

16-19 BURSARY

GUIDANCE FOR STUDENTS & PARENTS 2026-27

1 Summary

The 16 to 19 Bursary Fund is a fund provided by the Department for Education to Wallingford School. It provides financial support to help students overcome specific barriers to participation so they can remain in education. The School is required to follow government guidance in the use of the fund.

There are 2 types of 16 to 19 bursaries:

1. **Vulnerable groups** of up to £1,200 a year
2. **Discretionary bursaries** which institutions award to meet individual needs, for example, help with the cost of transport, meals, books and equipment

2 Eligibility

2.1 Age

To be eligible to receive a bursary in the 2026 to 2027 academic year you must be aged 16 or over but under 19 at 31 August 2025.

Students aged 19 or over are only eligible to receive a discretionary bursary if they are continuing on a study programme they began aged 16 to 18 ('19+ continuers') or have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

These 2 groups of aged 19 plus students can receive a discretionary bursary while they continue to attend education (in the case of a 19+ continuer, this must be the same programme they started before they turned 19), as long as their eligibility continues and their institution considers they need the additional support to continue their participation.

Students aged 19 or over are not eligible for bursaries for vulnerable groups.

The School may generally only pay bursaries to students aged 16 or over.

2.2 **Bursary for defined vulnerable groups**

Students who meet one of the 4 criteria below and who have a financial need can apply for a bursary for vulnerable groups of up to £1,200 per year. If you are participating on a study programme that lasts for less than 30 weeks a pro-rata amount is paid.

The defined vulnerable groups are students who are:

- in care
- care leavers
- 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

Students do not necessarily need to be living independently – you may still be in your parent's home. HOWEVER, if a student receives a vulnerable group bursary, parents **may not continue to claim Child Benefit for that student**.

If a student applies for a vulnerable group bursary but does not have any actual financial need and so does not need support from the scheme, the School may decide not to grant a bursary. For example, their financial needs may already be met and/or they have no relevant costs

Payment

Payment will be made on a termly basis based on the need of the student.

2.3 Discretionary bursaries

The School can make discretionary bursary award of up to £250 to students to help them overcome the individual financial barriers to participation they face, for example, help with the cost of transport, meals, books and equipment. Funds are limited and cannot be guaranteed.

Funding is not a right and Wallingford Sixthform has a duty to ensure that funds are awarded fairly and to those most in need of financial support and to use household income to help establish the amount of support it awards to a student. This will be used in conjunction with other factors, such as:

- Travel requirements
- Requirements of their study programme
- Number of dependent children in the household
- Whether the young person has additional responsibilities that may mean they need extra help, for example, they are a young carer or a parent.

Students need to apply for a bursary each year they want support.

Criteria & conditions for support for the Discretionary bursary:

- Household income up to £28,000 per year (a larger sum may be considered if there are a large number of dependents)
- In receipt of Universal Credit/Employment and Support Allowance
- In receipt of tax credits (annual income less than £20,000)
- Entitled to Free School Meals in the last 4 years or registered as a young carer where there is financial hardship.
- A recent and substantial decrease in household income
- Acceptable attendance, behaviour & Academic performance

Universal Credit

If you receive Universal Credit we will need to see the 3 most recent monthly Universal Credit award statements. The take-home pay figure in addition to the amount of Universal Credit after all deductions have been made will give a total monthly income. Using 3 months statements acts as a guide to the household income for a quarter of a year. We will use this to estimate assumed income for a full year.

Expenses a bursary can cover

A bursary can be used to pay for:

- School Meals (provision via the school canteen)
- Contribution towards public transport to and from school.
- Books
- Specialist equipment/materials

Students may also wish to apply for:

- Cost of specialist materials & stationery
- Cost of, or contribution towards the cost of music tuition (A level music student only)
- Cost towards field study courses/trips

- Contribution towards transport to and from University Open Days
- Contribution towards trips and study courses

The School is not permitted to make lump-sum awards. Each award must be based on specific costs listed on your application.

The School provides a bank of laptops for use in the Sixth Form study area. If there is a particular need for a student to have one for use at other times, the School will consider such a request. The laptop would be on loan, to be returned on completion of 16-19 studies.

Sometimes the School will purchase items rather than give the student money to do so. The School can often obtain items cheaper than available in shops and ensures the School has the relevant documentation to hand.

Payment

Payments will be made to the students bank account on receipt of a completed and authorised claim form with supporting evidence such as receipts, invoices etc **these must be kept by the student.**

A bursary may be paid into another person's account only in exceptional circumstances where a student is unable to administer their own account. If the student is in one of the vulnerable groups and cannot manage their own funds, the School will consider who is going to manage the bursary on the student's behalf.

Students aged 16 can open a basic bank account. The basic bank account will allow BACS transfers and allow the student to withdraw money. More information on basic bank accounts can be found at [British Bankers' Association](#).

The following issues may lead to payment of a bursary being suspended:

- poor attendance
- unauthorised absences
- coursework not up to date and of a good standard

3. How to apply

The application form is available on the school website in the 6th Form section and paper copies can be obtained from the 6th Form office. Completed forms should be submitted to Mrs Honer-Lee in the Sixth Form office or emailed to sixthform@wallingfordschool.com. Applications should be returned by Friday 25th September 2026.