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**Carlisle College**

**Student Services**

**2016-2017**

* 16-19 Vulnerable Bursary
* Discretionary Bursary Fund Policy

**This document outlines Carlisle College’s policy in allocating the 16-19 Bursary Fund allocated to FE Colleges by the EFA (Education Funding Agency). The Fund is designed to help support those young people who face the greatest barriers to continuing in education post-16.**

**The Bursary Fund is only available to students living in England. Students living in Scotland may be eligible to receive Education Maintenance Allowance which is no longer available in England. Carlisle College has also created a fund to help students living in Scotland who may need extra travel support to attend College.**

**There are two elements to the Bursary Fund**

1. A Vulnerable Bursary

A guaranteed bursary for young people in care including unaccompanied asylum-seeking children; care leavers; young people in receipt of Income Support or Universal Credit in their own right; and young people in receipt of Employment Support Allowance who are also in receipt of Disability Living Allowance Personal Independence Payments. These students are eligible to receive a bursary of £1,200 a year.

1. A Discretionary Bursary

A discretionary bursary which the College can use to support those students who they consider to be most in need with costs such as transport, books and equipment and free college meals. This fund will be known as Carlisle College Student Support Fund.

In 2016-17 students in receipt of Free College Meals may also be eligible for a bursary of £350 a year, payable in ten instalments of £35.00.

**To receive support students must be aged (16-18) on 31st August of the academic year in which they start their programme of study. Where a student turns 19 during their programme of study, they can continue to be supported to the end of that academic year, or to the end of their programme of study, whichever is the sooner.**

**With the exception of the Vulnerable Bursary all funds will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. Eligibility will not mean an automatic entitlement as the funds are limited.**

**Vulnerable Bursary**

Students in the defined vulnerable groups will be eligible for a bursary of £1,200 if their course lasts for 30 weeks or more. Students who are eligible for the £1,200 bursary will need to provide proof of their eligibility in the form of a letter confirming that they are in receipt of one of the eligible benefits or a letter from their local authority confirming that they are in care or a care leaver. Paid apprentices are not eligible.

The College will be responsible for identifying and assessing a students’ eligibility and for ensuring that the appropriate evidence has been seen. The College will then draw down funding from the Learner Support Service, and distribute the fund to eligible students.

**Discretionary Bursary Fund**

Full-time students from households where the income is less than £25,000 will be eligible to apply to this fund. Assistance can be given with none essential course costs.

Assistance may also be given with the cost of transport where students live more than 3 miles from the College. Carlisle College will calculate the most cost effective method of public transport.

Students in receipt of Free College Meals may also be eligible for a Bursary of £350 for the year payable in 10 monthly instalments of £35 based on a minimum attendance level.

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| What Can Be Applied For |

**Course Related Equipment/Trips, attending University Open Days, help with transport costs where the home address is more than 3 miles from College etc**.

Monies will be awarded for equipment for each individual course. Equipment lists are provided by the academic areas.

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| Travel Support |

Support for travel costs is only available for full-time students and is means-tested. Students must live 3 miles or more from College. The College will calculate the most cost effective method of transport from a student’s home to College and it will be paid by either fortnightly refunds based on attendance or by issuing a Stagecoach pass.

* Full Time students aged 16-18 from Cumbria and Northumbria should apply to their LEA if they are eligible.
* Cumbria County Council will fully support those students from low income groups and in receipt of one of the following:
* Income Support.
* Universal Credits
* Income based Jobseekers Allowance.
* An income related employment and support allowance.
* Child Tax Credit (provided you are not entitled to Working Tax Credit) and have an annual income that does not exceed £16,190 as assessed by HM Revenue & Customs.
* The Guarantee element of State Pension Credit.
* Those students who do not qualify can apply for help with travel costs dependent on location.

- Megarider Zone – Carlisle - £331.00 per academic year

- Megarider Plus Zone – Outlying areas e.g Penrith, Brampton, Wigton - £572.00 per year

- Megarider Gold Zone – North and West Cumbria - £590.00 per year

* Students who wish to apply for the Cumbria County Council concessionary Transport may apply to the Discretionary Bursary Fund for help with the cost.

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| Free Meals |

Free meals are targeted at disadvantaged students. For the purposes of eligibility for free meals, disadvantage is defined by the students being in receipt of, or having parents who are in receipt of, one or more of the following benefits:

* Income Support
* income-based Jobseekers Allowance
* income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
* support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
* the guarantee element of State Pension Credit
* 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 Her Majesty’s Revenue and Customs (HMRC)
* Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit during the initial roll out of the benefit, Universal Credit

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| Childcare |

Students aBC50ged up to 20yrs should apply to the EFA Care to Learn Programme for support with childcare costs.

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| Proof of Income |

Any income evidence, which has been copied and presented, will be filed and kept in the student’s file.

To be eligible for the Vulnerable Bursary the following evidence is required:

* A letter setting out the benefit to which the young person is entitled
* Written confirmation of the young person’s current or previously looked-after status from the local authority which looks after them or provides their leaving care services

To be eligible for Discretionary Bursary Fund evidence is required that the household income is less than £25,000. The following types of evidence are required:

* Receipt of Benefit
* P60
* Tax Credit Award Notice
* Wage slips
* Evidence of self-employment income

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| Procedure for applying for the Vulnerable Bursary and Discretionary Bursary Funds (for course costs e.g. equipment, kit, uniform and books) |

* Students and their parents are required to complete an application form for financial assistance and provide proof of financial circumstances
* Student Services will offer advice and guidance on completing applications and providing evidence. Assistance with completing the application form is available if required.
* The application is checked by Student Services to ensure that all supporting evidence has been provided.
* Completed applications should be submitted as early as possible in the autumn term. Students are advised to do this by October half-term at the latest.
* **The application form will be returned to the student if they fail to supply all details/evidence required.**
* Completed application forms are assessed individually by Student Services staff
* Applications are considered daily.
* Decisions are made in accordance with the guidance set out in this document and in line with EFA guidance.
* The student will be notified of the outcome of the decision by letter.
* The outcome of each application is entered onto Pro Monitor. This is for the purpose of completing the end of year monitoring data.
* Proof of income and benefits must be attached to the Bursary application form.
* Students eligible for the Vulnerable Bursary will be paid in ten instalments by BACS from September to June.

**No applications will be accepted unless all evidence is provided**

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| Procedure for applying for the Discretionary Bursary Fund for travel costs |

* Students are required to complete a Transport Application Form and provide evidence of financial circumstances.
* Reception will be available to offer help and advice on eligibility and also completion of the application form
* Once the student is enrolled on the course the application will be assessed by Reception and they will be advised by e mail to contact Reception and will sign a code of conduct.
* Once the student’s application is agreed they will be advised by Reception on how the payments will be made and this will be either:
  + Fortnightly refunds via BACS or
  + Stagecoach pass

**No applications will be accepted unless all evidence is provided**

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| **Appeals** |

Students and their parents/carers who wish to appeal against any decisions made concerning their application for the Vulnerable Bursary or for assistance from the Discretionary Bursary Fund should follow Carlisle College’s Complaints procedure which is published on the College website.