



## **Learner Financial Support Policy**

**Version:**

Final

**Author:**

Vice Principal  
Finance & Planning

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**Approved by SLT**  
**Approved by F&R Committee**  
**Approved by Corporation**

26 June 2025  
1 July 2025  
9 July 2025

**Impact Assessment Completed**

Yes

**Date of Next Review**

June 2026

## Equality Impact Assessment Form

The completion of the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) will help us to ensure that our policies, procedures and practices do not discriminate or disadvantage people and also improve or promote equality.

**In relation to: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation.**

1. Please explain if you identified any inequalities or possible discrimination in the policy, procedure or practice?

No inequalities or areas of discrimination identified.

2. If identified, how have you changed the policy, procedure or practice to remove or mitigate the inequality or discrimination?

N/A

3. Any follow up actions required?

None

## **1. Purpose**

The purpose of this Policy is to set out Shipley College's approach to the allocation of Financial Support funds available for learners. It aims to remove barriers to learning, promote equality of opportunity and support learners to complete their studies and progress to further learning or employment.

## **2. Scope**

This Policy applies to all funded students and the following funds:-

- 16-19 Bursary funds (including vulnerable bursaries)
- Free College meals
- Loan Bursary Fund for Advanced learning loan learners

## **3. Responsibility**

It is the responsibility of all staff to comply with the requirements of this Policy and for Student Experience staff, Enrolments staff and Heads of Department to ensure its implementation. Policy and practice is overseen by the Vice Principal Finance and Planning.

## **4. Principles**

Guidance on learner financial support will be provided at enrolment, during induction, on the student portal, in classrooms, as part of information, advice and guidance and upon request. The policy aims to: remove financial barriers to access and succeed in education, ensure funds are distributed fairly and in accordance with funding body rules and promote full participation in course related activities.

Sources of funding are predominantly through the following grants:

- The 16-19 Bursary and Free College meals allocation, given to the College by the Department for Education, is distributed at the discretion of the College within the funding body specific rules.
- The Learner Support Fund, given to the College by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority, is used to support adult learners with a specific financial hardship that prevents them from taking part in further education.
- The Loan Bursary Fund, given to the College by the Department for Education, is used to support learners who have an advanced learning loan.

4.1 To simplify the process for learners, the College has one application process per age group. The College then allocates applications and costs to the appropriate fund. Students or prospective students who need financial support to access learning should contact Student Experience or Enrolments, who will assess their eligibility for support.

4.2 Shipley College prioritises the allocation of the funds to enable the maximum number of learners to access learning and complete their course successfully. The priority groups being:

- Those in care or recently left care
- Those eligible for fee remission because they are, or they are the dependant of someone else who is, receiving a means tested state benefit or Tax credit
- Those eligible for fee remission because they are undertaking a first full level 2 or level 3 qualification, or a fully funded FCFJ qualification subject to current funding rules
- Those eligible for fee remission because they are in work but earning less than the current income threshold relevant to the learner's postcode and associated funding body
- Those taking a Skills for Life programme of study
- Those with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND)
- Those unemployed or recently made redundant
- Those from low income households
- Those vocational students undertaking industry placements to help access their placements.
- Those on a Tailored Learning course where funding body rules allow

Eligibility and assessment criteria are determined by the College, in accordance with funding body guidelines. These criteria may be changed at any time

- 4.3 The Learner Support Fund cannot be used for learners who are paying for a full cost course. It cannot be used where other funds are available to the learner e.g. help with travel or childcare costs from Jobcentre Plus or a Work Programme provider in connection with pre-employment training.
- 4.4 The Learner Support Fund can only be used for Apprenticeships in very exceptional circumstances as there is an expectation that employers will provide support.
- 4.5 Learner financial support is provided to support all eligible learners and to remove barriers to education or training. This can include:
- Course-related costs, books and equipment (where these costs are not included in the funding rate), support with emergencies
  - IT kit for online learning where none is available in the household
  - Transport costs
  - Tuition & examination fees
  - Costs relating to mandatory placements (including uniforms and professional work wear) and course related visits
  - Costs relating to university open days and interviews
  - Free meals
  - Childcare through Ofsted registered providers
  - Emergency food support
  - Support provided by others, or by providing items or services
- 4.6 To reach its decisions, the College will determine the eligibility of learners to access learner financial support based on the information provided in the application form and other appropriate sources. The College may then make reference to tutors to confirm:
- Attendance, progress and commitment to their studies
  - The likelihood of completion, particularly if support needs are considerable.

- 4.7 Learner financial support cannot be used to “pay off” debts.
- 4.8 Learner financial support is both limited and discretionary. There is no automatic entitlement to support from this fund.
- 4.9 If an application is successful, the Learner Support Fund may not cover all costs, but will make a contribution.
- 4.10 In order to assess an application, the College requires personal financial information from applicants or their parents/carers. All information supplied is treated as confidential. Applications will be processed and decisions communicated within 5 working days.

## **5. Oversight**

- 5.1 The Learner Support Fund Management Group (LSFMG) meets as and when necessary, in order to agree Policy and Procedures relating to LSF. This group consists of:
  - Vice Principal Finance & Planning
  - Head of Student Experience
  - Student Experience Administrative Team Leader
- 5.2 Exceptional cases are considered by at least 2 members of The LSFMG
- 5.3 Appeals are resolved by the Vice Principal of Finance and Planning in accordance with this policy, following an investigation conducted by the LSFMG.
- 5.4 Appeals prior to enrolment can be made through the College complaints procedure.

## **6. Monitoring and reporting**

Compliance with Policy and Procedures will be monitored by the Vice Principal – Finance and Planning and Student Experience.

Annual review of spend is carried out for the completion of the monitoring returns to be submitted to the funding bodies in line with their monitoring timetables.

External audit review the Policy, Procedure and claim via the annual regularity audit carried out in late September/early October each year.

Learners benefitting from support by these funds are flagged as such in the Individual Learning Record (ILR).

## **7. Related to other documents**

- Fee Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Admissions Procedure
- Compliments and Complaints Procedure
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy