

2023-24 Learner Bursary Information

These guidelines are for any young person who will be attending Valley College from September 2023 and the Advocates who are financially responsible for the young person.

What is the Learner Bursary?

The Government provide college with an allocation of funds to help learners who face financial barriers to continuing in full-time education. Therefore, Valley College ensures that this money is awarded to those learners who are most in financial need.

Who can apply for the Learner Bursary?

A learner can apply for the bursary if they have already applied, been offered or have accepted a confirmed place for September 2023 at Valley College, and also meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Learners aged 18-19
- Learners aged 19+ who are in the second year of a course that they started when they were aged 16-18
- Learners aged 19+ who have an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP)
- Learners who are settled in the UK and have been ordinarily resident in the UK for at least three years prior to the start of their course.

What sort of financial help is available to successful applicants?

If a learner qualifies for the 16-19 Bursary, i.e. meets one of the criteria outlined in Part 2 of the Bursary Application Form, then the learner will receive a bursary of up to a maximum of £1,200 a year to assist with the costs associated with studying at college (such as lunches, travel, books, equipment etc.). Please note even if a learner meets the criteria for the 16-19 bursary this does not necessarily mean that they will automatically receive a financial award (as this would be dependent upon their actual financial need). In some cases, a young person might meet the eligibility criteria for a bursary, but their financial needs are already met, they have not relevant costs, or they do not need the maximum award.

If a learner qualifies for the Discretionary Award, for example, meets one of the criteria outlined in Part 3 of the Application Form, then the learner will receive help towards the cost of travelling to college, lunches and other miscellaneous items throughout the academic year.

When can I apply to the Bursary Fund?

Applications for the 2023-24 Learner Bursary can be made in September for existing and new learners. The deadline date for this phase of applications is 31st October 2023.

Applications are available on the college website and are available from the college admin team.

A paper copy of the bursary application, with original signatures, and supporting documents needs to be returned to the college for processing.

How will I know if I have been successful and when will I receive my bursary?

We will write to all applicants to let them know whether their application has been successful. If successful, the letter will contain details of the learner's Bursary Entitlement for the academic year 2023-24 and you will be invited to a meeting in college to discuss this further.

Bursary awards will be backdated to the date that your application is ready to be processed (i.e. when the application form and all required evidence has been received).

Please note that a successful award in one year does not guarantee a future award. New evidence of eligibility must be submitted each academic year.

Changes in Circumstances

It is very important that you notify Valley College if your personal or financial circumstances change resulting in you no longer being eligible for bursary funding. Failure to notify college of such changes may make you liable to repay the cost of funds already received.

What should I do if I am not happy with any decision relating to my bursary application?

If a learner wishes to appeal against a decision, they should write to the Head of Valley College within 10 days of the decision, stating fully their reasons for the appeal.

Can I only apply for the Learner Bursary once during an academic year?

You can apply again at any point during the remainder of the year if your own circumstances have changed, or if your advocates financial status has changed.

If I miss the initial deadline of 31st October 2023, can I apply later in the year?

You can apply at any time during the academic year for the Learner Bursary. However, as stated above you will only start to receive any awards when your application and evidence have been received in full.

In addition, it should be noted that the amount of money that the college receives from the Government is fixed and is not increased at any point during the academic year. Therefore, it is always advisable to apply as soon as possible.

In the event that there is a shortfall in funding and Valley College is unable to make awards to all eligible applicants, the college will prioritise eligible learners based on their individual needs and circumstances.

Confidentiality and Data Protection

The data requested on the bursary application form will only be used for the purpose of assessing a learner's eligibility for financial support from the bursary fund. Valley College will not share this data with a third party without your consent unless the College is required to do so by law. If you have any queries relating to the need and use of the data provided on the application form, please contact the college Admin Manager at valleycollege@theviewtrust.org or on 01706 214640 Option 2.

Notes on completing the application form.

Please ensure that you print clearly when you complete the form and ensure that you complete all relevant sections in full. It is very important that all of the required evidence is submitted to support the application.

Part 1 - this needs to be completed by ALL applicants (all sections in Part 1 need to be completed in full)

Part 2 – this section only needs to be completed by learners who:

- Are in care or an unaccompanied asylum seeker.
- Are a care leaver.
- Receive Income Support or Universal Credit **in their own right**.
- Receive Employment Support Allowance **AND** Disability Living Allowance (or Personal Independence Payments) **in their own right**.

If Part 2 is completed there is no need for applicants to complete Part 3.

Part 3 – this needs to be completed by all other applicants. It is very important that you provide all of the required evidence, for example, to prove your household income. If you are not sure what evidence to provide, please do not hesitate to contact the Admin Manager. (See below).

Part 4 – this Privacy Notice section is for all applicants, and their advocates to read.

Part 5 – all applicants, and their advocates, are asked to read through the various declarations and sign the application form at the bottom of Page 3 if they agree. Please note – if a signature is missing the bursary application will not be processed until this is obtained.

If you need any help completing your application form, please contact the Admin Manager on 01706 214640 Option 2 or email valleycollege@theviewtrust.org

All applications can be returned to the Ewood Campus Reception which will be open 08.30 a.m. to 04:00 p.m. Monday to Friday during term time. Any supporting evidence will then be photocopied and returned.

Alternatively, you can return the application form by post to the following address:

Valley College, Ewood Campus, Clod Lane, Haslingden, Rossendale, BB4 6LR

Please note – emailed applications will not be processed (evidence can be emailed but the actual application needs to be a paper copy with original signatures).