

Basingstoke ITEC

Traineeship Financial Support Policy

2015-16

This Policy applies to Trainees aged between 16 and 18 on 31 August 2015 and Trainees aged between 19 and 25 who are subject to a Learning Difficulty Assessment (LDA) or Education Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan).

16 – 19 Bursary Fund

EFA Guidance (May 2015) has been used to update this policy

The 16-19 Bursary Fund helps 16- to 19-year-olds continue in EFA funded education, where they might otherwise struggle for financial reasons. It is made up of two parts – government bursaries of up to £1200 a year for the most vulnerable young people and a discretionary fund (from the Education Funding Agency) for schools, colleges, academies, training providers and local authority learning providers to distribute to other students who face genuine barriers to participation.

1. **A vulnerable student bursary** of up to £1,200 a year (pro rata for shorter or part time courses) for young people in the following defined vulnerable groups:

young people in care or care leavers

young people claiming [Income Support](#) or [Universal Credit](#) in their own right

disabled people getting [Employment and Support Allowance](#) and [Personal Independence Payment](#) in their own right

The first call on the individual vulnerable bursary will be to cover the cost of transport, meals (if not entitled to Free Meals support) and work clothing. Any additional funds available will be provided to the student as agreed on a case by case basis.

2. **Discretionary awards** made by providers to young people in ways that best fit the needs and circumstances of their students. Discretionary bursary awards should be targeted towards those young people not eligible for the vulnerable student award who face the greatest financial barriers to participation; such as the costs of transport, meals, and clothing or equipment.

Providers are free to determine the assessment criteria for eligibility for discretionary bursaries and the nature and frequency of payments for all awards.

Further Education Free Meals

From September 2014, the requirement for maintained school and academy sixth forms to provide free meals to disadvantaged students was extended to all FE funded institutions at an allowance of £2.41 per student per day.

ITEC will apply the Education Funding Agency guidance (March 2015) in meeting this requirement for the 2015-16 academic year.

Accessing Vulnerable Student Bursary

If a young person is eligible for a vulnerable student bursary they should declare this on the application form and ITEC will apply to the student bursary support service (SBSS) on their behalf. ITEC will support the learner with supplying the appropriate evidence for the claim.

Accessing Discretionary Bursary Support

Eligibility for discretionary bursary support will be determined by ITEC assessment of personal circumstances and household income as declared on the application form with evidence supplied. Trainees who meet one or more of the following criteria (and are not eligible for a vulnerable student bursary) will be supported through these funds:

- Trainees who meet the criteria for Free Meals (in the list below)
- Trainees whose family is in receipt of Working Tax Credit
- Trainees whose family is in receipt of Housing Benefit
- Trainees who do not live with family
- Trainees who are parents
- Trainees who have caring responsibilities for a member of their family

If the EFA Bursary Fund is insufficient to meet the needs of all eligible learners the deficit will be covered from the ITEC Financial Support Offer.

Accessing Free Meals Support

Free meals are targeted at disadvantaged students. For the purposes of eligibility for free meals, 'disadvantage' is defined by the 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
- Working Tax Credit run-on (- paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)
- during the initial roll out of the benefit, Universal Credit

Eligibility for free meals support will be determined by ITEC assessment of household income as declared on the application form with evidence supplied.

If insufficient funds are available from the Further Education Free Meals fund to support all eligible learners the Discretionary Bursary fund will be used to cover the deficit.

Learners not eligible for Free Meals funding who are eligible for Discretionary Bursary support will have meals costs covered by the Bursary.

ITEC Financial Support Offer

ITEC is committed to supporting all 16-18 year old Trainees by removing financial barriers to engagement. The ITEC Traineeship does not fit the pattern of a 'standard' one year study programme. It is an intensive programme (typically 12-14 weeks) with a pattern of attendance aligned to workplace hours. As such, the programme is not consistent with Trainees maintaining the casual or part time paid work that is available to other 16-18 year old students. In order to prevent the costs of undertaking a Traineeship being a barrier to engagement and success and to avoid potential discrimination or stigma we will provide the following support to all Trainees:

- A lunchtime meal provided on site during the classroom based phase of training
- Re-imburement of travel costs to and from the ITEC centre and work placement (on receipt of evidence of travel cost)
- An allowance of ~~up to~~ £100 for purchase of appropriate clothing for the work placement phase
- An allowance of £100 to help with moving to monthly salary when employed.
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The cost of this support will be covered from the government Bursary and Free Meals funds for eligible young people only. For all other Trainees the costs will be covered from ITEC funds.

EXCEPTIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS

There may be occasions when personal circumstances change during the programme or Trainees need financial support to remain in training in addition to the offer described above. Exceptional need will be considered on a case by case basis. If there are funds

remaining from the government bursary allocation these funds will be used to support any such need.

Applying for a Bursary, Free Meals or ITEC Financial Support

On enrolment on a Traineeship, learners will be asked to complete a combined application form for Bursary and Free Meals. Where the learner is ineligible for Bursary or Free Meals funds then the application will be treated as an application for ITEC support

Learners will be provided with the application form and the learner guide and encouraged to discuss the application with parents/guardians who will, in most cases, need to supply the evidence. Learners will be informed that until the signed application and evidence are received no payments can be made.

All learners will be asked to complete the form in order to confirm that the offer of support has been made. There is the facility to declare that they do not wish to apply for any financial support.

Payments to Learners

Free meals will be provided on site from local catering facilities. No cash alternative will be provided.

Travel payments and clothing allowance will be paid by BACS transfer into learner bank accounts following submission of receipts.

Any additional allowances (e.g. maintenance payments to vulnerable bursary learners and ITEC work placement incentive payments) will be paid by BACS transfer into learner bank accounts following evidence of attendance and performance.

Appeals

Any learner who feels that they have been unfairly treated should first raise this with their training co-ordinator or the manager of their learning programme. They can appeal a decision i.e. if a bursary or allowance is refused. The final decision on such appeals rests with the Managing Director.

Learner information

ITEC has produced a simple guide to its Bursary and Free Meals system for applicants to use. It explains what a Bursary is, the purpose of the Bursary and how it is applied to learners. It also explains the ITEC Financial Support package. The learner guide makes clear that the payment of any bursary or ITEC support is conditional on good attendance and compliance with ITEC rules and code of conduct.

Equality

Guidance requires ITEC to have a clear policy on how we apply assessment against real need, however the Bursary does not appear as a means tested benefit in the guidance nor is there any guidance on how finances or circumstances would be used to set a threshold to refuse in total or in part the payment of a Bursary. Therefore to comply with equality legislation, maximise opportunity for all learners and provide the fairest use of public money ITEC has implemented this policy.

Full guidance on the Department For Education 16-19 Bursary Fund and Further Education Free Meals policy can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/16-to-19-bursary-fund-guide-for-2015-to-2016> and <https://www.gov.uk/16-to-18-education-free-meals>

