



## **19+ Discretionary Learner Support & Advanced Learner Loans Bursary Fund Statement**

The 19+ Discretionary Learner Support and Advanced Learner Loan Bursary Fund are provided to help students overcome specific barriers to participation, to enable them to remain in education.

The College is committed to maintaining the integrity of its awards and the validity of its assessment of qualifying criteria and has effective procedures for resolving appeals.

This statement sets out the financial support available through, and eligibility for, bursary funding for 19+ year old students and eligible for an Advanced Learner Loan enrolled at Gateshead College.

The 19+ Discretionary Learner Support and Advanced Learner Loan Bursary Funds are managed by the College and are allocated on a first come first served basis via an online application and assessment process. Applicants will be notified of their application outcome within 10 working days (this may vary at busiest times) of completed application.  
<https://gateshead.paymystudent.com/portal/>

The rules within this statement are set at the time of writing but the College reserves the right to adjust the criteria in year according to the funds available and in accordance with any changes to funding rules.

### **1) Types of support - 19+ Hardship, 20+ childcare & ,19+ Fees Support (19+ those not eligible for Advanced Learner Loan).**

#### **a) Support Eligibility - to be eligible for any support the student must:**

- i. Be aged 19 or over at 31 August 2024.
- ii. Meet the residency criteria in the Adult Skills Fund: Funding and performance Management Rules in the 2024 to 2025 academic year.
- iii. Meet income assessment:
  - Gross annual household income must be below £35,000 couple or £30,000 single including any Working Tax Credit/Universal Credit.
  - Receive one of the following benefits Income Based Jobseeker's Allowance/Income Related Employment and Support Allowance/Universal Credit/Guaranteed Pension Credit.
- iv. Students with a gross annual household income of more than £35,000 couple or £30,000 single can still apply for Discretionary Bursary support providing the student can demonstrate they are facing financial hardship. In this instance the College will take into account any extenuating circumstances and a decision will be made.

**b) 19+ Hardship** - awarded to meet individual needs, for example, help with the cost of transport, course fees, books and equipment.

i. An award for 19+ Hardship may be awarded to eligible students where one or more of the following applies:

- Specific equipment, books and or uniform are needed for the student to attend the course.
- The student lives 2 miles or more from college and/or work placement and the cost of travel is a barrier to attending. Google maps are used to assess distance (shortest/quickest walking distance).
- Monthly bursary is to assist with the costs relating to study and contribute towards loss of income or benefits for living costs but not to replace them.
- The student is facing unexpected financial hardship that is creating a barrier to attending College and or learning.

**c) 20+ Childcare:** awarded to help meet costs for Ofsted registered childcare for the children of 20+ year old students whilst they are studying. Students aged 19 and under should apply to “Care to Learn” scheme.

i. Terms & conditions of childcare awards:

- Will make payments up to our maximum awards of Nursery - Full Day £45 Half Day £30, Childminder - £11 Per Hour & Out of School Club - AM £5 PM £10.
- Funding is only made for timetabled days in College plus 30 minutes travelling time before and after college hours.
- Will regularly check attendance and course timetables and will reduce or withdraw any award if attendance proves unsatisfactory and/or timetables are changed (although every effort will be made to resolve any issues in the first instance)
- Reserve the right to amend any part of the terms and conditions (although both parties will be given prior notice of this if it becomes necessary).
- Will pay all claims monthly (Sept-June), in arrears, unless other arrangements have been agreed.
- Will pay by the BACS system (directly into provider’s bank account) unless other arrangements have been agreed.
- Will inform both parties of any changes in circumstances, payments, timetables or other changes that may affect the award.
- Do not accept any liability for the terms and conditions of the contract. The contract for childcare provision is between the student and the provider.
- Informal childcare provided by a relative cannot be funded.
- If the child is eligible for 15 or 30 hours per week free early education, these must be used to cover the required sessions.
- The college are not liable for any costs incurred that have not been agreed by the college. This includes any fees incurred prior to an award being made or fees incurred if you have not attended your course.
- Student is liable for any costs incurred which are in excess of the maximum awards or are outside of your normal study time.

**d) 19+ Fees Support:** awarded to support with course fees for students studying Entry Level, Level 1 or Level 2.

i. Terms & conditions of fees support:

- Students can be awarded 100% of the course fee up to a maximum of £1000 and for one course (or a number of courses which make up a learning aim) and one year only.
- Full course fee for the academic year must be provided at point of application/enrolment in order to be considered.
- Full costs courses are not eligible.
- Will process correctly completed applications within 5 working days.
- If successful will be sent an award notification which must be brought into College to enrol on course and pay any outstanding balance at the point of enrolment.
- Payment transfer to course dept will only be made when attendance has been confirmed for at least 4 sessions on course.

## **2) Not Eligible**

- i. Students on apprenticeship programmes, or any waged training, are employed, rather than in education.
- ii. Students who are aged 19 and over on 31 August 2024 and eligible for the Advanced Learner Loan but have not applied or who have been declined for an Advanced Learner Loan.

## **3) Payments/Travel**

- i. Payments will be made direct into the student's bank account via the BACS system.
- ii. Those students over 2 miles and over 3 days on timetable who travel by Go North East (GNE) bus will receive a GNE App/Key Card Ticket (over 3 days may not be taken into account when awarding asylum seekers with no other options for support).
- iii. Those students over 2 miles travelling by bus (other companies), metro or by car will be awarded a cash contribution towards travel costs on a half termly basis.
- iv. Payments are usually made into bank accounts within 10 working days of being processed.

For all applications funding is limited, meaning evidence of eligibility does not guarantee an award. Students wishing to apply for financial support are advised to do so as soon as possible from the start of their course.

#### **4) Attendance Criteria**

- i. First initial attendance criteria 1 week attendance at least 92%.
- ii. Attendance criteria is set at 92% and termly awards can be stopped if students do not meet criteria (take into account any absence notes on system).
- iii. Less than 92% attendance for students in receipt of monthly bursary, the following actions will be taken:
  - Contact relevant college staff (course tutor, learning facilitator) and request information (if any) to support continued financial support for learners.
  - Reduce payment to reflect attendance percentage.
  - Stop payment.

#### **5) Review/Appeals Process**

- a) Can request review/appeal in writing or by emailing [support.funds@gateshead.ac.uk](mailto:support.funds@gateshead.ac.uk)
  - i. Stage 1 – Initial Review/Re-assessment - application will be re-assessed and a response will be given within 10 working days.
  - ii. Stage 2 – Further (Specific) Review – if not satisfied with the initial review can request a further review. Need to provide further information and/or evidence regarding financial need or household circumstances that were not apparent from original application. The application will then be reviewed by a lead person not involved in the original decision making and receive a response within 10 working days.
  - iii. Stage 3 – Appeal - if a student considers that the application has not been assessed correctly and feel they have grounds for appeal can write to the Support Funds Team clearly marking as an APPEAL. The appeal will be allocated to a lead person not involved in the original decision making and lead person will consult with Head of Student Services. A response will be given within 10 working days.

#### **Context**

This statement applies to all 19+ students enrolled at Gateshead College and sets out the financial support available through, and eligibility for, 19+ Discretionary Learner Support and Advanced Learner Loan Bursary Funds.

#### **Location and access to statement**

The 19+ Discretionary Learner Support and Advanced Learner Loan Bursary Fund Statement 2024-2025 and other supporting documents are available via Gateshead College Website – Finance & Funding.