

FE Bursary Policy

Integrity • Supportiveness

Our Mission

To inspire learners to recognise and achieve their full potential

Our Values

Excellence, Passion, Team Work, Integrity, Innovation,
Sustainability, Valuing Others and Supportiveness

Sparsholt College Group

The Sparsholt College Group (the College Group) includes Sparsholt College, Andover College, University Centre Sparsholt, Sparsholt College Services, Westley Enterprises and Andover Town Football Club. College Group policies apply to each part of the group unless specified otherwise.

The FE Bursary Policy was confirmed by the College in December 2020. This supersedes the previous publication of rules and guidelines and is effective for the 2021/22 academic year.

Equality Impact Assessment	Conducted: November 2020
Originator: Student Administration Manager	Located: College Group Intranet
Date of next scheduled review:	November 2021

FE Bursary Policy

Contents

POLICY STATEMENT	3
BURSARY FUNDS AVAILABLE:	3
1. ESFA for learners aged 16-18.....	3
2. Adult education budget 19+	3
3. Advanced Learner Loan Bursary for learners aged 19+.....	3
RULES AND GUIDELINES.....	3
4. Assessment and Eligibility Criteria – All bursaries except ‘Gifted and Talented’	3
5. 16-19 Bursaries for young people in defined vulnerable groups	4
6. 16-18 Bursary and 19+ Discretionary Learner Support Funds-DSLFF (Not including Advanced Learner Loan Bursary).....	4
7. Residential Bursary Fund (16-18 Learners) & Residential Access Fund (19+ learners)	5
8. Childcare.....	6
PAYMENT OF FUNDS	6

FE Bursary Policy

POLICY STATEMENT

Sparsholt College Hampshire incorporating Andover College (the College) aims to provide bursary support for learners experiencing the greatest financial hardship but also has a flexible approach to allocating funds where a learner can prove a need for support.

In order to be eligible to receive funding learners must meet the residency criteria as determined by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and be studying a funded course.

The College will allocate bursary funding in accordance with the funding rules specified by the ESFA.

BURSARY FUNDS AVAILABLE:

1. ESFA for learners aged 16-18

- 16-19 Bursaries for young people in defined vulnerable groups
- Discretionary bursaries
- Residential Bursary Fund

2. Adult education budget 19+

- Learner Support – Hardship
- Residential Access Fund
- 20+ Childcare

3. Advanced Learner Loan Bursary for learners aged 19+

RULES AND GUIDELINES

4. Assessment and Eligibility Criteria – All bursaries except ‘Gifted and Talented’

- 4.1. All bursaries (except the Sparsholt College Gifted and Talented Bursary) are means tested and based on household income. Learners who have a household income up to £32,960 may apply.
- 4.2. All income and benefits (including housing benefit, council tax benefit, working tax credits, child tax credits, etc.) are taken into account. The College does not take into account Child Benefit, Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment when calculating total household income.
- 4.3. For parents/guardians or students who are self-employed, the College will assess income based on Gross profit, but taking into account any business expenditure. For example, household items, mortgage and food would not be deducted from Gross profit but servicing of farm machinery, stationery, etc. would be deducted.
- 4.4. An assessment is made based on a completed and signed declaration from the learner and parent/guardian (dependent upon age and circumstance of learner) detailing income from employment and/or benefits along with supporting evidence of all declared income.

- 4.5. The number of dependent children is taken into consideration. The College will allow a further £1648 of income (£32,960 threshold) per additional dependent child living at the same household as the applicant to recognise additional household costs.
- 4.6. In order for funding to be awarded, the College expects that certain standards of behaviour and attendance will be met. Learners are expected to adhere to the Terms and Conditions as published in our bursary application at all times and attend all lessons. In circumstances where a learner is involved in disciplinary proceedings or has poor attendance, funding may be withheld or reclaimed at the College's discretion.
- 4.7. The College can only guarantee bursary award for applicants applying by the 15th August prior to the academic year of study. Applications made after this date will be awarded if there is funding available.

5. 16-19 Bursaries for young people in defined vulnerable groups

5.1. Defined as those:

- in care
- care leavers
- 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

5.2. For these learners there is a bursary fund of up to £1,200. Learners will be identified through registration forms and funding application forms. In order to qualify, evidence of eligibility will be required. This will be either: written confirmation from the relevant local authority or an award notice.

5.3. An interview with the Student Support team and the Student Admin team will be arranged to identify whether there is a financial requirement and if so how the money should be allocated. Travel costs and any clothing, books and equipment will be covered in the first instance and the balance may be spread out throughout the year to support the learner as necessary. Learners are expected to adhere to the Student Code of Conduct at all times and attend all lessons. For learners receiving regular payments 100% attendance is expected. However, the College does recognise that there may be exceptional reasons why a learner cannot attend a lesson and in these instances the College will assess each case on its merits.

6. 16-18 Bursary and 19+ Discretionary Learner Support Funds-DSLF (Not including Advanced Learner Loan Bursary)

6.1. All learners who have a household income of £32,960 or less are eligible to apply for help through the DLSF. The award is discretionary and will be given to those with the greatest need. Section 5.5 further increases the income threshold of £32,960 by £1,648 for each dependent child living in the same house as the bursary applicant.

6.2. The College will allocate funding to learners with a household income of £25,750 or less in the first instance.

- 6.3. Learners with a household income between £25,750 and £32,960 will be assessed individually and, where sufficient funds are available, those with the greatest need will also be awarded assistance towards their costs.
- 6.4. In exceptional circumstances, and only if sufficient funds are remaining, the College may consider applications from learners whose household income is above £32,960.
- 6.5. The College will award funds for the following categories
 - Travel
 - Clothing, books and course equipment
 - DBS costs
 - Exam/registration fee (19+ only)
 - Extra-curricular fee (Sparsholt only)
 - Essential trips
 - Work Experience
 - Unit duties
- 6.6. The amount of support will vary from student to student depending on needs but will usually be between £200 and £800. In exceptional circumstances, the College may award up to £3000 where a learner will be unable to attend without the extra help (for example, a learner who lives outside of the College travel routes but is unable to live in College accommodation).
- 6.7. Learners may only receive assistance with Travel costs if assistance is not available through their Local Education Authority.
- 6.8. **Travel awards** - For the 2021/2022 academic year all learners with:
 - Household income below £25,750 – learner will contribute £0 where they prioritise travel costs as their required area of support.
 - Household income between £25,750 and £32,960 will may receive an award for travel where sufficient funds are available and where travel support is prioritised.
- 6.9. For learners who have requested assistance with several categories, the College will work with the learner to prioritise the need under each of these categories before making an award.
- 6.10. For 16-18 learners the main priorities are likely to be travel, clothing, books and equipment and extra-curricular charge.
- 6.11. For 19+ learners the priorities are likely to be travel, exam/registration fee, extra-curricular charge, clothing, books and equipment.
- 6.12. The College is restricted on the amount of funding it can offer for tuition fees. As a result, the College will only consider awards towards the cost of tuition fees in exceptional circumstances. (For example, if the learner's circumstances change during the course so that the learner can no longer meet the costs and would otherwise have to leave the course.) This is at the College's discretion and the College's decision is final.

7. Residential Bursary Fund (16-18 Learners) & Residential Access Fund (19+ learners)

- 7.1. Funds are available to some students to support students who need to live away from home in order to study at the college and who meet travel distance and income criteria.
- 7.2. These funds are available to Land Based and Specialist Provision (excluding Motor

Vehicle and some Sports) courses for £32,960 Sparsholt campus learners only. Learners with a household income below are eligible to apply for assistance with accommodation costs. Section 5.5 further increases the income threshold of £32,960 by £1648 for each dependent child living in the same household as the bursary applicant.

- 7.3. Residential Bursary of up to £4377 (see income bandings below) will be made available to applicants meeting Residential Bursary and Residential Access criteria. Applicants from households with income of up to £25,750 will be prioritised should funding be limited

16-18 Learners

- Income below £25,750 - The learner will receive a maximum of £4377 towards the cost of their accommodation
- Income between £25,750 and £32,960 – The learner will receive a maximum of £3862 towards the cost of their accommodation

19+ Learners

- Income between £25,750 – The learner will receive a maximum of £3,605 towards the cost of their accommodation
- Income between £25,751 and £32,960 - For applications received by 18th August 2021 the learner will receive a maximum of £3,090 towards the costs of their accommodation. Applications received after that date be assessed on an individual basis and will be dependent on affordability for the college.

- 7.4. In exceptional circumstances, it may be possible for mature learners to apply for assistance with the cost of their rent for privately rented accommodation. This will only be considered where it is not possible for the learner to live in College accommodation, for example, where they have a dependent partner and/or children. The maximum funding that can be awarded is £3605. Funds will usually be split over ten months of the academic year and will be paid directly to the landlord/landlady.

8. Childcare

- 8.1 Learners who are not eligible to apply to the Government 'Care to Learn' scheme and have a household income of £32,960 or less can apply to the College DLSF for help with childcare costs.
- 8.2 Childcare providers must be Ofsted registered. The college will support up to £155 of childcare costs per week. Payments are made based on attendance requirement at college. The College cannot pay for lessons where the learner has not attended. The Student Administration team will check the learner's attendance before authorising payment. Sickness and holidays will not be covered by the College. The College cannot pay for any retainers. Payments are made directly to the learner. The College also requires a signed form from the childcare provider to confirm their Ofsted registered number and the hours for which childcare has been requested.

PAYMENT OF FUNDS

9. Where possible, funds will be used to directly procure the agreed service on behalf of the student. For awards such as childcare, clothing and equipment, payments will be made by BACS to the student (or parent, where parent bank account details have been given).