

Further Education Bursary: Frequently Asked Questions

Q) What is the bursary? Who is it for?

The bursary aims to remove financial barriers to studying and ensure no-one is unable to attend college due to financial reasons. Anyone on a Further Education course can apply for a bursary, but apprentices cannot apply. Please note that not everyone who applies will be eligible. You can find full information on this at www.yorkcollege.ac.uk/bursary.

Q) Will I be eligible for the bursary?

If you are studying a Further Education course and your household income is below £35,000 gross pay (before deductions) per year, you should be eligible for bursary funding.

Q) How do I apply for a bursary?

All students must complete an application form in each new academic year. This needs to be submitted on our website: www.yorkcollege.ac.uk/bursary. After you have submitted your application, you will need to email your household income evidence to funding@yorkcollege.ac.uk. Please ensure that the student's name and date of birth is included in the subject line.

Q) I had a bursary last year. Do I need to apply again?

Yes. You must submit a new bursary application for each academic year. You will need to provide up-to-date income/benefits evidence to support your application.

Q) It's asking me to log in. What details should I use?

The student needs to log in using the email address and password they set when they applied for their course. If you have forgotten your password, please click on the "forgotten password" link and follow the instructions. If you are still experiencing difficulties after using this link, please contact funding@yorkcollege.ac.uk for further assistance. All applications must be submitted in the student's name as it is their bursary.

Q) What might I get?

The most common support elements are travel funding, free meal credit, and funding for equipment/uniform. Whether you receive each element will depend on your distance from college, personal circumstances, and the course you are studying. The bursary does not cover general living costs such as rent and household bills.

Q) What income/benefits evidence do I need to provide?

The evidence that you need to provide will depend on who you live with and what income/benefits you or they receive.

We can accept:

<u>Eligibility Criteria</u>	<u>Evidence Required</u>
Income Support	Most recent benefits letter
Employment & Support Allowance	Most recent benefits letter
Universal Credit	<p>Full, most recent Universal Credit statement ensuring we can see the claimants name and the dates at the top of the statement and covering all the way down to 'total payment for this month', including details of entitlements and deductions (if any).</p> <p>and</p> <p>If your statement shows earned income of any kind, we will also require wage slips or the most recent self-assessment tax return</p>
Other income-based benefits	Tax Credit Award Notice covering the current financial year or recent benefit letter.
Household income	Tax Credit Award Notice covering the current financial year, P60 covering the previous financial year, most recent wage slip or self-assessment tax return
Savings limit	Bank statements may be required to show that savings are below £16,000

Enhanced Bursary: In care or care leaver	Letter from the Local Authority or Social Worker
Enhanced Bursary: Universal Credit (financially independent)	<p>Full, most recent Universal Credit statement ensuring we can see the claimants name and the dates at the top of the statement and covering all the way down to 'total payment for this month', including details of entitlements and deductions (if any).</p> <p>and</p> <p>We also require additional evidence to confirm the student's independent status, for example – a tenancy agreement in the student's name, proof of housing benefit or in some circumstances a letter from a Support Worker or Social Worker can be accepted.</p>

If you are still unsure of what evidence to provide, please visit the **Further Education Bursary: A guide to providing evidence of household income/benefits and further education free meals** at www.yorkcollege.ac.uk/bursary

Q) How can I send my evidence?

The quickest way of providing evidence is to send it by email to funding@yorkcollege.ac.uk. Please ensure that you include the student's name and date of birth so that we can match this evidence to their application. We can accept photos, screenshots, or attachments if all pages of the document are provided in a readable format. If you are unable to email your evidence, we can accept physical copies that can be either brought to the Funding Desk or sent by post. Please be aware that the Funding Team work remotely during college holidays but will collect posted correspondence on a weekly basis.

Q) I'm unsure if I would qualify for a bursary or not. What should I do?

In most cases, students are eligible if their household income is below £35,000 (before deductions) per year. If you are unsure, please make an application as it may take us some time to respond by email about individual circumstances. You can give any additional information and details of any exceptional circumstances in the "Additional information" section of the application. This will avoid further delays and the Funding Team will contact you with a decision once your application has been assessed.

Q) Our income is over the threshold of £35,000 per year, but we are still suffering financial hardship. What should I do?

Check our page www.yorkcollege.ac.uk/bursary to see if you fit any of our "exceptional circumstances". If the household income is above £35,000 but a student has exceptional circumstances, we may still be able to provide bursary funding. This discretionary funding is assessed on a case-by-case basis and is not guaranteed. Please submit a bursary application and include as much information as possible about your current circumstances in the 'Additional Information' section.

Q) Will I get travel funding/a bus pass?

If you are eligible for the bursary, we will provide travel funding if you live more than 2.5 miles walking distance from the college by a safe route, or if you have exceptional circumstances. With the exception of college bus passes, all students will receive weekly travel payments into their bank account. Travel is capped at a maximum of £10 per student per day.

Q) Is travel funding backdated?

Travel funding can only be backdated to when the application could be assessed. This is the date at which we had the correct household income/benefit evidence and were able to process the application. Assessments may take 6-8 weeks during busy periods, and it is the student's responsibility to apply in good time and provide the right evidence. We cannot

guarantee that applications received after the start of enrolment will be processed before the start of term.

Q) Will I get free meal credit?

Eligibility for further education free meals is dependent on the household receiving certain means tested benefits. The income threshold for free meal credit is set by the Government and is significantly lower than for other aspects of the bursary. All students who are under 19 will be assessed for further education free meals if evidence of means tested benefits are provided. Most students aged 19 or over are not eligible for free meal credit, regardless of what benefits they receive.

If you received free school meals on or after 1st April 2018, transitional protection is in place during the Universal Credit roll out. You can obtain evidence of your eligibility by contacting either the local authority responsible for education in your area or the previous education provider.

Q) Will I get funding for childcare?

If you are aged 20 or over and have a household income of below £35,000 (before deductions) you should be eligible for childcare funding on your timetabled college days. If your course has a compulsory placement, we can also cover childcare costs on these days. We would need written confirmation from your placement provider confirming the dates, times, and duration of the placement. Childcare during college holidays is not covered, however retainer payments can be considered during termly and half termly breaks. Childcare fees over the summer holidays would not be covered.

If you are under 20, you should apply to [Care 2 Learn](#) for childcare funding.

Q) Will I get help with my equipment/uniform/PPE costs?

If you are bursary eligible, we can cover essential course costs such as uniform, equipment and PPE. You will receive an award email once your eligibility for the bursary has been confirmed which will explain how this is provided.

Q) Will I get help with my living costs?

Unfortunately, no. The bursary does not cover general living costs such as rent and household bills.

Q) Will the bursary cover the cost of course trips?

The bursary will only cover the cost of compulsory course trips. For a trip to be compulsory for bursary purposes, the trip itself must entail activities that if the student does not take part in those activities on that date, they will automatically fail the course. These trips are agreed in advance with the Funding Team.

Q) I've applied for a bursary, but I haven't heard anything back. What should I do?

The Funding Team receive a very high number of applications towards the start of the academic year, and we are unable to confirm a specific time frame of when your application will be assessed. Roughly speaking, applications may take 6-8 weeks to assess during busy periods, but this will decrease as the academic year goes on. The Funding Team process applications as quickly as possible and will contact you by email once your application has been assessed. You should receive a basic confirmation email when you first submit your application to confirm it has been received. We kindly request that you check your emails regularly including your junk/spam folders.

Q) I do not have a bank account. Can I give my parent/carer's bank details for any bursary money to be issued to their account?

Generally, no. We are required to issue any bursary funds to the student directly. We can only pay someone else's bank account in very exceptional circumstances such as a student being unable to legally open their own account. If you do not have a bank account, you will need to open one as all travel, with the exception of college coach passes, will be provided through weekly payments.

The following link contains some helpful advice about opening an account:

<https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/banking/basic-bank-accounts/>

Q) I forgot to input my bank details in the online bursary application/You have emailed me requesting my bank details. How do I get this information to you?

If you are submitting your bank details outside of the online application process, we are required to have a signed form detailing these. We are unable to accept this information by email. If you have a printer, you can request that we send you a copy of the form by emailing funding@yorkcollege.ac.uk. Please complete the paper printout and return it to us by post, in person to the Funding Desk at York College or by taking a picture/scan of the completed form and sending that to us by email. If you do not have a printer, please email us at funding@yorkcollege.ac.uk asking us to post you out a form. Don't forget to include your full name and address in the email.

Q) Can I get funding for university open events?

If you are applying to university for September, the bursary can fund visits to three university open events or £150, whichever comes first. This cap is increased to £250 for students on Performing Arts courses due to additional audition costs. You would also be eligible to claim for your UCAS application fee.