

Learner Support Fund Policy 26–27

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Student Financial Support Policy 2026-27

Stanmore College receives an allocation of funds from the Department of Education (DFE) annually, to provide financial support to help students overcome specific financial barriers to participation, so they can take part in or continue in education.

The College has a defined bursary resource, and students are encouraged to enquire and where eligible, make an application for the relevant bursary at the earliest opportunity to ensure they receive maximum financial benefit from this provision.

Purpose of the Bursary

A Student Bursary is in place to support with the costs of study, for example, books, materials, IT equipment, essential educational trips, meals, fares to college.

Bursary applications can be affected by 2 major factors:

1. The number of applications received
2. Individual circumstances and actual financial need. Bursary funds will not be used to support general living costs, non-essential trips, or to provide general subsidies unrelated to specific student need.

Stanmore College currently adopts a bespoke system for payments to accommodate the different categories of students.

Currently there are 2 main types of learners:

1. On-site students (learning is based at the main site of Stanmore College at Elm Park)
2. Off-site students (learning is delivered in offsite locations – for example: satellite centres)

Eligibility

A student must be aged 16 or over, but under the age of 19 as of 31 August 2026 to be eligible for help from the 16 to 19 bursary funds during academic year 2026-27.

Students on apprenticeship programmes, or any waged training, are employed rather than in education so they are not eligible for the 16 to 19 bursary fund and must seek another fund/grant.

Students aged 19 or over as of 31 August 2026 are only entitled to receive the 16 – 19 Discretionary Bursary if they are continuing a study programme, they began aged 16 to 18 (19+ continuers) or have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

Students aged 19 or over may still be able to apply for financial support, dependent on household income and based on a needs assessment.

Receipts for purchases made using bursary funds must be provided periodically, and students will be asked to confirm funds were used for their intended purpose.

Residency

Students must meet the residency criteria in DFE funding regulations for post-16 provision for the academic year 2026-27.

Students must have the legal right to funds in the United Kingdom at the start of the study programme. Any Student/Persons subject to Home Office deportation are unable to access the bursary.

Stanmore College recognises that all European Economic (EEA) student's resident before January 2021 have the legal right to remain in the UK for the duration of their course programme.

Vulnerable Bursary

To be eligible for this bursary, students must be either:

- In Care/Foster Care
- Care leavers
- Receiving Income Support (IS) or Universal Credit (UC) in their own right to financially support themselves and / or someone who is dependent on them and lives with them, such as a child or partner.
- Receiving Disability Living Allowance (DSA) or Personal Independence Payments (PIP) as well as receiving Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or Universal Credit (UC) again in their own right.

Vulnerable Bursaries of up to £1,200 are available for students and are designed to help students overcome the individual financial barriers to participation in education. Institutions must ensure the funds go to those who genuinely need them. No student will automatically be awarded a set amount of funding without an assessment of the level of need; therefore, applicants will need to provide evidence to support their claim for transport, meals, or essential equipment up to the value of £1,200.

Discretionary Bursary

To be eligible for this bursary, students must live with their parent(s), guardian(s), or carer(s), where the household income is below £35,000 p.a.:

Awards will be made subject to a successful application and only to students who face genuine financial barriers to completing their course, and priority will be given to co-funded students who are unable to afford their tuition fees or examination fees. Students whose household income is more than £35,000 can still apply for hardship support however will need to demonstrate that they require financial support due to exceptional circumstances.

Free College Meals

Students aged 16 – 18 on the 31st of August 2026 who are eligible to receive a meal allowance will receive it for timetabled days to attend college. This also applies to students aged 19 and over who are continuing a study programme they began aged 16 to 18 (referred to as 19+ continuers). They may also be eligible if they have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

The FCM allowance is £3.70 which is credited to the Students ID card to be used in the college canteen. The canteen offers meal deals to this value, any further expenditure will be met by the student. The daily value does not roll over if not used.

Students studying at satellite centres can apply for the meal allowance, which is payable to their account at daily rate of £5. The meal allowance will be paid to students for timetabled days and based on attendance.

If a student is on placement for work experience or T Level, they will receive a BACS payment in their account for the days they cannot receive meals on campus, this will be to the amount of £5 per day and be received as BACS payment. Evidence of this placement will need to be provided.

In cases of severe hardship, the College may provide temporary meal support without full income assessment, following internal evidence and safeguarding procedures.

UCAS Fees

We can support 16–18-year-old learners eligible for the bursary with UCAS registration costs.

Childcare

Students who are parents, aged under 20 on the 31st August 2026 with childcare needs, can apply for support through the “Care to Learn” scheme via the College. [Care to Learn: Overview - GOV.UK](#).

Students aged 20 and over may be eligible to receive support towards childcare costs. Any award will be calculated after considering any other government childcare benefits or funding received.

19+ Bursary

To be eligible the student must be aged 19 or over on the 31st of August 2026 at the start of the academic year with a gross household income of less than £35,000.

The College may be able to support with exam fees, registration fees, travel, childcare and ICT support based on need.

All awards are based on an individual assessment of need for the course the student is on.

Level 3 Advanced Learner Loan Bursary

Advanced Learner Loans Bursary are available to students who are funded by an Advanced Learning Loan for their course and the approval letter from the Student Loan Company must be attached to the application. Whether you qualify for an Advanced Learner Loan depends on your:

- Age
- Course
- College or training provider
- Nationality or residency status You must be 19 or older on the first day of your course.

Your course must be:

- a level 3,4,5 or 6 qualifications, for example A Levels or graduate certificate
- at an approved college or training provider in England

Further guidance can be obtained at <https://www.gov.uk/advanced-learner-loan/bursary-fund>

Evidence Required

- Tax Credit Award Notice 2026-27 – All pages
- Universal Credit – All pages of statements [including breakdown calculations and deductions] covering the last 3 months

If you are not in receipt of the Tax Credits or Universal Credit, please supply the applicable documents below:

- Employment Support Allowance [ESA] award letter dated after 5th April 2026, and all other benefits and/or 3 months' pay slips for all adults earning in the household
- Income Support [IS] award letter dated after the 5th of April 2026 and all other benefits and/or 3 months' payslips for all earnings in the household
- Job Seekers [JSA] award letter dated after the 5th of April 2026 and all other benefits and/or 3 months' payslips for all earning in the household
- Pension/Pensions credit [state or private] award letter dated after 5th April 2026
- Tax Return for 2025/26 [self-employed] plus accountants' letter

Payments

Payments are made via BACS into a bank account in the students' name for travel and equipment, or essential books. Payments are not backdated or paid during holiday periods. There are scheduled payment dates for Free College Meals and travel bursary.

For all students, there is an attendance and punctuality criteria (known as Percentage in Learning) of 85% + per week which students must attain to receive a payment for a particular week.

Students on study programmes of less than 30 weeks will be paid a pro-rata amount. As the College has a defined financial resource to assist students with their bursaries financial support must go to the most deserving of students, therefore, if these objectives are not met each month, the college will withdraw this financial support at the end of the period until students have demonstrated improved Percentage in Learning or provided the requested receipt.

Help with fares

To be considered for financial help with fares, students are to be in receipt of the bursary and hold a current 16+ or 18+ Oyster Card (if living in a London borough).

The financial help will be based on the costs of weekly or monthly travelcards linked to their Oyster Card as per rates shown on the TFL (Transport for London) website. This will be reviewed monthly for each student applicant by Student Services.

Students must obtain and provide a receipt for the travelcard and hand to the Bursary Administrator the day after purchase. Stanmore College is situated in Zone 5, therefore, financial support to students living / travelling from the neighbouring Zone 4, will not be offered as the 16+ Oyster card (for students aged 16 – 18 as of 31.08.2026) offers free bus travel which can be used when travelling to college.

Equipment and Educational Trips

During the academic year, students may have the opportunity to attend educational trips associated with their course or are required to purchase equipment to support their course of choice. Trips must be essential to the study programme or course the student is attending. An application can be made to support these costs in writing to the bursary email.

Equipment

The College will support with compulsory equipment cost associated with the course with the requirement that the student pays the remaining balance. Payments will be 'in kind' where the college are responsible for purchasing the equipment. Following payment, the student will receive a proof of payment in their award letter.

An application can be made to support these costs in writing to the bursary email.

Educational Trips

The Discretionary Bursary is provided to ensure that learners of limited means can access learning opportunities. If an organiser believes that the trip may not be financially accessible to all the learners on the course, then they may put in a request for bursary support to the bursary email: bursary@stanmore.ac.uk (see the 'Trips and Visits Policy' for the details on how to do this).

Withdrawn Students

Students who have incurred payments or fines (i.e., replacement id badges, overdue book fines, lost books fees etc) are required to make settlement in a timely fashion. If after repeated requests, payment is not forthcoming, the College can look to recover these amounts from bursary monies owed. Students will be advised via the College app of the deductions to be made in any given period.

Should a student withdraw from their chosen course of study and decide to leave the college, they may be required to repay monies or return equipment supplied / bought by Bursary fund. Eligibility to the college bursary will cease from the first date of non-attendance.

Appeals

If any student is dissatisfied with the decision regarding their bursary application, financial support, help with fares, equipment or educational trips, they need to set this out in writing clearly stating reasons and produce supporting evidence, if needed. Please follow the process below:

The first stage of the appeals process: please email bursary@stanmore.ac.uk. Please allow up to **10 working days** for your appeal to be reviewed.

The second stage of the appeals process: If you are still not satisfied with the response, please email complaints@stanmore.ac.uk. Please allow up to **10 working days** for your appeal to be reviewed.

16-19 Bursary Fund	Stanmore College	Payment	Beaconsfield	Payment	Greenwich Borough Academy	Payment
Travel Payments	Yes	Up to max of £2720	Yes	Up to max of £2720	Yes	Up to max of £2720
Meals	Yes ID Card	£3.70 Daily	Yes Bacs payment	£5 Daily	Yes Bacs payment	£5 Daily
Exam resit payments	Yes	Up to max £100	Yes	Up to max £100	Yes	Up to max £100
Laptop Loan	Yes Subject to Availability	N/A	Yes Subject to Availability	N/A	Yes Subject to Availability	N/A
Educational Visits	Yes	Up to max £150	Yes	Up to max £150	Yes	Up to max £150
Essential books, equipment and uniforms	Yes	£250*	Yes	£250*	Yes	£250*
Childcare Payments	YES Via Care 2 Learn	Up to max £195 per child	YES Via Care 2 Learn	Up to max £195 per child	YES Via Care 2 Learn	Up to max £195 per child

*Learners on sports courses can claim a additional £50 towards the cost of football boots

All payments are due for timetabled college days only. If you are required to attend college outside of these times, please inform the bursary team as soon as possible.

Travel Payments	Stanmore College	Payment	Harrow Arts Centre	Payment	Rail Futures	Payment	Salon Hijab	Payment
Exam, accreditation & professional membership fees	Yes	Up to max of £1000	Yes	Up to max of £1000	Yes	Up to max of £500	Yes	Up to max of £750
Exam resit payments	Yes	Up to max £100	Yes	Up to max £100	Yes	Up to max £100	Yes	Up to max £100
Digital Support	Yes	Up to max £100	Yes	Up to max £100	Yes	Up to max £100	Yes	Up to max £100
Educational Visits	Yes Subject to Availability	N/A	Yes Subject to Availability	N/A	Yes Subject to Availability	N/A	Yes Subject to Availability	N/A
Essential books, equipment and uniforms	Yes	Up to max £50	Yes	Up to max £50	Yes	Up to max £50	Yes	Up to max £50
Childcare Payments	Yes	Up to max £250	Yes	Up to max £250	Yes	Up to max £250	Yes	Up to max £250
	Yes	£250 max monthly	Yes	£250 max monthly	Yes	£250 max monthly	Yes	£250 max monthly

Laptop supply is limited and will be assessed on learner's individual need.