



NORTH BRISTOL

Post 16 Centre



NBP16C Bursary Funding Policy | 2024-25

1. Learner Eligibility

1.1 A learner aged under 19 on 31 August in the academic year in which they start the program of study funded by the EFA, will be eligible to apply for a bursary.

1.2 Eligibility and the level of award is dependent upon the learner's personal circumstances/level of household income.

1.3 The budget funding for bursaries is limited; learners who are eligible for support are not automatically entitled to discretionary bursaries.

1.4 Learners are encouraged and expected to access other forms of financial support. This will be considered when their applications for bursaries are accessed.

1.5 Learners who qualify for Free School Meals will be automatically eligible for the discretionary bursary (priority 2) provided proof of FSM eligibility is provided, either in the form of a valid National Insurance Number (verified as eligible via the Department for Education online checking system, or by documentation confirming receipt of this benefit).

2. Policy Aims

The North Bristol Post 16 Centre aims to have a workable and fair system for the allocation of bursary funds, targeted at those most in need.

3. Vulnerable Student Bursary

Those eligible for the vulnerable student bursary (known as 'Priority 1') are:

- Children in care / care leavers
- Students in receipt of income support (or Universal Credit) in their own name
- Disabled young people in receipt of both Employment Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance (or Personal Independence Payments).
- More recently, this also includes unaccompanied asylum seeking children.

4. Discretionary Bursary

4.1 NBP16 will seek to allocate discretionary bursaries to learners who are at risk of not participating in learning because of financial hardship, particularly those learners who are not able to access alternative schemes to provide specific support in meeting the costs associated with attending NBP16 and completing their programme of study.

4.2 At NBP16, we work on an hour-for-an-hour basis for each course (one hour of teacher-led learning, one hour of student-led learning), which means home learning makes up a fundamental component of our students' provision and barriers to participation in this respect will also be a consideration.

4.3 Our discretionary bursaries can support students with essential course related costs such as travel to the Centre, equipment, books, trips, sports kit, attending university or job interviews, provision of designated study space.

4.4 This fund can also help with hardship arising from a sudden change in circumstances, such as redundancy or a sudden drop in household income.

4.5 The discretionary bursary can assist if the student is:

- Living in a household where the joint annual income is less than £30,000 (or living independently on an income below this level)
- Facing exceptional circumstances, even with an annual income in excess of £30,000

4.6 At the discretion of NBP16, it may be possible to provide support beyond the scope of the examples provided here; this will be reviewed in line with this policy, ESFA guidance and the changing landscape of Post 16 education.

5. Policy guidelines

5.1 Detailed guidance on the application and appeals process is provided in the Students Guidance Notes, available at www.nbp16c.org.uk.

5.2 All three categories of funding are subject to available funds. Allocation of funding for travel costs may be withheld should students fail to attend the Centre on a given day.

5.3 Students may have received an award in previous years; this is no guarantee of future awards. Indeed students must make an application and provide new evidence each academic year.

5.4 NBP16 will make awards based upon proven hardship. Hardship must be substantiated by evidence which will be retained in accordance with audit requirements by the education funding agency. Evidence / assessment of income / benefits will be required to support all claims and will be handled discreetly.

5.5 The discretionary bursary is cash limited and can only be allocated whilst funds last.

5.6 Each application is judged against the published household income thresholds; not all applications will be successful.

5.7 Students will be advised whenever possible and applicable of other forms of financial support that may be available to them.

6. Criteria for the disbursement of bursary funding

Vulnerable Student Bursary		
Priority	Criteria	Indicative Award
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people aged 16 and 17 in care/ Care leavers • Young people receiving Universal Credit in their own name • Disabled young people in receipt of both Employment Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance (or Personal Independence Payments) • Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children 	£1,200 p.a
Discretionary Bursary		
Priority	Criteria	Indicative Award
2	Students who are unable to access any other form of learner support funding and parental income including child tax credit and working tax credit is below £25,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full cost of travel to centre • Full course costs
3	Students who are unable to access any other form of learner support funding and parental income including child tax credit and working tax credit is between £25,001 and £30,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2/3 cost of travel to centre • 2/3 course costs
4	Students who do not fall into any of the above categories but whose circumstances are causing them to suffer hardship or who are at risk of being unable to continue their studies because of hardship.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the discretion of the Director of Post 16

6.1 These awards are discretionary and depend on the availability of funds and the provision of evidence of expenditure. Students are therefore not automatically entitled to payment of the maximum amount.

6.2 Depending on the number of eligible students in a given academic year, it may be necessary for NBP16 to place a cap on the weekly travel allowance available to students.

7. Determining priority groups

7.1 NBP16 will consider guidance from the funding body about priority groups and identify groups who are likely to be most at risk of leading her or him to drop out of learning, in line with the eligibility criteria published in this policy.

7.2 Children in care, care leavers, students in receipt of Universal Credit in their own name, disabled young people in receipt of both Employment Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance (or Personal Independence Payments), and unaccompanied asylum-seeking children are currently guaranteed a non-discretionary bursary.

8. Handling applications

8.1 Information and application forms will be provided to new applicants prior to enrolment.

8.2 Applications must be supported by evidence of circumstances.

8.3 Parents/carers and students are encouraged to make early applications, but they can apply for a bursary later in the year. NBP16 cannot guarantee that applications received after the October half term will be reviewed and applications will be closed for the year once budget allocations have been reached.

8.4 If a student feels aggrieved about how their application for a bursary was handled, they should follow the NBP16 complaints procedure.

8.5 All information submitted via the application form must be supported by the necessary accompanying evidence, as indicated in the guidance document. The supporting evidence will be reviewed by NBP16 and this will be the basis of eligibility decisions.

9. Equality and diversity

Arrangements will not discriminate against students on the basis of any protected characteristics as set out in equalities legislation.

10. Policy measuring and monitoring

This policy will be reviewed annually through our NBP16 Steering Governors group represented by both schools' governing bodies.