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**Carlisle College**

**Student Services**

**2017-2018**

* Adult Discretionary Learner Support Fund Policy
* 19+ Advanced Learning Loans Bursary Fund Policy

**This document outlines Carlisle College’s policy in allocating the Adult Discretionary Learner Support Fund (DLSF) allocated to FE Colleges by the Skills Funding Agency. The Fund is designed to help adult learners with some of the associated costs of learning and includes 19+ Hardship Fund and 20+ childcare.**

**This document also outlines the College’s 19+ Advanced Learning Loans Bursary Policy which has been allocated to colleges to support learners who are paying their fees with a 19+ Advanced Learning Loan.**

**Adult Discretionary Learner Support Fund Policy**

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

1. 19+ Hardship Fund

This element of the fund is available to support learners with course related costs including transport and course trips, none essential books and equipment, and fees. To receive support learners must have reached the age of 19 on the date they commence College.

1. 20+ Childcare Support

This element of the fund is available to support learners with the cost of childcarewhile they are attending College. It can only be used to fund childcare with a provider who is Ofsted registered.

**Funds are means-tested and will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. Eligibility will not mean an automatic entitlement as all the funds are limited.**

1. **Hardship**

Full-time learners 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 e.g. books, and equipment, DBS checks, and fees. Assistance will also be given with the cost of transport where students live more than 3 miles from the College. The College will calculate the most cost effective method of public transport between the student’s home and College.

Fully funded learners do not pay tuition or exam fees or essential course costs. The Hardship Fund can be used to pay fees in exceptional circumstances for disadvantaged learners. Learners will be expected to make a contribution of 25% of the tuition fees. Support will only be available to learners whose household income is less than £25,000. All other learners will be responsible for paying their own fees.

1. **Childcare Fund**

* Full-time learners from households where the income is less than £25,000 will be eligible to apply to this fund.
* The childcare provider must be Ofsted-registered.
* Learners aged up to 20yrs are not eligible for childcare support and should apply to the EFA Care to Learn Programme.
* The College can support students up to a maximum of £5253 in an academic year where funding allows.

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| What Can Be Applied For |

**None essential course related equipment, trips, help with transport costs where the home address is more than 3 miles from College etc and household income is less than £25,000 per year**.

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 learners and is means-tested. Learners must live 3 miles or more from College. The College will calculate the most cost effective method of public transport which will be paid out by fortnightly BACS refunds or a Stagecoach pass will be issued.

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| 19+ Advanced Learning Loans |

Learners paying for their courses with 19+ Advanced Learning Loan can access support from the 19+ Advanced Learning Loans Bursary Fund.

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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 Hardship Funding 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
* Evidence of self-employment income
* Wage slips

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| Procedure for applying for the Hardship Funding for Travel costs |

* Learners 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 assist with completion of the application form
* Once the learner is enrolled on the course the application will be assessed by Reception and they will be advised by text to contact Reception.
* Once the learner’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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| **Procedure for applying for the Hardship Funding for course costs etc** |

* Learners 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 learner if they fail to supply all details/evidence required.
* Completed application forms are assessed individually by Student Services staff.
* Applications are considered weekly (more often during peak periods).
* Decisions are made in accordance with the guidance set out in this document and in line with SFA guidance.
* The learner will be notified of the outcome of the panel’s decision via letter.
* The outcome of each application is entered onto ProSolution. This is for the purpose of completing the end of year monitoring data.
* Proof of income and benefits must be attached to the application form.

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

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| **Appeals** |

Learners who wish to appeal against any decisions made concerning their application for assistance from the Learner Support Fund should follow Carlisle College’s Complaints procedure which is published on the College website.

**19+ Advanced Learning Loans Bursary Fund Policy**

This section outlines Carlisle College’s policy in allocating the 19+ Advanced Learning Loans Bursary Fund allocated to FE Colleges by the Skills Funding Agency. The Fund is designed to help adult learners who are being supported with the cost of their course by a 19+ Advanced Learning Loan. Learners living in Scotland and studying at Carlisle College are also eligible to apply to the Bursary Fund.

The Fund is available to assist learners with childcare and transport support. The fund is means-tested. Learners with a household income of less than £25,000 will be eligible to apply for transport. The Fund will be distributed by the College and is not an entitlement.

The Fund can be used for:

* Transport costs. Support for travel costs is only available for full-time students and is means-tested. Students must live 3 miles or more from College. Learners will get a refund on production of travel tickets or will be issued with a travel pass if this is more economical. In exceptional circumstances we will consider contributing to petrol costs. Learners must apply for support by completing a transport application form and attaching the required evidence of income.
* Childcare costs. Learners from households where the income is less than £25,000 will be eligible to apply to this fund.

**Learning Support**

This part of the Fund will be used to fund Learning Support Workers and necessary adjustments under the Equality Act. There is no means-testing for this part of the Fund as it is based on need, not income.

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| **Appeals** |

Learners who wish to appeal against any decisions made concerning their application for assistance from the 19+ Advanced Learning Loans Bursary Fund should follow Carlisle College’s Complaints procedure which is published on the College website.

Impact assessed: 08/05/2015

Next impact assessment: September 2015