2021/22
19+ Learner Support Fund and Advanced Loan Bursary Guidelines

Please take the time to read the information below before completing the application form.

This document will provide you with information about whether you are eligible to apply to the Learner Support Fund/Advanced Loan Bursary, what sort of assistance you might get, and how to apply.

If you applying for help with the cost of childcare you will need to make sure that you read **Help with Childcare Costs** as well as the general information about the fund.

If you require help with the information contained in these guidelines or help completing your application, please contact a member of the Trafford College Learner Services team.

What is the 19+Learner Support Fund/Advanced Learner Loan Bursary?
The Learner Support Fund/Advanced Learner Loan Bursary aims to help eligible students who need additional financial support throughout their time at College in order to complete their course. The funds can also help with travel and Childcare costs and the 19+ Learner Support fund can also help with course related costs.
For more information about Learner Support Funds/ Advanced Learner Loan Bursary please contact our Team by emailing **traffordstudentbursary@tcg.ac.uk**

Eligibility Criteria for 19+ Learner Support Fund
Applicants must be aged 19 or over on 1 September 2021 to apply for general course related costs and aged 20 or over at the start of their course to apply for child care costs.

Applicants must have been accepted onto a 'Learner Responsive' course for which they are funded by the Skills Funding Agency or the Education Funding Agency.

Many college courses are eligible **but** there are certain types of courses and certain groups of students who are **not** eligible for Learner Support Funds - these are listed below.

Eligibility Criteria for Advanced Learner Loans Bursary
All students who apply to the Bursary Scheme must have had their Advanced Learner Loan approved. If you require assistance applying for the Advanced Learner Loan, please contact us.

Are you aged 19-24 with an EHC plan?
If you will be aged 19-24 on 1 September 2021 and you have an EHC Plan (Education, Health and Care Plan), please contact the College's Financial Support Officer via email **traffordstudentbursary@tcg.ac.uk** for further guidance about the bursary support which you may be entitled to.

The following students are NOT eligible to apply for Learner Support funds:
- Students who are aged 24 or over at the start of their course and who are enrolling on a Level 3 or Level 4 course which is eligible for an Advanced Learning Loan
- Students who are over 19 at the start of their course and already have a Full Level 3 qualification
- Students who have been classed as 'Overseas Students' for fee purposes
- Students studying Higher Education courses (e.g. HND's, HNC's, Foundation Degrees)
- Students on self funding courses (full cost recovery courses)
- Student on Work Based or Community Learning Courses
- Waged Apprentices
- Learners who are in prison or youth offender institutions/ or released on temporary licence
- Students who are Job Seekers Allowance claimants who are attending through the Work Programme cannot apply for funds for costs which Job Centre Plus will be meeting.

Asylum seekers are eligible to apply for Learner Support funds (except for the types of courses listed above) but if successful in their application can only be awarded 'payments in kind' for example, travel passes or books/ equipment purchased on their behalf.

Are Learner Support Fund/Advanced Learner Loan Bursary applications income assessed?
The Bursary Scheme will be assessed on household income, applicants must be in receipt of an out of work income related benefit or have an income of less than £28,000.

Please note: All thresholds are for gross income (before tax) per year and Child Benefit, Tax Credits, Disability Living Allowance, Personal Indepence Payment or Attendance Allowance are not counted as income for the purposes of the bursary scheme.

Applicants who are aged 24 and under and who live with parent(s)/carer(s); will in most cases be assessed on parental/ carers' income using the £28,000 income threshold. Students who claim income related benefits in their own right or who are in full time employment/ can demonstrate they live independently in the parental / carers' home and all students who are aged 24 or over will be assessed on their own income.

What financial help can I apply for?
Financial help received is intended to be a contribution and may not meet the full costs.

You can apply for help with:
- travel costs - if you live at a distance of 2 miles or more from the College site at which you study.
- childcare costs whilst you are studying for the days attending College. You can find information on applying for help with childcare costs further on in these guidelines under the heading Help With Childcare Costs
- Students who are not 'fully funded learners'* can also apply for help with:
- Essential equipment and uniform costs.

If I am eligible will my application to the Learner Support Fund/Advanced Learner Loan Bursary definitely be successful?
Although Trafford College will endeavour to help as many eligible applicants as possible, the College has a limited amount of money available to help students and eligibility does not guarantee an award will be made. You are strongly advised to make an early application.

When can I apply?
Applications forms and guidelines will be available on the College website, returning students and new students who have applied for a full-time course will be sent an application form in the post.

Advanced Learner Loan students must have successfully applied for an Advanced Learner Loan for your course fees before applying to the bursary scheme.

What happens after I have submitted my application?
If you make a successful application we will write/email with details of your award.

For further information about the application process and awards for childcare costs, please refer to the information under the heading 'Help with Childcare Costs'

Unsuccessful Applications
If you have been unsuccessful, we will write to you informing you why and with details of how you can appeal against any decision made.

Evidence
If you do not supply the evidence of income/ benefits we have asked for on the application form, we will contact you to request further evidence but will not be able to make an assessment until it has been supplied.

How and when will Awards be made?
Awards will be made by BACS credit transfer to your bank account.

Travel awards will be paid monthly. This will mean an applicant who has applied in time for the start of the College year will receive 10 travel payments from September to June. We will endeavour to make payments within 4 weeks of your application and back date any awards to the date of application.

Awards for equipment and uniform costs will be made per term as applicable

Are there any other conditions for receiving payment?
You must be fully enrolled on your course and have attended all your lessons and tutorials for at least 2 weeks before any payment is made. To continue to receive payments throughout the college year your attendance must be 90% or above, and you must adhere to the conditions of your Learner Agreement, which you will sign at enrolment. Attendance will be checked monthly before payment is made.

If attendance is below 90%, unless there are extenuating circumstances confirmed by your tutor, no payment will be made.

Appeals
Appeals in respect of any unsuccessful application or with respect to the award made, needs to be made in writing to the Team Leader for Customer Services, Admissions and Student Finance. An appeal form and a copy of the appeals procedure is available on request and is also available on the College website.

Changes in Circumstances/ Fraud
Students are required to disclose any change in circumstances – personal, financial or educational that may affect their eligibility for funding. Failure to notify us of these changes could result in students becoming liable for the cost of funding given. Forms must be filled in truthfully and accurately and the College reserves the right to recover any funding which has been obtained fraudulently.

Confidentiality
Forms and evidence of income are only seen by staff involved in the administration/auditing of the 19+ Learner Support Fund/Advanced Loan Bursary fund, all information is stored securely and treated as confidential.

Equality and Diversity Statement
Admissions and Student Finance Team Leader, the Financial Support Officer and the Student Support team will:
1. Take positive action to ensure that all eligible students can apply for financial support to the Learner Support/ Advanced Learner Loan funds thus widening participation and providing learning opportunities to under represented groups.
2. Ensure that no applicant to the bursary scheme receives less favourable treatment which cannot be justified in relation to individual financial/personal circumstances.
3. Ensure that all literature, marketing and publicity materials are free from stereotypes, discriminatory assumptions, images and language.
4. Monitor and review the effectiveness of the support on a regular basis.
5. Ensure that this form is available in other formats if required.

GDPR
Trafford College (part of the Trafford College Group) is a data controller committed to ensuring the security and protection of the personal information that we process under the terms of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

The Finance Support Team collect data requested on the bursary application form and use it to assess your eligibility to access learner support funds. Data is inputted onto our electronic systems to allow us to make payments. Application forms and associated evidence is stored securely on campus: for learners studying off site this data will be stored at one of our main sites.

Our Data Protection Policy is available on our website if you require further information.

Useful information
Guidelines on the purpose and use of the 19+ Learner Support fund/Advanced Learner Loan Bursary are detailed in the Education and Skills Funding Agency Funding Rules 2021-2022. Copies of relevant extracts are available from the College's student Financial Support Officer.

Help with Childcare Costs

Additional Eligibility Criteria
Students applying for help with child care must meet the general eligibility and attendance requirements which have already been outlined in this guidance.

In addition you must also meet the following criteria:
- Be aged 20 or over at the start of your course **or** you have successfully applied for an Advanced Learner Loan.
- Be the person who is mainly responsible for the child/ children for whom you are applying for childcare costs - You will be asked to provide proof or this, for example; your Child Benefit Entitlement letter.
- Your childcare provider must be Ofsted registered. - If your application is successful we will write to your provider for proof.
- Only days/half days on your timetable will be considered.

The maximum awards the College can make for Childcare are detailed in the table below:

Nursery	Registered Childminder	Before and After School Clubs
Daily £50	Daily £50	Per Session
Half Day £30	Half Day £30	£10

If your household income threshold is above £28,000 you will not be eligible to apply to the Learner Support Fund/ Advanced Learner Loan Bursary.

We will also take into account any 2 or 3 year old funding you receive when making awards.

How many children can I apply for help with?
As our funds are limited we will only be able to pay our maximum award of £50 per day for one child. Any additional childcare will be subject to availability of funds and at the discretion of the College.

What if my childcare provider charges more than this?
If your childcare provider's rates are higher than the above rates, it will be your responsibility to pay for any shortfall in funding. It might be advisable for you to discuss this with your provider and put in place weekly or monthly payments.

How much Childcare can I apply for help with?
The Learner Support Fund/Advanced Learner Loan Bursary will only contribute for the days/half days or hours when you are timetabled to be in College for lessons and tutorials, and for reasonable travelling time to and from College. It is important that you take this into account when arranging your childcare.

Are there any additional conditions for receiving financial help with childcare costs?
Your child's attendance with the Childcare provider must be 80% or above each month, and we will make regular checks with your provider.

Please note, if your attendance falls below the required threshold and a payment is withheld, it is your responsibility to pay your provider.

If I am eligible, will my application for childcare costs definitely be successful?
Although Trafford College will endeavour to help as many eligible applicants as possible with Childcare costs, the College has a limited amount of money available to help students and eligibility does not guarantee an award will be made.

Priorities for funding
Childcare Applications will be considered in date order of receipt.

If your Childcare application is successful, we will write to your Childcare provider confirming payment arrangements (subject to you being fully enrolled).

Please note: Advanced Learner Loan Students Childcare cannot be paid until the loan has been approved, if the child attends before the loan has been approved, students will be liable for the fees.

If there is not sufficient funding for all applications, we will write to you to confirm we cannot fund your application.

If there is not sufficient funding for all applicants who have applied, the following criteria in the order stated will be used to prioritise funding:

1. Applicants who are studying full time for their first full time Level 1 or Level 2 qualification/ or have successfully applied for an Advanced Learner Loan to fund their course and submitted a Bursary form.
2. Applicants who are aged 23 or under and who are studying full time for their first full level 3 qualification
3. Applicants who are part time students and studying basic skills courses: Literacy, Numeracy and ESOL
4. Any other Applicant (please note we will give priority to full time applicants)

Should any childcare funding remain after this date, applications will be considered in date order of receipt. The College will however prioritise funding to applicants as detailed in the above criteria if the fund is over subscribed.

Please note that the childcare provision contract is between the Student and the Childcare Provider and the College cannot be responsible for any childcare costs incurred because of an unsuccessful application.

Please note: Application forms and evidence are posted at your own risk and the college does not accept responsibility for evidence which has not been received.

What happens after I have made my application?
Upon receipt of your application we will provide you with further details about the application process.

How will payment for childcare be made?
Payments will be made directly to your Childcare Provider by BACs credit transfer. Normally, these will be equal monthly payments from the start to the end of your course.

Is there anyone I can talk to if I need help with any aspect of my application? Yes, you can contact the College's financial support team at:

traffordstudentbursary@tcg.ac.uk

⚠ If you email a contact number and the nature of your enquiry, a Financial Support Officer will contact you.

* The information in these guidelines is correct at time of printing however Trafford College reserves the right to make any necessary changes in order to comply with Education and Skills Funding Agency, Government or College Policy.

TRAFFORD COLLEGE