



16 – 19 Bursary Policy

Policy Details

Policy Owner
Head of MIS

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1. Statement of Intent

It is the aim of USP College to provide financial support through its bursary allocation to students aged 16 – 19 or are in possession of an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP), who are experiencing financial difficulty with meeting the costs associated with learning.

The College aims to provide financial information and advice that is impartial to all prospective and enrolled students.

2. Introduction, Purpose and Eligibility

- 2.1 The Bursary Fund is provided by the Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) to support USP College students who face the greatest barriers to continuing education or training.
- 2.2 Students should exercise their entitlement to other forms of financial support before eligibility for discretionary funding is considered, e.g. Care to Learn.
- 2.3 The Bursary has two elements, Vulnerable Bursary (for eligible students) and Discretionary Bursary.
- 2.4 A student must have a household income under £30,000 per annum net.
- 2.5 Discretionary Bursary: to be eligible students must be over 16 and either under the age of 19 as of 31 August of the academic year or in possession of an EHCP. Students must meet the residency criteria in the ESFA funding guidance for the 2023/24 academic year and have a low income.
- 2.6 To be eligible for the Vulnerable Bursary of up to £1,200 per academic year, the young person must fall into one of the defined vulnerable groups. Discretionary Bursaries are targeted at students who cannot stay in education without financial help for things like transport, meals, books and equipment.
- 2.7 Vulnerable Bursary: to be eligible to receive up to £1,200 per academic year (value awarded will be based on assessed needs for eligible award items supported by the college) the young person must meet one of the following criteria;
 - a. young people in care, including unaccompanied asylum-seeking children
 - b. young care leavers
 - c. young people getting Income Support or the equivalent Universal Credit (UC) in their own right – if students live independently, a tenancy agreement is required
 - d. young people getting both Disability Living Allowance (or Personal Independence Payments) and Employment Support Allowance (ESA) (or Universal Credit as a replacement for ESA) in their own right
- 2.8 A student must satisfy the residency criteria as set out in the ESFA Guidance document. They must also be participating in provision that is subject to inspection by a public body that assures quality (e.g. Ofsted). That provision must also be:
 - a. funded by the ESFA (either directly or via a local authority); or
 - b. funded or co-financed by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund ; or

- c. otherwise publicly funded and lead to a qualification that is accredited by Ofqual or is pursuant to Section 98 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000

2.9 Applications can only be considered when a completed bursary application form and all correct supporting evidence/paperwork has been submitted.

2.10 USP College will follow the guidance given by the ESFA for unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC); as the responsibility of the local authority they are treated as looked after children. As such, and in accordance with the 16-19 Bursary Fund guidance, they are eligible for the vulnerable bursary.

3. General Principles

3.1. Application Procedure

- a. Students who live in a household where the income is £28,000pa gross or below are eligible to apply. Additional consideration can be given to household income where there are other dependents under 18 years and in full time education.
- b. If the household income is higher but the student is in hardship, an application can still be made, the case will be considered; however, a supporting statement and evidence of financial difficulties must be included.
- c. Returning students must reapply for bursary each academic year must submit a full to ensure eligibility criteria is still being met

3.2. Applications for bursary are made Online via the secure Pay My Student portal. The link is available on the College website.

3.3 Applications will be assessed individually, and the award calculated by factors such as the distance a student lives from their campus of study and the course/s enrolled on.

3.4 All completed applications should be submitted within three weeks of the course start date and will be assessed at the point where all required evidence and information has been submitted. Where appropriate award payments will be backdated.

3.5 Evidence must be uploaded for all applications confirming receipt of;

- a. Income Based Job Seekers Allowance/Employment and Support Allowance, Income Support or Universal Credit.
- b. Evidence must be recent and dated within one month of application. Guaranteed Pension Credit or Working Tax Credit confirming income for the previous year (Max income p.a. £28,000 – estimated income not accepted, and all pages must be included).
- c. Written confirmation of the young person's current or previous looked-after status from the local authority which looks after them or provides their leaving care services.

4. Awards and Payments

4.1 Travel

- a. Students eligible for bursary support, living over 1 mile from their campus of study will be able to receive travel support. The award will be based on actual travel cost assessments. The college will determine the value for travel based on the cost of all travel routes available. Students are expected to provide information of travel preferences as part of the application process.
- b. Travel awards are available up to a maximum of £900 annually for public transport.
- c. Where travel is via a College bus service, the total cost will be covered. Students do not receive payments. Deposit payments to secure a college bus seat are refundable on the successful approval of a bursary application.

4.2 Students can also apply for support with the following: course equipment and book costs, cost of a UCAS application, exam resits (1 exam pa) and essential/compulsory trip costs. A percentage of these costs will be paid.

4.3 Payments will be made by BACs directly into the student's bank account. Students must fulfil the necessary attendance requirements to receive their payment. Students must adhere to the college's code of conduct for behaviour.

Payments will be made to students, as follows;

- a. Travel will be paid a week in arrears and directly linked to attendance % for that week, e.g. if attendance is 75%, the travel payment would be at 75% of award.
- b. Equipment costs will be paid as a single payment or in 3 payments split across the academic year, based on total awarded value.
- c. Other Ad-Hoc payments will be made as and when required

4.4 Bursary payments or support can be withheld because of a disciplinary outcome; this to be approved by the Head of Student Services and/or the Executive Director Information, Systems and Funding

4.5 The Vulnerable Bursary is calculated by the number of weeks of the student's course. Payments will be transferred by to the student's bank account via BACs. Students attending a course of less than 30 weeks will receive pro-rata payments.

4.6 USP College will award students a daily Free College Meal (FCM) allowance of £5 to spend in the College's catering facilities and may be adjusted at the College's discretion, funds permitting

4.7 Applicants of the Bursary will be advised of the outcome of their application as soon as an assessment has been completed.

4.9 Appeals against actions/decisions taken in accordance with this policy must be made in writing and addressed to the Executive Director Information Systems and Funding within seven working days of the receipt of the outcome letter. Formal complaints should be made in line with the college's Compliments & Complaints Policy

5. Contingency Fund

- 5.1 Students may also access the Student Emergency Fund for exceptional circumstances. They will need to complete a separate application form and provide evidence of the financial need. This is administered through the Head of Student Services.

6. Free College Meals

- 6.1 All bursary students will also be provided with a daily allowance of £5 to be used in the College catering facilities. The fund needs to be used on the day and will not be carried over. This may be adjusted at the College's discretion, funds permitting
- 6.2 Students on block placement or Industry Placement need to inform Student Services of this prior to their placement commencing so that alternative arrangements can be made.

7. Linked Policies

Other related Policies include:

- a. Student Attendance Policy
- b. Student Plagiarism Policy
- c. Student Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy
- d. Student Confidentiality Policy
- e. Student Disciplinary Policy
- f. Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy
Data Protection Policy

8. Link to Procedure

Guidance notes and bursary application forms are available via the USP College website www.uspcollege.ac.uk

Equality and Diversity Statement & Impact Assessment

USP College is committed to equality of opportunity. The aim is to create an environment in which people treat each other with mutual respect, regardless of: age, disability, family responsibility, marital status, race, colour, ethnicity, nationality, religion or belief, gender, gender identity, transgender, sexual orientation, trade union activity or unrelated criminal convictions.

This form should be used by managers and policy owners within their area of responsibility to carry out Equality and Diversity Impact Assessments (EDIAs) in relation to protected characteristics including, but not limited to: Age, Disability, Gender reassignment, Marriage and civil partnership, Pregnancy and maternity, Race, Religion and belief, Sex, Sexual orientation. The word 'policy' is taken to include strategies, policies, procedures and guidance notes; both formal and informal, internal and external.

1. **Name of Policy**
16-19 Bursary Policy
2. **Which of the following groups could be affected by this policy?**
(Tick all that apply)

- **Students**
- **Staff**
- **Wider Community**

3. Complaints

Have complaints been received from anyone with one or more protected characteristic about the service provided? If yes then please give details.

NA

4. The Impact

Four possible impacts should be considered as part of the assessment:

- Positive Impact** - Where the policy might have a positive impact on a particular protected characteristic.
- None or Little Impact** – Where you think a policy does not disadvantage any of the protected characteristics
- Some Impact** – Where a policy might disadvantage any of the protected characteristics groups to some extent. This disadvantage may be also differential in the sense that where the negative impact on one particular group of individuals with protected characteristic is likely to be greater than on another.
- Substantial Impact** – Where you think that the policy could have a negative impact on any or all of the protected characteristics. This disadvantage may be also differential in the sense that the negative impact on one particular protected characteristic is likely to be greater than on another.

Thought-provoking questions, which might help come to a decision about the impact of a policy on individuals with protected characteristics:

- Does policy outcomes and service take up differ between people with different protected characteristics?
- What key information do we have? Does data or engagement with people with protected characteristics give insights into areas of disadvantage, which relate to the policy area?
- If the policy is likely to have a negative impact on individuals, sharing particular characteristics what steps can be taken to mitigate these effects?
- Will the policy deliver practical benefits for certain groups?
- Does the policy miss opportunities to advance equality of opportunity and foster good understanding/ relationships between groups?
- Do other policies need to change to make this policy more effective?
- Is there any elements of the policy that could be unlawful under the Equality Act 2010?

Use the guidance provided above and complete the following table: **(Please Tick ✓)**

	Positive Impact	No or Little Impact	Some Adverse Impact	Substantial Adverse Impact
Gender		✓		
Age		✓		
Disability	Positive Impact	No or Little Impact	Some Adverse Impact	Substantial Adverse Impact
Visually Impaired		✓		
Hearing impaired		✓		
Physical Disability		✓		
Specific Learning Difficulties		✓		
Global Learning Difficulties		✓		
Autistic Spectrum Disorder		✓		
Any other disability – Various		✓		
Other Factors	Positive Impact	No or Little Impact	Some Adverse Impact	Substantial Adverse Impact
Race		✓		
Culture		✓		
Religious Belief		✓		
Sexual Orientation		✓		
Gender Reassignment		✓		
Marriage/Civil Partnership		✓		
Pregnancy /Maternity /Paternity		✓		

Please comment on any areas where some or substantial impact is indicated. Any resulting actions must be added to the below action plan.

5. Is there anything that cannot be changed?

What cannot be changed?	Can this be justified?	If so, how?
Not applicable		

E.g., Disabled people can be treated more favorably under the Disability Discrimination Act 2005. If a policy appears to treat disabled people more favorably than other equality groups, the disadvantage may be justifiable

Please list the main actions that you plan to take as a result of this assessment in your area of responsibility.
(Continue on separate sheets as necessary)

Action Plan: