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**16-19 BURSARY POLICY AND GUIDANCE**

**2020-2021**

**Board Approved: June 2020**

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**Important information – please read and retain for future reference**

The 16-19 Bursary Fund offers help to students to continue in full-time education, who might otherwise be financially disadvantaged. The Fund has two parts, to be eligible for either type of bursary students must be enrolled with V Learning Network and aged over 16 and under 19 as at 31 August 2020. Please see full guidance link below.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/16-to-19-bursary-fund-guide-2020-to-2021-academic-year>

**1. ELIGIBILITY**

**1. Vulnerable Bursary**

Awards up to £1,200 per annum are made if at least one of the following applies, students are:

• in care

• care leaver

• receiving Income Support, or Universal Credit because they are financially supporting themselves or financially supporting themselves and someone who is dependent on them and living with them, such as a child or partner

• receiving Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments in their own right, as well as Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit in their own right

**2. Discretionary Bursary**

Students who are not eligible for the Vulnerable Bursary can apply for a discretionary award. Awards will be dependent on the funds available from the Education and Skills Funding Agency and the number of eligible students. Awards will be made on the level of household income (including all benefits); with the threshold being up to £25,521.

Discretionary awards can also be awarded to students aged 19 or over (as at 31st August 2020) if they have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and/or are continuing on a study programme they began when aged 16 – 18.

**2. APPLYING**

To apply for either Bursary you will need to complete an application pack which you can access from your tutors or training provider administrators.

It is your responsibility to ensure the application is complete. Incomplete applications will not be processed. Once your application has been processed, we will inform you if you have been successful. To check the progress of your application please contact kelly.channon@vlearningnet.org.uk.

You can apply once you are enrolled or at any time throughout the year. You will receive a pro-rated payment depending on when you apply, it can only be backdated to one calendar month.

Due to limited funding on the discretionary fund, V Learning Net cannot guarantee applicants will receive any or part of the funding requested. Therefore, learners should actively seek alternative financial assistance from other agencies, organisations and funds. The financial help provided is a contribution towards costs. Payments for extra-curricular activities or to support living costs cannot be made. We will process the application on a first come bases, once funding has been fully allocated a waiting list system will be implemented.

**3. EVIDENCE OF INCOME**

**Vulnerable Bursary**

Evidence of your looked after status such as a letter from your Social Worker or Young Persons Adviser. Evidence of entitlement to a named benefit, with details of the calculation of that benefit (in learners’ own name).

**Discretionary Bursary**

Evidence of your total household income including all benefits will need to be provided, this includes parent(s), carer(s) and partner(s), but excludes siblings and grandparents (unless they are your carer) who are earning and living within the household. Disability Living Allowance is the exception when calculating your household income, this element of funding is not included. We may also need to see a copy of your last month’s bank statement.

**For both funds**

You will need to provide us with the bank account details of where you want any award to be paid into. It is your responsibility to ensure that you provide us with the correct bank details, we do accept evidence of the bank account information into which the award will be paid i.e. a copy of a bank paying in slip or bank card to verify your bank details. We cannot accept responsibility if incorrect bank details are passed to us and any payments made do not reach the nominated account. Second payments will not be made due to incorrect bank details. Under our retention policy, all documents provided for Bursary evidence will be kept securely for 6 years.

Please submit photocopies of all documentation. We cannot accept originals; we cannot be responsible for any loss of evidence.

**4. PAYMENTS**

**Vulnerable Bursary:**

Payments are processed monthly and paid by BACS directly into your bank account on receipt of your attendance

**Discretionary Bursary:**

Payments are processed on receipt of invoices and paid by BACS into the learners bank account.

**TRANSPORT**

Your Bursary payment can be used towards your transport cost and other expenses incurred whilst studying with V Learning Net. Please state on the application your travel arrangements and cost.

**5. ATTENDANCE**

Your attendance will be monitored on a monthly basis and should be a minimum of 80%. All absences must be authorised and be notified to the training provider immediately and supported by a letter from your parent/carer. Awards will be made as follows based on the following attendance levels:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Attendance Thresholds** | **Payment of bursary** |
| 100% - 80% | 100% |
| Below 80% | 0% |

If there are mitigating circumstances for lower attendance levels these will be considered on an individual basis.

**6. APPEALS/COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

Should a learner or parent/carer wish to appeal against a decision regarding financial support, the matter will be referred initially to the Head of MIS, Compliance and Administration.

V Learning Nets procedure is designed to ensure that learners have a full opportunity to raise, individually or collectively, matters of concern to them without fear of disadvantage and in the knowledge that privacy and confidentiality will be respected.

**6. OTHER**

If you are unsuccessful with your application, you can speak to a member of the finance team to discuss the option of a payment plan to support you with costs if necessary.

An application form must be completed at the beginning of every academic year you attend the V Learning Net as your personal circumstances may change. Learners must notify V Learning Net of any changes in their circumstances throughout the year, they will not normally be expected to repay an award, but their entitlement to further payments may be affected.