

Students who are aged 19+ studying on an FE program and have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) are eligible to apply for the **16-18 Bursary and Free Meals in college** where they meet the additional criteria for the support.

You are **NOT eligible** for funding if –

- you are studying on a waged Apprenticeship or Higher Education course
- you have been released on temporary license from prison or young offender institution
- you are receiving support through Additional Learning Support for the same purpose.

## **Free Meals**

From September 2026 all students aged 19+ with an education health and care (EHC) plan studying in FE provision funded by DfE will be entitled to receive a free meal if they or their households are in receipt of any of the following benefits.

- Universal Credit
- Income-related Employment Support Allowance (ESA)
- The **guaranteed element** of Pension Credit
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

**\*\*\* If you do not meet the above criteria we may still be able to provide you with a meal through the Bursary funding (details below) \*\*\***

### **Evidence Requirements (dated within 3 months of the date of your application)**

Universal Credit - at least one full Universal Credit statement

Income Related ESA – letter from DWP showing evidence of an ongoing claim

Guaranteed Pension Credit - letter from DWP showing evidence of an ongoing claim

Support under part VI – home office letter or proof of benefit eg Aspen Card

You will also be required to provide **proof of continued receipt of the same benefit** at a later point in the academic year – failure to do so will result in the meal allowance being removed.

### **If you are eligible you will receive**

- £4.50 per day towards the cost of food at college which will be pre-loaded each day onto your college ID card to be spent on site

## **16-18 Bursary**

**Please Note:** this fund is limited and therefore **NO GUARANTEE** of funding can be made.

You are eligible to apply if you have a **total household income of less than £40,000 per annum.**

Household income will be calculated using one or more of the following as applicable –

**Proof of Earnings / Wages** – last 3 months wage slips, P60, SA302 Self Employment Tax Return

**State Pension, Income Support, Job Seekers Allowance, Employment Support Allowance (Incapacity Benefit)** – letter from DWP dated within the last 3 months or showing an ongoing claim

**Universal Credit** – the last 3 months statements in full

**Other income** eg Private Pension, Carers Allowance, Student Loan

Personal Independence Payment and the Disability Element of any Child Tax Credits will NOT be taken into account as part of household income – **please make us aware if this is part of any payment you receive as it is not always evident.**

**If you are eligible you will receive**

- a refund of the 'Our Pass' application fee if you live in the Greater Manchester area and are under the age of 18
- for those not eligible for a Free Travel Pass or funded by the local authority, a weekly payment towards the cost of travel may be made – subject to approval.
- £4.50 per day towards the cost of food at college pre-loaded each day onto your college ID card to be spent on site
- A contribution to **essential course costs** eg uniform, equipment and **essential** trips

## **How to Apply**

Applications can be made via the Free Meals and Bursary Portal on the college website. You can use the same application form to apply for both Free Meals and Bursary but **please check you have provided sufficient evidence** if applying for both.

Applications open on **Thursday 20<sup>st</sup> August 2026** and will be processed in the order that they are received, fully completed with all necessary evidence.

### **Terms and Conditions of Payment for all Bursaries**

- Bursary funds will only be awarded provided the student applies before the closing date for applications (if applicable), meets the application criteria and once they have provided all relevant information / documents requested
- Receipt of any weekly payments for travel will be based on achieving **at least 90% overall attendance each week** in **all classes** including compulsory Maths and English classes (GCSE or Functional Skills) and work experience placements.
- Attendance less than 90% will result in payments being **adjusted accordingly** based on % weekly attendance. Backdated payments for travel will also be based on overall % attendance at time of processing. It is not possible to backdate funding for meals.

Some payments are made directly into Student Bank Accounts so we advise you ensure you have an account open **before** you apply – **bank account name must match the name in which you are enrolled at college.**

Applications will be available via the Online Application Portal in the Student Support area on the college website from **Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> August 2026** and will be processed in the order that they are received, fully completed with all necessary evidence.