

## **19+ Bursary Fund Procedure 2019/20**

Students aged 19 on 31st August 2019 who are continuing on a study programme they began when they were 18 ('19+ continuers') or students aged 19-24 on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2019 who have an Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP) will receive their financial support through the **16-18 Bursary Fund** where they meet the required eligibility criteria. In view of this, these students should read the **16-18 Bursary Fund/Free Meal Entitlement Procedure** as their support will be based on this.

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**<https://www.don.ac.uk/student-support/financial-support/>**

### **Overview**

Students are advised to fully read this procedure prior to submitting an application for financial support to ensure full understanding of the 19+ Bursary Fund. This procedure details the evidence required for an application to be submitted/assessed, how financial support is awarded and the terms/conditions attached to receiving financial support. **Returning students who received financial support in 2018/19 must re-apply for support in 2019/20.**

Bursary Fund applications can be submitted from the 8<sup>th</sup> of July and can be submitted up to the 26<sup>th</sup> of June 2020 (late applications are not guaranteed support & where eligible, support will be determined by fund availability at the point of an application being processed); **applications will not be accepted before the 8<sup>th</sup> of July & applications must have all of the required supporting evidence as highlighted on the application form. Applications that do not have all of the required supporting evidence will not be accepted & this will delay an application being processed.**

Students applying for a Bursary are advised to do so in a timely manner – due to limited funds, applicants are informed that meeting the eligibility criteria does not guarantee support and we advise that where possible, **applications are submitted in person** rather than by post – where applications are submitted by post we recommend that they are sent via Recorded/Special Delivery to the address shown on the application form and that you do not send original documents as we cannot guarantee that these will be returned to you, the DN Colleges Group/Doncaster College cannot accept responsibility for postal applications that are not received/documents not returned.

Applications can be printed from the College website at <https://www.don.ac.uk/student-support/financial-support/> or can be collected from the Financial Support Team office in room S.1.900 (please note that paper applications available from the Financial Support Team will be limited).

To be eligible to apply to the 19+ Bursary Fund, students must meet the following criteria:

- Be aged 19 or above (**age taken as of 31<sup>st</sup> of August 2019**)
- Have a 'net' yearly household income of less than £32,000 (the household assessment takes into account the income of all individuals with an assumed financial responsibility towards the applicant i.e. parents/guardians/step parents/partners/grandparents etc.)
- Meet the residency requirements as determined by the Education & Skills Funding Agency
- Be enrolling onto a learning aim/qualification that is funded by the Education Skills Funding Agency (**this includes both full & part time programmes**)
- Where students are 19+ and are studying a level 3 or a level 4 programme and do not qualify for a fee waiver, they must be aged 19 or over on the **start date** of their programme **&** be funded through an **Advanced Learner Loan** for the **full** cost of their tuition fees

The following groups of students are **not** eligible to apply to the 19+ Bursary Fund:

- Students who are under 19 on the 31<sup>st</sup> of August 2019
- Students who do not meet the residency requirements as determined by the Education & Skills Funding Agency
- Students enrolling onto a programme that is not funded through the Education & Skills Funding Agency
- Students with a 'net' yearly household income of £32,000 and above
- Students enrolled onto a Distance Learning Programme
- Students who are carrying out Community Learning, a Higher Education course or provision with learning aims that are identified as fully funded from other sources
- Students who are in custody or released on temporary licence
- Students on a waged Apprenticeship Programme, or waged learning/training programmes – **students who are on a Traineeship Programme are non-waged so may be eligible for discretionary support where they meet the required eligibility criteria**

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Where students are 19+ and are studying a level 3 or a level 4 programme and do not qualify for a fee waiver, they **must** meet the following criteria (where students are only applying for learning-support type activity i.e. additional support, they are not means-tested and as a result do not need to provide evidence of income):

- Be aged 19 or over on the start date of their programme (**age taken as of 31<sup>st</sup> of August 2019**)
- Be funded through an **Advanced Learning Loan** for the **full** cost of their tuition fees
- Have a 'net' yearly household income of less than £32,000 (with the exception of Child Benefit, Disability Living Allowance/Personal Independence Payments, Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit and the 'childcare element' of Working Tax Credits; all other income/benefits will be included in the household assessment and this will take into account the income of all individuals with an assumed financial responsibility towards the applicant i.e. parents/guardians/step parents/partners/grandparents etc.) Where students are **only** applying for learning-support type activity i.e. additional support, they are **not** means-tested and as a result do not need to provide evidence of income

Receipt of bursary funding should not affect receipt of means tested benefits such as Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance etc. but students are advised to inform the relevant benefit agencies of any support they receive from the 19+ Bursary Fund. However, if the student is in receipt of Disability Living Allowance/Personal Independence Payments and Employment Support Allowance or in receipt of Universal Credit, parents can no longer receive certain household/family benefits for that child, such as child benefit.

Bursary payments are not subject to the Social Security Amendment (Students & Income Related-related Benefits) Regulations 2000 as they are not for living costs.

### **Assessment of income**

Students who apply to the 19+ Bursary Fund must evidence that they have a **net** household income of less than £32,000 per year. Where students are living in the parental home and can evidence their own income/benefit, the assessment will be based on this income only, where students are living in the parental home but do not have an income/benefit of their own then the assessment will be based on parental/guardian income. Where students are living independently, the assessment will include the income/benefit(s) of all those within the household i.e. partner/spouse.

When assessing applications, the following **are** included in the assessment:

- Earned income
- Unearned income such as rental income
- Out of work Benefits i.e. Income Support/Universal Credit, JSA, ESA, Incapacity Benefit etc.
- Working & Child Tax Credits
- CSA/Maintenance payments
- Private Pensions
- State Pensions
- War/Military Pensions
- Carers Allowance

The following are **not** included in the assessment process:

- Child Benefit
- Housing/Council Tax Benefit
- Disability Living Allowance/Personal Independence Payments
- The 'childcare element' of Working Tax Credits

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Applications cannot be accepted without all of the necessary evidence as stated on the 19+ Bursary Fund application – **please ensure that you provide this as failure to do so will delay your application.**

Once an application has been assessed and where the student is eligible they are notified by email to their College email address of the support which they will receive. **Please ensure that you check your College e-mails on a regular basis to ensure that you do not miss any notifications/updates with regards to financial support.**

### **What the 19+ Bursary Fund can help students with**

The 19+ Bursary Fund can help students with the following costs:

- Ofsted registered childcare for students aged 20+ (students requiring childcare support need to submit both a **19+ Bursary Fund** application form and a **20+ Childcare Support Registration Form**), students who are aged 19 on the start date of their programme need to apply to **Care to Learn** for their childcare support)
- Hardship payments (to contribute towards the day to day costs of study i.e. travel, materials, stationery)
- Tuition Fees/Registration Fees/Exam Fees (this is subject to change & is reviewed on a yearly basis)
- Learning-Support type activity for 'in learning' support i.e. support for teaching assistants. For this support, the student must have a referral from the College's Additional Learning Support Team which will support the students' application and give details/costs of the support required – students who feel that they may require additional learning support are advised to contact the Additional Learning Support Team for a confidential and informal interview/assessment to assess their individual needs: the Additional Learning Support Team can be contacted via email: [als.enquiries@don.ac.uk](mailto:als.enquiries@don.ac.uk) (this support only applies to students who have taken out a 19+ Advanced Learning Loan)
- UCAS application costs – if you apply for University through UCAS & where funds allow you can apply for this cost to be refunded. UCAS will ask that you pay their fee by debit card & you will need to provide evidence of this.
- The costs of attending University Open Day/Interviews – where students incur 'public transport' travel costs as a result of attending a University Open Day/Interview in the UK, we may be able to help with these costs. This support will depend on available funds and where funds allow, students can apply for up to a maximum of 2 visits. Evidence of public transport costs i.e. train/bus booking confirmation & also evidence of invite/attendance at University must be provided – support cannot be given for overnight accommodation costs incurred as a result of University visits.
- Exam re-sits - we can support a maximum of 2 exam re-sits where funds allow and where students have previously failed the exam – students requiring support with these costs need to come to the Financial Support Team office with their re-sit form which will need stamping & signing by a member of the team before they submit it to the Finance cash desk

### **Payment of the 19+ Bursary Fund**

Support awarded will be based on the student's number of guided learning hours over the academic year and availability of funds (to be classed as a full-time student, a student must be studying at least 450 guided learning hours within the academic year for which they are enrolling).

Payment is made directly to the student with regards to travel and hardship support; where students receive childcare support, this support is paid directly to the childcare provider. **We are not able to make payments into either a Post Office account or a Credit Union account.** Where students are unable to open a bank account they are advised to discuss this with the Financial Support Team for possible alternative methods of payment; student payments cannot be made to anyone else on behalf of the student (except in exceptional circumstances where a student is unable to administer their own account i.e. where Power of Attorney is in place and evidence of this can be provided).

Where Asylum Seekers are eligible for support from the 19+ Bursary Fund, support must be made in-kind; under **no** circumstances can support be given in the form of cash ('in kind' means that instead of the student receiving payment, the payment would be made directly to the College on the students behalf, in voucher form or monies credited directly to the students College ID card).

**As this is a 'limited' Government fund, the DN Colleges Group reserves the right to amend payments in year in accordance with student need and availability of funds. These funds are not an entitlement and where support is awarded it should be viewed as a 'contribution only' to students course related costs and in some cases, the support awarded may not cover the full costs of travel as these costs will vary depending on the students home address.**

**Please refer to the '19+ Bursary Fund Payment Schedule' for expected payment dates.**

#### **Criteria regarding payments**

For students to receive their monthly payments, they are expected to meet the minimum attendance criteria of at least **80%** for the month for which payment relates to.

When calculating student attendance, attendance is looked at on a monthly basis rather than overall attendance. Attendance is calculated by session/s (lesson/s) attended/missed, rather than days attended/missed.

**Where students do not meet the expected attendance criteria of at least 80% then the payment will be stopped for the month in question and with the exception of childcare support only, there is no recourse for appeal – students will be notified via e-mail to their College e-mail account when a payment is stopped & where a student feels that their register data is incorrect, we advise that they discuss this with either their Programme Tutor or their Pastoral Coach.**

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### **Register Marks**

With regards to the 19+ Bursary Fund, the following register marks are seen as **negative** and will impact on a student's attendance:

- Notified/Authorised/Unauthorised absences
- Holiday
- Sickness
- Doctors/Dentist/Hospital

In addition to payments being stopped as a result of attendance; payments can also be stopped if the student does not adhere to the following standards:

- Student must be punctual
- Coursework should be submitted according to agreed deadlines and to the best of the students ability
- Student must maintain acceptable standards of behaviour - if a student's behaviour is considered to be unacceptable this can result in payments/support being stopped and where a student is suspended from College all support will be stopped until further notice

It is expected that students of the DN Colleges Group adhere to the above standards and recognise that failure to do so will result in payments/support being stopped.

### **Declined Applications**

Where an application for support is declined, notification of this is sent via post and in the event of a student wishing to appeal against an application being declined; the appeal must be made in writing and be based on one of the following criteria:

- Change in circumstances
- Household income (in excess of £32,000)

For an appeal to be considered it must be made within 10 working days of the student receiving their notification and must be addressed to the Financial Support Team who will then forward to the Director of Finance. The Director of Finance will then determine whether the appeal meets one of the appeal criteria within 10 working days of receiving the appeal.

Where it is deemed that the appeal does not meet one of the necessary appeal criteria, then the student will be notified in writing of this and there will be no further recourse for appeal.

### **Additional Information**

#### **What happens to my application and supporting evidence once submitted?**

All applications are treated as confidential and are only seen by those responsible for the processing of student applications but it may be necessary from time to time for the Financial Support Team to contact other College staff for additional information to allow applications to be processed or for attendance monitoring purposes.

The information/evidence given to support the Bursary Fund/Free Meal Entitlement application is used lawfully & for the specified purpose of determining student eligibility for financial support as per ESFA guidance & the DN College's Group Financial Support Policy 2019/20.

The application/supporting evidence is retained by the DN College's Group for a period of 6 years as per ESFA requirement & is handled in a manner that ensures appropriate security & protection against unauthorised access.

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Notification of support is sent directly to the student's College e-mail account and this includes details of support and expected payment dates etc. – please ensure that you check this regularly as any updates/stoppage notifications will be sent to this e-mail. Applications received with all of the required evidence can expect to receive a decision within 6 working weeks from the date of submission but due to high volumes at the beginning of the term, this period may be extended.

If a student withdraws from or is suspended from College then their application is cancelled and they may be written to and asked to pay back any monies paid to them.

### **Fraudulent Claims**

If a student/parent/guardian/partner provides false or inaccurate information/evidence with regards to household income, the matter may be referred to a third party and may result in the student being asked to leave Doncaster College – in addition, the College will also try and recover any payments made to the student in these instances.

If you think another student may have made a fraudulent claim, please discuss this with the Financial Support Team in confidence.

### **Further Questions**

If you are unsure about what support you might be eligible to apply for or you have any other questions with regards to the application process, please contact the Financial Support Team to discuss.

Office drop-in hours are as follows:

**8th of July to 30th August 2019:** drop-in hours are Monday to Friday, 8.45 to 4.30pm (please note the College will be closed on Monday the 26th of August and will re-open on the 27th of August)

**2nd September 2019 onwards:** term time drop-in hours are Monday to Friday, 11.30 to 1.30pm (these hours are in place to allow the team to process applications and out of these hours the team can be contacted by either telephone or e-mail)

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