



BOA 16 to 19 Bursary Policy

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Introduction

In September 2011, the government introduced a bursary fund providing support to young people from less advantaged backgrounds, living in England, to meet the cost of participating in post-16 education and training. This fund is split into two types of bursary:

- Vulnerable Student Bursary of £1,200 per year
- Discretionary Bursary of up to £950 per year.

Eligibility

To be eligible to receive the 16 to 19 Bursary in the 2025-26 academic year, a student must be aged 16 years old or over and under 19 years old on 31st August 2025. Where a student turns 19 years old during their programme of study, they can continue to be supported to the end of the academic year in which they turn 19 years old, or to the end of their programme of study, whichever is sooner.

Vulnerable Student Bursary

The Vulnerable Student Bursary is paid to students from the following defined vulnerable groups:

- Young people in care
- Care leavers
- Young people in receipt of Income Support or Universal Credit in their own name
- Young people in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payments (PIP) in their own name as well as either Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or Universal Credit in their own name.

Eligibility must be proven by relevant official documentation, such as:

- Letters from social services relating to young people in care or leaving care
- Letters confirming nominated benefits (as listed above) from the relevant local authority.

Discretionary Bursary

The Discretionary Bursary may be awarded to students who are experiencing financial difficulty. The main criterion employed by the Academy is eligibility for Free School Meals; details on how to apply and/or confirm eligibility for Free School Meals can be found on the [Academy website](#). Alternatively, contact Dr S May (Assistant Principal): 0121 359 9300 / simon.may@boa-academy.co.uk.

The Academy will also consider applications from students who are not eligible for Free School Meals but who can demonstrate gross annual household income of £28,000 or less as evidenced by receipt of benefit and/or P60, Tax Credit Award notice, or evidence of self-employment income.

The levels of payment awarded to students depend on the funds available each year and the number of applicants to the fund.

Applications and Payments

Information regarding the application process for the 16 to 19 Bursary can be found on the [Academy website](#), with a link provided to the electronic application form. If a paper application is required, or should any help be needed in completing the application, contact should be made with Ms T Skeete (Attendance Officer): 0121 359 9300 / teresa.skeete@boa-academy.co.uk.

For students commencing Year 12, applications for the 16 to 19 Bursary should be made by the end of September, although applications will be considered throughout the academic year.

For students going into Year 13, a declaration of continued eligibility will be sought at the end of Year 12 so that payments can continue with minimum interruption. New applications will also be considered throughout the academic year.

The 16 to 19 Bursary is split into six equal payments (one per half-term) across the academic year; these are made in October, November, January, March, April, and June of each academic year in which the student is eligible.

In addition to the eligibility criteria detailed above, payments of the 16 to 19 Bursary are dependent on good attendance (see 'Conditions and Monitoring' below). If a student applies successfully for the 16 to 19 Bursary and demonstrates good attendance, they will receive the first payment by the third week of October. This payment will include the backdated payment for the first half-term and will include the payment for the second half-term (Nov-Dec). All subsequent payments will be made at the start of each half-term.

If a student becomes eligible for the 16 to 19 Bursary during the academic year, they should contact the Attendance Officer (contact details above) and give notice that they wish to be considered either for the Vulnerable Student Bursary or the Discretionary Bursary.

Following a successful late application, payments will be determined in most cases *pro rata* from when the student became eligible and the course length remaining, at a maximum rate of £40 per week for the Vulnerable Student Bursary and £20 per week for the Discretionary Bursary. In exceptional circumstances, at the Principal's discretion, payments of the 16 to 19 Bursary may be backdated; payments cannot be backdated to include the previous academic year.

Students in receipt of the 16 to 19 Bursary may also apply to the Principal for further support to cover costs such as:

- Examination resit fees
- Travel to open days
- Course-related trips.

This funding will be considered on a case-by-case basis, subject to there being funds available. Eligibility for these payments must be demonstrated in writing giving clear justification.

Should circumstances alter during an academic year such that a student is no longer eligible for the 16 to 19 Bursary, they should inform the Attendance Officer (contact details above); subsequent payments will then be withheld.

Data and Confidentiality

The Academy will treat all information supplied under this policy as confidential and subject to the usual care and security measures, including disposing of material no longer required at the end of a student's time at the Academy.

Conditions and Monitoring

Payment of the six instalments is subject to maintaining at least 95% attendance to all timetabled lessons and tutor periods, and attending all examinations entered. This will be monitored by the Attendance Officer and Examinations Officer.

The Discretionary Bursary can also be withdrawn if a student's effort or behaviour cause concern to the extent that the Principal intervenes, which would occur if a student failed to heed prior formal warnings from BOA staff.

Payments

Instalments of the 16 to 19 Bursary will be paid via bank transfer directly to the student. In the case of applications from students for further support, payment will often be in kind and entail a transfer of funds to the relevant department, e.g. to cover the cost of examination resit fees or course-related trips; the exception is in the case of travel to open days, where payment will be made via bank transfer to the student and will be authorised following receipt of a valid travel or fuel receipt and proof of participation at the open day.

Decisions and Appeals

Vulnerable Student Bursaries are only available to students in a narrow range of circumstances. If the external authorities do not deem a student to be eligible for the relevant benefit or designation, they must appeal to the relevant local authority and resubmit an application to the Academy once eligibility has been demonstrated.

The funds available for Discretionary Bursaries will vary from year to year. Students are only eligible for a bank transfer payment if they are deemed eligible for Free School Meals or have proven hardship as evidenced by household documentation. A student can appeal to the Principal over their proven hardship or to their local authority over eligibility for Free School Meals. If a student appeals to their local authority, the Academy must be notified, in writing to the Principal, so that sufficient bursary money can be set aside pending the result of the appeal.

Ms H Stanton (Assistant Principal) will make the decision as to whether a student meets the attendance, effort, and/or behaviour criteria set out in this policy. If a decision is made to withhold a payment, the student will be notified in writing by the usual payment date.

Appeals against decisions made regarding proven hardship, attendance, effort, and/or behaviour should be made in writing to the Principal. The appeal must be lodged within 5 working days of the decision letter being received and a decision regarding the appeal must be reached and communicated within 5 working days of the appeal letter being received.

Fraud

If the Academy is notified by the relevant funding agency that a student has been found to be fraudulent in their claim for Free School Meals or for Income Support, Universal Credit, DLA, PIP, or ESA, then the Academy will:

- Cease all further payments
- Take steps to recover any money paid out under this fraudulent claim, including legal measures.

Students claiming any benefit fraudulently should also expect to be prosecuted by the paying agency in question.

Links to other Policies/Guidance

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- [BOA Free School Meal Application](#)
- Government guidance: [16 to 19 Bursary Fund](#)