

Student Financial Support Policy

Valid from

2023-24

to

2024-25

Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality

Owner

SLT

Committee approval

Approval date

Board of governors'
committee

Approval date

Board approval
necessary Date of
Board approval

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Student Financial Support Policy 2024-25

Stanmore College receives an allocation of funds from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) annually to provide financial support to help students overcome specific financial barriers to participation so they can take part in or continue in learning.

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 students with the costs of study, for example, books, materials, essential educational trips, meals, fares to college etc.

Bursary support given can change for two reasons. The first is the number of applications received, secondly the support provided can vary based on each students' individual circumstances and their actual financial need.

Stanmore College currently adopts a bespoke system for payments for the variation in 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. External (students) (learning is delivered in offsite locations – for example: satellite centres)

*Unusually long journey can be based on either distance or travel time by public transport to get to Stanmore. In these cases, 'In-Kind' support can be provided but is subject to attendance, punctuality and Percentage of Learning of the applicant.

Eligibility

A student must be aged 16 or over, but under 19 as of 31 August 2024 to be eligible for help from the 16 to 19 bursary funds during academic year 2024-25.

Students on apprenticeship programmes, or any waged training, are employed rather than in education. They are not eligible for the 16 to 19 bursary funds.

Students aged 19 or over as of 31 August 2024 are only eligible to receive the 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 as of 31 August 2024 are not eligible for the Vulnerable Bursary.

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

Residency

Students must meet the residency criteria in [ESFA funding regulations](#) for post-16 provision for the academic year 2024-25.

Students must have the legal right to be resident in the United Kingdom at the start of the study programme. Any Student/Persons subject to Home Office deportation are ineligible.

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.

Bursary offer for 2024-25

16-18 year old students

- Vulnerable Bursary - up to a maximum of £1200, dependent on assessment of need
- Discretionary Bursary to help with discretionary meals, travel, books, equipment or special kit over the academic year

Vulnerable Bursary

Vulnerable Bursaries are available for up to £1200 for courses and are designed to help students overcome the individual financial barriers to participation that they face, and 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 they have and therefore applicants will need to provide evidence to support their claim for transport, meals, or equipment up to the value of £1200.

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 some who is dependent on them and living 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 Bursary – Ineligible Students

- Students attending specialist residential provision that covers education costs in full.
- Students undertaking distance learning programme that has no financial barriers (Travel/Meal Costs)
- Student in the care of Local Authority and educational costs are covered by the local authority.
- Student who is financially supported by a partner.

Discretionary Bursary

To be eligible for this bursary, students must live with parent(s), guardians, carers where the household income is below £30000 pa:

Free College Meals

Students aged 16 – 18 on the 31st of August who are eligible to receive a meal allowance will receive it on days timetabled to attend college. Students aged 19 and over are only eligible to receive the meal allowance if they are continuing on a study programme, they began aged 16 to 18 (19+ continuers) or have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). The amount of £3.50 is credited to their Student ID and is to be used in the college canteen. The canteen offers meal deals to this value and 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 at daily rate of £3.50 for each day they attend a time-tabled teaching learning session. The meal allowance will be paid to students and will be based on attendance as per registers.

FREE MEALS TRANSITIONAL PROTECTION ARRANGEMENTS

If you had Free Meals at school or College last academic year, then you can continue to receive these, although you may need to provide us with evidence such as your parents national insurance number or the statement from your previous school/college confirming that you were in the receipt of free school meal.

19+ Bursary

To be eligible the student must be aged 19 or over on the 31st of August at the start of the academic year with a gross household income of less than £30,000.

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

All awards are based on an individual assessment of need.

Level 3 Advanced Learner Loan Bursary

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

<https://www.gov.uk/advanced-learner-loan/bursary-fund>

Evidence

- Tax Credit Award Notice 2024-25 - 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 2024 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 2024 and all other benefits and/or 3 months' payslips for all earning in the household
- Job Seekers [JSA] award letter dated after the 5th of April 2024 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 2024
- Tax Return for 2023/24 [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 in order 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. As with the bursary, this help is to promote and support good attendance and punctuality (Percentage in Learning) and 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 Student Finance Adviser (within Student Services) 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 at 31.8.2024) 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.

Equipment

The College will pay up to 50% of such costs 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.

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 (see the Trips and Visits Policy for the details on how to do this) for bursary funding to support learners entitled to the bursary.

Outstanding Payments or Fines

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.

Withdrawn Students

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 as at the date of withdrawal. Any outstanding financial support due will be paid to the student on the next payment date subject to meeting conditions of financial support.

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. The letter should be sent to the Vice Principal Curriculum & Quality who will investigate and respond to the student within 10 working days of receipt of the appeal letter. The appeal will be heard by two managers not involved in the initial decision-making process.