



**Cheshire College
South & West**

16-19 Bursary Fund 2026/27

These guidance notes are to provide further information to help you submit the correct evidence to support your bursary application, and what support you may be entitled to.

This fund is available to learners aged between 16-18 years old on the 31st of August 2026. Learners aged 19 or over are only eligible to receive a discretionary bursary if they are continuing a study programme they began aged 16-18 or have an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP). There are 3 categories: **Enhanced Bursary**, **Discretionary 1**, and **Discretionary 2**.

Learners whose permanent home address is in Wales and who qualify for the Welsh Student Finance Education Maintenance Award (EMA) can apply for the Free College Meals allowance providing they meet DfE (Department for Education) Government Guidelines. Learners that are approved for support through the Enhanced Bursary can potentially receive further support depending on the individual assessment completed to identify any further financial costs.

BURSARY CATEGORY	CRITERIA	SUPPORT TYPES					
		TRAVEL	EQUIPMENT	EDUCATIONAL VISITS	CHILDCARE	MEALS	ADDITIONAL FUNDING
Enhanced Bursary	Currently in care or are a care leaver - Receive Universal Credit in your own name - Receive ESA and PIP/DLA in your own name	100% funded	100% funded up to £300	100% funded up to £600	Care to Learn Scheme – eligibility rules apply	Up to £5.50/day	Individual assessment completed to identify any further financial costs
Discretionary 1	Eligible for FCM as per Gov Guidance	100% funded	100% funded up to £300	100% funded up to £600	Care to Learn Scheme – eligibility rules apply	Up to £5.50/day	No funding
Discretionary 2	Annual household income below £40,000	100% funded	100% funded up to £300	100% funded up to £600	Care to Learn Scheme – eligibility rules apply	No funding	No funding
Wales	Eligible for EMA Wales	100% funded	No funding	No funding	No funding	Subject to meeting eligibility criteria	No funding

Enhanced Bursary

BURSARY CATEGORY	CRITERIA	TRAVEL	EQUIPMENT	EDUCATIONAL VISITS	CHILDCARE	MEALS	ADDITIONAL FUNDING
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Enhanced Bursary	- Currently in care or are a care leaver - Receive Universal Credit in your own name - Receive ESA and PIP in your own name	100% funded	100% funded up to £300	100% funded up to £600	Care to Learn Scheme – eligibility rules apply	£5.50/day	Individual assessment completed to identify any further financial costs
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Learners eligible for this fund can receive a bursary of up to £1,200 per year if they are participating in a programme of study that lasts 30 weeks or more, a pro rata amount is available to learners on a programme of less than 30 weeks. Consideration on the amount awarded will be taken regarding the number of study hours and the individual financial need of each learner. Learners will not automatically be awarded £1,200, individual assessments will be completed by the learner when completing the application form to assess the level of financial support required. If additional support is required, then the learner should contact the bursary team.

Please note you are not automatically entitled to FCM (free college meals) under this category unless you receive a means-tested benefit, see list below in the Band 1 information.

There are three categories, namely:

- In Care/Care Leaver

If you are in care, care leaver or classed as a looked after child we require a letter confirming these details. Ask your case worker/social worker to provide a letter, this can be confirmed by email but must be clearly from the local authority (on official headed paper)

- Income Support/Universal Credit

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.

- ESA & DLA/PIP

If you are in receipt of UC/ESA and DLA and PIP, a copy of your UC claim from DWP is required. Evidence of receipt of DLA or PIP must also be provided

Bursary – Band 1 – Eligible for FCM

BURSARY CATEGORY	CRITERIA	TRAVEL	EQUIPMENT	EDUCATIONAL VISITS	CHILDCARE	MEALS	ADDITIONAL FUNDING
Discretionary 1	Eligible for FCM as per	100% funded	100% funded up to £300	100% funded up to £600	Care to Learn Scheme –	£5.50/day	No funding

	Gov Guidance				eligibility rules apply		
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This funding is available to learners who are classed as disadvantaged. Free meals in further education defines disadvantage as learners being in receipt of, or having parents/guardians who are in receipt of, one or more of the identified means tested benefits:

- Universal Credit
- 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
- Children who get paid these benefits directly, instead of through a parent or guardian, can also get free school meals

Bursary - Band 2 - Discretionary Award

BURSARY CATEGORY	CRITERIA	TRAVEL	EQUIPMENT	EDUCATIONAL VISITS	CHILDCARE	MEALS	ADDITIONAL FUNDING
Discretionary 2	Annual household income below £40,000	100% funded	100% funded up to £300	100% funded up to £600	Care to Learn Scheme – eligibility rules apply	No funding	No funding

Discretionary support if you are living in a household with an annual income below £40,000.

Examples of evidence required if you are applying for Discretionary 1 or Discretionary 2 bursary

Discretionary 1 Bursary

Universal Credit

Learners from households in receipt of universal credit will be eligible. A full most recent universal credit statement is required as evidence.

Discretionary 2 Bursary

Learners from households not in receipt of universal credit but with a household income below £40,000 will be eligible. Evidence required - recent payslips/P60 which will need to be for the parent(s)/guardian(s) that live in the same household as the learner. They must be for the most recent 3 months, or tax year, and show the employee's name, and address if possible. For those that are self-employed, please provide a self-assessment tax return for 25/26.

Legacy Benefits – i.e. Income related Employment and Support Allowance, guarantee element of pension credit.

Your most recent award letter from the DWP. We are unable to accept any bank statements showing the income of any of these benefits.

EHCP + PIP – 19+ Learners

Your most recent award letter from the DWP confirming your Personal Independence Payment (PIP) entitlement. Evidence of an EHCP can be supplied by the College Learner Services Department. This evidence can be accepted for learners that are aged between 19-23 years old and are not continuing a course that they began when they were 18 years old.

Pension Credits

Your most recent award letter from the DWP confirming your entitlement to pension credit award, as well as the information regarding the guarantee element, if you are eligible for this.

For single parent/guardian households, a Council Tax statement for 26/27 is required as evidence of single status.

If you are still unsure about what evidence to supply, or wish to enquire about another benefit you receive, you can contact the bursary team via email – bursary@ccsw.ac.uk

Support Types Explained

Travel

Under the Free College Transport terms and conditions, all 16 to 18 full-time learners that live more than 1 mile from their campus of study qualify for 1 funded method of transport. This transport must be able to reasonably transport them to and from their home address as registered on the college system. Part-time learners and learners aged 19 and over can apply however, full-time learners aged 16-18 will have priority.

For students of Crewe Campus only, there is a dedicated coach service that delivers learners to campus directly. Where a route is available within 1 mile of the home address, and the route is safe and reasonable, this is the only method of transport the college will fund. For those that cannot access a Crewe Coach service, public bus passes can be provided, or if the only method of transport available is train, this cost can be reimbursed.

Equipment – Uniform, Kit, and Books

Equipment (including core textbooks) will be purchased on the learner's behalf by the College if it is essential to their course. Any equipment (including books) that is bought by the fund for the learner must be returned at the end of the academic year. To order any kit or uniform, please contact the Department Co-ordinator for your course area. To order any books you require, please go to the main desk in the Library.

Educational Visits

Approved educational visits that are considered essential to the completion of the course, can be funded up to a maximum of £600 per year. Anything over this amount will be the responsibility of the learner. Visits to University Open and Applicant Days, as well as University Interviews, can be supported through the refund of the cost of any public transport used to get there.

Childcare

Learners can get up to £180 per child per week through the Government Care to Learn scheme. This can support your childcare costs, including deposit and registration fees, a childcare taster session for up to 5 days, keeping your childcare place over the summer holidays, taking your child to their childcare provider. Applications are made and processed through the PayMyStudent platform for Financial Support.

Free College Meals Support

Students that are eligible for Free College Meals under the DfE Government Guidance will have £5,50 loaded onto their student ID card each day they are scheduled to be in college. To use the funds the learner just needs to scan the barcode on their ID cards at the till. The support can be used at any of the food and drink outlets at college.

If a learner forgets their ID card, they can give staff their student ID number at the tills of the main canteen to use their meal award. Learners will not be able to do this at Costa, or in the College Shop.