

University of Birmingham School

Student guide to the 16-19 Bursary

The 16 to 19 bursary fund is funded by the government, aiming to support students in overcoming specific financial barriers to participation so they can remain in education.

There are 2 types of bursaries available at UoBS;

- Discretionary 16-19 Bursaries
- Bursaries for Defined Vulnerable Groups

Discretionary 16-19 Bursaries

Each year, the majority of our bursary awards are Discretionary 16-19 Bursaries, awarded to support students from lower income households, who may be disproportionately impacted by the costs of completing their A-Level studies.

Eligibility

Students are encouraged to apply for a Discretionary Bursary if they satisfy one or more of the following criteria:

Criteria	Evidence required	How should evidence be provided?
A) Student is currently in receipt of Free School Meals (FSM).	A successful application through the online FSM checking service for this academic year. cloudforedu.org.uk/ofsm/birmingham	N/A - Confirmation of eligibility is automatically sent to the school.
B) Total household income (including any received benefits / universal credit) was less than £30,000 during the previous tax year	Universal Credit Statements (Past 3 months*) Or P60 (most recent) Or Pay slips (Past 3 months) for all adults in the home	Electronic or scanned copies to be uploaded as part of the online application form <i>*if parents/carers have been on Universal Credit less than 3 months we require copies of all statements or entitlement letters received so far</i>

Under exceptional circumstances students who are not automatically eligible for an award may also apply for help with one off course related expenses (proof of household income or hardship will be asked for). Such applications will be considered on an individual basis, if funds remain.

We will review all students' eligibility position each academic year – meaning that students must therefore re-apply in Year 13.

Discretionary Bursary Support Categories

Bursary support will be provided in the form of financial reimbursement for items from the following categories (subject to submission of itemised receipts).

- Transport to/from school
- School Meals
- Educational Resources
- IT Software or Equipment
- Clothing for Dress Code

To support with our allocation of bursary, students will be asked during their application to rank the categories above in order of importance (to assist with planning purposes). However, support can be claimed from across any of the different categories.

Note: Maximum award amounts for support will be calculated after the initial application deadline has passed.

This is because the actual amounts available will be subject to the number of eligible applications received.

Bursaries for young people in defined vulnerable groups

Students with a financial need and who meet one of the following criteria below may apply to the **Bursary for Defined Vulnerable Groups**. Where this kind of bursary is provided, support will generally be available up to £1,200 per year, allocated across any combination of the five support categories.

However, cases will be looked at individually and students will only receive the amount they actually need to support their studies (i.e. will not automatically receive £1,200 if they do not need the full amount).

Eligibility

The defined vulnerable groups are as follows;

Criteria	Evidence required	How should evidence be provided?
In care or have recently left Local Authority Care	Written confirmation of the student's current or previous looked-after status from the relevant local authority	Scanned copies to be uploaded as part of the online application form
Personally receiving Universal Credit (UC) because they are financially supporting themselves (and/or a child or partner)	Documents such as a tenancy agreement in the student's name, a child benefit receipt, birth certificate or utility bills A copy of the UC award notice, in the student's name	
Personally receiving Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payments (PIPs) in their own right AS WELL AS Employment Support Allowance (ESA) or Universal Credit in their own right	A copy of documents confirming receipt of DLA or PIP, in the student's name Plus UC or ESA award notice, in the student's name	

Entitlement to Bursary

Students who meet the criteria for a Defined Vulnerable Groups Bursary are not automatically entitled to a bursary award. For example, students will not receive the bursary if they do not have any actual financial need (i.e. their financial needs are met from other sources and/or they have no relevant costs).

How to Apply

Apply via our online bursary site > <https://uobschoolbursary.applicaa.com/>

During your initial application, you may be asked to provide the following;

- Evidence of your household income or Free School Meal status
- Documents showing any benefits to which your household are entitled
- Your bank account details for your (the student) bank/building society accounts

The key dates for the 2026/27 school year are as follows:

	Term 1 Autumn	Term 2 Spring	Term 3 Summer
Review of attendance, punctuality and conduct	12 October	8 February	24 May
Evidence/Receipt of purchases to be received by	02 November	22 February	07 June
Reimbursement payments to be processed <i>(week commencing)</i>	09 November	01 March	21 June

Applications to the bursary can be made at any point during the academic year prior to the final 29 May receipt deadline. However, applicants are encouraged to apply early.

Submission of reimbursement claims

Following confirmation of your bursary eligibility, you will be required to submit requests for any items that you wish to claim financial reimbursement for (travel tickets, purchase of equipment etc).

All requests must be submitted via our online bursary portal for approval and must be evidenced by an itemised receipt of purchase. Wherever possible, receipts should clearly state the location and date of purchase.

Items will only be reimbursed where there is a clearly identified need for the item to support your studies therefore if you are at all unsure as to whether an item would be approved, you should seek approval from the Sixth Form Office before making the purchase.

Optional: Item purchases over £150

We appreciate that in some cases, students may struggle to purchase more valuable items (laptops, annual bus pass etc.) up-front. Therefore, **for any single item valued at over £150**, the school may be able to support with ordering/purchasing items on behalf of the student.

Note: Items will be ordered once the reimbursement deadline has passed. Bus passes can then take an additional 2-3 weeks to arrive, whilst other items can take 4-6 weeks.

Requests may be submitted by selecting the 'Request for School to Purchase' option on the Bursary request form.

Payment

Payments for all approved claims will be made on a termly basis, typically paid by BACS transfer to the student's bank account. We will not pay funds into parent/carers accounts.

Conditions for the receipt of bursary payments

Students in receipt of a bursary are expected to uphold the school's high expectations for attendance, general conduct and punctuality throughout their studies.

Therefore, bursary payments are subject to the following expectations being met:



Maintains an overall authorised attendance above 96%
(i.e. does not accrue more than 4% unauthorised marks)



Has not been issued any Stage 1 or Stage 2 reports for behaviour, attendance or punctuality concerns

If, at the point that bursaries are awarded/reviewed each term, applicants have fallen below that which is required and expected, the school reserves the right to reduce, or even fully withdraw any future bursary payments.

We will always take students' individual circumstances into consideration. This includes considering the impact on attendance that might be caused by significant illness, caring responsibilities or other exceptional circumstances.

We may also reduce or withhold payments where students have been absent for a period of 4 continuous weeks or more (excluding holidays) and where students have decided to withdraw from a study programme.

We reserve the right to recall money from students where it is not spent for the reasons it was awarded. We will consider the impact of such an action on the individual student before taking a final decision to do so, and any decision will be confirmed to the student in writing.

All students are required to sign a declaration confirming that they agree to these conditions.

Support Categories

Please see the below guidance for item reimbursement claims within each Support Category.

Travel to/from school	To receive travel support, students should live more than one mile away from the school* and must have applied for a 16-18 photo card. Due to the timing of the process, students may need to pay for their own costs such as travel to school in September/October and then claim these back if their bursary application is successful. Please be mindful that reimbursement will only be made if receipts/proof of purchase are provided (each term) so families should keep all receipts. Reimbursement will be based on the cheapest and most reasonable method of public transport for an individual's journey between the school and their primary home address. Students with an EHCP should first check to see if they are eligible for support via Birmingham City Council (https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/post16transport)
School Meal Support	Available to students who are eligible for a discretionary bursary (but not already in receipt of Free School Meals). Students who are awarded school meal support will be permitted to purchase food from the school canteen up to the cost of a standard meal deal. Any unused meal allowance will not 'roll on' to subsequent days and no cash value will be stored in the school gateway system.
Educational Resources	Reimbursed payments will be offered towards the cost of equipment, stationery and books which are associated with the student's courses or general A-Level studies. Receipts will be required to evidence any purchases made and must clearly label/identify the item, cost and the date of purchase. If a student is unsure whether an item would be approved as an Educational Resource, they should speak to Mrs Kershaw in the Sixth Form Office to seek approval BEFORE purchasing the item. Final decisions on whether resources can be approved will sit with the Schools Business Leader.
IT Equipment or Software	Students who do not have adequate access to IT facilities at home may apply to use bursary funding towards the purchase of suitable equipment or software to support their studies.

	Where possible, students are encouraged to consider refurbished or reconditioned devices, provided they are fit for purpose and represent good value for money. All purchases must be approved by the school in advance. Students should speak to Mrs Kershaw in the Sixth Form Office before making any device purchase using bursary funding. Once purchased, any equipment funded through the bursary becomes the property of the student. Students and their families are responsible for the care, security, maintenance, insurance and safe use of the item. The school cannot accept responsibility for the loss, theft, accidental damage, malfunction or repair of any bursary-funded equipment and will not normally provide replacement funding where an item has been lost, stolen or damaged. Students should retain all receipts and any warranty documentation provided by the retailer or manufacturer. Any issues relating to faults, repairs or warranties must be resolved directly with the supplier. Final decisions regarding the approval of IT equipment and software purchases will sit with the School Business Leader.
Dress Code	Reimbursed payments will be offered towards the cost of clothing items in line with the school's published Sixth Form Dress Code, including; • Suit items (inc. Blazer/Jacket) • Smart shoes • Outdoor coat • School bag • Sports kit (A-Level PE students only) Receipts will be required to evidence any purchases made and must clearly label/identify the item, cost and the date of purchase. Items should be purchased according to need and with value for money in mind. If a student is unsure whether an item would be approved as an appropriate Dress Code purchase, they should speak to Mrs Kershaw in the Sixth Form Office to seek approval BEFORE purchasing the item. Final decisions on whether resources can be approved will sit with the Schools Business Leader