

## **Learner Support Fund FAQs**

### ***How do I apply for The Learner Support Fund?***

Application forms are available at Reception or can be downloaded from the college website. If you would like a form posting out please send us an email requesting one to [financial-support@sheffcol.ac.uk](mailto:financial-support@sheffcol.ac.uk) stating age of the student on the 31<sup>st</sup> of August, name and address.

### ***When will I hear about my LSF?***

You will be informed of the outcome of your application by letter.

The first term is the busiest and due to the volume of applications received it can take several weeks to receive a response. However, we always backdate applications during this term and any payments due to you will be made ASAP.

Your patience at this time is appreciated.

Whilst we are happy to try and help if you are facing significant financial hardship we do ask that you consider the volumes of applications we are trying to assess. We will send acknowledgement of your application. If you have received that please don't call to check we have received it.

## ***Awards***

### ***What will my award be?***

Awards are based on the essential costs of attending college. We look at travel costs if you live more than 1.5 miles from college. If you live more than 1.5 miles away from college your award will be based on the cheapest available weekly pass cost. Travel awards are not guaranteed to cover all travel costs.

We also pay for costs such as books, uniform, DBS checks and essential trips.

We work with course leaders to determine how much it costs to buy the equipment you need and we award the amount agreed with them.

Unfortunately we cannot support with living costs e.g. rent, bills etc.

***When will I be paid?***

Your award letter will show the breakdown of your award and expected payment dates.

Please note we always show any payments that are backdated - so if your letter shows payments due on a date that has already passed please allow 10 working days for this to reach your bank account.

Travel is paid for most students per half term, it is up to you to budget that money for the period allocated.

***How do I access the free College Meals I have been awarded?***

£2.60 will be available each day you are timetabled to be in college. This is pre-loaded each day on your college ID card, which you must present at the till in order to pay for your meal.

There will be healthy meal deals (hot or cold) available for the value of £2.60.

Please note, money for Free College Meals is not transferable to another day or other students.

If you wish to spend over the £2.60 daily amount you will be able to pay the difference at the till with cash.

***I have my award letter - why is some of my award marked as 'internal transfer'?***

Where possible we pay costs for things like trips and kit directly to your department.

The department will then work with you to order equipment. You should speak with your tutor mentor about this.

This means things like trips are covered and you have no need to worry about making these payments.

***I have already paid for equipment you have sent money to my department for - can I get a refund?***

If you have already bought the kit we have transferred the money for please don't worry.

Take your award letter to your tutor and they can request a refund from us.

## ***Evidence***

### ***I have had a letter requesting further evidence- why?***

We have to meet strict guidelines for spending this money and part of that is having copies of recent and relevant evidence of student's financial circumstances. If we have sent a letter requesting further evidence please send us the requested document. We will not be able to proceed with your application without it.

If you think you have already sent it, before calling us please consider if maybe the copy you sent was incomplete, or the document was outside of the time period stated on the letter - for instance, some documents must be dated within the last 3 months in order for us to accept them.

Please ensure further evidence sent to us has the student's name and person code on it - if we can't match the evidence to the application form the application will be further delayed.

If you have concerns about obtaining the evidence please do speak to us.

### ***I have sent a bank statement showing payments - is this acceptable evidence?***

No, unfortunately we cannot accept bank statements of evidence of income, they do not tell us enough detail to meet audit requirements.

### ***Do you need to see the original document for evidence?***

No, in fact we request that you only send good quality photocopies of any evidence as we cannot return originals.

## ***Travel***

### ***How can I find out about cheap travel costs?***

We know how expensive travelling to college can be. Your travel award from the Learner Support Fund is based on the cheapest weekly option we believe is available.

There are many products available to reduce costs, please check online that you are getting the cheapest travel you can:

[www.travelsouthyorkshire.com](http://www.travelsouthyorkshire.com)

[www.sytravelmaster.com](http://www.sytravelmaster.com)

[www.stagecoachbus.com/tickets](http://www.stagecoachbus.com/tickets)

[www.firstgroup.com/ukbus/south\\_yorkshire](http://www.firstgroup.com/ukbus/south_yorkshire)

We recommend you apply for NUS Extra card to get discounts on travel:

[www.nus.org.uk/en/nus-extra](http://www.nus.org.uk/en/nus-extra)

Many passes are available to buy from reception at your campus.

Now available in college **only** - £9 per week, **Student CityBus** pass for travel on **all buses in Sheffield**. This product is only for Sheffield College students, please ask at Reception for details.