

FE Bursary Policy 2021-22 – Policy and Guidance

Introduction

The Cornwall College Group (TCCG) believes that every individual deserves the opportunity to access education and training to develop themselves, both personally and professionally. We recognise that for some people this can present more of a challenge in terms of paying for essential costs such as travel to college, meals and childcare. To support these individuals the Government and The Cornwall College Group allocate a series of funds for people of different ages groups to support them with some of these costs. In line with Government guidance, the main priorities for this funding are students who are **economically** or **socially disadvantaged**, who need support to assist them in attending and who have financial difficulties.

Policy Statement

It is the intention of TCCG to ensure that all learners receive appropriate support from the relevant sources. The College administers internal and external Further Education financial support funds for learners whose access to, or completion of, education may be affected by financial factors. The College uses these funds to support learners according to their personal financial circumstances.

This document sets out how the College uses its bursary allocations to support learners financially. Guidance relating to the other funding is available separately from the Student Experience team.

This policy applies to Government funded learners only and does not include those studying on an Apprenticeship or Traineeship.

Support available for eligible learners aged 16 -18

- Funding support for travel
- Free College Meals
- Childcare Support – Care to Learn
- Residential Bursary

Vulnerable Young Learner Bursary

An annual **Access to Education bursary** of up to £1,200 is available for young people who are aged 16-18 at the start of their course and are:

- 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
- In care
- A care leaver
- Receiving Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments in their own right as well as Employment and Support Allowance and Universal Credit in their own right

Learners who receive a Vulnerable Young Learner Bursary will be eligible for general funding support to help with travel costs, up to £515

The remaining funds (up to £685) are available to the student for any identified needs they may have. The learner can complete an application within the Pay My Student Bursary portal outlining their individual need. Wherever

possible purchases and spends are made on the student behalf or, if required we can refund the learner, subject to the necessary receipts being submitted.

This fund is not means tested. Learners who start later in the year and those on short courses will receive pro-rata payments

Free College Meals

Students between the ages of 16 and 18 on 31st August 2020 will be eligible for free meals, if parents or guardians are in receipt of certain benefits.

Students who are in receipt of benefits in their own right will also qualify.

Students aged between 19 and 25 who have an EHC Plan and are aged between 16 and 18 on 31st August 2019 are also entitled to a free meal, if they meet the income eligibility criteria of a household income under £16,190.

Qualifying benefits:

- Income Support
- income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided they are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190, as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC))
- Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for 4 weeks after someone stops qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit with net earnings not exceeding the equivalent of £7,400 pa

Childcare support for learners aged 16 to 20

Care to Learn is a government funding scheme to support parents under 20 years of age with childcare costs. This childcare support will not affect your own or your family's benefits or allowances. This support is not means tested and you do not have to be in receipt of benefits or a low income in order to qualify for this support.

- Young parents must meet the general eligibility criteria
- The young parent must be aged 20 or under on the first day of your course
- The young parents child(ren) must be placed in Ofsted-registered childcare
- The young parent's income is NOT assessed

Residential Bursary Fund (RBF)

Some learners may need to be resident during term-time in order to participate because their chosen course is not available locally. The Residential Bursary Fund (RBF) is intended to provide financial support towards the costs of accommodation for learners living further than a daily travel time of 2 hours from their campus.

Transport

The Cornwall College Group offers financial support for transport. Learners aged between 16-18 years, with a household income below £31,000 will be eligible to apply for financial support towards the cost of a travel pass.

Funding Support

Support will be subject to attendance being no less than 90%. If termly attendance falls below TCCG target, financial assistance can be withheld. Tutors will be consulted regarding assessment of progress and attendance to determine whether to continue with the financial assistance. In some cases financial support will be withdrawn following consultation with the Student Experience Manager and Student Bursary Coordinator.

Assistance will only be granted during term time and will not normally be considered for support outside of term time.

Support available for learners aged 19+

Award categories

- **Tuition fees** *household income less than £31,000*
- **Learner Travel** *household income less than £31,000*
- **Childcare Support** *household income less than £31,000*
- **Residential Access Fund** *household income less than £31,000*

Tuition fees

Depending on age, qualifications undertaken and/or benefits/allowances claimed learners may not have to pay tuition fees. In certain circumstances learners tuition fees may be funded by the Learner Support Fund. Learners will need to check with the central Registry Office on campus to see if they are eligible for fee remission or a Student Loan

Transport

Support to assist with transport is available to learners aged 19 or over at the start of their course. Learners may be able to use a college bus, or receive a contribution towards fuel costs. This was raised from 20p per mile to 30p per mile on the 1st March 2022 to support with the higher cost of living. We are unable to support learners living within a three mile radius of the campus they are attending.

Childcare Support – for learners aged 20+ on 31st August 2021

Assistance may be granted towards the cost of childcare for eligible learners with dependent children aged up to 14 years (18 for children with a disability). This bursary is available only when no government support (Free Early Education) is being received. Support will be considered only for Ofsted registered childcare. Informal childcare (e.g. provided by a relative) cannot be supported.

- Learners must meet the general bursary eligibility criteria
- The learners child(ren) must be placed in Ofsted registered childcare
- Learners must be aged 20 or over on 31st August 2021

Learners who have an unemployed partner will not normally be supported with Childcare funding.

Funding will be limited to a maximum of £6.00 per hour. Please check that there are no price increases intended for the forthcoming year.

Payment is for time-tabled tuition hours only. Childcare assessments may be subject to change once your timetable has been confirmed. If the stated hours on your application form are more than your confirmed timetabled hours your childcare allocation will be reduced accordingly.

If you decide to change providers the College is unable to pay notice given to your childcare provider. This cost will have to be met by the learner. All learners supported with childcare costs are expected to pay for all ancillary charges e.g. nappies, trips out etc.

The Fund is unable to pay for childcare if the learner is absent from College and has not contacted their tutor or Student Services to report the circumstances or illness; in such cases the learner will be expected to pay 100% of the cost of the childcare for the duration of the absence.

Payments for childcare will be made directly to the childcare provider monthly, in arrears, upon receipt of a timesheet. Retainers for the summer holiday period is not covered by the FE Bursary Fund.

Please do not assume childcare will be paid until you receive a letter stating how much support has been allocated to you.

Residential Access Fund

The Residential Access Fund (RAF) is intended to provide financial support towards the costs of accommodation for those aged 19+. For those campuses delivering specialist provision, and if the learner's chosen course is not available locally, and the learner lives more than 2 hours travel time, they may need to be resident during term-time in order to participate. Learners receiving Housing Benefit are not eligible. Please contact the Residential team for further information.

Support available for learners aged 19+ in receipt of an Advanced Learning Loan

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|---|---------------------------------------|--|
| ➤ | <i>Learner Travel</i> | <i>household income less than £31,000</i> |
| ➤ | <i>Childcare Support</i> | <i>household income less than £31,000</i> |
| ➤ | <i>Residential Access Fund</i> | <i>household income less than £31,000</i> |

Information for all categories as for students aged 19+ support and detailed on previous pages

Eligibility

General eligibility criteria

- Learners must be enrolled on an eligible course. Awards will not be made to learners who are not enrolled, or where an enrolment is pending
- Learners must be able to demonstrate financial hardship (**household income below limits specified**). Evidence of income is required
- Learners who are eligible for the Guaranteed Learner Bursary do not need to demonstrate financial hardship but must provide evidence of eligibility
- The College reserves the right to make awards to learners who appear to be outside the financial criteria, based on individual and exceptional circumstances
- Learners must meet the residency and other eligibility criteria as set out in the Government Funding Guidance for the relevant academic year
- Learners studying a Higher Education course are not eligible and should contact Student Services for hardship funding
- Learners on any waged Apprenticeship or any learning or training undertaken where a wage is being drawn are not eligible
- Learners must meet the stated age requirements on 31 August 2021

Assessment of Applications

Applications will only be considered when submitted using our online portal or on the appropriate application form and with the required evidence.

All applications for funding will be considered by set criteria as laid out in this document.

Income assessment - general FE Discretionary Bursaries

- Learners will be assessed on the annual gross taxable household income of the learner, the learner's partner or the learner's parents as appropriate. Awards will not be made where a learner's household income is above the threshold.
- Where a learner lives with a partner the income of both the learner and the learner's partner will be used for the calculation
- Where a learner is aged 19 or over, and lives with their parent(s), each case will be assessed individually to decide whether the learner is dependent on their parents

Required evidence

All applications require evidence of income to be provided. Evidence may include

- P60 issued by current employer dated April 2021
- Photocopies of benefit award letter no more than 3 months old. In exceptional circumstances, where it is not possible to obtain evidence less than 3 months old, we are able to use bank statements showing benefit payments
- Details of accounts for self-employment.
- Tax credit award letter for 2022/2022 showing finalised income for 2020/2021.
- Written confirmation of the young person's current or previous looked after status

Applications will be processed from 1st July.

Notification of award

Fully completed forms, with all supporting evidence attached, will normally be processed within 28 days of receipt but in peak times (summer holidays and the start of the academic year) this may take longer. Once your application has been assessed you will receive an award notification email letter which will indicate how your award will be paid. If your application is not successful you will be notified. Wherever possible payments are made via internal transfers within the college.

Payments

Personal payments such as mileage claims will be paid directly into learners bank accounts. Childcare payments will be made direct to the childcare provider.

Attendance Requirements

If attendance falls below the college target of 90% on-going funding will be withheld. Study Programme Managers in consultation with the Student Bursary Coordinator will decide whether to reinstate funding based on progress, attitude, and reason for absence.

We will take account of all personal circumstances when determining satisfactory attendance.

Appeals Procedure

Decisions regarding the payment or non payment of monies from the Fund will be made in accordance with Government guidelines for administration of the fund and TCCG policy.

If you are dissatisfied with any decision regarding the decision to not award funding support you may request an appeal. Your reasons for wanting an appeal should be clearly stated and addressed to the Student Finance Manager.

Appeals will not be accepted where a turndown has been made due to the funds being exhausted.

Learners who withdraw

Learners who receive an award and later withdraw from their course may be asked to repay this award.

False or Fraudulent Applications

Where learners are found to have intentionally given misleading or inaccurate information the College will claim back the award made. Providing false statements may result in the learner being sanctioned in accordance with the TCCG Disciplinary Policy.

Support not granted

- If you have **not** been a resident in the EU for 3 years prior to the start of the course.
- If you have a gross taxable household income that exceeds the limits stated
- Whilst a main programme of study is supported any further or additional add-on courses will not normally be considered for funding. Guaranteed Bursaries are not affected.
- If you are already being supported by another college your application will not be considered.

Security measures

TCCG complies fully to its obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 and Data Protection Act 2018 and other relevant legislation regarding the correct handling, use, storage and retention of student information. Further information can be found on our website:

<https://www.cornwall.ac.uk/governance/your-information>

14. Additional assistance

There may be other sources of help which can be accessed for possible financial assistance.

Learner Finances <https://www.gov.uk/further-education->

Lifelong Learning <http://www.lifelonglearning.co.uk>

Learner money [http:// www.family-action.org.uk](http://www.family-action.org.uk)

Lone Parent Advisor [Contact your Local Job Centre](#)

General Bursaries & Charities www.turn2us.org