



16 – 19 Bursary Fund Policy (2026/27)

Policy Ref: TMP97v2

This policy will not discriminate either directly or indirectly against any individual on grounds of sex, race, ethnicity or national origin, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, religion or belief, age, disability, socioeconomic status, offending background or any other personal characteristic.

	Name	Title	Signature	Date
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Approved by	Martin Heaton	CEO		July 2026

Does this Policy require publishing on the College Website? Yes

Does this Policy require approval by Board of Governors? No

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Record of Changes

Version	Issue Date	Changes	Initials
v1	July 2025	Initial issue	KM/CF
v2	July 2026	Updates to application, updates relevant to academic year 2026/27	KM/CF

Date of Next Policy Review: July 2027

Definition

Throughout this policy document **TMP Studios CIC** is referred to as 'TMP College'.

Introduction

The 16 to 19 Bursary Fund provides financial support to help learners overcome the specific financial barriers to participation they face, so they can remain in education. The main aim of this is to ensure that all learners can access college-based learning as fully as possible.

TMP College is allocated a fixed sum of money for the 16-19 Bursary Fund, based on demographic information).

There are 2 types of 16 to 19 bursaries:

- bursaries for defined vulnerable groups.
- discretionary bursaries which institutions award using policies they set, in line with these funding rules.

The bursary fund is intended to help learners with the essential costs of participating in their study programme, so to help contribute towards the cost of essential books or equipment or with the cost of travelling to college, for example. The bursary fund is not intended to support costs that are not related to education (e.g. general living costs), extracurricular activities or provide learning support, nor is it intended to provide services that institutions give to learners – such as counselling, mentoring or extra tutoring.

A contingency fund of 5% will be kept for learners who join the college part way through a year or whose circumstances change during the year.

Criteria and Eligibility

A learner must be aged 16yrs or over but under 19yrs on 31st August 2026 to be eligible for help from the bursary fund in the 2026/27 academic year.

Learners aged 19yrs 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).

Learners must meet the residency criteria in ESFA funding regulations for post-16 provision¹.

Learners who meet the criteria, and who have a financial need, can apply for a bursary for vulnerable groups. The defined groups reflect that these learners are unlikely to be receiving

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/16-to-19-bursary-fund-guidance/16-to-19-bursary-fund-guide-2026-to-2027>

financial assistance from parents or carers, so may need a greater level of support to enable them to continue to participate.

The defined vulnerable groups are learners who are under 19 and:

- 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.

Learners who meet the criteria can apply for a discretionary bursary. The groups that will be considered for this bursary are:

- learners in receipt of Free School Meals.
- learners whose home Household income is less than £32,000.

Evidence Required

For bursary applications for vulnerable groups, the following evidence is considered appropriate by the government:

- for learners who are in care or a care leaver, written confirmation of their current or previous looked-after status from the relevant local authority – this is the local authority that looks after them or provides their leaving care services. The evidence could be a letter or an email but must be clearly from the local authority.
- for learners in receipt of UC or IS, a copy of their UC or IS award notice. This must clearly state that the claim is in the learner's name/confirm they are entitled to the benefits in their own right. The evidence must not state any conditions that prevent them from participating in further education or training.
- for learners in receipt of UC, institutions must also see a document such as a tenancy agreement in the learner's name, a child benefit receipt, children's birth certificates, utility bills and for learners receiving UC/ESA and DLA and PIP, a copy of their UC claim from DWP. Evidence of receipt of DLA or PIP must also be provided.

For discretionary bursary applications, the following evidence is considered appropriate:

- Working Tax Credit/Child Tax Credit, Last 3 months of Universal Credit statement, evidence of any other benefits showing household income or letter from HMRC, P60, Last 3 months payslips.

Applications and Assessment

Applications will be completed using the platform PayMyStudent. To access this, learners must use their TMP email address.

Evidence must be uploaded to PayMyStudent before the application can be submitted. Payments cannot be made without significant evidence. Once the evidence has been approved the learner and/or parent will receive a confirmation letter. This letter will contain what the learner is entitled to. This letter will be viewable on the learners PayMyStudent account.

TMP College will make every effort to ensure that all those learners entitled to bursaries receive such support. All learners joining TMP College will receive information about bursaries.

On PayMyStudent learners must select the support they wish to receive. Learners can choose to have support for equipment/books/uniform, travel and to use to money for lunch.

Attendance

To be eligible for the Discretionary bursary the learner is required to have attendance of 85% or above in the half term in which the payment is due.

Learners will not receive the discretionary bursary if attendance falls under 85%. Only in exceptional circumstances will a learner get paid a bursary if attendance falls under 85%. These are at the discretion of the college Principal.

Learners who are placed on a reduced timetable need to attend 100% of this new timetable to be eligible for bursary.

Remote learning can account for 5 days per half term. If a learner remote learns for 5 days and their attendance is over 85% they will be entitled to bursary.

If college has been shut due to issues with the building or weather, this will not affect bursary. If learners have been told they can stay off from college due to weather issues, this will not affect bursary.

Appointments and illness which result in absences will usually affect bursary payments, unless a discretionary exception has been agreed with the Principal.

Payments

Payments are due the first week back of the following half term, subject to attendance being finalised, on the following dates:

Half term	Payment due
Autumn 1	W/C 2/11/2026
Autumn 2	W/C 4/01/2027
Spring 1	W/C 22/02/2027
Spring 2	W/C 12/04/2027
Summer 1	W/C 7/06/2027
Summer 2	W/C 20/07/2027

Payments will be made to the bank account provided on the application form. It is the responsibility of the learner to provide TMP College with the correct details. TMP College cannot accept liability for payments being made into incorrect accounts.

TMP College will back-date any payments to the start of the half term in which the application form and evidence has been received in.

Breakdown of the bursary

Standard discretionary bursary

Learners who qualify for the discretionary bursary and have achieved attendance over 85% for the half term in which the payment is due are entitled to the standard discretionary bursary. For those with an attendance percentage 85% - 99%, this is £10 per week. For those with 100% attendance this is £15 per week.

Essential equipment

Learners who qualify for the discretionary bursary and are completing a Maths qualification are entitled to receive a calculator and a geometry set. These are the responsibility of the learner and will not be replaced.

TMP College can buy learners equipment they need in kind. The money for this will be taken out of the standard bursary.

Travel

Learners who qualify for the discretionary bursary, and live more than 2 miles away but in Greater Manchester, and do not receive transport from the Local Authority, are entitled to receive a reimbursement of £10 once they have brought an Our Pass (Bus Pass). The learner must produce evidence that they have purchased the Our pass in order to get the reimbursement.

Learners who qualify for the discretionary bursary, and do not receive transportation through the local authority, are entitled to an extra travel bursary. This is attendance based and will only be received if attendance is over 85% for the half term. The money will be received as a bulk payment with the rest of the bursary payment.

- £5 per full week if you live between 1-5 miles away
- £7.50 per full week if you live between 5.1-10 miles away
- £10 per full week if you live over 10.1 miles away

Vulnerable learner bursary

Learners who meet the criteria for the defined vulnerable groups are entitled to the vulnerable learner bursary. The amounts given for this bursary are decided on a case by case basis and will be explained to the learner via a letter.

Free college meals

TMP College is responsible for assessing applications for free meals. Learners are only eligible to receive a free meal when they, or a responsible adult on their behalf, have made a successful application to TMP College.

Free meals are targeted at disadvantaged learners. This is defined as learners being in receipt of, or having parents who are in receipt of, one or more of the following benefits:

- Universal Credit
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

Households in receipt of Income-related Employment and Support Allowance or the guarantee element of Pension Credit may also be entitled to a meal².

Those entitled to free meals will receive £2.66 per day they are in college.

Learners who qualify for free meals can choose from a selection of Jacket potato and topping, chips, sandwich, crisps and cartoon juice from the Sound Bites Café at TMP College's Caroline St campus. If preferred the learner can be sent their free meal money with their bursary money.

Alternative provision learners are only entitled to a meal from the Sound Bites Café.

In the Wellbeing hub there are Pot noodles, breakfast biscuits and other snacks available for all learners. There is also bread available for toast in the morning on request.

Appeals

Learners are entitled to appeal against decisions made in relation to their application for a bursary or the withholding of payments. They should first raise their concerns with the Bursary Lead (Katie McKnight) and, if such a meeting fails to resolve any differences, they should make a written complaint to Director of Pastoral Care (Kim Pulman), for consideration by the Principal.

Important information

Learners must have a bank account in their name, as any payments would be made directly via BACS payment to the learner's bank account. Any learner faced with difficulties in opening a bank account should contact Learner welfare team. In exceptional circumstances we will transfer money to parents/carers or they will be paid in cash.

This is a year-on-year Government Funded Grant and awards to learners therefore relate only to the current academic year and therefore need to be renewed annually.

² [Free meals in further education funded institutions guide: academic year 2026 to 2027 - GOV.UK](#)

Learners should be aware that that an application is no guarantee of payment, even if the eligibility criteria are fulfilled. Each award will be made on a case-by-case basis