

HEREFORD SIXTH FORM COLLEGE
16 – 19 BURSARY FUND GUIDANCE NOTES 2022-2023



Who is eligible?

The 16–19 Bursary Fund is a government-provided, means-tested fund available to support students who have difficulty in meeting costs relating to their studies.

To qualify, you must be under 19 years of age on 31st August in the academic year in which you start your programme of study, and you will be expected to provide evidence of personal and/or financial hardship. Each case will be assessed individually.

The current income limit is £20,817 per annum if the student is the sole child or young person in the household or £23,077 per annum if there are additional children or young people in the household.

What evidence will I need?

If you are 'looked after', a care leaver, personally in receipt of Income Support or Universal credit, or a disabled person in receipt of both Employment Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance you may be eligible for the maximum bursary of £1,200 (pro-rata if part-time). You will need to provide written evidence from your Local Authority of your care status and/or evidence of the above benefits. Please note meeting the criteria above is not a guarantee of the Vulnerable Student funding if it is assessed there is no financial need.

For all other students, a financial assessment is necessary. You will need to complete the Initial Assessment form setting out the financial situation together with supporting documentation that provides recent evidence of total household taxable income. For assessment purposes, this may include, for example:

- Payslips (3 monthly or 4 weekly most recent) or P60 from 2021-2022
- Employment Support Allowance
- Tax Credit documentation – **full document** (this is used as evidence only and does not form part of the assessed household income)
- Pension
- Other means-tested benefit
- Accounts if self employed – most recent audited accounts or Tax Return
- Universal Credit documentation (3 most recent monthly **full** statements)

Receipt of Educational Maintenance Allowance will be taken into account in determining the level of assistance provided.

Awards will not be made unless required evidence is provided. A lack of adequate evidence will lead to delays in assessment. Tax credit award notices in isolation are not adequate for this purpose.

Household expenditure is not relevant to the assessment.

Please turn over

Bursary support will be offered in the first instance to provide support for a travel pass where applicable. **There will be a parental contribution of £150.00/academic year towards the cost of the travel pass. This can be paid in full, 3 termly instalments or smaller payments throughout the year via the Parentpay system or by credit/debit card payment in person at the Finance Office or by telephone, 01432 355166 Ext. 311/284.** Any further funds available will be allocated as appropriate to support compulsory trips, books/materials/equipment or other items relevant to the individual student.

As part of the Bursary assessment eligibility for **free college meals** will be checked. Free college meals will only be offered to students whose family receive one or more of the following: Child Tax Credit (provided they are not entitled to Working Tax Credit) and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190 as assessed by HMRC, Income Support, Income based Job Seekers Allowance, income –related Employment Support Allowance, Universal Credit with net earnings not exceeding the equivalent of £7,400 per annum, support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 or the guarantee element of State Pension Credit.

How do I apply?

- (i) Complete the Initial Assessment Form and return it to the Clare Edmonds, Student Finance Officer together with evidence in support of your application.
- (ii) The Student Finance Officer will consider your request. You can normally expect a response within one working week but a decision will be delayed if further evidence is required. **Response time may be longer at the start of the academic year due to volume of applications received.** You are advised to submit your application as soon as possible. Applications received later in the year will not be offered retrospective support for previous terms.
- (iii) Appeals against any decision should be made in writing to the Principal.

Is there anything else I should know?

- (i) If you are having financial problems you should feel free to discuss them in full confidence with the Student Finance Officer.
- (ii) If attendance, punctuality or behaviour falls below acceptable standards Bursary support can be withdrawn.
- (iii) **You are required to inform the Student Finance Officer if your circumstances change,** for example a change in benefits or employment status. Failure to do this could result in a requirement to pay back some or all of an award.
- (iv) The application is valid for one academic year only, you will need to submit a fresh application form and up to date evidence before the end of the summer term for the next academic year.
- (v) **Once approved for travel support a pass will be automatically reordered for the subsequent terms of the academic year. Please inform the Student Finance Officer asap of any change in home address or route of travel or if you no longer need the travel pass. Late cancellation may result in the charge of an admin fee by Herefordshire Council.**

Please make your application as early as possible to allow for the assessment to be made and any travel pass required to be ordered in good time, to ensure it is available, for collection by the student, at the start of the term in September. Travel passes can take up to 28 days to be issued by Herefordshire Council and any costs incurred will only be refunded if the issue has exceeded the 28 days.

Please note you must make an online application to Herefordshire Council for your travel pass but make no payment. Herefordshire Council will issue a reference number which you need to include in your bursary application; if bursary is approved, this will then be used to order and pay for the travel pass on your behalf. Please do not delay sending your bursary application if you do not have this reference number.