



16-24 BURSARY FUNDS POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Policy provides guidance on how Trinity Specialist College will Administer Bursary Grants that will be used to help maintain a young person in Education who might otherwise be unfairly disadvantaged or excluded. The Policy operates in line with the Government's guidelines on the 16 - 24 Bursary Funds allocation for young people aged 16-24.

The Bursary is to be used to help students experiencing greatest financial need When wishing to access their educational provision. Our aim is to support Students who would otherwise be financially disadvantaged in some way when Accessing their learning through Trinity Specialist College. Money should be spent in a way that removes barriers to education.

1.2 This policy also provides guidance on how Trinity Specialist College will administer Free College Meals in line with the requirement of the 1996 Education Act which states that maintained school and academy sixth-forms provide free meals to disadvantaged students who are aged over 16. In the 2014 to 2015 academic year this requirement was extended to disadvantaged students following FE courses at the range of FE funded institutions. Funding Agreements have been amended to place a legal duty on institutions to comply with this requirement.

1.3 Decisions will be based purely on financial needs and no account will be taken of Individual characteristics such as gender, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, Sexual orientation, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment or marital or Civil partnership status or any other individual characteristic. Age will be taken Into account as detailed in this policy.

2. PURPOSE

Created by: Sally Evans, Finance

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Date for Review: 05/2019

2.1 Trinity Specialist College 16 - 24 Bursary Fund has two components:

(i) Vulnerable persons Entitlement and,

(ii) Discretionary entitlement. Trinity Specialist College 19 - 24 Bursary Fund is entirely a discretionary entitlement with a focus on ensuring students can access their educational provision. Should any students apply to Trinity Specialist College who fall into category (i) then applications will be made for their entitlement directly to the Bursary Services as specified in the bursary guidance.

2.2 This Policy applies to all students at Trinity Specialist College who are aged between 16 - 24 by the 31st August in the year commencing their studies. Students wishing to claim the 'Vulnerable persons' Bursary entitlement **must be under 19 by the 31 August** in The year commencing their studies.

Free meals and the 16 to 19 Bursary Fund

Additional funding for free meals for post-16 students at further education funded institutions was introduced in the 2014 to 2015 academic year.

The ESFA removed the ring fence between the free meals in further education allocation and the 16 to 19 Bursary Fund discretionary bursary allocation in the 2016 to 2017 academic year. This flexibility remains in place for the 2018 to 2019 academic year.

2.3 Objectives

2.3.1 That Trinity Specialist College responds, within its remit, to the financial needs of individuals wishing to engage in an educational programme at the college.

2.3.2 That Trinity Specialist College responds to and recognises the value of an individual's choice, the diversity of access needs and the needs of the community when educational preference is made for a place at Trinity Specialist College.

2.3.3 To fulfil the role of education in recognising the importance of adequate resource provision for promoting economic, social and cultural wellbeing.

2.3.4 To accurately allocate funding to those students who demonstrate sufficient need.

2.3.5 That Trinity Specialist College provides appropriate financial support to meet the changing needs of individuals, promoting equality and fairness of access.

3. ELIGIBILITY FOR 16 – 19 BURSARY

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3.1 Following government guidelines, Trinity Specialist College will only apply for a vulnerable person's bursary for those students who meet specific criteria.

3.2 16-19 Vulnerable Student Bursary

3.2.1 Trinity Specialist College will apply to the ESFA for a Bursary Fund of up to £1200 per year to any student enrolled at Trinity Specialist College on a full time, 25 hours a week course who falls into one of the following government set criteria:

- The young person is under 19 years old before the 31st August.
- Is a young person in care, including unaccompanied asylum-seeking children
- Is a care leaver
- Is a student in receipt of income support or Universal credit (in their own right) because they are financially supporting themselves or themselves and someone who is dependent on them and living with them such as a child or a partner.
- Is a young person who is in receipt of **both** Employment Support Allowance (ESA)/Universal Credit (as a replacement) and Disability Living Allowance/or Personal Independence Payment in their own right.

3.2.2 The vulnerable bursary awards are administered externally by 'The learner Support Service' on behalf of the EFA. Trinity Specialist College make applications on behalf of a young person but decisions are not in the control on Trinity Specialist College.

3.2.3 Students who are in or become part of the vulnerable category can apply for support at any given time of the academic year they are studying.

3.3 Discretionary' Entitlement -16 - 24

3.3.1 This Bursary allocation is only available to students aged 16 to 24 enrolled full Time at Trinity Specialist College. These young people are deemed to be financially disadvantaged and may need further financial support to assist their expenses at college (primarily to meet transport costs or for college learning resources) which in turn helps them to remain in college.

3.3.2 The criteria for applying for a 16 - 24 discretionary entitlement are as follows:

- That the student is in receipt of Disability Living Allowance/Personal Independence Payments/Universal Credit/Individual payments **in their own** name during college time (proof of original letter required)
- An asylum-seeking young person.
- Are continuing on a study programme they began aged 16 to 18 ('19+ continuers')
- Have an Education, Health and Care Plan(EHCP)
- The student's household income is proven to be less than £20,000 per year (evidence required).

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4. ELIGIBILITY FOR FREE COLLEGE MEALS

4.1 To be eligible for a free meal in the 2018 to 2019 academic year the student must be aged 16 or over but under 19 at 31 August 2018.

Students aged 19 or over are only eligible for a free meal 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 students can receive a free meal 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.

The following groups of students are not eligible for free meals in further education support:

- students aged between 14 and 16 (these students are already covered by different provision, that is Free School Meals (FSM))
- students aged 19 or over at the start of their study programme, unless they have an EHCP or are a 19+ continuer
- apprentices, including those with an EHCP

4.2 Eligible benefits

Free meals are targeted at disadvantaged students. Free meals in further education defines disadvantage as students being in receipt of, or having parents who are in receipt of, one or more of the following benefits:

- Income Support
- income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided they are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190, as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC))
- Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for 4 weeks after someone stops qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit with net earnings not exceeding the equivalent of £7400 pa

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5. APPLICATION

5.1 A letter will be issued at the start of the Summer term (June) to all students and their families about the opportunity to apply for a Bursary and/or Free College Meals award and what they are required to do.

5.2 A student or their family/guardian applies for the relevant Bursary for which they maybe entitled and must submit applications and supporting evidence by the Specified closing date as disclosed in the letter.

5.3 Trinity Specialist College will hold a Senior Management Meeting that allocates money or 'money in kind' to students. The bursary will be calculated, some bursaries may cover 100% of the costs but not in all cases. This will be dependent on Trinity's allocation and the number of applications.

6. MONITORING

6.1 Once all Bursary Funding is agreed and confirmed (subject to a satisfactory Enrolment process), then payments will be distributed each term.

Cheques/BACS payments will be paid to the student directly.

If a student is allocated 'money in kind' (for transport costs or materials, etc) this will be allocated in full at source to the relevant department to purchase the Service/materials by the Finance Officer.

6.2 Ongoing payments are conditional on a student meeting satisfactory standards of attendance **and** behaviour whilst on their enrolled courses.

Formal action will be taken by Trinity Specialist College to stop further Bursary payments if attendance reaches an unacceptable level during the duration of the course. Attendance lower than 85% will trigger a review.

7. APPEAL AND COMPLAINTS

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7.1 A student can appeal a funding decision made by the Senior Management Team. A request must be received in writing by the Chief Executive Officer within 7 working days of unsuccessful notification; the letter requesting an appeal must clearly state the grounds of that appeal.

7.2 Any complaints about the process of handling the bursary must be addressed Through Trinity Specialist College's complaints procedures.

8. FINITE NATURE OF THE BURSARY AWARDS

8.1 Trinity Specialist College has a limited amount of funds to support claims under the 16-24 Discretionary Bursary Funds and applications will be looked at by the Senior Management Team for students whose have the greatest need in relation to barriers to participation.

8.2 Once the annualised fund is allocated, no further discretionary applications will be received regardless of eligibility criteria being met.

8.3 A student can apply for a further award in subsequent years of study as long as they meet the eligibility criteria as specified.

9. FRAUDULANT CLAIMS

9.1 Trinity Specialist College will ask for proof of income to support bursary claims.

Should false information be presented to gain a bursary, any money and/or goods paid for by Trinity Specialist College as a result will be claimed back from the family and the police involved to investigate the matter.