



Financial support for students

1 **Policy statement**

King Edward VI College has two allocations of funds from the Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and one allocation of funds from the College Trustees:

1. 16-19 bursary fund (ESFA)

This provides 2 types of bursary

- a. Bursaries of up to £1200 for vulnerable groups
- b. Discretionary bursaries

Each category of funding is administered by the College according to criteria determined by the College but subject to national guidelines.

2. Free meals (ESFA)

This category of fund is administered by the College according to criteria determined by government policy.

3. Non-Compulsory trips (College Trustees)

This category of funding is administered by the College after being requested by a confirmed student in receipt of either Vulnerable Student Bursary or Discretionary Bursary. The student may request funding towards a non-compulsory subject related trip, via the Bursary support administrator(s) after paying a deposit for the trip.

2 **Policy aims**

King Edward VI College aims to have a workable and fair system of allocation for the distribution of funds, targeted at those most in need.

3 **Application of the policy**

3.1 **Vulnerable Student Bursary**

A bursary award equivalent of up to a maximum of £1,200 may be available for young people studying a course lasting 30 weeks or more (pro-rata payments for less than 30 weeks) who qualify as vulnerable young people. Defined in the government's 16-19 Bursary policy as:

1. Young people who are 'looked after', including unaccompanied asylum-seeking children
2. Young care leavers
3. Young people receiving income support or the equivalent universal credit (in their own right) because they are financially supporting themselves or financially supporting themselves plus a dependent partner or child.
4. Young people receiving either disability living allowance or personal independence payments, as well as employment support allowance (or universal credit in their own right).

3.2 Discretionary Student Bursary

The funds available for discretionary bursaries are cash limited. They are awarded to support students from low-income households. For eligible students the discretionary bursaries can help towards essential course related costs. These could include travel to college, equipment, books, stationery, compulsory trips, sports kit, and attending university open days. Discretionary bursaries can help with educational needs arising from a sudden change in circumstances, such as redundancy or a sudden drop in household income. A student could be eligible if:

- Aged 16 – 18 at the start of their course
AND
- Living in a household where the combined annual income is less than £30,000 inclusive of benefits (or living independently on an income below this level)
OR
- Living in a household with 4 or more children under the age of 18, where the combined annual income is less than £36,000, inclusive of benefits (or living independently on an income below this level)

3.3 Free meals

Students may be eligible for free meals if they or their parents/guardians fall into the below categories

- If the annual net household income, as assessed by the Bursary administrators, is below £25,000
- Receive Income support
- Receive Income-based jobseekers allowance
- Receive Income-related employment and support allowance
- Receive support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Receive the guarantee element of the state pension credit
- Receive Child tax credit (provided you're not also entitled to working tax credit and have an annual gross income below £16,190) subject to changes in government policy
- Receive Working tax credit run-on
Receive Universal credit with net earnings not exceeding the equivalent of £7400 pa subject to changes in government policy.

Entitlement to free meals will be assessed as part of the discretionary bursary fund application

Students must have applied to the institution where they are enrolled by completing a 16-19 bursary fund application via the online portal.

3.4 Non-Compulsory trips (College Trustees)

The funds available for non-compulsory trips are cash limited and therefore are not guaranteed. They are awarded to confirmed students in receipt of either Vulnerable Student Bursary or Discretionary Bursary. A confirmed student can request funding for a non-compulsory subject related trip, after paying the deposit for the trip and contacting the Bursary support administrator(s). A student can request the following subsidies from the College Trustees funding:

- 100% subsidy for a non-compulsory day trip, with a limit of 3 per academic year.
- 75% subsidy for a non-compulsory domestic residential trip, with a limit of 1 per academic year.
- 75% subsidy for a non-compulsory international residential trip, with a limit of 1 per academic year.

Allocation of this funding is cash limited, and available on a first come-first served basis.

To support families on low incomes, the initial deposit to secure a place on a trip will be set at £50.

For non-compulsory subject-related trips, all applications for trip funding will be limited to those students in greatest financial need: those in receipt of free meals or considered vulnerable.

4 Policy guidelines

- 4.1 All applications for the 16-19 Bursary are to be submitted via the PayMyStudent portal.
- 4.2 Detailed guidance on the application and appeals process is provided in the financial support for students guidance notes, available on the college web-site or from the Bursary Administrators.
- 4.3 All three categories of funding are subject to available funds. Recipients must evidence good attendance, progress, and behaviour. Allocation of funding may be withheld should attendance fall below 95% or if the student is in breach of the student code of conduct. The target level of attendance may be adjusted where a student's attendance has been affected by a disability or serious illness.
- 4.4 Students may have received an award in previous years; this is no guarantee of future awards. Students must make an application and provide new evidence each academic year.
- 4.5 The College will make awards based upon individual needs. These must be substantiated by evidence which will be retained in accordance with audit requirements. Evidence of all current household income, inclusive of benefits, will be required to support all claims.
- 4.6 The 16-19 bursary fund is cash limited and can only be allocated whilst funding lasts.
- 4.7 Each application is judged based on 'relative financial need'; not all applications will be successful.
- 4.8 Personal tutors will advise students, whenever possible and applicable, of other forms of financial support that may be available to them.
- 4.9 The threshold for the 16-19 bursary fund awards is agreed by the Finance and Business Manager. The income thresholds for the 2025/26 academic year are £30,000 with exceptions made for families of four children or greater, where the threshold is £36,000.

- 4.10** For successful applicants, payments in kind will be awarded for the cost of any books, equipment, resources, or compulsory trips relevant to the student's programme of study.
- 4.11** For successful applicants, financial support for travel to and from college will be awarded in the form of termly bank transfers into a bank account in the student's name. Payments will be made to students once their applications are approved, with the first payment being made by the end of September. Students should purchase the appropriate travel pass at the start of term and send their receipt to bursary@kedst.ac.uk. Students will be required to submit receipts for their travel on a termly basis.
- 4.12** Any additional payments that are necessary will be made by bank transfer, into a bank account in the student's name. All payments are required to be substantiated by a receipt/order confirmation, which should be submitted to bursary@kedst.ac.uk.
- 4.13** Funds are given to support the costs of attending College and associated study. The grant may be repayable if the student fails to complete the course, their attendance is at an unacceptable level or effort is considered to be below a satisfactory level. If the student fails to meet these conditions, they must be aware that they may be asked to repay funds and will be billed accordingly.
- 4.14** The 16-19 bursary is awarded on the condition that students maintain good attendance, behaviour, and academic progress. Students must:
- Maintain at least 95% attendance across all timetabled lessons (excluding approved absences).
 - Demonstrate good behaviour and adherence to the College's Student Code of Conduct.
 - Engage with their studies, making reasonable academic progress.
- If a student's attendance falls below 95%, or they are subject to disciplinary action, bursary payments may be reduced, suspended, or withdrawn at the discretion of the Bursary Support Team. Exceptions will be considered for students with documented medical conditions or exceptional circumstances. Appeals against a funding decision can be made following the process outlined in Section 4.2 of this policy.
- 4.15** If a student's financial circumstances change during the academic year (e.g., loss of employment, change in household income, change in benefits), they must notify the Bursary Support Team immediately.
- Failure to report significant financial changes may result in adjustments to bursary payments or a request to repay funds if overpayment has occurred.
- 4.16** The College recognises that some students may face additional financial barriers beyond household income. The Bursary Support Team will consider additional discretionary support for:
- Students with Special Educational Needs (SEN) requiring specific resources.
 - Young carers who may face fluctuating financial hardship.
 - Students experiencing temporary financial crisis, such as family breakdown or eviction.
- Students in these situations are encouraged to speak confidentially to the Bursary Support Team to explore additional funding options.

- 4.17** The College supports the principles of equality and diversity in the disbursement of the fund and monitors the distribution of the fund across various student cohort groups including ethnicity, gender, and disability. The impact of the fund on students' attendance, retention, and achievement is considered by senior managers and governors.
- 4.18** Awards from the 16-19 Bursary Fund may only be back dated to the start of the academic term in which the application is received.
- 4.19** As stipulated by ESFA guidance on the fund, 5% of the fund will be used by the college as a contribution to the costs of administering the fund.

5 Equality Impact

The College's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy has been taken into account when considering this policy.

Date of review	Date agreed	JCC	Governors	Review date	Comments
February 2024	February 2024	N/A	LGB 06/03/2024	February 2025	Updated August 2025

Appeals Process

We are committed to ensuring that decisions relating to financial support are made fairly, transparently and in line with policy. However, we recognise that students and/or their families may wish to appeal a decision.

Grounds for Appeal

An appeal may be submitted where:

- There is reason to believe an error was made in assessing eligibility or calculating an award.
- Relevant personal or financial information was not fully considered.
- A student's circumstances have changed significantly since the application was submitted.

Procedure

1. Informal Resolution

In the first instance, students are encouraged to speak with the Bursary Support Administrator to seek clarification or discuss any concerns. This informal step often resolves most queries.

2. Formal Appeal Submission

If concerns remain, a formal written appeal should be submitted to the **Business and Finance Manager** within **10 working days** of receiving the decision. The appeal must clearly state the grounds and include any supporting evidence.

3. Appeal Review

The appeal will be considered by the business and finance manager or a senior manager, excluding any staff involved in the original decision. A written response will normally be issued within **15 working days** of receiving the appeal.

4. Final Decision

The outcome of the appeal will be final. There is no further right of appeal within the College.

Additional Information

- During the appeal process, existing bursary payments may be paused but not withdrawn.
- Students can seek advice and support from their Personal Tutor or Student Services when preparing an appeal.