



CITY OF LONDON COLLEGE

CHANGING FUTURES ASPIRING SUCCESS

Student Support Funds Policy

2026/27

Policy	Student Support Funds
Date	June 2026
Approved by	Student Support Manager
Next review due	June 2027

SCOPE

Students on courses that are funded by the Department of Education (DfE) who meet the DfE residency criteria attending Gloucestershire College Higher National Certificate / Diploma awarded by Pearson.

PURPOSE

This Student Support Fund Policy establishes guidelines and procedures for allocating and disbursing funds to support students pursuing further education. The fund aims to help eligible students overcome financial barriers that may hinder their academic progress.

For tuition fee funding, refer to the Tuition Fee Policy.

OBJECTIVE

Ensure student applications to the support fund are assessed according to eligibility criteria and awarded amounts as set out in the policy.

Ensure students have the right to appeal decisions, considering their individual circumstances.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The College Principal and Executive team are responsible for meeting financial regulations in line with policy.

The registry team are responsible for gathering sufficient evidence as proof of eligibility and processing applications accurately, allocate funding to students in line with this policy.

Students are responsible for providing evidence of eligibility and informing Student Support of any change of circumstances, which may affect their award.

MONITORING PROCESS

The Student Support Fund will be internally audited annually through process auditing and individual performance checkpoints.

All assessments will be conducted in line with the Equality Act 2010 to ensure fairness and non-discrimination.

PROCEDURE

1. Eligibility

Students who are in receipt of income-based benefits or if they are being supported by someone in receipt of income-based benefits. These benefits are:

- Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Supported under part VI of the immigration and Asylum Act 1999

- Universal Credit (provided earnings are less than £26,800 per annum)
- Disability Living Allowance (or the new Personal Independence Payments) **and** Employment Support Allowance (or Universal Credit as a replacement for ESA) in their own right

Students whose gross household income is under £26,800 per year are eligible for a funding package. Household income refers only to adults that have parental responsibility for the students or the income of anyone else who is supporting the student for example, their partner or sibling. Income refers to the income earned from employment only. Students must be above the age of 18 years old.

16 – 19 Bursary Fund

This applies to students aged 19-25 with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

Enhanced Bursary (Vulnerable groups)

This applies to students who are:

- In care or a care leaver
- 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. We would need evidence to show that they are living independently.
- 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.

Further Education Free Meals

Eligible students can only apply for the Further Education Free Meals scheme if they are aged 19-25 if they have an EHCP.

And enrolled on a further education course funded via the DfE and in receipt or being supported by someone in receipt of the following benefits:

- Income related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Supported under part VI of the immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- Universal Credit

From the start of the 2026 to 2027 academic year, all students from households in receipt of Universal Credit will be entitled to receive a free meal. If the household income exceeds the bursary threshold the student will only be eligible for meal support.

Advanced Learner Loan

- Students must have been approved for an Advanced Learning Loan course before applying to the bursary fund.
- If the application is in progress funding will not be awarded until it is approved.
- Students will need to meet the same eligibility as the Discretionary Support Fund.

In addition to the above criteria applications are assessed based on actual financial need. The application will be used to identify individual need in order to attend their course.

2. Application

Applications will open on Monday 1st June 2026 and will close on Friday 2nd July 2027 (earlier if the funds become exhausted). Applications will be assessed in date-applied order. Our aim is to assess applications within 10 working days.

3. Awards

Band	Criteria
1	Vulnerable students (Enhanced Bursary)
2	Supported by someone who is not working or has a household income lower than £20,000
3	Household income between £20,001 - £26,800

Course costs

Mandatory course costs are provided by each department.

Fee type	Awards		
	Band 1	Band 2	Band 3
Material fees	100%	100%	0%
Exam/Registration	n/a	100%	100%

Funding will not be given for exam re-sits.

Weekly Bursary Payments

[CoLC travel award rates and applicable campus travel zones to be approved before implementation.]

Payments will be made weekly by BACS, which will be paid where possible directly into the student's own bank account. To receive payment students will need to have minimum 85% attendance each week. Authorised absences and sickness allowance will be taken into consideration only when applied in writing. Behaviour will also be monitored, and payments will be held if appropriate.

Students will be asked to provide evidence of travel payments at the beginning of the academic year and at other points through the year. Failure to provide evidence could result in payments being held and withdrawn. Any in year changes to students travel arrangements will be considered by the College registry.

Further Education Free Meals

Each successful application is awarded £4.50 per day for each day they attend college.

This award is made up of a £2.61 contribution from the DfE and £1.89 from the discretionary support fund. This is calculated on students being able to purchase a healthy option or hot meal from the outlets available on campus.

Students who are eligible for Band 1 funding will be awarded free meals from their overall vulnerable bursary allowance if they identify this as a need in their application.

Households that are in receipt of Universal Credit but do not meet the income threshold for the College's Student Support Fund will be awarded £4.50 per day. They will only be eligible for meal support.

19+ Travel Payments

Students will be awarded the following:

Distance	Award
2-9 miles (one way)	£6 per day
10+ miles (one way)	£8 per day

Payments will be made weekly, and attendance will be monitored. If overall attendance falls below 85% payments will be held and students will need to appeal to the Student Support Manager or coordinator.

19+ Progressing Enhanced Bursary

Students who were previously receiving the Enhanced Bursary but who are now eligible for 19+ funding will be awarded the following:

Award	Amount
Course fees	100%
Travel	£20 per week
Meals	£4 per day

20+ Childcare

Approved childcare providers (Ofsted registered) – paid directly to the childcare provider.

Other Private Nurseries (OFSTED registered) – paid directly to childcare provider.

A maximum of £70 per full day session

Childcare will only be granted for days timetabled in college, or exams that fall outside of the timetabled hours.

NB: Childcare providers must be able to produce their fee policy upon request. Prices may be compared with other local providers and if the college deems the prices to be illogical, funding may be adjusted or declined.

Funding will only be approved for providers who have an OFSTED inspection grading of good or outstanding or satisfactory. If the provider has recently received an overall grading of requirements improvement or inadequate, time will be allowed for required action to be taken. If a provider has not been inspected, then funding will be approved. Annual checks of inspection reports will be conducted by the Student Support team. If a student would still like to use a provider graded requires improvement or inadequate they will need to appeal.

All childcare funding is based on attendance and will be monitored. A minimum attendance level of 85% is required to receive funding for childcare costs, should attendance fall below this level funding may be reduced or held until the absence is authorised.

If a student withdraws from their course after enrolling, the college has no responsibility for future fees and charges. However, we will provide the provider with a month notice before withdrawing the funding.

If a student wishes to transfer providers during their course, they will either need to keep attending the first provider for the months' notice and transfer after or if they wish to transfer

sooner, they will need to pay a month themselves at either provider. The college will not pay two providers for the same month. An exception to this would be if the parent had made a formal complaint against the provider and have provided evidence.

If the student does not attend from the start of the course funding will not be paid.

Advanced Learning Loan Bursary Fund

All awards will be made in line with the 19+ award structure for childcare.

4. Payments

Payments are made either directly to the department, the childcare provider, or direct to the student. If fees have been paid in full prior to the funding application a refund will be paid directly to the student.

5. Receipts

Students will be asked to provide evidence of travel payments at the beginning of the academic year and at other points through the year. Failure to provide evidence could result in payments being held and withdrawn. Any in year changes to students travel arrangements will be considered by the Student Support Manager.

Student may be asked to produce receipts of items purchased with vouchers and cash grants if appropriate.

6. Back payments

Applications submitted after half terms / end of terms will have travel payments backdated to the start of the term / half term in which they submitted their completed application.

Students who apply for funding mid-year due to changes in circumstance will be backdated to when the circumstances changed.

7. Appeals

Every student has the right to appeal against the amount of support offered. This process will open after the first half term. Exceptions will be made for students who are open to Safeguarding. Appeals must be made through Student Services. The application will then be reassessed by the Student Support Manager, Student Support Co-ordinator, or Head of Student Support. Appeals may also be referred to our Executive team in the event of safeguarding cases, specific amounts requested or in the event of limited funds being available. Appeals will be processed within 10 working days of the date received.

The college can provide emergency support to students for food without them being formally assessed if we determine them to be in real need. This would only relate to one off support. If the student requires ongoing support they would need a full assessment.

Additional Funding support

Additional Support	Responsibility	Storage
Laptop loan and carry bag	IT Support	IT Support offices
£20/£10 food voucher	Procurement	Student Services safe
£20 clothing voucher	Procurement	Student Services safe

Additional Support	Responsibility	Storage
£5 CoLC Food Vouchers	Student Services	Student Services safe
Free Meals	Student Services	N/A
£300 grant towards purchasing a laptop (19+ only)	Student Services	N/A
Books and Registration	Student Services	N/A
UCAS Application Fee	Student Services	N/A
£400 grant toward personal counselling (Level 4 Counselling only)	Student Services	N/A
Costs to support with work placements	Student Services	N/A

8. Withdrawals

If a student withdraws all payments will cease as of the withdrawal date. All equipment that has been funded will remain the property of City of London College and we reserve the right to reclaim any funds and equipment that the student has been awarded, including funding paid to academic departments.

9. Complaints

If a student would like to make a complaint about the service they have received or the award they have been given from the Student Support Fund they can follow our college complaints process through the CoLC complaints procedure.

10. Higher Education Funding

Student Opportunities (Higher Education)

Eligibility and application

Students will need to complete an application form available from Student Services detailing what support they require and declare any household income and expenditure.

Students are required to provide additional evidence to support their application, for example bank statements or proof of benefit.

Students can only apply to the Student Opportunity fund if they have applied for and taken out a loan or grant from Student Finance England

Awards

Payments can be made for emergencies or exceptional circumstances e.g., household bills, rent, travel, and food. Awards will be based on individual circumstances, considering the type of support the student needs, their income/expenditure, and the intensity of their course.

Limits

The maximum amount that can be awarded per student per year is:

- Full time - £1,000
- Part time - £500

11. External Training Partner (ASF Funding)

Eligibility and Assessment

Students need to meet the same eligibility as the Discretionary Support Fund (i.e be in receipt of an income based benefit or on a low income)

Eligibility, including intention to enrol onto the course (prior to it being input onto the College student records system) will be confirmed by an approved external training partner

Awards will be allocated by an approved external training partner using the Request for Funding form and sent to CoLC for payment.

Awards

Award type	Amount	Payment
Travel	CoLC - £10 per day GLA - £12 per day	Weekly for duration of the course
Food	£4.50 per day for the day they attend the learning centres	Weekly for duration of the course

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

All Student Support Fund documents will have a declaration or privacy notice approved by the CoLC Data Protection Officer. An annual review will take place via the Student Support Data Protection Register. All application forms will be saved securely online in line with the City of London College Data Protection Policy.

RELATED POLICIES

Related Policies and Procedures	Policy
Tuition Fee Policy	Internal
Adult Funding Rules 2026/27	External
Further Education Free Meals Guidance 2026/27	External
Student Bursary Guide	Internal Document

Next review due: June 2027

Implementation note: CoLC must confirm that each funding stream applies to its provision and approve locally applicable travel rates, childcare arrangements, delivery-partner arrangements and financial commitments before issuing this policy to students.