

19+ Discretionary Learner Support Fund & 24+ Loans Bursary Fund Policy Statement 2014/2015

Introduction

The 19+ Discretionary Learner Support Fund exists to help students continue with and complete their course where they would otherwise be prohibited from doing so on financial grounds.

19+ DLS funding and the guidance concerning the administrative arrangements, priority groups for support and monitoring arrangements are issued by the College

The DLS fund is intended to help with the hardship needs of individual students. Its intent is to “enable” a learner to continue with his or her education and should not be viewed as an incentive to attract people into learning. Generally, awards from the DLS fund will be used towards essential course related costs such as childcare, books, equipment, travel, field trips, visits and other costs associated with living and learning. Franklin College will seek to ensure that:

- Funds are distributed fairly through a process which is transparent and easily understood.
- Accurate information about the process for application and consideration is available from Student Services and the Adult Learning Team.
- All applicants are assessed and allocated monies subject to the individual’s need, taking into account the financial circumstances of the applicant and the intended use of the award.
- Funds are used to widen access to, and participation in, college education.

Please note: this is a limited fund which means that it will not be possible to support every application, therefore priority will be given to those students from families with the lowest household income and/or highest demonstrated need.

Summary of 19+ Discretionary Learner Support Fund

Fund	Support	Who for?	Household income
19+ Maintenance Grant	£10-£15 per week	Full-time, 19+ students only	Under £21000
20+ Childcare Fund	Support towards childcare costs for our learners.	All eligible 19+ students	£25-£28000 based on number of dependents.
19+ Hardship Fund	Support towards costs such as course fees, equipment, trips etc.	All eligible 19+ students	

19+ Maintenance Grant

The 19+ Maintenance Grant offers assistance in the form of a weekly payment (term-time only) via the BACS payments system to full-time students for help with costs associated with travelling to College, purchasing course equipment and other associated expenditure.

The College has agreed eligibility criteria in line with the arrangements that exist for assessment for the Franklin College 16-18 Bursary.

In exceptional circumstances, funds may be awarded to students who do not meet the specified criteria.

Application Process

- Step 1: Completed *financial assessment forms* should be returned to Student Services for confirmation of eligibility

Once confirmation of *financial eligibility* is received,

- Step 2: Applicants will be advised as to the outcome of their applications

Step 3: Applicants who have been assessed as eligible will receive payments to their bank account on a weekly basis,

- Unsuccessful applicants will have the right of appeal
- All applications will be treated in the strictest confidence

20+ Childcare Fund

The 20+ Childcare Fund offers assistance in the form of a contribution to the costs associated with childcare whilst a student aged 20 or over attends a Franklin College course or in some circumstances where a student needs childcare whilst in a work placement associated with a Franklin College course.

Attendance and behaviour standards can be found in the Student Handbook and align with that expected of all students attending Franklin College.

The College has agreed eligibility criteria in line with local demographics, ability to pay and whether the household currently receives 2 and/or 3 year old childcare/nursery funding. Some students will already be receiving 15 hours per week of state-funded childcare/nursery costs. Franklin College will therefore give priority to those students with children aged 1 or under.

In exceptional circumstances, funds may be awarded to students who do not meet the specified criteria.

Application Process

- Step 1: Completed *financial assessment forms* should be returned to ALT for confirmation of eligibility. Students will also check availability of childcare in their local area with OFSTED registered childcare providers (including child minders) and also include costs on the assessment form.

Once confirmation of *financial eligibility* is received,

- Step 2: Applicants will be advised as to the outcome of their applications and ALT will contact childcare provider to check details and arrange a payment scheme.

Step 3: Applicants who have been assessed as eligible will have agreed payments paid directly to their chosen childcare provider on a monthly/quarterly basis.

- Unsuccessful applicants will have the right of appeal
- All applications will be treated in the strictest confidence

19+ Hardship Fund

The 19+ Hardship Fund offers financial assistance associated with course related costs such as course fees, travelling to College, purchasing course equipment and other associated expenditure.

Attendance and behaviour standards can be found in the Student Handbook and align with that expected of all students attending Franklin College.

The College has agreed eligibility criteria in line with local demographics and the ability to pay.

In exceptional circumstances, funds may be awarded to students who do not meet the specified criteria.

Application Process

- Step 1: Completed *financial assessment forms* should be returned to ALT for confirmation of eligibility

Once confirmation of *financial eligibility* is received,

- Step 2: Applicants will be advised as to the outcome of their application and a payment schedule agreed. This may be through our Finance Department in order to off-set course fees or to send a payment to a student for equipment, books etc that they have already paid for.
- Unsuccessful applicants will have the right of appeal
- All applications will be treated in the strictest confidence

24+ Advanced Learning Loans Bursary Fund

This is a separate allocation which will be for discretionary learner support type provision for those who have funded their L3 course through a 24+ advanced learning loan. Unlike the DLS fund the loans bursary fund **will not** provide support towards course fees as these will be funded via the loan. However other course related costs such as additional equipment (not including that needed to complete the course ie what should be provided within the cost of the course), travel costs and contributions towards childcare costs.

Childcare element

Attendance and behaviour standards can be found in the Student Handbook and align with that expected of all students attending Franklin College.

The College has agreed eligibility criteria in line with local demographics, ability to pay and whether the household currently receives 2 and/or 3 year old childcare/nursery funding. Some students will already be receiving 15 hours per week of state-funded childcare/nursery costs. Franklin College will therefore give priority to those students with children aged 1 or under.

In exceptional circumstances, funds may be awarded to students who do not meet the specified criteria.

Application Process

- Step 1: Completed *financial assessment forms* should be returned to ALT for confirmation of eligibility. Students will also check availability of childcare in their local area with OFSTED registered childcare providers (including child minders) and also include costs on the assessment form.

Once confirmation of *financial eligibility* is received,

- Step 2: Applicants will be advised as to the outcome of their applications and ALT will contact childcare provider to check details and arrange a payment scheme.

Step 3: Applicants who have been assessed as eligible will have agreed payments paid directly to their chosen childcare provider on a monthly/quarterly basis.

- Unsuccessful applicants will have the right of appeal
- All applications will be treated in the strictest confidence

24+ Advanced Learning Loans Bursary Fund cont...

Hardship element

Attendance and behaviour standards can be found in the Student Handbook and align with that expected of all students attending Franklin College.

The College has agreed eligibility criteria in line with local demographics and the ability to pay.

In exceptional circumstances, funds may be awarded to students who do not meet the specified criteria.

Application Process

- Step 1: Completed *financial assessment forms* should be returned to ALT for confirmation of eligibility

Once confirmation of *financial eligibility* is received,

- Step 2: Applicants will be advised as to the outcome of their application and a payment schedule agreed. This will usually be through our Finance Department in order to offset a payment to a student for equipment, books etc that they have already paid for or to re-imburse travel costs following production of evidence of the travel concerned.
- Unsuccessful applicants will have the right of appeal
- All applications will be treated in the strictest confidence

Awards Process

Discretionary Learner Support Fund payments are conditional upon a student meeting attendance and behaviour standards which are agreed in advance and set out in the Student Agreement.

Attendance and behaviour requirements align with the conduct standards expected of all students who are part of the Franklin College community and can be found in the full time Student Handbook. Where the learner does not meet the agreed attendance or behaviour standards, which will be monitored on a weekly basis, the College will retain the right to reduce or adjust payments accordingly.

In line with current College attendance policy, students will have a 2 week deadline to ensure that any register errors are corrected.

It is the responsibility of the student to notify the College immediately of any change in personal circumstances, which affects their eligibility. Failure to do so will result in action being taken by the College to reclaim any overpayments.

Appeals and Complaints Process

Should learners disagree with the outcome of either their application for a Discretionary Learner Support Fund award or, where a payment has been withheld or reduced due to attendance/behaviour, they should follow the College appeals procedure.

All appeals will be considered by the Deputy Principal. The letter of appeal should include student's name and the reasons for their appeal. Any additional information they wish to provide that they feel is relevant to their application can be attached. Written confirmation of the outcome of the appeal will be sent out within 10 days of the Appeal being considered.

Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.