

The  
Sheffield  
College

**POLICY**

# 2025/2026 Student Support Fund Policy

[Document Reference:]

## Document administration

<b>Policy family</b>	Learning	
<b>ELT owner</b>	Deputy Principal	
<b>SLT lead</b>	Director of Student Services	
<b>Department</b>	Student Experience	
<b>Final approving body</b>	Finance, Employment, and General Purposes Committee	
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<b>Equality impact assessment</b>	Completion date: 16/4/25	EQIA not required <input type="checkbox"/>
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<b>Publication</b>	Staff intranet <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	External website <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

## Version control log

Date	Version No	Summary of changes	Reviewed by (SLT lead)
01/04/2019	V1	New Policy	HoLR
01/05/2020	V2	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"> <li>• 19+ Discretionary Bursary</li> <li>• 19+ Advanced Learner Loan Bursary</li> </ul>	HoLR
11/05/2021	V3	<p><b>Page 4: Responsibilities</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Overall responsibility changed to Chief Executive and Principal (CEP)</li> <li>2. Executive owner changed to Deputy Chief Executive and Principal (DCEP) which reflects change in management structure.</li> <li>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.</li> </ol> <p><b>Page 6: Internal and external supporting information has been updated</b></p> <p><b>Page 8: 16-19 Discretionary Bursary</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Under the support available section, 2 tier thresholds changed to a flat rate household income of £26k and under</li> <li>2. Study award increased to a maximum of £500 for all students, to reflect the need of remote learning support</li> <li>3. Remote learning added to list under the support available.</li> </ol> <p><b>Page 10: 19+ Discretionary Bursary</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Study award changed to a maximum of £500 for all students, to reflect the need of remote learning support.</li> </ol>	HoLR

		<p><b>Page 11: 19+ Advanced Learner Loan Bursary (Page 11)</b> 1. Study award increased to a maximum of £500 for all students, to reflect the need of remote learning support.</p> <p><b>Page 14</b> 1. New section added for appeals procedure 2. New section added for policy evaluation.</p> <p><b>Page 15</b> 1. New section added for policy evaluation.</p> <p><b>Page 15 onwards:</b> 1. New section added for applicant responsibilities 2. New section added for staff responsibilities.</p>	
4/10/2021	V4	<p><b>Page 9: 16-19 Discretionary Fund</b> 1. Household income eligibility criteria changed from £26k to £30k 2. Travel support now provided to students who live 1 mile away from their main college site. This was 1.5 mile previously 3. Free Meals table removed – Free meals added to support available for all students who meet eligibility requirements for 16-19 discretionary fund.</p> <p><b>Page 10: 19+ Advanced Learner Loan</b> 1. Refreshment bursary added to the type of support available.</p>	HoLR
11/5/2022	V5	<p><b>Page 5: Definitions</b> 1. Academic year updated.</p> <p><b>Page 6: Responsibilities</b> 2. HOSSR job title updated.</p> <p><b>Page 7: Implementation arrangements</b> 1. Academic year updated.</p>	HOSSR

		<p><b>Page 8: 16-19 Discretionary Support Fund</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Academic year updated to 22/23</li> <li>2. Household threshold increased from 26k to 35k</li> <li>3. Sport scholarship programmes added to support available.</li> </ol> <p><b>Page 10: 16-19 College Meal Credits and Vouchers</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. New section added back into the policy; this was removed in the last update as all 16-19 students received free meals from Nov 21 onwards</li> <li>2. Allowance increased to £5 per day from £3 per day.</li> </ol> <p><b>Page 11: 19+ Student Support Fund</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Academic year updated to 22/23</li> <li>2. Household income threshold increased from 26k to 35k.</li> </ol> <p><b>Page 12: Advanced Learner Loan Bursary</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Academic year updated to 22/23.</li> </ol>	
27/2/23	V6	<b>Page 13 – HE Eligibility changed to household income</b>	HoSSR
11/5/23	V7	<p><b>Page 7:</b> Supporting Related Documents section updated with up-to-date policies and resources.</p> <p><b>Page 8 – 11:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Age criteria updated in each table</li> <li>2. Study awards increased from £500 to £800 to reflect increased costs.</li> </ol> <p><b>Page 10:</b> Value for meals and vouchers increased from £5 to £5.50.</p> <p><b>Page 14:</b> Section added under application to reflect the change in funding guidance for FT students progressing with the college.</p>	HoSSR
10/5/24	V8	<b>Policy moved to new Policy template</b>	DoSS

		<p><b>Page 8:</b> Purpose, Scope, Aims and Objectives have been reworded to fit the new policy template.</p> <p><b>Page 9 – 13:</b> Age groups (31<sup>st</sup> Aug 2024) updated to reflect new academic year on all support fund tables.</p> <p><b>Page 9 – 13:</b> Carer support added to support available in 16-19, 19+ and ALL student groups.</p> <p><b>Page 13: The following cohorts have been added under the eligibility criteria for the HE Support fund:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young Parents</li> <li>• Children of service personnel</li> <li>• Jewish students</li> <li>• Commuter students.</li> </ul> <p><b>Page 14: Procedure:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New links for all paper-based application forms added</li> <li>• New section added on college attendance expectations.</li> </ul> <p><b>Page 18: Procedures</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New section added and flowchart for curriculum course costs and CAST team responsibilities.</li> </ul>	
10/4/2025	v9	<p><b>Page 6:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All updated policies and procedures are being linked as they are being completed.</li> </ul> <p><b>Page 10-14:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Household income thresholds and support available changed to a 2-tier system, £30k or less and £30,001 to £35,000 across all budgets</li> <li>- Study award reduced from £800 to £500 for all budgets</li> <li>- Free Meals and Refreshment Bursary amount reduced to £4.50 throughout</li> <li>- Age criteria (dates) eligibility updated.</li> <li>- Universal credit eligibility for free meals updated</li> </ul>	DofSS

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Asylum seekers/refugee guidance updated for care to learn support</li> <li>- Registration fees, travel costs and deposit support added to care to learn support</li> <li>- Emergency Hardship funds added to 16-19, 19+, ALL and HE support tables.</li> </ul> <p><b>Page 17:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Guidelines updated to enable flexibility to consider provision of financial support should funds be exhausted.</li> </ul> <p><b>Page 20:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Section added on Free Meals and Refreshment Bursary guidance, including reference to Meal Deals.</li> </ul> <p><b>Page 21:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sentence added regarding the reservation of a small amount of funds for students starting late on roll on / roll off provision</li> </ul> <p><b>Throughout:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Timelines and deadline dates updated for 2025-2026</li> <li>- Job titles updated.</li> </ul>	
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## Associated documents *(if required)*

Document	Description and link
1	FE Student Attendance Policy
2	EDI-public-statement
3	2025 - 2028 EDI Objectives
4	2025-26 Financial Regulations
5	Induction and Tutorial Procedures
<u>6</u>	<u><a href="#">2025-26 Safeguarding Policy Procedures Guidelines</a></u>
<u>7</u>	2025-28 Student Charter
<u>8</u>	Data Protection Policy



9	Complaints Policy
10	2025-26 Educational Trips and Visits Policy
11	2025-30 Summary of Access and Participation Plan
12	16-19 Bursary fund guidance is available via the link below: <a href="#">16 to 19 Bursary Fund guide: 2025 to 2026 - GOV.UK</a>
9	Care to Learn guidance is available via the link below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Care to Learn: Overview - GOV.UK</a></li> </ul>
10	Free meals in Further Education guidance can be accessed at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">16-19 Free Meals Guidance</a></li> </ul>
11	Adult Education budget funding guidance can be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">SYMCA Funding Guidance for 19+ Adult Students</a></li> </ul>
	Advanced Learner Loans funding guidance can be accessed at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Advanced learner loans funding rules: 2024 to 2025 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a></li> </ul>
12	Higher Education: The Office for Students Guide to Funding can be accessed at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Student funding and finance - Office for Students</a></li> </ul>
13	Application Forms (Paper Copies) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">SSF application Form for New Full Time Students 2025-26</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">SSF application Form for Returning Full Time Students 2025-26</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">SSF application Form for 20+ Childcare 2025-26</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">SSF application Form for HE Students 2025-26</a></li> </ul>

## **1. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to set out The Sheffield College's (TSC) approach to the allocation of student support funds available for students for the 2025/2026 academic year.

## **2. Scope, aims and objectives**

This policy is subject to funding agencies existing rules and therefore may change during the academic year. We reserve the right to change the policy during the year to reflect any changes.

TSC recognises that a significant number of students have financial support needs that could affect the college's commitment to "Transforming lives through learning".

This policy aims to ensure that:

2.1 Student support funds are made available to assist disadvantaged students and students facing financial hardship to support them to fulfil their potential, improve the student experience and ensure no student is left behind.

2.2 Administration of student support funds meets the needs of students and removes barriers to learning.

2.3 Systems are in place to administer, record and monitor funds, ensuring that funds are used for their intended purposes.

2.4 This policy covers the 16-19 Student Support Fund, which includes:

- Vulnerable Student Bursary
- 16-19 Discretionary Bursary
- College Meal Credits and Vouchers
- Care to Learn

2.5: This policy covers the 19+ Student Support Fund, which includes:

- Adult Discretionary Bursary Fund
- Advanced Learner Loan Bursary Fund
- 20+ Childcare Fund

### 3. Responsibilities

3.1: 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 Principal Quality and Student Experience (DPQSE) is the Executive Owner of the Policy
- the Director of Student Services (DoSS) is the SLT lead and responsible for review, development and overseeing the implementation of this policy
- Academy Directors 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 up to date
  - ensuring student progress and performance is monitored and systems are up to date
  - ensuring programmes are up to date with all course delivery details and course costs identified.

### 4. Implementation Arrangements

4.1 This policy will be implemented for the 2025/2026 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.

### 5. 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 Department for Education (DfE) funded courses. These funds and support schemes are not available to students studying Apprenticeships, 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 <b>£1,200</b> value per academic year per student, to support with essential costs, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Travel support</li> <li>• Essential equipment and resources</li> <li>• Uniform</li> <li>• Meals (<b>£4.50 per full college day</b>)</li> <li>• Essential trips</li> <li>• Remote learning (Laptop and MIFI device)</li> </ul> <p>The £1,200 is not guaranteed and only support needed will be awarded. Support is awarded through cashless payments with support sourced and provided centrally.</p>	<p>This fund is available to students who are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young People in Care</li> <li>• Care Leavers</li> <li>• Students in receipt of Income Support or Universal Credit because they are financially supporting themselves or financially supporting themselves and someone who is dependent on them</li> <li>• Students in receipt of Employment Support Allowance (ESA) or Universal Credit who are also in receipt of Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments (PIP)</li> <li>• Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers under the care of the local authority and defined as Looked After Children/ Young Person in Care</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students need to be at least 16 but under 19 years of age on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2025.</li> </ul>

### 16-19 Discretionary Support Fund

Support Available	Eligibility Criteria	Age
<p>Where a student's household Income is <b>£30,000</b> or below the student is entitled to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Travel Support</li> <li>• <b>Refreshment Allowance (£4.50 per full college day)</b></li> <li>• Study award up to £500 to support with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Essential equipment and resources</li> <li>○ Uniform</li> <li>○ UCAS fees</li> <li>○ Essential trips</li> <li>○ Remote learning (Laptop and MIFI device)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Where a student's household Income is between <b>£30,001 and £35,000</b> the student is entitled to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Travel Support</li> <li>• Refreshment allowance (<b>£4.50 per full college day</b>)</li> </ul>	<p>This fund is available to students who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have a household Income of up to £35,000 (see support available)</li> <li>• are dependants of someone on Income Support</li> <li>• are dependants of someone on Income Based JSA or Employment Support Allowance</li> <li>• dependants of someone on Universal Credit</li> <li>• are dependants of someone claiming the Guarantee Element of State Pension Credit</li> <li>• can demonstrate that they are facing financial hardship</li> <li>• live more than 1 mile away from the college and would benefit from travel support.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students need to be at least 16 but under 19 years of age on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2025</li> <li>• Students aged 19 on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2025 but continuing into their second year of a two-year course</li> <li>• Students aged 19-24 on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2025 in receipt of an Education Health Care Plan.</li> </ul>

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Emergency hardship funds are available for students who are facing emergency financial difficulties.</li></ul> |  |  |
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## 16-19 Care to Learn Fund

Support Available	Eligibility Criteria	Age
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Childcare costs for study programme including work/industry placement and independent study time (as agreed) up to £180 per child per week. Support with travel costs, where appropriate, if these are necessary for the student to take their child(ren) between childcare and home. Travel costs are only paid if they are additional to the student's normal travel costs from home to the education institution. Deposits of up to a maximum of £250 per child if the childcare provider requires this.</li> <li>Registration fees that are charged by the childcare provider, up to a maximum of £80 per child. Summer retainers can be paid to childcare providers, if required, to hold the childcare place over the summer holiday period. This only applies if a student is finishing study in one year and continuing their study in the next academic year.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be the main carer and in receipt of Child Benefit for the child(ren) for whom they are claiming Care to Learn</li> <li>the other parent is unable to provide childcare, for example, they are also in education or are absent</li> <li>the other parent is not claiming childcare through Tax Credits or government funded early childcare places</li> <li>you are a British citizen or have a legal right to live and study in England. Specifically, you're eligible if you are an asylum seeker and <b>under 18</b>, or a care leaver aged 18–19, and you can provide evidence your status, such as Home Office correspondence.</li> <li>You qualify if you have <b>legal residency in the UK</b> and are under 20 at the start of your course, even if you're not a British or Irish citizen. Specifically, the grant is available to those with: Refugee status, humanitarian protection, any form of leave to remain and your course and /or your childcare provider qualifies for funding.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students aged under 20 at the start of their course</li> <li>Students who become 20 during their study programme can continue to get funding to the end of that specific study programme.</li> </ul>

## 16-19 Free College Meals

Support Available	Eligibility Criteria	Age
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>College meal credits <b>£4.50 per timetabled day attended including work experience/industry placement days</b></li> <li>supermarket vouchers will be provided in exceptional circumstances</li> </ul>	<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"> <li>Universal Credit (annual net earned income must be no more than £7,400, as assessed by earnings from up to three of the most recent assessment periods)</li> <li>Income Support</li> <li>Income-based Jobseekers Allowance</li> <li>Income-related Employment Support Allowance</li> <li>Guarantee Element of State Pension Credit</li> <li>Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999</li> <li>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)</li> <li>Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for 4 weeks after someone stops qualifying for Working Tax Credit</li> <li>Universal Credit for students who have received FSM previously</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A student must be aged 16 or over but under 19 on 31 August 2025 to be eligible to receive a free meal. Students aged 19 or over are only eligible to receive a free meal if they are continuing their study programme, they began aged 16 to 18 ('19+ continuers') or have an EHC plan.</li> </ul>

### **19+ Student Support Funds**

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 SYMCA AEB and Advanced Learner Loan courses.

### **19+ SYMCA Discretionary Support Fund**

Support Available	Eligibility Criteria	Age
Where a student's household Income is <b>£30,000</b> or below the student is entitled to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Travel Support</li><li>• Study award up to £500 to support with:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Essential equipment and resources</li><li>○ Uniform</li><li>○ UCAS fees</li><li>○ Essential trips</li><li>○ Remote learning (Laptop and MIFI device)</li><li>○ Exam fees</li><li>○ Accreditation fees, professional memberships</li><li>○ Registration fees</li><li>○ Work placement if you're in a SWAP – accordance to guidelines</li></ul></li></ul>	This fund is available to students who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• have a household Income of up to £35,000 (see support available)</li><li>• receive Income Support</li><li>• receive Income Based JSA or Employment Support Allowance</li><li>• receive the Guarantee Element of State Pension Credit</li><li>• receive Universal Credit</li><li>• demonstrate that they are facing financial hardship.</li></ul> *Tuition Fees - Students can apply for tuition fee support if not eligible for SYMCA tuition fee remission for an Advanced Learner Loan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students aged 19 or older on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2025.</li></ul>



<p>it is for Job Centre Plus students who we are unable to support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Hardship</li> </ul> <p>Where a student's household Income is between <b>£30,001 and £35,000</b> the student is entitled to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Travel Support</li> <li>• Emergency hardship funds are available for students who are facing emergency financial difficulties.</li> </ul>		
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#### 19+ Advanced Learner Loan Bursary

Support Available	Eligibility Criteria	Age
<p>Where a student's household Income is <b>£30,000</b> or below the student is entitled to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Travel Support</li> <li>• Study award up to £500 to support with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Essential equipment and resources</li> <li>○ Uniform</li> <li>○ UCAS fees</li> <li>○ Essential trips</li> <li>○ Remote learning (Laptop and MIFI device)</li> <li>○ <b>Childcare - £60 per child per day</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>The Bursary is available to those who have successfully applied for and been awarded an <b>Advanced Learner Loan</b> and who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have a household Income of up to £35,000 (see support available)</li> <li>• receive Income Support</li> <li>• receive Income Based JSA or Employment Support Allowance</li> <li>• receive the Guarantee Element of State Pension Credit</li> <li>• receive Universal Credit</li> <li>• can demonstrate that they are facing financial hardship.</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students aged 19 or older on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2025.</li> <li>• Meet the residency criteria in the Adult Education Budget: Funding and performance Management Rules in the 2025-2026 academic year</li> </ul>

Where a student's household Income is between <b>£30,001 and £35,000</b> the student is entitled to:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Travel Support</li> <li>• Specific targeted learning support</li> <li>• Emergency hardship funds are available for students who are facing emergency financial difficulties.</li> </ul>		

### 20+ Childcare Support Fund

Support Available	Eligibility Criteria	Age
Student Childcare costs including compulsory work placement up to £60 per child per day. Care to learn top ups are available for students where costs exceed £180.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students with household Income of up to £30,000</li> <li>• childcare must be provided by an OFSTED registered provider</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• the other parent is unable to provide childcare, for example they are also in education/ work or are absent.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students aged 20 or older on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2025.</li> </ul>

### Higher Education Support Fund

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.

Support Available	Eligibility Criteria	Age
Students are entitled to a maximum bursary of £200 to support with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning Materials</li> <li>• Living Costs</li> </ul>	The Bursary is available to those who have enrolled on a Higher Education Course and who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have a household Income of up to £30,000</li> <li>• receive Income Support</li> <li>• receive Income Based JSA or Employment Support Allowance</li> <li>• receive the Guarantee Element of State Pension Credit</li> <li>• receive Universal Credit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Available to any student enrolled on a Higher Education course on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2025 and meet the eligibility criteria.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergency hardship funds are available for students who are facing emergency financial difficulties.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• can demonstrate that they are facing financial hardship</li> <li>• a declared disability</li> <li>• from IMD1 postcodes</li> <li>• from Polar 4 Q1 and 2 postcodes</li> <li>• mature students on full-time programmes</li> <li>• Care Leavers</li> <li>• Black, Asian and Minority ethnic students</li> <li>• Young Parents</li> <li>• children of service personnel</li> <li>• Jewish students</li> <li>• Commuter students.</li> </ul>	
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## 6. 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 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 application timelines are in the table below:

Age Group & Funding	Application Window
16-19 FT Internal progression students	1 <sup>st</sup> June to 30 <sup>th</sup> Sept
16-19 new students	1 <sup>st</sup> Aug to 30 <sup>th</sup> Sept
19+ Students (Including HE)	1 <sup>st</sup> Aug to 30 <sup>th</sup> Sept
Vulnerable Bursary	1 <sup>st</sup> Aug to 12 <sup>th</sup> Nov

- For courses starting in year e.g. Princes Trust, students will need to apply within 3 weeks of their course start date.

Applications can be completed via the following methods:

#### Online

- Apply via the college website via the link below:
  - <https://sheffield.paymystudent.com/portal/>

#### Paper

- Application forms can be accessed via the following ways:
  - download via: <https://www.sheffcol.ac.uk/student-life/financial-support>
  - requested from Student Central or a reception point at all College campuses
  - downloadable copies of the application forms are available via the links below:
    - [SSF application Form for New Full Time Students 2025-26](#)

- [SSF application Form for Returning Full Time Students 2025-26](#)
- [SSF application Form for 20+ Childcare 2025-26](#)
- [SSF application Form for HE Students 2025-26](#)
- completed paper-based application forms can be dropped in at any college campus or returned via post to FREEPOST (FPN5748), Student Support Fund Team, The Sheffield College, Granville Road, Sheffield, S2 2RL
- applications must be supported with the documentary evidence requested
- applications will be acknowledged within 48 hours of the application received date.

#### **16-19 Discretionary Support Fund – FT Internal students only**

- Full Time students progressing to another course with the college will need to complete a disclaimer to acknowledge that their circumstances have not changed from the previous academic year. [SSF application Form for Returning Full Time Students 2025-26](#)

#### **Application Assessment and Decision**

- Assessments will be carried out and application decisions provided within five 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 five working days where possible
- application decisions and student fund awards will be communicated via email and 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.

#### **Application appeals**

Where students are refused financial support, they have a right to appeal against the decision by writing to the Director of Student Services. 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 Director of Student Services, who will be supported by the Student Support Fund Manager. Students will have the right to be accompanied.

The appeal meeting will normally take place within five working days of the college's receipt of the appeal. The college will write to the individual within 24 hours working days of the appeal meeting to confirm the college's decision.

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

## **7. Guidelines**

### **Key Information for all Student Support Funds**

- Applicants will be able to apply for financial support at any point through the academic year.
- a proportionate amount of funds will be reserved for students starting late on roll on / roll off provision to ensure such students are not disproportionately disadvantaged
- if Student Support Funds are exhausted no further awards can be guaranteed
- each application is considered individually and assessed against the relevant eligibility criteria. They will reflect actual costs for participation
- course costs will only be provided for essential costs and any trips funded must be a compulsory part of the programme of study
- awards are designed to contribute towards the main costs incurred by students but may not cover all requirements. Students who meet the criteria for bursaries for vulnerable groups are not automatically entitled to a bursary, or to a fixed amount of bursary
- any awards requested which are above the stated maximum amount in this policy will be decided by a panel meeting which will consist of the following staff:
  - Director of Student Services
  - Student Support Fund Manager
  - Academy Director
  - Head of Student Experience
- any student found to have made a false claim will be subject to the college's Student Positive Relationships and Behaviour policy and 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 Academy Management to determine whether further financial support should be reduced or stopped
- if by exception, an award is to be paid by BACS transfer, the account must be in the student's own name
- for any overseas trips a full rationale will need to be provided. This rationale will need to include the following:
  - why the trip cannot be delivered within the UK
  - the benefits for students and how this is linked to their study programme
  - full breakdown of costs
- the college will operate a student hardship fund at its discretion for all students.

### **College Attendance Expectations**

- Students are usually expected to have at least 90% attendance to receive financial support
- the Student Support Fund Team will engage with the Student Experience team to gather information on barriers or extenuating circumstances to attendance. Genuine reasons for low attendance will be reviewed and actioned accordingly
- communication will be sent if attendance drops below 90%. This could be in the form of text, email or letter home to advise that financial support is at risk of being removed
- if attendance does not improve, further communication will be sent confirming actions taken and next steps
- the Student Experience team can request for funding to be reinstated with supporting reasons or evidence, but final decision will sit with Director of Student Services.

### **Cashless Payments**

The college policy operates a cashless payment system for all students, the table below shows how this applies to Student Support Fund payments:

<b>Support Type</b>	<b>Cashless Payment Procedure</b>
Travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Travel Master travel passes</li></ul>
Meal Credits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Meal credits issued to Student ID cards to purchase items at college catering outlets</li></ul>
Meal Vouchers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Meal vouchers provided to students if provision is delivered off site or subcontracted, where feasible</li></ul>
Childcare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Childcare provider invoices the college directly</li></ul>
Trips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Internal Transfer from Student Support Fund to Academy</li></ul>
Tuition Fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Internal Transfer from Student Support Fund to Academy</li></ul>

### **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
- re-enrol each academic year
- adhere to standards set out in the Student Charter, Student Positive Relationships and Behaviour policy and Attendance policy.

### **Academy Directors/Heads of School**

Academy Directors/Heads of School are responsible for:

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

<b>Provision</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
Higher Education	May 2025
Further Education	May 2025

### **Curriculum Teams**

This policy requires curriculum teams to ensure that they:

- maintain a proactive and positive working relationship with the Student Funding Team (SFT)
- identify students who would benefit from the Student Support Fund early and support them 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.

### **Student Funding Team (SFT)**

The SFT team are responsible for:

- ensuring 100% budget utilisation for each fund
- maintaining a proactive and positive working relationship with curriculum teams and Academy/School leadership
- ensuring that all communications are via agreed standard templates
- providing accurate and timely IAG to prospective students relating to the Student Support Fund
- updating all college systems in a timely manner
- ensuring key performance indicators identified in the table below are achieved.

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

### **Curriculum Administration Services Team (CAST)**

Working in partnership with the SSF team and finance, CAST will be responsible for procuring all course equipment and resources for their specific academies. This is in line with the flowchart below:

#### **Curriculum Course Cost Procurement Procedure**

<b>Stage No</b>	<b>Stage Detail</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
1	Academy Director confirms course costs between rounds 2 and 3 Head of Student Experience confirms course costs and suppliers for their academy with the Student Support Fund (SSF) Team.	31 <sup>st</sup> May 2025
2	SSF team project student numbers based on previous years student support fund data.	15 <sup>th</sup> June 2025
3	CAST team procure course equipment and resources in line with college finance procedures to ensure students have the right equipment and resources available to ensure a strong start to their course. CAST team to log Purchase Order numbers and audit information on their academy folder/files within their Student Support Fund SharePoint site.	15 <sup>th</sup> June to 12 <sup>th</sup> August 2025
4	SSF team to assess applications from June 2025 and input eligible student details onto SharePoint files/folders for each academy and course.	1 <sup>st</sup> July 2025 onwards
5	Once application is approved students collect equipment and resources from CAST at their designated college campus. Students	12 <sup>th</sup> August onwards



	must complete and sign an online receipt form; The CAST team will log when the student has collected their equipment	
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### **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 student feedback from the Student Support Fund survey
- positive student 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 student retention for supported students
- low student withdrawals from supported students.

### **Free Meals and Refreshment Bursary Guidelines for The Sheffield College Catering Outlets**

Students who receive free meals or a refreshment allowance will be allowed a total daily allowance of £4.50 for each full day they attend college. This can be used flexibly throughout the day for breakfast and lunch.