



Ralph Allen School 16-19 Bursary Policy

Context and Aims

In September 2011 the Government introduced a 16-19 Bursary Fund to provide support for sixth form students from economically deprived backgrounds to continue in their post-16 education. The School is allocated funding for this Bursary which is roughly based on the numbers of student applications for financial support in the previous financial year. These funds must be entirely exhausted by the end of each financial year. Approximately 5% of this funding may be used for the school costs of administering the scheme, in line with direction from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).

This document is based on advice provided by the ESFA and sets out how Ralph Allen School will administer and distribute these funds and is divided into the following sections:

1. Eligibility
2. Applications and Assessment
3. Provision of support
4. Appeals
5. Fraud

Ralph Allen School recognises that offering support to students from economically deprived backgrounds requires sensitivity and respect for all those concerned. Information relating to applications will be treated confidentially and will be retained for 7 Years in line with the schools Audit requirements.

1. Eligibility

Bursaries are intended to support those students from economically deprived backgrounds. School staff will ensure that all students are aware of the Bursary and how to apply during their induction to the school, details will also be available on the school's website and on Posters in the sixth form. There are 2 types of bursaries students are eligible to apply for:

A. Vulnerable bursary

A Bursary of up to £1200 claimable depending on the needs of the individual student, the student must be on a study programme of 30 weeks or more, (study programmes with fewer weeks or reduced hours will be funded pro rata) the Bursary is for young people in one of the defined vulnerable groups:

- Students in care
- Care leavers
- receiving Income Support (IS), or Universal Credit (UC) 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 (DLA) or Personal Independence Payments (PIP) in their own right as well as Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or UC in their own right

(For Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) guidance on eligibility visit the following website:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/16-to-19-bursary-fund-guide-2021-to-2022-academic-year#eligibility-criteria-bursaries-for-young-people-in-defined-vulnerable-groups>

B. Discretionary bursaries

The school awards bursaries to meet the individual needs of students who face financial barriers, hence students aged over 16 but under 19 at 31 August 2021, whose parents or carers have a total household income of less than £27,000, should apply. To qualify for the bursary students will need to provide evidence of all household income, bank statements, both wage slips and universal credit and benefits statements where applicable. Disability Living Allowance income will be excluded from the calculation, but should be disclosed, as with universal credit only those with savings below £16,000 will be eligible. Additional funding or payments might be granted to less well-off students at the panel's discretion. All applications should be received by the finance team with accompanying supporting documents.

Awards will be given to students based on the level of need, low income and higher level of costs will both be considered in making an award. These amounts will change from year to year based on the funding received by the school and the number of students that apply. Students will receive the bursary either in kind or as a cash sum when evidence of the expense has been provided.

Bursary Level

Entitled students will receive payments to be determined by the Business Manager, dependent on the money received by the school and the level of need both in terms of family income and needs of the individual student. The School is only allocated a finite amount of money for bursaries and this will be distributed amongst applicants in relation to their priority levels of eligibility. Once this money has been allocated there will be no more money to distribute. The funding comes to the school from central government and the school has no other money to pay bursaries. Students should be aware that applying is not a guarantee of any bursary support.

Payments must be for specific educational purposes, which may include: costs of transport (bus passes), extra books and equipment, meals in school, educational trips, UCAS registration etc.

Students eligible to receive a bursary must be aged over 16 and under 19 on the 31st of August in the academic year in which they start their programme of study, and must satisfy ESFA residency criteria.

However, some students aged 19 or over on 31 August 2021 are eligible to apply for help from discretionary bursaries, those who are continuing on a study programme they began aged 16 to 18 ('19+ continuers') and those who have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP). (Other students aged 19 and over may be able to access Discretionary Learner Support provided by the Skills Funding Agency).

Students should talk to their institution to establish what help may be available to them. Please note no students aged 19 or over are eligible to receive a vulnerable bursary. All students must satisfy ESFA residency criteria.

Students will need to reapply for the Bursary each academic year.

Data Sharing

Students who move from Ralph Allen School to another educational provider will need to sign an agreement if they wish their information to be shared with the new institution, in support of an application for bursary.

2. Applications and Assessment

Ralph Allen School will make every effort to ensure that all those students entitled to bursaries receive such support. All students coming into the Sixth Form will receive information about bursaries. A specific application form is available to be used. Students will be encouraged to make an application for a Bursary as soon as possible forms will be available at results days and applications are encouraged to be submitted promptly after enrolment in September so as not to delay support to eligible students.

Students will be asked to provide evidence of their total household income e.g. notice of benefits received from the Department of Work and Pensions (see Ralph Allen School Application form for further details). The School will photocopy any supporting documentation provided as evidence in an application, and will keep this securely stored.

To receive a bursary the student must satisfy the following conditions:

1. The student must have met the terms of the Sixth Form 16-19 Bursary Learning Agreement.
2. The student must have no unauthorised absence from any lesson, private study period or supervised study period (monitored by Sixth Form Administration Assistant). Students not meeting these criteria may have their bursary status withdrawn.

Applications should be received by the Finance Office by the end of the first week in September. A Bursary Panel comprising The Business Manager, and the Finance Officer will meet once a year to review all applications, at this point further information may be requested from applicants, students will be advised of their entitlement and support will be provided according to need. The panel will meet within 20 working days of the application deadline and students will be informed of the result of their applications within 5 working days of the panel meeting. The school will retain an amount of the bursary to fund any in year applications, if by term 5 no other applications have been received the will become available to provide further support to eligible students.

3. Provision of Support

Students who are eligible will be requested to provide the Finance Office with details of the support required the Office will purchase books, materials and fund the trips required. Payments to students will be made as reimbursements for costs incurred through automated bank transfer, receipts will need to be provided for such transfers.

Support will be for that period of time that a student remains on their course and meets the expectations of Sixth Formers, as outlined in the Sixth Form 16-19 Bursary Learning Agreement, with specific regard to attendance and punctuality, behaviour, meeting deadlines, achieving grades in line with predictors. Specific details of these can be found in the document *ESFA Bursary – Ralph Allen School Application Form*.

Should any student fail to meet these requirements the school reserves the right to withhold bursary support for which requirements have not been met. Similarly, if students leave school before the end of the academic year, they will only receive support for the time that they attended the sixth form. The school reserves the right to adjust the level of support provided if the study programme undertaken by the student is significantly reduced.

Students must open a bank account, as reimbursements will be made from the school directly to their accounts. Any student facing difficulties in opening a bank account should immediately contact the school Finance Office.

4. Appeals

Students are entitled to appeal against decisions made in relation to their application for a bursary or the withholding of support. They should first raise their concerns with the Head of Sixth Form, and if such a meeting fails to resolve any differences they should make a written appeal, for consideration by the Headteacher.

5. Fraud

Fraudulent claims for bursary allocations will be referred to the Police. Students found to make fraudulent claims will be required to refund all payments received and may be permanently excluded from the school.

Date: 30th July 2021