

16-18 Bursary Fund

2024-25

The Student Bursary is money, which has been given directly to the College by the Government to help 16-18 year old students with education-related costs.

Who is eligible to apply for the student bursary?

Students who have enrolled on a full time course at Wigan & Leigh College, and meet the eligibility criteria below:

- Aged over 16 but under 19 at 31st August 2024
- Aged 19 who are in the second year of a course that they started when they were aged 16-18
- Aged 19-24 at 31st August 2024 and have an EHC Plan (Educational Health and Care Plan).
- Aged 16-19 and settled in the UK and have been ordinarily resident in the UK for at least three years prior to the start of their course

Types of Bursary available

There are two types of 16 to 19 bursary available, Discretionary and Vulnerable.

Discretionary Bursary.

You could get a bursary worth up to a maximum of £750. If you or your parents/guardians are in receipt of means tested benefits or have an annual household income of less than £32,000 you can apply for help with college costs.

The above Students may receive (subject to assessment of study related financial need not met by another source):

A monthly Bursary to help you pay for your essential costs whilst at College such as:

- Travel if you live more than 2 miles from your college campus (outside of Our Pass Area or are not eligible for an 'Our Pass' or using other mode of public transport)
- College meals on the days you are timetabled to be in college
- Course costs such as essential books, stationery and printing credit
- In addition, your bursary can cover essential equipment and uniform costs and compulsory trips where applicable (Please note: Uniform/equipment and compulsory trip costs may be paid as a lump sum out of your bursary to enable purchase at the beginning of the academic year either to the student or their curriculum area)

Vulnerable Bursary

You could get a bursary worth up to a maximum of £1,200. This fund supports students with a financial need relating to costs whilst studying at College who meet at least one of the criteria below:

- you're in or you recently left local authority care
- You get Income Support or Universal Credit because you're financially supporting yourself or someone who is dependent on you and living with you such as a child or partner.
- you get Disability Living Allowance (DLA) in your name and either Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or Universal Credit
- you get Personal Independence Payment (PIP) in your name and either ESA or Universal Credit

The above Students may receive (subject to assessment of study related financial need not met by another source):

A monthly Bursary to help you pay for your costs whilst at College such as:

- Travel if you live more than 2 miles from your college campus (outside of Our Pass Area or are not eligible for an 'Our Pass' or using other mode of public transport
- College meals on the days you are timetabled to be in college
- Course costs such as essential books, stationery and printing credit
- In addition, your bursary will cover essential equipment and uniform costs and compulsory trips (Please note: Uniform/equipment and compulsory trip costs may be paid as a lump sum out of your bursary to enable purchase at the beginning of the academic year either to the student or their curriculum area depending on the usual policy of the curriculum area.

'Our Pass' Travel Scheme

'Our Pass' is a free bus travel scheme for 16-18 year olds who live and travel within the Greater Manchester area. Visit www.ourpass.co.uk for more information on the scheme and to apply. Please apply as soon as possible so you will have your Our Pass for when you start your college course. 'Our Pass' replaces bursary financial assistance for bus travel for students within the Greater Manchester area. Please note: if you use an 'Our Pass' for journeys to and from college, you will not be eligible for a travel contribution from the bursary.

The pass can be used from the 1st September following your 16th Birthday until the 31st August following your 18th Birthday. An 'Our Pass' will cost £10 and this fee will be reimbursed by the College to all students who are applying for an 'Our Pass' for the first time, if you are eligible for the bursary, live more than 2 miles from the college, and use an 'Our Pass' for your college journeys.

When can I apply to the Bursary Fund?

Students will enrol on their course after GCSE results day at the end of August. You can only apply for financial support with college after you have enrolled on the course and received your College ID card and number.

When students start college, they will receive their personal login details for the Student Intranet. They can then apply for financial support via the Student Intranet.

Applications can be also be made throughout the year.

Do I need to submit evidence with the application form?

Yes, it is very important that the correct evidence be submitted with the application. The evidence required for each type of earnings, income and benefit is clearly specified on the application form. Documents must be submitted through the on-line portal.

Please note: If you are in receipt of Universal Credit

In order to assess for eligibility for **Free Meals**, you must submit a copy of your full **Tax Credit Notification 2023-24 dated April 2023** onwards or; a recently dated (within 3 months) **Universal Credit Letter** that you are named on.

If the correct evidence is not submitted, the form cannot be assessed and an award cannot be made. If this is the case, we will email the student to inform them of what further evidence they need to submit. It is the responsibility of the student to make sure that they do this promptly

How will students know if they have been successful?

We will email all students informing them of the outcome of their application. Successful students will get an award notice, which tells them what their award is including where

applicable if they are entitled to free college meals. We will also communicate all unsuccessful students informing them of the reasons for the College's decision

Attendance

Bursary payments are **not an entitlement** they are to support your attendance and engagement at college so that you can make the best of your educational opportunity. Wigan & Leigh College expects full attendance from all its students and this will be monitored throughout the academic year. Your attendance will be monitored as follows:

- Attendance is checked every month before making monthly payments.
- If your attendance is below the expected, your payments could be at risk.
- If you do not attend a course for four consecutive weeks your award will be removed, you will have to re-apply to the fund and show evidence of re-engagement on a course.
- Reasonable adjustment will be made for those with disabilities or severe medical conditions. Please speak to the Student Funding Team about an individual attendance plan.

Attendance, behaviour and attitude towards your studies = the best outcome from your chosen course.

How and when will payment be made?

Please note that your bursary award is based on course costs identified by your curriculum area, your assessed mode of travel and whether you are entitled to free or discretionary College meals. This means that for some students their bursary award may be a one-off bacs payment ONLY or may be paid by the College with no direct payment to the student. In some cases, a student may be assessed as having no costs or the monetary value of the award may be small. Where payments are made directly to the student, they will only be issued once the student is enrolled on and has been attending their course for at least two weeks.

All payments will be made to your bank account on or around the 20th of each month. Please be aware that bank holidays and your banks policies may affect how quickly payments reach your account. We will backdate any payments to the start of the month in which we receive your fully completed application and all correct evidence has been received.

In the case of unaccompanied asylum seekers who are in the care of the local authority and do not have access to their own bank account, the college will endeavour to make bursary payments to the care provider on the understanding this is provided directly to the student.

Payments will cease at the date that a learner completes or withdraws from their course.

Even if a student meets the criteria for either of the 16-19 bursary funds this does not necessarily mean that they will automatically receive a financial award, as this is dependent upon the actual financial need of the applicant.

Bank Details

BACS transfers (Bankers Automated Clearing Services) are one method of ensuring that students receive their bursary entitlement. Such BACS transfers can only be made into the student's own bank account – they cannot be paid into a parents/carers account. Students can open a basic bank account at aged 16, which will allow BACS transfers and allow the student to make withdrawals. Therefore, if a student does not already have a bank account, they will need to open one as soon as possible. A request for bank account details is included on the Student Bursary Application Form.

What should I do if I am not happy with any decision that has been made regarding my application?

- Appeals can be made in writing within 15 days from receipt of the award notification to: The Director of Finance, Wigan & Leigh College, PO Box 53, Parsons Walk, Wigan, WN1 1RS.
- All appeals about decisions or payments must be submitted before **1st June** to allow time for a review to be carried out before the funds close at the end of the academic year. •
- Please be aware, the College cannot accept appeals about awards being refused or reduced where the reason given is that the funding has been fully utilised.

Changes in Circumstances

Students may submit further evidence should a change occur in their circumstances, which may result in them being assessed for a higher level of assistance. Except for Vulnerable Bursary students and where eligibility for Free College Meals has been identified, all other further awards will be subject to availability of funding. Students are also required to disclose any change in circumstances – personal, financial or educational that may make them ineligible for funding. Failure to do so may make the students liable for the cost of funding already received.

Data Protection

Wigan & Leigh College collect information about our students for a variety of reasons as declared in our data control registration, details of which are available on the Information Commissioner's Office website. Please see your fee receipt/learning agreement for further information.

- An explanation of how your personal information is handled can be found in the Privacy Notice on the Wigan and Leigh College website.

Date of next review : June 2025