

## Financial Support for Students 2026-27

### Guidance for the 16-19 Bursary Fund, Free College Meals and the 19+ Learner Support Fund

We understand that attending college can involve additional costs. If you need financial support, you may be able to apply for assistance through means-tested Bursary Funding.

This guidance explains how to complete your Financial Support Application Form and sets out the evidence you will need to provide as part of your application.

Please read this guidance carefully before applying. Applications that are incomplete, or submitted without the required supporting evidence, may take longer to process and could delay any financial support you are entitled to receive.

#### Financial Support available at WQE:

| Funding Type                    | Eligibility                                                                                                                                 |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Enhanced Bursary</b>         | Students age 16 -18 in priority groups identified by the government                                                                         |
| <b>Discretionary Bursary</b>    | Students age 16 – 18 at the start of their course <u>or</u> students age 19 – 24 with an EHCP; and Household annual income £33,000 or below |
| <b>Free College Meals (FCM)</b> | Households receiving Universal Credit or other qualifying benefits                                                                          |
| <b>19 + learner support</b>     | Students (without an EHCP) age 19 or above at the start of their course who meet any of the above criteria                                  |

You only need to complete one Financial Support Application Form. Once submitted, the Student Services Team will review your application and supporting evidence to determine which financial support you may be eligible for.

#### Important information about your application

- **You must be signed in to your WQE Microsoft 365** account to access and complete the application form
- **Submit ONE application only.** We assess eligibility for all available financial support through a single application.
- **Your application will not be assessed until all required evidence has been received.** If additional information is needed, we will contact you via your WQE email account and provide a deadline for submission. Applications may be withdrawn if this deadline is not met.

- **Applications are processed in strict date order.** Submitting incomplete information or incorrect evidence is likely to delay the assessment of your application.
- **The outcome of your application will be sent via email to your WQE email account.**
- **If your application is successful, we will provide details of the support** we will provide details of the financial support available to you as part of your award. The Student Services Team can offer further advice and guidance if required, so please contact us if you have any questions.
- **If your application is unsuccessful,** we will explain the reason for our decision.
- **All information is accurate at the time of publication.** The College reserves the right to amend these guidelines in response to changes in government policy, funding regulations, or budgetary requirements.

## Enhanced Bursary (Band A)

You may be eligible for an Enhanced Bursary if you:

- Are currently **in the care of a local authority or have previously been in care (Care Experienced)**
- Are **living independently and receive Universal Credit** in your own name
- Receive **Universal Credit and Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payments (PIP)** in your own name

You will need to provide evidence as outlined below:

| Eligibility Criteria                                                                                                              | Evidence Required                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Students currently <b>‘in care’ or ‘carer leavers’</b>                                                                            | Written confirmation of your current or previous looked-after status from the local authority who looks after you or is providing your leaving care services                                                                                                               |
| Students <b>living independently and in receipt of Universal Credit</b> in their own name                                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Your most recent Universal Credit statement or a copy of your Universal Credit award notice; and</li> <li>▪ A document which shows you live independently such as a tenancy agreement in your own name or utility bill</li> </ul> |
| Students in receipt of <b>Universal Credit and Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment</b> in their own name | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Your most recent Universal Credit statement or a copy of your Universal Credit award notice; and</li> <li>▪ Evidence of receipt of Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments</li> </ul>                       |

## Discretionary Bursary (Band B and C)

You may be eligible for support through the Discretionary Bursary if:

- You are not eligible for the Enhanced Bursary; and
- Your **household's gross annual income is below £33,000**. This includes income from employment as well as any benefits received.

The level of support you receive will be dependent on your household income:

|        |                                                  |
|--------|--------------------------------------------------|
| Band B | Gross household income below £22,000             |
| Band C | Gross household income between £22,000 - £33,000 |

You will need to provide evidence as outlined below:

| Eligibility Criteria                                                                   | Evidence Required                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| In receipt of <b>Universal Credit</b> with <b>gross household income below £33,000</b> | Your parent/carers three most recent Universal Credit Statements. <a href="#">Click here for guidance</a> .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| The <b>guaranteed element of State Pension Credit</b>                                  | A letter, that is no more than three months old, from the benefits agency, confirming receipt of the benefit.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Support from the <b>National Asylum Support Service</b>                                | A letter confirming your NASS registration number or an image of your Application Registration Card (ARC).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Household <b>income below £33,000 but not in receipt of benefits</b>                   | For each parent/carer living in the household, please provide one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ <b>If employed:</b> pay slips covering the previous three months</li><li>▪ <b>If self-employed:</b> their most recent self-assessment tax calculation or an accountant's letter confirming annual profit for the 2025-26 tax year</li></ul> |

## What does the Enhanced and Discretionary bursary cover?

If your bursary application is successful, you may be eligible to receive the support outlined below. The level of support available will depend on your household income.

Please refer to **Appendix 1** for further details.

|           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Transport | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Available to students who live more than 2 miles from WQE.</li><li>▪ Eligibility for transport support will be assessed based on the information provided in your bursary application.</li><li>▪ Support is normally provided in the form of an Arriva Smart Card for each term (Leicester Flexi or East Midlands).</li><li>▪ Students awarded <b>Band C</b> support will be required to <b>contribute 20% of the travel pass cost</b>.</li></ul> |
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|                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students who travel by train will be considered on an individual basis. Support from the Discretionary Bursary will normally not exceed the equivalent cost of an East Midlands annual bus pass.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Meal support         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meal support will be assessed based on the information provided in your bursary application.</li> <li>Students studying at <b>WQE</b> will receive a <b>daily meal allowance loaded onto their WQE ID card</b>.</li> <li>Students studying at <b>Studio 79 or BACA</b> will receive weekly meal support in the form of <b>supermarket e-vouchers</b>.</li> <li>Students studying at <b>LCPA</b> will receive a <b>weekly BACS payment</b>, with the expectation that the funds are <b>used within the LCPA catering facilities</b>.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Course Related Costs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support may be available for course-related resources and equipment, including stationery, scientific calculators, revision guides, art materials and sports kit.</li> <li>This support is available throughout the academic year, subject to the availability of bursary funding.</li> <li>Student Services can purchase approved items on a student's behalf.</li> <li>If you purchase approved items yourself, you can apply for reimbursement by submitting a completed Reimbursement Form and proof of purchase.</li> <li>The <b>maximum reimbursement for a single item is normally £25. If an item costs more than £25, please contact Student Services before purchasing</b>, as the College may be able to buy it for you. Items over £25 may need to be returned at the end of your course.</li> </ul> |
| Trips                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A contribution towards college trips which directly enhance your studies.</li> <li>This support is available throughout the year subject to the availability of funding.</li> <li>Trip information provided by the Curriculum Area will include details of how to access bursary funding.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Progression Costs    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribution towards travel costs for University Open Days, interviews and auditions.</li> <li>UCAS Application fee for students who do not qualify for the UCAS fee waiver.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |

### Reimbursements – Student Bank Account

If you buy an approved item yourself, such as a bus pass or stationery, you can apply to be reimbursed through your bursary. **Reimbursement payments can only be made to the student's own bank account.**

You will need to provide proof of your bank account, for example:

- A photo of your bank card; or
- A copy of a recent bank statement.

This evidence must clearly show your name, account number and sort code.

We are unable to make reimbursement payments in cash.

## Free College Meals Only (Band M)

You may be eligible for Band M support if:

- You are not eligible for the Enhanced Bursary; and
- Your parents/carers are **in receipt of Universal Credit**; and
- Your **household's gross annual income is above £33,000**. This includes income from employment as well as any benefits received.

### What does Band M Support cover?

|              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|--------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Meal support | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Meal support will be assessed based on the information provided in your bursary application.</li><li>▪ Students studying at <b>WQE</b> will receive a <b>daily meal allowance loaded onto their WQE ID card</b>.</li><li>▪ Students studying at <b>Studio 79 or BACA</b> will receive weekly meal support in the form of <b>supermarket e-vouchers</b>.</li><li>▪ Students studying at <b>LCPA</b> will receive a <b>weekly BACS payment</b>, with the expectation that the funds are <b>used within the LCPA catering facilities</b>.</li></ul> |
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## 19+ Learner Support Fund

You may be eligible for support through the 19+ Learner Support Fund if:

- Are **aged 19 or over at the start of your course** (including students progressing internally to the next level of study);
- **Do not have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)**; and
- You **meet the eligibility criteria for the Enhanced Bursary, Discretionary Bursary, or Free College Meals** schemes.

We will aim to provide support that is broadly equivalent to the bursary or meal support you would otherwise be eligible to receive.

**If you have any questions about the application process or require assistance in completing your application, please contact [bursary@wqe.ac.uk](mailto:bursary@wqe.ac.uk) or visit the Student Services Team on either campus, who will be happy to help.**

## Appendix 1: Bursary Eligibility and Funding Grid 2026/27

|          | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Meals *                                   | Transport<br>(Living more than 2 miles from the College)                                                                                       | Essential kit and materials                                                                                                             | Trips and Visits                                                                     | UCAS fee |
|----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| <b>A</b> | <b>Enhanced Bursary.</b> Student is either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Looked after by the Local Authority or is a Care Leaver</li> <li>Living independently and in receipt of Universal Credit in their own name.</li> <li>In receipt of Universal Credit <b>and</b> either Disability Living Allowance <b>or</b> Personal Independence Payment in their own name.</li> </ul> | Enhanced daily allowance on your WQE card | Full support for your travel costs.                                                                                                            | Provision in-kind or reimbursement** of cost for essential course related equipment and resources.                                      | 100% towards trips that directly enhance your studies.<br>(Maximum of £200 per trip) | Paid     |
| <b>B</b> | <b>Gross annual household income (earned income and any benefits) of below £22,000</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | £4.50 daily allowance on your WQE card    | Provision of term bus pass (or equivalent contribution to other travel costs).                                                                 | Individual allowance of up to £100 per year for specific course related equipment and resources to be provided in-kind or reimbursed**. | 80% towards trips that directly enhance your studies.<br>(Maximum of £150 per trip)  | Paid     |
| <b>C</b> | <b>Gross annual household income (earned income and any benefits) in range £22,000 - £33,000</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | £4.50 daily allowance on your WQE card    | Contribution to term bus pass of up to 80% of the relevant annual Arriva or Flexi bus pass (or equivalent contribution to other travel costs). | Individual allowance of up to £80 per year for specific course related equipment and resources to be provided in-kind or reimbursed**.  | 50% towards trips that directly enhance your studies.<br>(Maximum of £100 per trip)  | Paid     |
| <b>M</b> | <b>In receipt of Universal Credit, gross household income (including earned income) above £33,000</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | £3.00 daily allowance on your WQE card    | N/A                                                                                                                                            | N/A                                                                                                                                     | N/A                                                                                  | N/A      |

### NOTES:

\* Meal support for students studying off-site at Studio 79 or BACA will be paid via weekly via Supermarket Evoucher. Students studying at LCPA will receive a BACS payment with the expectation that this will be spent in the LCPA catering facilities.

\*\* Reimbursements are available on submission of a completed reimbursement form and proof of purchase. The maximum reimbursement for a single item is normally £25. If an item costs more than £25, please contact Student Services before purchasing, as the College may be able to buy it for you. Items over £25 may need to be returned at the end of your course.