completed ahead of any policy review or approval. Changes should be listed clearly, and concisely for timely review by the Policy and Standards Group.

Policy Name	Change Description	Date
Bursary Policy	New policy that has been rewritten to fall inline with the new processes in the admissions and bursary teams.  New log and formatting added for new policy.	January 2026