

19+ Learner Support Fund (LSF) Guidance for applicants for 2019-2020

This is a discretionary and limited fund and meeting the eligibility criteria does not guarantee an award.

Who can apply?

If you are 19 or over on 31/8/19 with a financial barrier to learning **and** not using an Advanced Learner Loan for fees **or** not classed as 19+ Continuer **or** do not hold EHCP **and** meet one of the criteria below:

- Live alone or with partner, with household income of under £32,000 (tier depends on income), or
- Live with parent and receive a personal income (tier depends on your income), or
- Live with parent and you have no income, or
- you are receiving one of the benefits listed below

you may be able to get support from LSF to help with your travel, childcare, kit or equipment, or other costs associated with coming to college.

Benefits include:

- Income Support
- Job Seekers Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Working Tax Credit Run On
- Universal Credit (max income (£7,400)
- Child Tax Credit only (max income £16,190)
- 'Guarantee' element of State Pension Credit

To qualify students must be participating in provision that is subject to inspection by a public body that assures quality (e.g. Ofsted), that provision must also be funded by the ESFA.

Students on a traineeship programme are non-waged so may be eligible to apply for a bursary.

How to apply

You need to complete an application form. Forms are available on the Boston College website, from Learner Services at the Rochford Campus or receptions at any other campus. If you are using the form from the college website you will need to print it off.

You must:

- Complete **all** the sections
- Provide evidence of your income and that of your partner.
- Make sure the form is **signed**
- Return the **completed** form and evidence to Learner Services at the Rochford campus

Please be aware that if your application is incomplete for any reason it will be returned to you and any payments you may be entitled to will be delayed.

What evidence do I need to provide?

You must provide evidence of **all** household income.

If you are claiming Tax Credits or Universal Credits, acceptable evidence is:

- Full Tax Credit Award notice for 2019/2020
- Universal Credit Award notice for the last 3 months

If not, you will need to provide an appropriate selection of the following to show household income:

- Current wage slips – your most recent 6 weekly slips or 3 monthly slips or

- Benefit award letters must be the latest and relate to the period from at least April 2019 or
- Pension credit letters must be the latest and relate to the period from at least April 2019 or
- Most recent certified profit and loss accounts for the self-employed or
- Most recent P60

Where possible please photocopy the evidence before submitting your application. Please note that bank statements will NOT be accepted as proof of benefits.

What help can I get?

Support levels vary depending upon your income and our available funds. Please see below for the level of support that you may be awarded based on your income.

Tier 1 (Income less than £16190 or listed benefits) childcare 20+, transport, books, equipment, uniform, food credit, trips, tuition fee support

Tier 2 (Income from £16191 to £23000) childcare 20+, transport, books, equipment, uniform, trips

Tier 3 (Income from £23001 to £32000) childcare 20+, transport

Transport costs in the form of refunded payment for train or bus tickets on production of tickets to Learner Services **or** payment of 10p per mile motor mileage allowance. Please tick the appropriate box in section 7 of the application form. Where both options are available we will award support for the most cost effective method of travel only

Books, equipment and uniform costs when not covered by funding as advised to us by the curriculum area in which you study.

Food credit of £2.75 per day on the cashless catering system which can be spent in the college diners. Equivalent bank payment will be made weekly for those at Spalding and SNMC depending on attendance. Credit will only be available on days when you are timetabled to be in college. Unused credit does not carry forward and is removed at the end of each day. **Please check your Food Credit balance before selecting your food from the catering outlets.**

Childcare 20+ before we can help with this we need your childcare provider to send us a letter or headed email detailing days, times and costs for your weekly childcare and sign and return the Providers Information sheet. Once authorised by Head of Learner Services costs are paid directly to your childcare provider in arrears upon presentation of an invoice. We pay at a rate of 80% (if you receive Income Support or one of the above mentioned benefits, or 50% if not, to a maximum of £100 per week. Alternatively, if awarded, you can pay your provider in full and claim the percentage refund as awarded from us by bringing in your receipt. Please note we do not pay towards food, trips holiday care and bonds.

If you are under 20 at the start of your course you will need to claim childcare costs through the **Care to Learn** initiative. Please see one of the Learner Support Officers to discuss this.

Tuition Fees may be paid at a rate up to 50% (max.£600) directly to the registry if awarded. Tuition fee support may only be awarded in exceptional circumstances.

Can I make an appeal with regard to my award decision?

If you feel that the decision not to make an award, or that your actual award is unfair, you can appeal in writing to the Head of Learner Services, Boston College, Skirbeck Road, Boston.

Other important information

Your LSF payment is dependent upon you having an attendance level of 90% or over and demonstrating appropriate behaviour. If you fail to maintain these requirements your 19+ LSF payments may be affected. We will let you know about any award from the LSF via your student email account. These guidelines can be applied flexibly to support the needs of individual learners and their circumstances. If you have any further questions please contact **Learner Services Info Desk – 01205 313218.**