

2021/2022 Student Support Fund Policy

Owning Strategy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic plan 18-21 	Related Strategies:
Relevant to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Sheffield College staff and students. External Careers, Information, Advice and Guidance (CIAG) providers, partners and stakeholders 	

Office Use only:

Corporate Intranet Family:	Approval Board/Committee/Group: FE&GP Committee Executive Owner: Deputy Chief Executive & Principal	Approval/Re-approval Date: 23/06/2022	Implementation Date: 01/08/2021	Next Review Date: 01/05/2022
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New Policy or Substantive Policy Review

Version	Date	Policy Development Agreed by <i>(Executive Owner)</i>	Policy Development Author	Draft Policy Verified by	Policy Approval	Impact Assessment <i>(if applicable)</i>
1	June 2019	Executive Leadership Team & FEGP Committee	Head of Learner Recruitment	Director of Marketing	Governing Body	N/A
2	June 2020	Executive Leadership Team & FEGP Committee	Head of Learner Recruitment	Commercial Director	Governing Body	N/A
3	June 2021	Executive Leadership Team & FEGP Committee	Head of Learner Recruitment	Deputy CEO & Deputy Principal	Governing Body	Complete

Rationale for new or substantive policy review	
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Please make explicit if change/review relates to procedures, guidelines and associated documents only

Periodic Policy Review / Change History

Version	Date of Review / Revision	Description of Change	Reviewed By	Approved By (Executive Owner)
V1	01/04/2019	New Policy	HoLR	Director of Marketing
V2	01/05/2020	a) Increase in free meals allowance from £2.60 to £3.00. b) Adjustments to household income thresholds for the following groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 19+ discretionary Bursary 19+ Advanced Learner Loan Bursary 	HoLR	Commercial Director
V3	11/05/2021	Page 4 – Responsibilities 1. Overall responsibility changed to Chief Executive and Principal (CEP) 2. Executive owner changed to Deputy Chief Executive and Principal (DCEP) which reflects change in management structure. 3. Complete section removed for Head of Special Educational Needs (SEND); this is due to the local authority now covering all travel costs for EHCP students.	HoLR	Deputy CEO & Principal
	11/5/2021	On page 6 the internal and external supporting information has been updated	HoLR	Deputy CEO & Principal
	11/05/2021	16-19 Discretionary Bursary (Page 8) 1. Under the support available section, 2 tier thresholds changed to a flat rate household income of £26k and under. 2. Study award increased to a maximum of £500 for all students, to reflect the need of remote learning support. 3. Remote learning added to list under the support available	HoLR	Deputy CEO & Principal
	11/05/2021	19+ Discretionary Bursary (Page 10) 1. Study award increased to a maximum of £500 for all students, to reflect the need of remote learning support. 2. Remote learning added to list under the support available	HoLR	Deputy CEO & Principal
	11/05/2021	19+ Advanced Learner Loan Bursary (Page 11) 1. Study award increased to a maximum of £500 for all students, to reflect the need of remote learning support.	HoLR	Deputy CEO & Principal
	11/05/2021	Page 14 1. New section added for appeals procedure 2. New section added for policy evaluation	HoLR	Deputy CEO & Principal
	11/05/2021	Page 15 1. New section added for policy evaluation	HoLR	Deputy CEO & Principal
	11/05/2021	Page 15 onwards 1. a new section added for applicant responsibilities 2. a new section added for staff responsibilities	HoLR	Deputy CEO & Principal

Communication

To be agreed by Executive Leadership Team

Announcement on hub ✓	SLT email ✓
College newsletter ✓	All staff email ✓
SLT meeting <input type="checkbox"/>	Cascade brief ✓
External website ✓	Training needed (specify who) <input type="checkbox"/>

Date: 11/5/2021	Doc Name: 2021/2022 Student Support Fund Policy	Ref:
Owner: M Hepworth	Family: Learner Recruitment	Page 3 of 16

1. POLICY STATEMENT

The Sheffield College recognises that a number of students have financial support needs that could affect the college's mission which is "Transform your life through learning".

The Sheffield College is committed to promoting equality by ensuring student support funds are made available to assist disadvantaged students and students facing financial hardship in order to improve their student experience and support them to fulfil their potential.

This policy states the college's commitment to students with regard to financial support and in line with all current national and college regulations, guidelines and legislation.

2. DEFINITIONS

This policy has been developed to allow students and potential students to determine their eligibility for financial support from The Sheffield College (TSC). Information in this policy relates to the 2021/2022 Academic year only.

3. PRINCIPLES

The Student Support Fund policy will:

- Use clear and responsive processes and systems, which apply the 'student first' approach throughout
- Operate cashless payment systems where possible
- Promote the College's commitment to equality and diversity
- Raise student aspiration and social mobility
- Enhance the ability of students to achieve their goals whilst at the College
- Ensure that students are treated fairly within an open and transparent application process
- Widen participation in Further and Higher Education
- Support the achievement of key college outcomes
- Administer, record and monitor funds, ensuring that funds are used for its intended purposes in accordance with internal and external regulations and guidelines

4. SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

This policy covers the following student support funds:

- 16-19 Student Support Fund, which includes:
 - Vulnerable Student Bursary
 - 16-19 Discretionary Bursary
 - College Meal Credits and Vouchers
 - Care to Learn
- 19+ Student Support Fund, which includes:
 - Adult Discretionary Bursary Fund
 - Advanced Learner Loan Bursary Fund
 - 20+ Childcare Fund
- Higher Education Bursary Fund

Date: 11/5/2021	Doc Name: 2021/2022 Student Support Fund Policy	Ref:
Owner: M Hepworth	Family: Learner Recruitment	Page 4 of 16

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibility for the implementation of this policy exists at all levels of the College specifically:

- The Chief Executive and Principal (CEP) has overall responsibility for this policy.
- The Deputy CEO and Principal (DCEP) is the Executive Owner of the Policy.
- The Head of Learner Recruitment (HoLR) is responsible for review, development and overseeing the implementation of this policy.
- Assistant Principals/Vice Principal are responsible for:
 - Ensuring students in need of financial support are identified and supported effectively and efficiently so that their learning is not affected.
 - Setting essential course costs
 - Ensuring student attendance records are completed accurately and systems are regularly updated
 - Ensuring student progress and performance is monitored and systems are regularly updated
 - Ensuring programmes are up to date with all course delivery details

6. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

The following procedures will be implemented for the 2021-2022 academic year.

All new employees who have student support responsibilities are made aware of the policy and guidelines during the formal employee induction process.

Updated and amended procedures are disseminated and reinforced in training sessions, team meetings and via email communications. Staff and students have access to this policy on the College website.

The roles and responsibilities of staff in implementing the policy and procedures are set out clearly in the guidelines.

7. MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy and guidelines will be formally reviewed annually by the HoLR. This formal review will consider any changes to government funding policies, market conditions, management arrangements or internal systems and procedures.

This review will be carried out in consultation with colleagues from student experience, curriculum teams and the student union.

8. SUPPORTING/RELATED DOCUMENTS

This Policy works within the strategic framework of the College's vision and values. This policy should be used in conjunction with other College policies and procedures. (The following list is not exhaustive)

Date: 11/5/2021	Doc Name: 2021/2022 Student Support Fund Policy	Ref:
Owner: M Hepworth	Family: Learner Recruitment	Page 5 of 16

The Sheffield College

Related Policies

- [Health and Safety Policy](#)
- [Equality Scheme 2020-2023](#)
- [Student Charter](#)
- [Safeguarding Policy](#)
- [Employee Code of Conduct Policy](#)
- [General Data Protection Policy](#)
- [Fees and Charges Policy](#)
- [Complaints Policy and Procedure](#)
- [Access and Widening Participation Plan 2021-22 to 2024-25](#)
- [Higher Education Terms and Conditions](#)
- [Remote Learning Statement 2021](#)
- [Document Retention Policy](#)
- [General Data Protection Policy](#)

Process Information and Documents

- [Student Support Fund Paper Based Application Form](#)

Online Resources and Systems

Internal

- The Sheffield College website (<https://www.sheffcol.ac.uk/student-life/financial-support>)
- The Sheffield College on line student support fund (<https://sheffield.paymystudent.com/portal/>)

External

- 16-19 Funding Guidance can be accessed at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/16-to-19-education-funding-guidance>
- Care to Learn funding guidance can be accessed at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/care-to-learn-guide-2021-to-2022-academic-year>
- Free meals in Further Education guidance can be accessed at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/free-meals-in-further-education-funded-institutions-guide-for-the-2021-to-2022-academic-year>
- Adult Education budget funding guidance can be accessed at : <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/adult-education-budget-aeb-funding-rules-2020-to-2021>
- Advanced Learner Loans funding guidance can be accessed at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/advanced-learner-loans-funding-rules-2020-to-2021>
- Higher Education: The Office for Students Guide to Funding can be accessed at: <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/aa1ad13f-8a96-4559-856d-76151438e5f5/guide-to-funding-2020-21-corrected.pdf>

Date: 11/5/2021	Doc Name: 2021/2022 Student Support Fund Policy	Ref:
Owner: M Hepworth	Family: Learner Recruitment	Page 6 of 16

The Sheffield College

GUIDELINES

16-19 Student Support Funds

There are several funds and support schemes available for students aged 16-19, which are:

- Vulnerable Young Person Bursary Fund
- Discretionary Support Fund
- College Meal Credits and Vouchers
- Care to Learn

These funds are designed to help students with specific costs associated with their programme of study and are available to students who are on ESFA funded courses. These funds and support schemes are not available to students on Apprenticeship, Higher Education or Full-Cost courses. Please see tables below for breakdown of each fund.

16-19 Vulnerable Young Person Bursary Fund

Support Available	Eligibility Criteria	Age
<p>Up to £1200 per academic year per student, to support with essential costs, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel • Equipment • Meals • Trips • Remote learning <p>All remaining funds after the above costs are deducted will be paid into the student's bank account weekly via BACS payment</p>	<p>This fund is available to students who are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young People in Care • Care Leavers • Students in receipt of Income Support • Students in receipt of Employment Support Allowance (ESA) who are also in receipt of Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments (PIP) • Where Universal Credit is evidenced, it must be in the student's own name 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students need to be at least 16 but under 19 years of age on 31st August 2021.

Date: 11/5/2021	Doc Name: 2021/2022 Student Support Fund Policy	Ref:
Owner: M Hepworth	Family: Learner Recruitment	Page 7 of 16

The Sheffield College

16-19 Discretionary Support Fund

Support Available	Eligibility Criteria	Age
<p>Where a student's Household Income is £26,000 or below the student is entitled to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel Support • Study award up to £500 to support with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Equipment ○ Uniform ○ Resources ○ Essential trips ○ Remote learning 	<p>This fund is available to students who are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where student's Household Income is up to £26,000 (see support available) • Dependants of someone on Income Support • Dependants of someone on Income Based JSA or Employment Support Allowance • Dependants of someone on Universal Credit • Dependants of someone claiming the Guarantee Element of State Pension Credit • Students who can demonstrate that they are facing financial hardship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students need to be at least 16 but under 19 years of age on 31st August 2021. • Students aged 19 on 31st August 2021 but continuing in to their second year of a two-year course • Students aged over 19 on 31st August 2021 in receipt of an Education Health Care Plan

16-19 College Meal Credits and Vouchers

Support Available	Eligibility Criteria	Age
<p>College meal credits or supermarket vouchers to the value of £3 per day.</p>	<p>Students, or their parents/guardians, must be in receipt of one or more of the following benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income Support • Income-based Jobseekers Allowance • Income-related Employment Support Allowance • Guarantee Element of State Pension Credit • Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 • Child Tax Credit (provided they are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190 (assessed by 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 p/a 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students need to be at least 16 but under 19 years of age on 31st August 2021. • Students aged 19 on 31st August 2021 and continuing to their second year of a two-year course • Students aged over 19 on 31st August 2021 in receipt of an Education Health Care Plan.

Date: 11/5/2021	Doc Name: 2021/2022 Student Support Fund Policy	Ref:
Owner: M Hepworth	Family: Learner Recruitment	Page 8 of 16

16-19 Care to Learn Fund

Support Available	Eligibility Criteria	Age
<p>Childcare costs for study programme including work placement up to £160 per child per week.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be the main carer and in receipt of Child Benefit for the child(ren) for whom they are claiming Care to Learn. • The other parent is unable to provide childcare, for example, they are also in education or are absent. • The other parent is not claiming childcare through Tax Credits or government funded early childcare places • Full details of eligibility to be found at the link to funding guidance on page 6 of this policy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students aged under 20 at the start of their course • Students who become 20 during their study programme can continue to get funding to the end of that specific study programme.

19+ Student Support Funds

Date: 11/5/2021	Doc Name: 2021/2022 Student Support Fund Policy	Ref:
Owner: M Hepworth	Family: Learner Recruitment	Page 9 of 16

The Sheffield College

There are three funds available for students aged 19+, which are:

- 19+ Discretionary Support Fund
- 19+ Advanced Learner Loan Bursary
- 20+ Childcare Support Fund

These funds are designed to help students with specific costs associated with their programme of study and are available to students who are on ESFA funded courses.

19+ Discretionary Support Fund

Support Available	Eligibility Criteria	Age
Where a student's Household Income is £26,000 or below the student is entitled to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel Support • Childcare support • Tuition Fee's* • Exam Fee's • Study award up to £500 to support with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Equipment ○ Uniform ○ Resources ○ Essential trips ○ Remote learning costs ○ *Professional Registrations or Memberships 	This fund is available to students who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students with household Income of up to £26,000 • Receive Income Support • Receive Income Based JSA or Employment Support Allowance • Receive the Guarantee Element of State Pension Credit • Receive Universal Credit • Students who demonstrate that they are facing financial hardship • *Tuition Fee's - Students can apply for tuition fee support if not eligible for ESFA tuition fee remission for an Advanced Learner Loan • *Professional Registrations or Memberships specific to course related career development and compliance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students aged 19 or older on 31st August 2021

19+ Advanced Learner Loan Bursary

Support Available	Eligibility Criteria	Age
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Date: 11/5/2021	Doc Name: 2021/2022 Student Support Fund Policy	Ref:
Owner: M Hepworth	Family: Learner Recruitment	Page 10 of 16

The Sheffield College

<p>Where a student's Household Income is £35,000 or below the student is entitled to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel Support • Childcare support • Exam Fee's • Study award up to £500 to support with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Equipment ○ Uniform ○ Resources ○ Essential trips ○ Remote learning ○ *Professional Registrations or Memberships 	<p>The Bursary is available to those who have successfully applied for and been awarded an Advanced Learner Loan and who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a household Income of up to £35,000 • Receive Income Support • Receive Income Based JSA or Employment Support Allowance • Receive the Guarantee Element of State Pension Credit • Receive Universal Credit • Can demonstrate that they are facing financial hardship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students aged 19 or older on 31st August 2020
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20+ Childcare Support Fund

Support Available	Eligibility Criteria	Age
<p>Student Childcare costs including compulsory work placement up to £50 per child per day.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students with household Income of up to £26,000 • Childcare must be provided by an OFSTED registered provider • Be the main carer and in receipt of Child Benefit for the child/children for whom they are claiming for • Funded Early Learning (FEL) payments are to be applied first to the cost of any sessions. • The other parent is unable to provide childcare, for example they are also in education/ work or are absent. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students aged 20 or older on 31st August 2021

Higher Education Support Fund

Date: 11/5/2021	Doc Name: 2021/2022 Student Support Fund Policy	Ref:
Owner: M Hepworth	Family: Learner Recruitment	Page 11 of 16

This fund is designed to support Higher Education students with a variety of course related cost. Eligibility is determined through the College's Access and Participation Plan.

Higher Education Bursary Support Fund

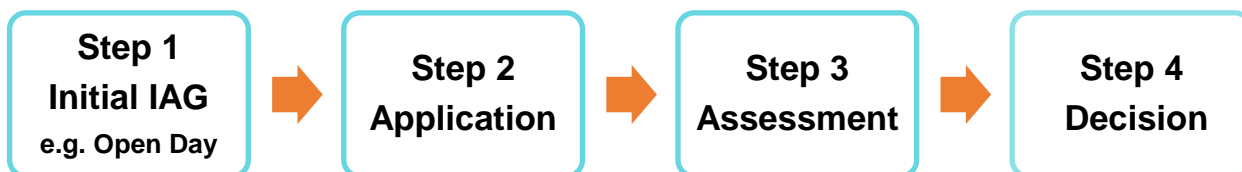
Support Available	Eligibility Criteria	Age
<p>Students each year from the target groups will be identified and will be entitled to a minimum bursary each year of £200 and will be more if funding allows as a 'continuation' fund to help with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning Materials • Living Costs 	<p>The under-represented target groups identified in the Access and Participation Plan are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students in IMD Quintile 1 To close the continuation gap between ABMO students and white students • Female students in POLAR Q1-2 • ABMO students in Polar Q 1-2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No age restriction, available to any student enrolled on a Higher Education course

10. PROCEDURE

This section sets out the top-level procedure and service standards that students can expect. Other specific information is identified in the guidance section of this policy.

Student Support Fund Application and Assessment Process

The application and assessment process are based on four key stages shown in the flowchart below.



Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG)

Prospective and current students are encouraged to find out more about the Student Support Fund before applying. They can do this via the following methods:

- Online via the college website: <http://www.sheffcol.ac.uk/financial-support>
- Talking to careers staff in their school
- Talking to the college's Admissions and Student Funding team
- Attending a college open day
- Reading the Sheffield College Course Guide – available on the website or from the College
- Visiting Student Central or a college reception point

Application

Student support fund applications can be submitted from June each year. Early applications are advised. Applications can be completed via the following methods:

- Online via the college website via the link below:
<http://www.sheffcol.ac.uk/financial-support>
- Paper based application forms can be accessed via the following ways:
 - Downloaded via <http://www.sheffcol.ac.uk/financial-support>
 - Requested from Student Central or a Reception points at all College campuses
- Completed paper-based application forms can be dropped in at any college campus or returned via post to FREEPOST (FPN5748), Admissions & Student Funding Team, The Sheffield College, Granville Road, Sheffield, S2 2RL
- Applications must be supported with the documentary evidence requested
- All applications submitted will be acknowledged within 48 hours of the application received date.

Application Assessment

- Assessments will be carried out within 10 working days of the application-received date for all applications that have all the required evidence included.
- If an application requires additional evidence, students are required to submit this evidence within 10 working days.

Date: 11/5/2021	Doc Name: 2021/2022 Student Support Fund Policy	Ref:
Owner: M Hepworth	Family: Learner Recruitment	Page 13 of 16

The Sheffield College

Application Decision

- Application decisions will be confirmed within 10 working days of the application received date.
- Application decisions and student fund awards will be communicated via the following methods:
 - Email
 - Text
 - Letter

Reasons for not approving an application

A Student Support Fund application may not be approved for the following reasons:

- Student does not meet the eligibility criteria or does not provide the necessary supporting evidence required
- Student does not meet the College standards in terms of attendance and behaviour

Key Information for All Student Support Funds

- Awards are made on a first come first served basis
- When Student Support Funds have been exhausted, no further awards will be made
- Each application is considered individually and assessed against the relevant eligibility criteria
- Awards are designed to contribute towards the main costs incurred by students but may not cover all requirements.
- Any student found to have made a false claim will be subject to the College's Disciplinary Procedure or referral to Police in extreme cases. The Sheffield College reserves the right to invoice students who leave the college before completing their studies for repayments of any funds allocated to them. The student may also be asked to return any items of equipment, uniform or protective clothing.
- Initial assessment of applications and all ongoing support will include an overview of attendance and behaviour. If a student fails to meet College standards for attendance and behaviour, a review would be triggered through Faculty Management to determine whether further financial support should be reduced or stopped.
- If an award is to be paid by BACS transfer, the account must be in the student's own name.
- The college will operate a student hardship fund at its discretion for all students.

Application appeals

Where students are refused financial support, they have a right of appeal against the decision by writing to the Head of Learner Recruitment. This right must be exercised within five working days of the applicant being refused.

Stage 1 – Appeal meeting 1

The student will be invited to an appeal meeting with the relevant Head of Learner Recruitment, who will be supported by the Admissions and Student Funding Manager. They will have the right to be accompanied.

The appeal meeting will normally take place within ten working days of the College's receipt of the appeal. The College will write to the individual within ten working days of the appeal meeting to confirm the College's decision.

This decision is final and there is no further right of appeal.

Date: 11/5/2021	Doc Name: 2021/2022 Student Support Fund Policy	Ref:
Owner: M Hepworth	Family: Learner Recruitment	Page 14 of 16

The Sheffield College

Cashless Payments

The college policy is to operate a cashless payment system where possible for all Students, the table below shows how this applies to Student Support Fund payments:

Support Type	Cashless Payment Procedure
Travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel Master voucher codes Travel Tickets purchased via Student ID card at Reception/ Student Central points
Meal Credits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meal credits issued to Student ID cards to purchase items at College Diners or shops
Meal Vouchers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meal vouchers provided to students if provision is delivered off site or subcontracted
Childcare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Childcare provided invoices the college directly
Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal Transfer from Student Support Fund to Academy
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal Transfer from Student Support Fund to Academy/ Support department
Trips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal Transfer from Student Support Fund to Academy
Tuition Fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal Transfer from Student Support Fund to Academy

Policy Evaluation

The following measures will be considered when evaluating the success of this policy:

- Applications received and approval rates
- Achievement of operational key performance indicators
- Positive learner feedback from the Student Support Fund survey:
- Positive learner feedback from learner voice forums
- Positive feedback from other stakeholders including parents and external stakeholders
- Positive feedback from staff on the effectiveness of the policy and procedure
- High level of learner retention for supported students
- Low learner withdrawals from supported students

Applicant Responsibilities

Applicants need to ensure they:

- Are familiar with the student support fund they are applying for support from.
- Follow college procedures associated with this policy.
- Keep the college informed of changes to their circumstances or contact details.
- Ensure that at each stage of the application process, they provide honest and accurate information in a timely manner which could have a bearing on their application decision.
- They re-enrol each academic year.

College Staff Responsibilities

Faculty Assistant/Vice Principals

Faculty Assistant/Vice Principals are responsible for:

- Ensuring that suitably and sufficiently trained staff are identified and available within faculties to support the implementation of this policy.
- Implementing an effective induction for all relevant employees ensuring that they are provided with up to date information on the Student Support Fund.
- Ensuring effective selection and induction activities take place for our students and they are provided with accurate information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) relating to the Student Support Fund.

Date: 11/5/2021	Doc Name: 2021/2022 Student Support Fund Policy	Ref:
Owner: M Hepworth	Family: Learner Recruitment	Page 15 of 16

The Sheffield College

Heads of Academy

Faculty Heads are responsible for:

- Ensure all relevant online systems are fully updated in a timely manner. E.g. Attendance records/Pro Monitor
- Confirm course costs, tuition fees, and timetables prior to courses starting as per the timescales identified in table below:

Provision	Timescale
Higher Education	May 2021
Further Education	May 2021

Curriculum Teams

This policy requires curriculum teams to ensure that:

- Maintaining a proactive and positive working relationship with the Admissions and Student Funding Team (ASF).
- Students who would benefit from the Student Support Fund are identified early and supported effectively.
- Ensure prospective students are notified of the following through the admissions process:
 - Course costs
 - Course timetables
 - Tuition fee's
 - Student Support Fund and the support available as a student

Admissions and Student Funding Team (ASF)

The ASF team are responsible for:

- Ensuring 100% budget utilisation for each fund.
- Maintaining a proactive and positive working relationship with curriculum teams and faculty management.
- All communications are via agreed standard templates
- Providing accurate and timely IAG to prospective students relating to the Student Support Fund.
- All college systems are updated in a timely manner
- Ensuring key performance indicators identified in the table below are achieved.

SSF Process Stage	Key performance indicators
Enquiries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enquiries are dealt with within 3 working days.
Application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applications acknowledged via text and email within 24 hours • Application targets for each fund are achieved
Application Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applications with full evidence are assessed within 10 working days of receipt of application
Application Decision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application decisions are communicated within 10 working days of receipt of application
Feedback Surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback surveys sent within 24 hours of course offer being made throughout the Admissions process. • 90% positive feedback is received

Date: 11/5/2021	Doc Name: 2021/2022 Student Support Fund Policy	Ref:
Owner: M Hepworth	Family: Learner Recruitment	Page 16 of 16