NWSLC

NORTH WARWICKSHIRE & SOUTH LEICESTERSHIRE COLLEGE

Student Bursary and Discretionary and Advanced Loans Bursary Funds Policy 2026/2027(v5)

North Warwickshire and South Leicestershire College

Policy Author: Vice Principal Student Services and Support

Lead Owner: Deputy Principal

Target Audience: Students and Staff

Policy Location: Website and Staff SharePoint

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Document History

Version Number	Amended By	Date of Revision	General Revision Description
V2	APSSS	15.6.23	Minor formatting and date changes. Inclusion of section 11 Data Protection Impact Assessment
V3	APPS	30/05/2024	Minor formatting Change to information for childcare and values in line with national policy.
V4	VPSSS	30/05/2025	Annual Policy Update to ensure college policy meets funding guidelines for bursary assessment and awards
V5	VPSSS		

Student Bursary and Discretionary and Advanced Loans Bursary Funds Policy 2026/2027(v5)

1. Introduction

1.1 **Purpose of Bursary and Discretionary Funds**

These funds are made available to enable colleges to better meet the needs of their students by targeting funds on those individuals who may be financially disadvantaged. There are two types of Bursaries, for 16-18 students, defined as Vulnerable Groups and 16-18 Discretionary Bursary. For 19+ students on a level 1 or 2 course (and some level 3 courses where loans are not required) there is a19+ Bursary.

1.2 **Purpose of the 19+ Advanced Learning Loans Bursary Funds**

These funds are provided to enable colleges to help vulnerable students such as those with learning difficulties or disabilities, parents who need help with childcare and ex-military personnel studying a qualification funded through a 19+ Advanced Learning Loan.

1.3 This electronic version is the definitive version of the Policy.

2. Definitions

2.1 Bursary and Discretionary Funds means those funds provided by the Education and Skills Funding Agency for students aged 16-18 years and 19+ year old students.

2.2 Advanced Learning Loans Bursary Funds means those funds provided by the Education and Skills Funding Agency for students studying a qualification funded through an Advanced Learning Loan.

3. Related Policies and Documents

3.1 Financial Regulations;

3.2 Financial Support Guide.

3.3 Other policies and documents may be identified from time to time as circumstances change and may be added to this list.

4. Rationale

4.1 This Policy provides guidance that should be followed in testing eligibility for these funds to ensure fair distribution.

5. Core Principles

5.1 In developing this Policy the following objectives have been set:

i. Spend will be maintained within the budgeted allocation. Any overspend will require Executive Team approval prior to funds being committed.

ii. The allocation supports as many students as possible.

6. Policy Guidelines, Bursary and Discretionary Funds

6.1 Availability of Funds

All applications to this fund are subject to funds being available.

6.2 Eligibility of Applicants

To be eligible for the funds the students must be:

i. aged 16 or over;

ii. enrolled on a further education funded programme with North Warwickshire and South Leicestershire College; and

iii. meet one or more of the required eligibility criteria listed in the Financial Support Guide, before assistance can be considered.

6.3 Further Information

i. In exceptional circumstances a discretionary award may be considered following assessment of the requested evidence i.e. bank statement, wage slips etc. or following assessment by the College Safeguarding Team.

ii. All funding will be subject to attendance and behaviour criteria being achieved.

iii. Support is not available to students who are not funded via The Education and Skills Funding Agency or the European Social Fund (including overseas students) or higher education students (support for the latter may be available from the HE Access Fund) and it is not normally available to help with day to day living costs not associated with learning.

6.4 Eligible Use of Funds

Bursaries of up to £1,200 per annum are available for Vulnerable Young People (VYP) who fulfil the eligibility criteria. Discretionary Funding may be used to support eligible students with the costs of childcare, tuition and examination fees, travel to/from College, (where this has been identified as a specific barrier to participation) recommended equipment, College organised trips and any other costs associated with their learning, subject to the availability of funds.

6.4.1 Childcare

Childcare Costs for eligible students All students at the Nuneaton Campus will be expected to use the Wise Owls Nursery facilities and students at the Wigston campus to use the College Nursery. External childcare providers may be considered in exceptional circumstances (e.g. when no places are available at the College facilities).

i. Childcare support funds will be capped at £6,000 per student per annum, subject to the College discretion and available funds. Funds may be used to pay for after-school clubs, College or private nurseries, and child-minders'. Students are responsible for finding acceptable childcare and must provide details on the Bursary and Discretionary Funds Application Form of the service they intend to use.

ii. Considerations:

- All childcare providers must be registered with Ofsted.
- Funding can support full and part time students.
- Funding cannot be used to pay for childcare used whilst studying other than for timetabled hours.
- The College can only pay for childcare during the term time only in the academic year.
- No retainers or bonds will be paid, unless aged 20 and under .

Early Learning Funded Places

If your child is 9 months to 2 years old, you may be able to get 15 hours free childcare per week

for 38 weeks of the year (during school term time).

If your child is 3 to 4 years old, you may be able to get 30 hours free childcare per week for 38 weeks of the year (during school term time).

This can take place in nurseries, playgroups, pre-schools or at a child-minder. Students will need to utilise these hours first to cover or part cover the cost of childcare whilst studying at College.

6.4.2 **Fees**

i. In exceptional circumstances eligible students may receive full remission with tuition and exam fees subject to funding being available.

6.4.3 **Travel Costs**

i. Funding is available for students who live more than 2 miles away from the College where these costs have been identified as a specific barrier to participation. Students travelling by bus may be provided with a termly bus pass if eligible. Students who use their own vehicle can be reimbursed at 20p per mile for one return journey per timetabled attendance. (The distance is checked on a mileage system). This is for exceptional circumstances only. Alternatively, the fund may cover the cost of bus or train travel for those students outside of the local area. Tickets must be retained and sent into the bursary email on a daily or weekly basis, to be refunded. The fund may provide a travel pass to support journeys to and from college if this is more cost effective.

ii. The maximum amount claimable towards travel costs is £40 per week.

iii. Wherever possible attendance will be checked electronically to support payment.

iv. Reimbursement for travel will normally be paid a week in arrears by BACS.

v. Claims submitted more than 3 months after the travel date will not be considered.

6.4.4 **Equipment Costs**

Equipment Costs: All Eligible Students

i. Funding is only available for recommended uniform/kit/equipment. Checks may be made with departments to confirm necessity of items. Awards for uniform/kit/equipment may be processed through the central College purchasing system or reimbursement made on production of valid receipt. Awards for uniform/kit/equipment will be capped at maximum £500 per student or at half of the total equipment costs for adult students on part-time courses.

ii. For Hair and Beauty and Catering students the College may offer (where this is deemed to be practical), a loan system for items such as chef's knives and cutting scissors. Items loaned will be subject to a deposit being paid and must be returned at the end of the course or when the student leaves.

iii. Equipment for students on short courses

A maximum of £30 towards recommended kit/equipment may be paid to eligible students on programmes of 12 weeks or less.

6.4.5 **Trips / Educational Visits**

The Bursary and Discretionary Funds can only assist eligible students where the visit is deemed to be an essential part of the learning programme, subject to funds being available.

6.4.6 **Food allowance/Free School Meals (FSM)**

Payments for food allowance/Free school meals will be uploaded onto the Students ID card the day after their bursary application has been submitted. Students will receive an email notification of this.

Students attending work placement and entitled to food/FSM can have their lunch reimbursed once a valid receipt has been received. This is capped at the same as the daily allowance for

the current year

6.5 **Policy Guidelines, 19+ Advanced Learning Loans Bursary Funds**

6.5.1 **Availability of Funds:** all applicants to this fund are subject to funds being available.

6.5.2 **Eligibility of Applicants:** to be eligible for the funds the student must be:

i. Enrolled on a programme at North Warwickshire and South Leicestershire College funded through an Advanced Learning Loan.

ii. Had their loan application approved

iii. For hardship or childcare awards students must also meet one or more of the required eligibility criteria listed in the Financial Support Guide.

iv. For Additional Learning Support Awards students must be assessed by the College Learning Support Team as requiring additional learning support. (This element of the fund is not means tested)

6.5.3 **Further Information**

i. All funding will be subject to attendance and behaviour criteria being achieved.

ii. Support is not available to students who are not funded via an Advanced Learning Loan

6.5.4 **Eligible Use of Funds**

i. 19+ Advanced Learning Loans Bursary Funds are available for individuals who meet the eligibility criteria for childcare costs, additional support costs and hardship.

6.5.5 **Childcare**

i. All students at Nuneaton Campus will be expected to use the Wise Owls Nursery facilities and students at the Wigston Campus to use the College Nursery. External childcare providers may be considered in exceptional circumstances (e.g. when no places are available at the College facilities).

ii. Childcare support funds will be capped at £6,000 per student per annum, subject to the College discretion and available funds. Funds may be used to pay for after-school clubs, College or private nurseries, and child-minders. Students are responsible for finding acceptable childcare and must provide details on the Bursary Application of the service they intend to use.

iii. Considerations:

- All childcare providers must be registered with Ofsted .
- Funding can support full and part time students.
- Funding cannot be used to pay for childcare used whilst studying other than for timetabled hours.
- The College can only pay for childcare during term time in the academic year.
- No retainers or bonds will be paid

If your child is 9 months to 2 years old, you may be able to get 15 hours free childcare per week for 38 weeks of the year (during school term time).

If your child is 3 to 4 years old, you may be able to get 30 hours free childcare per week for 38 weeks of the year (during school term time).

This can take place in nurseries, playgroups, pre-schools or at child minders. Students will need to utilise these hours first to cover or part cover the cost of childcare whilst studying at College.

6.5.6 **Additional Learning Support**

Identified support may be provided, including in learning support, specialist equipment or

services or any other support identified through assessment. Services may be provided directly by North Warwickshire and South Leicestershire College or procured for the student by North Warwickshire and South Leicestershire College. Support will be subject to regular review of progress and identification of continuing needs.

6.5.7 **Hardship**

In exceptional circumstances a discretionary hardship award may be considered for eligible students following assessment of the requested evidence e.g. bank statements, wage slips etc. or following assessment by the College Safeguarding Team.

7. Administration

7.1 All applications will be processed by the Bursary Team.

7.2 Students applying to the fund will do so via the Pay My Student (PMS) software.

7.3 Applications will be assessed by date received subject to all evidence uploaded to the PMS portal.

7.4 Applications will be assessed against the total annual income, and awards allocated to relevant funding stream

7.5 Students will be notified of the outcome of their bursary application through the PMS portal.

8. Tracking, Monitoring and Review

8.1 The College will ensure that this Policy is effective in terms of outcomes as well as intent. Assistant Principal - Curriculum: Student Services and Support will be accountable to the Executive Team for the development and delivery of the service.

8.2 The Bursary Team will record, track and monitor all payments made from the Bursary and Discretionary Funds and the Advanced Learning Loans Bursary Funds against funds available, on a monthly basis to ensure that the fund is not overspent.

8.3 The Finance Team will compile an annual return of funds used, for submission to the Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).

9. Appeals Process

9.1 Appeals regarding payments decisions should be sent to the Admissions and Bursary Manager via email: jackie.branson@nwslc.ac.uk. If the appeal or complaint is not resolved this will be passed to the Head of Student Services via email: andrew.howarth@nwslc.ac.uk.

If you have a complaint, please email feedback@nwslc.ac.uk this will be processed through the College Comments, Compliments and Complaints system, where your complaint will be investigated formally.

10. Equality Analysis

10.1 By virtue of the provisions of the Equality Act 2010, the College has a duty to have regard to the need to:

i. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other prohibited conduct;

ii. Advance equality of opportunity between people of different groups;

iii. Foster good relations between people from different groups.

10.2 In implementing this Policy and associated procedures, the College will actively take these aims into account as part of its decision-making process and will demonstrate how this has been undertaken.

10.3 Where necessary a full equality impact assessment will be undertaken.

11. Data Protection Impact Assessment

11.1 Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA) are an essential part of the College's accountability obligations under the UK GDPR. Conducting a DPIA is a legal requirement for any type of processing, including certain specified types of processing that are likely to result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals. Under UK GDPR, failure to carry out a DPIA when required may leave the College open to enforcement action.

11.2 A DPIA, relating to any relevant areas within this Policy and Procedure, will therefore be undertaken to enable the systematic analysis, identification and minimisation of data protection risks and to demonstrate how the College complies with its data protect obligations.

12. Policy Review

12.1 The Policy and associated documentation will be reviewed on an annual basis or as required by changes in law, regulation or as directed by the Principal.