

16-19 Bursary Fund Policy 2025/2026

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Policy Name: 16-19 Bursary Fund Policy	Policy No: P660012
Approved Date: July 2025	Review Date: July 2026
Approved by: College Leadership Team	EqIA Completed: Yes
Author: Head of Student Experience	Monitoring & Evaluation: College Leadership Team

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Each year, Petroc receives an allocation for learners aged 16-19 for a Bursary Fund. This document sets out how Petroc intends to administer and distribute funds. This policy follows the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) guidance issued in April 25¹.
- 1.2 Learners may be eligible for either the Enhanced Bursary, if they meet the criteria set, or the Standard Bursary if their household is on a low income. The Bursary may be used to support home/college transport costs and books, equipment or trips essential to a learners' course of study. The Bursary Management System will also be used to allocate free college meals in line with the Government directive to those learners who are eligible.

2.0 Purpose

- 2.1 Petroc recognises that the 16-19 Bursary Fund has an important role to play in removing barriers for some learners accessing and completing Further Education courses. The bursaries are intended to help learners with the essential costs of participating in their study programmes. It is the policy of the college to optimise the use of the 16-19 Bursary Funding to provide support to those young people facing the greatest financial barriers to continuing in Education.

3.0 Eligibility

- 3.1 To be eligible to receive a bursary the learner must be aged 16 to under 19 on 31 August 2025 or a learner aged 19 to 25 who has an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) assessed by the local authority, satisfy residency criteria and be enrolled on an ESFA, European Social Fund (ESF) or publicly funded programme. All applications are based upon the actual needs of an individual learner in addition to them meeting the eligibility criteria. Learners on waged apprenticeships or a higher education course are not eligible for either of the 16-19 Bursaries.
- 3.2 Timetable for applications to be received:
Completed application forms with all the required information should be submitted online, ideally before the course starts. In-year applications will be accepted. Applications will be approved when the evidence of income/benefit is submitted to the Advice and Guidance Team. Applications for bus passes will be actioned within 1 week of receipt of all the correct information. Allocations for equipment will be made once the learner's expected attendance has been verified after 3 weeks from the start of the course. Emergency applications due to sudden change of circumstances should be made to the Advice and Guidance team as soon as possible, where they will be considered.

3.3 College Transport Scheme:

The College runs its own travel scheme based on the public service routes operated in North and Mid Devon. The cost of a bus pass will vary depending on home address and the number of days studied, Termrider or Flexi tickets are available. The Guidance Team will assess learners individually to determine which ticket needs to be issued. The College has taken the decision to assist learners who are

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[16 to 19 Bursary Fund guide: 2025 to 2026 - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/16-to-19-bursary-fund-guide-2025-to-2026)

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under the household income threshold of £35,000 and therefore would benefit from financial support. The bursary will fully fund the cost of their travel to and from college. Learners who live in the Cornwall and Somerset catchment areas can also access the fund to gain them a free bus pass.

4.0 Enhanced Bursary Learners

4.1 Enhanced Bursary Learners is a term used to describe those learners who are most vulnerable. These are identified as:

- Young people in care, including unaccompanied Asylum seeking young people
- Care leavers
- Young people in receipt of Universal Credit because they are financially supporting themselves and anyone who is dependent on them or living with them, such as a child or partner
- Young people who are disabled and in receipt of Universal Credit who are also in receipt of Personal Independence Payment (PIP).

Enhanced learners will be able to apply for a maximum allocation of up to £1200 for the full academic year, however allocation is strictly based upon a learner's individual participation need. A pro-rata allocation may be made for learners who start late in the year.

4.2 Assessment for eligibility of Enhanced Bursary Learners:

Enhanced learner payments will be arranged after completion and acceptance of the College's 16-19 Bursary Fund application form which is available on the learner's MyPetroc account. Information captured from the enrolment form will provide the details required to ascertain eligibility and individual participation needs, supported by the required documentation.

4.3 'In Kind Support' for Enhanced Bursary Learners:

Enhanced Learners may receive 'In kind' payments in the form of a bus pass when an enhanced bursary learner lives more than three miles from the College. According to individual need, the Enhanced Learners may be provided with a free college meal.. Payments may also be made directly to a Faculty area for educational visits and any additional fees essential to the completion of the study programme. Enhanced Bursary Learners will also have the support of a College Funded Mentor to support them during their time at college who will work with them to establish the costs to the learner's study

4.4 'Direct Support' for Enhanced Bursary Learners:

Where the Enhanced Learner is required to have equipment essential to their course, e.g. chef's whites, steel toe cap boots, they may request funds to cover these expenses by supplying a detailed breakdown of costs. Appendix A (Enhanced Bursary Information, Costs and Funding)

4.5 Managing payments for Enhanced Bursary Learners:

A breakdown of an individual learners' essential study programme costs will be completed as soon as possible, ideally before the start of the learner's course with the Enhanced Learner Mentor. A copy of the costs will be passed to the Advice and Guidance Team to plan payments and a copy will also be given to the learner (please see Appendix A).

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5.0 Eligibility to the 16-19 Standard Bursary Fund

5.1 In order to support as many learners as possible from the Bursary Fund, Petroc has maintained the threshold from 23/24 to assist learners whose families have a household income of under £35,000 per annum or are in receipt of a means tested benefit. This will be certified by Tax/Universal Credit Award Notice or P60/Self-Assessment stating the taxable income.

5.2 'In Kind Support' for the Standard Bursary:
When learners eligible for the Standard Bursary live more than three miles from the College, they may use the Bursary Funds to subsidise their travel. This may be through the Petroc's Travel Scheme or via the Devon, Cornwall or Somerset County Council scheme. The policies for the Council schemes can be found on the Councils' websites. Learners may also apply for assistance with travel to work experience/industry placement using public transport, if it is essential to their study programme.

Learners eligible for the Standard Bursary may also apply for funds towards educational visits, and studio fees essential to their course. In this case, learners may have 50% of costs paid via the learner's myPetroc portal for educational visits and 80% paid for studio fees which are paid directly to the Faculty. This does not include the Ancillary Fee.

5.3 'Direct Support' for the Standard Bursary:
Where learners are required to have equipment essential to their course, e.g. chef's whites, steel toe cap boots and based upon their individual needs, the fund may contribute 80% towards the full cost of the kit. The 16-19 Bursary Fund will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

5.4 Additional Support:
If a learner is facing a particular challenge or hardship, they are advised to contact the Wellbeing and Support Team on 01271 447196 or at wellbeing@petroc.ac.uk who may authorise additional funds if required and available

6.0 Internal decision-making process and appeal process

6.1 The College will base eligibility decisions on the basis of the information on the 16-19 Bursary Fund application form and the supporting documentation provided by the learner.

6.2 The College has set income thresholds which can be supported by identifiable evidence and documentation from the learners or their parents/guardians i.e., Tax/Universal Credit Award Notice or P60/Self-Assessment.

6.3 Appeals received by the College against a 16-19 Bursary Fund allocation or decision will be heard by the Head of Student Engagement, who is not directly involved in the original decision-making process.

7.0 Learner Information

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7.1 North Devon College's Website² will contain relevant and up-to-date information required to understand and complete the 16-18 Bursary application process and the Bursary Agreement.

8.0 Attendance

8.1 Any payments are conditional on complying with the attendance criteria as laid out in the Attendance and Punctuality Policy. Learners' attendance will be checked 3 weeks after their start date and payment will be processed if attendance is at 100%. If a learner falls below 100% attendance in the first 3 weeks, they will need to demonstrate improvement which will be considered on an individual basis.

9.0 Free College Meals

9.1 The college makes free meals available to all eligible learners for each day they attend their study programme, where this is appropriate. The free college meal criteria is set nationally and is for those learners whose families are in receipt of the following benefits:

- Income Support
- Income Based Job Seekers Allowance
- support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Employment Support Allowance (Income related)
- Guarantee element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit if you do not also receive WTC and your annual income as assessed by the Inland Revenue, does not exceed £16,190
- Universal Credit - if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)
- Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for 4 weeks after someone stops qualifying for Working Tax Credit

A learner aged 19 to 25 and has an Education (EHCP) assessed by the local authority is eligible for Free College Meals provided they meet the Household Income criteria.

² <https://www.petroc.ac.uk/life-at-petroc/advice-guidance/fees-and-funding/16-18-bursary-fund/>

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Appendix A:
Template for Recording Enhanced Bursary Information, Costs and Funding

Costs to be identified using kit list and learner payment portal.
 Identify items and costs to be paid internally/externally.

Category	Item	Comment	How to be paid (int/ext)	Cost
Equipment				
Fees				
Uniform				
Travel				
Text Books				
Technology				
Agreed extra items				
Internal Subtotal (to be paid directly to the college)				
External Subtotal (to be paid to the learner)				
Total Costs agreed				

I understand that in order to receive enhanced bursary support I agree to attend and engage fully with my course, the Petroc Code of Conduct and the Petroc Learning Agreement. I will make every effort to complete the qualifications for which I have enrolled.

I understand that any breach of these terms may result in bursary support being suspended or withdrawn.

Name of Learner.....

Learners signature Learner number.....

Staff Member..... Date.....

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Appendix B: Appeals Procedure for 16-19 Bursary

Learners have the right to appeal against any decision made in connection with their 16-19 Bursary Fund.

Learners wishing to appeal should put the details of their concern in writing by emailing: guidancecentre@petroc.ac.uk.

An appeals panel should be convened within 5 working days.

The appeals panel should consist of the Head of Learner Admissions, Advice & Guidance Centre Manager, and a member of the Wellbeing and Safeguarding Team.

The outcome of the appeal panel will be given in writing within 10 working days of the receipt of the learner's appeal.

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