

POLICY NAME: FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS 2024/2025

The College is committed to the equality of opportunity and to a proactive approach to equality, which supports and encourages under-represented groups, promotes inclusivity and values diversity.

Responsible Senior Leader	Donna Trusler
Policy Owner	Helen Devine
Approved by	Corporation
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Policy location	WQE Website/ Student Intranet

Equality Impact Assessment by	WQE Website							
Intended Audience	Staff	x	Governors		Students	x	External	x
Added to College website by	Megan Ardley				Date	January 2025		
Added to Staff intranet by	Helen Devine				Date	January 2025		

Policy on Financial Support for Students

1 Context

The College recognises that some of its students may find the financial demands of their education difficult to meet. Within available resources, the College will seek to mitigate those demands to help such students access, continue and complete their programmes of study successfully.

2 General Procedures

The College will:

Provide financial information to prospective students who are offered a place at the College, including information about all elements of the 16-19 Bursary Funds.

Administer the 16-19 Bursary Fund scheme in accordance with guidelines provided by the funding authority.

Provide, for all students, **essential** books and materials (excluding stationery requirements). Provide a contribution to instrumental or voice tuition, for those College students who study A level Music.

Ensure that should there be insufficient funds to meet all applications; priority will be given to students who are in greatest need or to applications for **specific resources** required to support their learning.

3 16-19 Bursary Fund:

The scheme is made up of two parts – an enhanced payment to the most vulnerable students and a discretionary fund, to be administered by the College to support eligible students who face genuine financial barriers to participation.

The 16-19 Bursary Fund can provide students with help towards costs such as transport, college trips and visits which link to an essential part of the student's study programme, essential resources and equipment.

3.1 Enhanced Bursary

The defined vulnerable group are students who are:

- in care
- care leavers
- receiving Income Support (IS), or Universal Credit (UC) because they are financially supporting themselves or financially supporting themselves and someone who is dependent on them and living with them, such as a child or partner
- receiving Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payments (PIP) in their own right as well as Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or UC in their own right

Any student who feels they may be eligible for the above Enhanced Bursary should contact Student Services for more information and advice in confidence.

3.2 Discretionary Bursary

Households with a household income below £33,000, including any of the benefits outlined below, may apply to the Fund.

- Income Support,
- Income based Job Seekers Allowance, or income-based Employment Support Allowance
- Universal Credit
- Pension credit
- Tax Credits
- Support from NASS (National Asylum Support Service)

Support will not normally be provided where the household income (including earned income and any benefits) is over the maximum published threshold of £33,000. In exceptional circumstances wider contributory factors may be considered.

Applications will be assessed and administered by the college in accordance with the above criteria, and guidelines provided by the funding authority.

The level of support will be discretionary and determined by assessment of individual circumstances, as outlined above, and available college funds – all such support will be reviewed on a term-by-term basis accordingly. Priority will be given to those determined to need this support the most.

3.3 Transport Costs

- Students may be able to apply to the 16-19 Bursary Fund for help with transport costs.
- Students meeting the Enhanced Bursary criteria will be provided with an annual pass.
- Students eligible for the discretionary fund will usually be provided with an annual pass. Some students will need to contribute towards the cost of the annual pass according to an assessment of their financial circumstances.
- If a student buys any other alternative pass (i.e. train, local authority pass) they will usually be offered the amount for which they are eligible according to assessed thresholds.
- In exceptional circumstances, such as where students are incurring temporary costs through being unable to pay for the pass, a higher level of support may be agreed.
- Transport support is normally only available to students who live at least two miles from college. Priority for support with transport costs will be given to students who apply by the published College deadline.
- Students with specific mobility needs, such as students with statements of Special Educational Needs (SEN), **may** be eligible to apply to their local authority for assistance with transport costs.
- Students with an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) are eligible to support from their local authority.
- Students with identified support needs but who are not eligible for SEN transport support from their local authority may apply to the 16-19 Bursary Fund for help with costs; their application will be subject to the normal household income assessment.

3.4 Meal Support

- Meals are administered in line with Bursary guidance, normally this is in the form of funds added daily to the student ID card. Any unspent funds do not carry forward to the next day.
- Students meeting government defined Free School Meals criteria will be guaranteed a daily allowance for meal support following the completion of a Bursary application.
- All other students eligible for bursary support will receive a daily meal support allowance paid through the Discretionary Bursary Fund.
- The daily allowance for meals will normally be sufficient to ensure eligible students are able to purchase a main meal daily. This rate will remain under review throughout the year. Certain categories of food are excluded from this subsidy to ensure a balanced and healthy diet.

3.5 Other Support

- Students in receipt of bursary support are eligible for help with course related costs, including trips and visits which link to an essential part of the student's study programme.
- Students will be expected to apply for other external means of support available for UKCAT, LNAT or other tests associated with progression plans. If unsuccessful in securing external funding, eligible students may apply to the 16-19 Bursary Fund for support.
- Reimbursements will be made to students where they have incurred costs for essential resources required to support their learning. Payment will be made only with receipt as proof of purchase.
- The Students Services team can purchase essential resources on a student's behalf and issue these in-kind. Students should contact Student Services to discuss their individual needs.
- All bursary eligible students may apply for payments towards other specific costs, such as UCAS registration fees
- The day-to-day operation of the Fund will be managed by the Marketing, Admissions & Student Services team. Where there is any doubt about whether payment is appropriate or about the amount to be paid, the decision will be made by the Marketing, Admissions & Student Services Manager.
- If an application is turned down, students will have a right of appeal via the Associate Principal Students and Welfare.
- Bursary support may be impacted if there are significant concerns regarding behaviour and/or a student's level of attendance does not meet the College's expectations as stipulated in Learner Agreement.

4 Other Sources of Financial Support

- Any student may make written application to the Principal for financial assistance from the Wyggeston Foundation or from the Old Wyggestonian Association. Such assistance may be given, in addition to support from the 16-19 Bursary Fund or for educational purposes lying outside any of the above criteria, provided that the purpose falls within the regulations for the use of the fund. The level of any such assistance shall be determined by the trustees of the Foundation or by the Old Wyggestonian committee.
- Students aged 19 and over on 31 August in the year when they enrol at the College are eligible for limited discretionary support, this is a small, separate funding stream.
- The College is aware of the 24+ Additional Learning Loan Scheme but makes no specific reference to this in this Policy due to the age profile of its cohort. The College will revise this Policy accordingly should eligible learners enrol.
- For young parent learners under the age of 20, Care to Learn can help with childcare costs. Further information, including the application process, can be accessed from the government website: www.gov.uk/care-to-learn
- Any student whose place at the College is not fully funded by the College's main funding body is not eligible for support from any supplementary government funding.