

BURSARY FUND POLICY

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This Policy links to:

Department for Education guidance

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Introduction

This policy is based on the published guidance provided by the Department for Education (DFE) and consolidates best practice within the sector.

The British Racing School can access DFE support for the provision of a number of bursaries, as set out below. The aim of all the bursary funds is to ensure that students are supported to overcome barriers to their participation in education.

16-19 year olds

Vulnerable Bursary – up to £1,200 a year for young people in one of the defined groups

Discretionary Bursary – awarded according to individual need

Residential Bursary – awarded to support students, from low income households, in meeting the board and lodging fee

Learners who are eligible for support are not automatically entitled to it. If demand exceeds the available funding reduced awards may be given. When the funds are fully committed no further awards will be made.

Statement

The bursary funds can provide some financial assistance with the costs associated with attending the BRS; for example, residential fee for subsistence, equipment, transport and meals when away from the college. The funds are designed to assist a priority target group of learners who are socially or economically disadvantaged. The funds will be distributed in a consistent and transparent manner in accordance with the guidance issued by the DFE.

The aim of the BRS is to use the funds to make the maximum impact on recruitment, attendance, retention, achievement and success rates.

The availability of bursary funds is communicated to students and parents at interview, via the trainee handbook and again to students as part of the induction talk. In addition hostel staff are asked to inform Lawrie Gillespie should they have concerns that a student is struggling financially whilst on a course at the BRS.

Parents are reminded of the residential bursary when invoiced for the board and lodging charge.

Information

The DFE publish guidance that sets out the criteria for the distribution of these funds and is updated on an annual basis.

All applicants must complete an application form at the start of the learner's course, available from the training office or sent to individuals by post at their request (QF 377). Support is available for those who require assistance completing the application form.

General Eligibility

All full time and part time DFE funded learners aged 16-19 are eligible to apply for support.

Applications for an award from the Residential Bursary Fund are means tested and require proof of eligibility in support. Examples of suitable evidence are benefit letters, Tax Credit Award Notices or proof of low income to verify household income. Applications for an award from the Discretionary Bursary Fund

will be considered on their merits, although a prior granting of an award from the Residential Bursary Fund would indicate that an award should be granted in most cases.

Home Office documentation is required where appropriate to prove residency status.

Learners who are undertaking waged Apprenticeships are not eligible for support.

16-19 Bursary Fund

To be eligible for these awards learners must not have had their 19th birthday. Where learners turn 19 during their programme of study, they can continue to be supported to the end of the academic year.

All learners eligible to apply will be prioritised for funding as follows:

- A. A bursary of £1,200 for young people in the following groups, defined as vulnerable:
 - i. In care
 - ii. Care leavers
 - iii. 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
 - iv. 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
- B. 16-19 Discretionary Bursary: this element of the bursary is to be used to support students who are facing financial barriers to participation and need help to remain on their course at the BRS.

All students are eligible to apply for support and all application should be assessed on their merits. It is recognised that the residential nature of BRS courses can result in the students not being able to rely on financial support from their family.

The financial requirements of students on residential courses at the BRS are likely to be small, the standard discretionary bursary awards is therefore £30 per week, to be paid on Friday lunchtime.

16-19 Categories of Support

Learners who are identified as being in the priority group (most vulnerable) will be guaranteed to receive £1,200 subject to meeting the BRS criteria as outlined above. Payments will be awarded on a pro-rata basis for learners on the Foundation Course, learners that start their courses late or complete early.

Eligible learners identified as most vulnerable will have their upfront awards i.e. equipment, residential fee for subsistence from the value of the bursary at the start of their course. The amount remaining will be calculated and paid weekly one week in arrears, normally by BACS Credit Transfer, throughout the duration of the course where satisfactory attendance and behaviour has been met.

Residential Bursary

Applications for assistance with the cost of the residential fees need to be received prior to a student stating a course. Learners can apply for a bursary to cover up to 80% of the cost, depending on household income, as set out below.

| Household Income | Up to £35,000 | Up to £40,000 | Up to £45,000 | Above £40,000 |
|-------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Standard accommodation charge | £950.00 | £950.00 | £950.00 | £950.00 |
| Reduction to Charge | 80% | 60% | 20% | 0% |



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|--------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Accommodation Charge due | £190.00 | £380.00 | £760.00 | £950.00 |
|--------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|

Course Materials and Equipment

Applications for assistance with the cost of essential equipment and transport will be supported where funds allow. Assessments will be made against equipment lists provided by the BRS prior to the start of the course. Any items purchased by learners will only be reimbursed with proof of the original receipted invoice from an approved supplier.

Due to the importance of safety equipment where students require support to purchase a riding hat they will be taken to Gibsons Saddlers by a member of the yard team to ensure that the hat purchased fits correctly.

Administration

Staff and students will be informed about student support funds and how to apply. Application forms will be available from the Training Office, prior to the start of the student's course or sent to individuals by post at their request.

Application forms must be completed for all awards made from the learner support funds. Up to date valid supporting evidence (within 3 months from the date of application form) must be produced at the time of application; staff administering the funds will verify the information on the application form. Application form saved at QF 374.

Decisions will be made in accordance with the criteria agreed at the beginning of the course. Applicants will be informed of decisions in writing or verbally. Decisions aim to be communicated to applicants within two weeks of a correctly completed application form being submitted and processed.

It is expected that students attend and be on time to all lectures, practical sessions, enrichment activities, tutorials and any other timetabled activity which is part of their programme of study.

Where students are in breach of the BRS Code of Conduct this will lead to withdrawal or suspension of any bursary or grant payments, subject to review.

Recording and Maintaining Data (PICs)

16-19 Bursary Fund

Data fields for the 16-19 Bursary Fund are included in the ILR and should be completed to record details of the bursaries awarded to students in the defined vulnerable groups and for discretionary purposes.

The following codes should be entered in the LSR field of the ILR:

Code 55: 16-19 Bursary – Vulnerable Groups.

Where a young person is in the following groups, defined as vulnerable :

- i. In care
- ii. Care leavers
- iii. 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
- iv. 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

Code 56: 16-19 Bursary – Discretionary.

Please Note: Where a young person falls into both categories both codes should be entered in the LSR fields of the ILR.

Appeals

If anyone is dissatisfied with the decision regarding an award, they will be advised to appeal in writing following BRS complaints procedure. They should state clearly why they are appealing and give reasons. Supporting evidence should be provided when requesting a review of the decision.

Allocation

To avoid multiple applications, payments will be considered for the course duration.

Applicants will be notified verbally how much has been allocated according to the categories for which they have applied, including how payment will be made.

In all cases the application will be judged on a learner's individual need as outlined in the DFE Funding Guidance

Responsibilities

Recruitment co-ordinator/Operations Manager/Finance Assistant

1. To be the first contact point for applications.
2. To provide information, advice and guidance to learners about the fund, how to apply and other financial assistance.
3. To ensure the maintenance of records and efficient administration of Learner Support Funds in line with SFA/EFA guidelines.

Contracts and Performance Manager/Finance Assistant

1. To approve and monitor the administration of the application process and provide timely reports.
2. To report to the Senior Management Team regarding the usage of the funds and make recommendations for necessary changes.
3. Extract data from system for eligibility for payment on a 6 weekly basis.

Finance Assistant

1. Process all accepted/approved payments on a weekly basis.