

UTC South Durham

Bursary Fund Policy



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Approved by	Trustee Board
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Responsibility	Principal

Bursary Fund Policy

16-19 Bursary Fund What is it?

The 16 – 19 Bursary Fund is a grant calculated and paid to UTC South Durham by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). The grant aims to support vulnerable students and students in need of financial assistance to continue attending school by removing financial barriers to participation and education.

There are two types of bursary awards available:

- Vulnerable Student Bursary – a fixed amount per individual student based on specific criteria
- Discretionary Bursary Awards – a defined total fund each year which can be allocated to students on the basis of need by the UTC

The Discretionary Bursary Fund is a fixed total amount each year and there is no set allocation per student; it is allocated to support students on a case by case basis and the total available fund cannot be exceeded. However, the fund may be topped up by contributions received from our partners who are committed to reducing barriers to access the education we provide.

Students may apply to the Discretionary Bursary Fund for financial assistance at the start of the academic year. Students joining after 1 September should make their application within 4 weeks of joining UTC South Durham.

Bursaries Available

1. Vulnerable Student Bursary

A fixed award to students who fall within the following criteria:

- Young people in care
- Young people who have left care (care leaver)
- Student's receiving Income Support, or Universal Credit because they are financially supporting themselves or financially supporting themselves and someone who is dependent on them and living with them such as a child or partner
- Student's receiving Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments in their own right as well as Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit in their own right

For students qualifying for a Vulnerable Student Bursary, the UTC will normally receive a fixed award of up to £1,200 per year (which will be pro-rated for any students starting later in the course or part time). The UTC will agree with the student how the award can best be used to support them. The criteria for the award are set by the ESFA and must be strictly adhered to. Proof must be provided to the UTC to confirm eligibility for this award.

2. Discretionary Awards

These awards are more flexible and can be awarded to any student deemed eligible by the UTC and meeting the criteria below. Each individual provider sets the eligibility and priorities for this award, so neighbouring schools or colleges may have slightly different criteria. The UTC priorities for funding are as follows:

Travel

The main assistance provided to students is to cover excessive transport costs to and from UTC South Durham so that young people can access the specialist technical and career education we offer. We will look at each student's situation on a case by case basis but will normally only support the cheapest form of return travel to UTC South Durham by public transport or UTC transport. We expect all students or their parents/carers to make a contribution towards the cost of travel. Those on a part time timetable will be supported pro rata and if attendance fall below 95%, we may reduce the amount paid to reflect attendance.

Other Support

Students may also apply for financial assistance in the following areas:

- Books, materials and equipment needed to complete the chosen course
- Personal protective equipment and clothing appropriate for the course they are studying
- Borrowing a UTC laptop purchased from the fund for the duration of the course (if available)
- Travel and additional costs to access industry placements
- Costs of course trips
- Travel and additional costs to access interviews and open days at universities or assessment centres
- Meal subsidy for food while in the UTC (a standard allowance at the UTC catering facility)
- Specific support relating to their individual circumstances

Awards are payable to the student, and will be settled to their bank account on receipt of evidence of the expenditure incurred. Awards may be withdrawn or reduced if attendance causes concern and results in lost learning opportunity. Awards will be for term time only in most cases.

Frequently Asked Questions

Am I Eligible?

Bursaries can only be paid to students that meet the Department for Education's residency qualification. Students who would normally qualify for pre-16 Free School Meals or in households with total income less than £20,000 will be able to apply for Discretionary Bursary.

Proof of Income

Proof of income will be required from all members of the household / those supporting the student, this can include:

- A P60 for the latest full tax year
- Last three months' wage or salary clips
- Benefit Entitlement Letter
- Full Tax Credit Award Notice
- Annual Tax Summary issued by HMRC for last full tax year
- SA302 Tax Calculation Form
- Certified accounts, if self-employed.

How do I apply?

Application forms are available for collection from the Finance office.

Students in receipt of a Bursary in year 12 will need to re-apply in year 13. Requests for other support should be submitted as the need arises.

How long will it take for my application to be considered?

Applications are considered as soon as possible after receipt, but within a month at the very most. Applications are considered by the Principal and the Finance Director. Any information provided as part of the application process will be confidential and treated with sensitivity.

Successful applicants will receive an email to their UTC South Durham account confirming the amount awarded. Payment of the award will be determined by UTC South Durham – this may be to the student, travel company, or other party. The email will inform the student how the bursary will be paid. If further information is needed to support the application, a letter will be sent requesting this before a decision can be made. A letter will be sent informing the student if the application is not successful and the reason why, referring to the criteria specified above.

Can I apply more than once?

Yes – applications can be made at any time during the school year.

Is there a limit to the monies I can apply for?

There is no set amount allocated to individual students and no limit for an application. However, it should be understood that the funds provided to the UTC are limited and consideration needs to be given to ensuring sufficient monies are made available to those students who need the most assistance. Careful consideration will be given to each application.

Appeals

If your application is unsuccessful, you may appeal against the decision by writing to the Chair of Trustees at the UTC address. Your letter needs to include what you applied for, the amount you applied for and why you feel the application should have been successful, referring to the criteria within this policy.

Further information on the 16-19 Bursary Fund can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund>