

Step into Learning – Bursary Fund Fact Sheet for Learners

Step into Learning is committed to supporting learners by providing financial assistance to help cover costs associated with education. Our bursary schemes are designed to ensure that financial barriers do not prevent learners from accessing and participating in their courses. This fact sheet provides a quick guide to the **16-19 Bursary Fund** and the **Care to Learn** scheme.

What is the 16-19 Bursary Fund?

The 16-19 Bursary Fund is a government initiative that helps learners cover essential costs such as **transport, books, equipment, and PPE**. The fund is available to learners who meet certain **eligibility criteria**.

Types of Bursaries Available

Vulnerable Bursary

A learner must be **aged 16 or over but under 19 on 31 August** of the relevant academic year to be eligible. – The only over-19s who can receive a Vulnerable Bursary are care leavers and those applying for Care to Learn.

This bursary is designed for learners who are facing particularly difficult circumstances, such as:

- **In Care or Care Leavers**
- **Learners receiving Universal Credit or Income Support** (in their own name)
- **Learners receiving Personal Independence Payments (PIP)**
- **Young Parents** (under 20 and in receipt of Child Benefit – Care to Learn)

Maximum Amount: Up to **£1,200** per academic year.

Note: The full amount is not guaranteed and depends on individual circumstances.

Discretionary Bursary

This bursary is for learners who do not qualify for the Vulnerable Bursary but still require financial assistance. It is awarded based on an assessment of the learner's **financial need**.

Eligibility:

- **Household income** up to £25,521 (including all benefits).



- A "19+ continuer" (continuing the same programme started aged 16–18)
- Learners aged **19 or over** with an **Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP)**.

Permissible uses:

- Travel costs, essential books, equipment, or uniform.

How to Apply

1. Complete an Application Form

- You can obtain the application pack from your tutor, or training provider administrator or download it from the Step into Learning [website](#).

2. Provide Required Evidence

Ensure you submit the necessary evidence, such as:

- Proof of household income
- A copy of your **bank details** (bank statement or paying-in slip)
- **Child Benefit evidence** (for Care to Learn applicants)

3. Submit Your Application

Submit the completed form and all required documents as early as possible.

Applications are processed on a **first-come, first-served** basis.

4. Notification of Outcome

After your application is reviewed, you will be notified of the outcome. You will also be informed if any additional documentation is required.

Evidence Requirements

Depending on the type of bursary you are applying for, you may need to provide the following:

Vulnerable Bursary Evidence

- **In Care/Care Leaver:** Confirmation from the relevant local authority.
- **Universal Credit:** UC award notice in your name.
- **Personal Independence Payments (PIP):** PIP award letter along with UC or ESA evidence.
- **Young Parent:** Birth certificate of your child, evidence of Child Benefit, and details of your childcare provider.



Discretionary Bursary Evidence

- **Income Evidence:** The 3 most recent payslips or benefit award notices for your household. Please provide the full UC statement if you receive it, we need to see the amount due before deductions are made.
- **Bank Statement:** The 3 most recent month's bank statements showing income and expenditure.
- **EHCP (if applicable):** Confirmation of your Education, Health, and Care Plan.

Payment Process

- **Vulnerable Bursary:** Payments are made monthly and are based on **attendance** and the **submission of invoices/receipts** for eligible expenses. However, this year, the DFE will also be assessing each application and will not be releasing the funds for successful applicants until February 2026. If your application is successful, we will be able to reimburse you for September-January when the funds are released to us.
- **Discretionary Bursary:** Payments are made **upon receipt of invoices** and **confirmation of monthly attendance**.

Payments are made **directly into your bank account**. Ensure that you provide **correct bank details** when applying.

Attendance Requirements

To continue receiving bursary payments, learners must maintain a **minimum of 95% attendance**. If attendance drops below 95%, the bursary may be affected, but mitigating circumstances will be considered on an individual basis.

Care to Learn (Young Parents)

If you are **under 20** years old and the **main carer** for your child(ren), you may be eligible for **Care to Learn** funding to help cover childcare costs.

Eligibility Criteria:

- **Under 20 years old.**
- **Main carer** of a child(ren).
- **In receipt of Child Benefit** for the child(ren).

Required Evidence:

- **Child's birth certificate.**



- **Child Benefit evidence** (award notice or bank statement).
- **Childcare arrangement confirmation:** Ensure your childcare provider is **Ofsted-registered**.

Use of Funds:

- Cover the costs of **childcare** while you attend school or college.
- Transport costs to take the child to the childcare provider.

Important Notes

- **Incomplete Applications:** If your application is incomplete or missing any required evidence, it will **not** be processed.
- **Backdating:** Applications can be made throughout the year; however, payments will only be **backdated** for up to **one calendar month**.
- **Waiting List:** If discretionary funds run out, a waiting list will be implemented.

Appeals Process

If you disagree with the outcome of your bursary application, you have the right to appeal. The appeal must be submitted in writing within **21 days** from the notification of the decision.

- **Step 1:** Submit your appeal to **Jo Tucker** at [**jo.tucker@stepintolearning.org.uk**](mailto:jo.tucker@stepintolearning.org.uk).
- **Step 2:** If the appeal is unresolved, you can escalate it to the **Lead IQA, Siobhan Robbins**.

Contact Information

For more details or assistance with your application, please contact:

- **Jo Tucker** (Bursary Administrator): [**jo.tucker@stepintolearning.org.uk**](mailto:jo.tucker@stepintolearning.org.uk)
- **Website:** [**www.stepintolearning.org.uk**](http://www.stepintolearning.org.uk)

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