



Bursary fund policy

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2023

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2

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policy





1. Introduction

The Government has set aside some money for schools, colleges, training providers and local authorities to allocate to young people who need financial support to stay on in further education or training. This is called the 16-19 Bursary Fund. Students aged 19 or over are only eligible to receive a discretionary bursary if they are continuing on a study programme they began aged 16 to 18 ('19+ continuers') or are 19-24 and have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

The bursary helps with any education-related costs that may arise during the college year, including essentials like a meal during the day or transport to college or work experience. Alternatively students may need extra help to buy books, clothing or equipment or pay for educational visits.

Rotherham Opportunities College will seek to ensure that the funds available are:

- distributed fairly through a process which is transparent and easily understood;
- assessed and allocated to each individual's need, taking into account the financial circumstances of the applicant and the intended use of the fund; and
- used to widen access to, and participation in, post-19 education.

Discretionary bursary – Students can apply for a discretionary bursary if they need financial help to stay on in further education. The application form is attached as Appendix 1. Distribution of this element of the funding is at the discretion of Rotherham Opportunities College and will be targeted towards young people facing the greatest financial barriers to participation.

Bursary funding is subject to funds available at all stages.

Additional Help - Under exceptional circumstances and subject to funds available (and for any students who are experiencing short-term financial hardship), students who are not automatically eligible for an award can also apply for help with one-off course related expenses (proof of income or hardship will be asked for).

Consideration of applications for additional help for students whose parent(s)/carers gross annual household income is between £16,191 and £30,000, will be subject to the level of available funding. Applications from students where the family income is above £30,000 will be considered where there is evidence that funding may/will be required due to the individual circumstances of the family. Applications for additional help will be considered on an individual basis.



The level of support which the college can offer is dependent upon the total funding available and the number of applications it receives. Please note: there is a limited amount of funding which means that it will not be possible to support every application and priority will be given to those students from the families with the lowest household income and/or highest demonstrated need. The level of funding may vary during the academic year.

2. Eligibility criteria

Students must be at least 19-24 and have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) to apply for a bursary. As a limited amount of discretionary funding is available funding must be allocated to applicants in the following priority

1. Students who receive free school meals or whose household income is below £16,190
2. Students whose household income is above £16190 but below £30,000

Rotherham Opportunities College aims to ensure its bursary fund eligibility criteria are applied correctly and consistently to all students.

3. Payment of the bursary

Discretionary bursary is for participation costs only. Rotherham Opportunities College will decide what participation costs a student has and will award funds appropriately. Bursary payments will be 'in-kind' this means instead of receiving money, students could get a travel pass, help towards transport costs to college, transport to work experience, free meals, or course materials. Alternatively students may need extra help to buy books, clothing or equipment or pay for educational visits.

The standards of behaviour, attendance and other specific conditions must be met.

4. Application process

An application form is provided to all students in September each year, with the request to return it by November to ensure funds can be allocated in a timely way. There are staff available within the college who can support families and students to complete the forms and advises on appropriate documentation as required, to maximise applications. However, in line with EFA recommendations for best practice, there is no absolute cut-off date for applications.



All students will be assessed individually for the bursary. Evidence must be provided to support applications.

For the latest up to date DFE information and guidance use the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund>

5. Contingency

A small amount of funding will be retained for use as a contingency fund to support eligible students who may experience unexpected financial hardship in unforeseen circumstances. This may include students who join the college later in the year, or whose needs/family circumstances change.

6. The Appeals Procedure

Any appeal made regarding the allocation of either element of the Bursary funds would follow the college complaints procedure.

7. Confidentiality

Rotherham Opportunities College will ensure that applications are handled confidentially. For audit purposes, however, hard copies of all documentation for students support will be kept for a period of six years. The information will be made available for audit purposes. Some records may be computerised but these will be held securely and in compliance with the Data Protection Act.

8. Equal Opportunities

No applicant will receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis, taking into account the views of the school, young people and their parents and guidance from the Department for Education and the EFA.



Appendix 1

APPLICATION FORM

Section 1: Applicant Details (STUDENT)

Title:	First Name:	Last Name:
Address:		
Postcode:		
Home Telephone No:	Mobile Telephone No:	
*E-mail Address:		

*We will use your e-mail address to send all correspondence to you – please ensure this is

Date of Birth:

Site: ROTHERHAM OPPORTUNITES COLLEGE

Section 2: Residential Status

Who do you live with? Please tick all boxes that apply

Mother	<input type="checkbox"/>	Father	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parent's spouse/partner	<input type="checkbox"/>	In care/looked after	<input type="checkbox"/>
Foster parents	<input type="checkbox"/>	On my own	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other: please give details	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>

Have you lived in the UK for the last 3 years?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Bursary policy
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Section 3: Learner's Eligibility/Supporting Documents

Please complete below:

Tick the box applicable and note the documents needed to support the application. The supporting documents must be enclosed with the application form. If you live with a parent/carer, their information is required for the proof of income. If you do not have the specified documents, please contact us to discuss possible alternatives.

Part a: Please tick the relevant boxes, then go to section 4

Discretionary Bursary-Other Learners	Tick	Supporting Documents needed
Young people who are claiming, or are eligible to receive free school meals		Staff in school will be able to obtain this information in-house
Young people whose household receives income based means tested benefits AND/OR whose gross annual household income is below £30,000 (Household income-this includes the combined incomes, where there is more than one source of income, of parents with parental responsibility and partner living in the household. Household income does not include income from siblings who are working, or money earned by the student themselves from part-time employment)		Please supply one or more of the following: (copies) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • award letter (less than 3 months old) for income based benefits • tax credit award notice for the current financial year (not provisional) • P60 (tax year ending April 2022) or the last 3 months pay slips • Evidence of self-employed earnings (certified accounts for 2022/23 tax year)
Young people with significant caring responsibilities at home and who are not in receipt of a Carer's Allowance		Supporting letter from social worker or parent
Young people who have been affected by sudden exceptional changes to their financial circumstances		Supporting letter from parent/carer or please contact the Principal in confidence for advice



Section 4: Payments

In the majority of cases, successful applicants will receive an award ‘in kind’ in the form of a bus pass, contribution towards meals, transport to school, or work experience. Alternatively, you might need extra help to buy books, clothing or equipment for your course, or pay for educational visits.

Section 5: Declarations

Please be aware that the funding covers only this academic year and there is no guarantee that funding will be available for future years, even if you are eligible for the current year.

Parent/Carer Declaration:

I declare that all information I have provided in support of this application for the Rotherham Opportunities College 19-25 Bursary Fund for 2022-23 is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief. I understand that if false or incomplete information is submitted which results in an overpayment, all future payments will be stopped, and the school will seek repayment of payments made. I undertake to notify the college in writing of any changes to the information provided, which may affect the eligibility for the Bursary.

By signing this declaration, I confirm agreement to all the conditions and eligibility criteria of the scheme. If for any reason, the learner named on this form leaves college or fails to abide by the behaviour or attendance policy, I undertake to return the award upon request and I understand that future benefits

For staff Use Only	
Award Approved by Head of College (Signature)	Date:
Financial Approval by College Business Manager (Signature):	Date:
Bursary Approved:	Discretionary YES/NO