



South Gloucestershire and Stroud College

Discretionary Learner Support Funds (DLSF) and 24+ Loans Bursary Scheme Policy & Procedure 2013-2015

If you would like this document in an alternate format
Please contact the Human Resources Department

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Approved by:	Executive Team
Date	14 th July 2014

Impact Assessment



Have you consulted on this policy? Details: What evidence has been used for this assessment?	No Skills Funding Agency – Guidelines 19+ Skills Funding Agency – Guidelines 24+ loans Government Guidelines		
Could a particular group be affected (negatively or positively)?	Positive Impact Indicate Y where appropriate	Negative Impact Indicate Y where appropriate	Evidence
Characteristics protected by the Equality Act 2010			
Age	N/A	N/A	
Disability	N/A	N/A	
Gender Reassignment (inc. Transgender)	N/A	N/A	
Race (inc. Gypsy & Traveller)	N/A	N/A	
Religion and Belief	N/A	N/A	
Sex	N/A	N/A	
Sexual Orientation	N/A	N/A	
Marriage & Civil Partnership	N/A	N/A	
Pregnancy & Maternity	N/A	N/A	
Characteristics designated by SGS as requiring due regard			
Carers and Care Givers	N/A	N/A	
Persons in Care and Care Leavers	N/A	N/A	
If any negative impacts are identified, are there any related policies, services, strategies, procedures or functions that need to be assessed alongside this screening? No			
If yes, please detail:			
Should this policy, service, strategy, procedure or function proceed to a full Impact Assessment? No			
<i>We are satisfied that an initial screening has been carried out on this policy/procedure and a full Impact Assessment is not required.</i>			
<i>We understand that the Impact Assessment is required by the College and we take responsibility for the completion and quality of this assessment.</i>			
Completed by: Rosheen Hucker		Position: Head of Learner Services	Date: 24-Jan-14
Checked by: Emma Jarman		Position: Vice Principal Learner Services & Quality	Date: 17-Jul-14

Discretionary Learner Support Funds (DLSF) and 24+ Loans Bursary Scheme Policy & Procedure 2013-2015

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The aim of this policy is to provide financial support to vulnerable and low-income learners.

2. Statement

- 2.1. All learners must be aged over 19 at 31st August of the academic year of application, and be eligible for funding for Education Funding Authority (EFA) or Skills Funding Agency (SFA) funded FE provision.
- 2.2. Application forms and leaflets providing basic information, are available at all times from Learner Services and Enrolments. Every learner will be given details of financial support during the admissions, enrolment and induction processes.
- 2.3. All funds are limited. Support will be means-tested to target those most in need.

3. Responsibilities

- 3.1. All Learner Services and Enrolments staff are required to provide details of financial support during the admissions, enrolment and induction processes.

4. Related Policies, Procedures, Regulations and Guidance

- 4.1. SGS Financial Regulations
- 4.2. Fee Policy and Charges
- 4.3. Additional Learning Support Policy
- 4.4. Compliments, Suggestions and Complaints Policy and Procedure
- 4.5. Skills Funding Agency (SFA) Funding Rules

5. Procedure

5.1. Overview of Financial Support Arrangements

The table below shows the available funds and the criteria of the eligible learner:

Criteria of Learner	Available Funds
19+ Learners Not including those eligible for 24+ Advanced Learning Loans	Discretionary Learner Support Funds – financial help with Fees, Childcare, Travel and Trips
24+ Advanced Learning Loans	Discretionary Learning Support Bursary Additional Learning Support Bursary

5.2. Discretionary Learner Support Funds

We will provide funding towards:

5.2.1. Fees

SGS College will pay up to 50% of tuition fees for learners in receipt of Benefits or with a household income of less than £22,000 per annum. The only exception to this eligibility is for Learners eligible for 24+ Loans.

5.2.2. Equipment/Kits

To the amount agreed with the welfare team for learners in receipt of benefits or with a household income of less than £22,000 per annum.

5.2.3. Childcare

Learners eligible for childcare funding will be awarded a maximum of £160 per week per child (same maximum award as Care to Learn scheme). Learners with three or more children, will be reviewed by the Head of Learner Services and will be made awards where demand for the limited budget allows.

5.2.4. Transport

Learners will be paid directly by Banker's Automated Clearing Services (BACS). If the learner does not have a bank account other forms of payment will be discussed.

5.2.5. Hardship

We can provide emergency help following a hardship interview.

5.2.6. Trips

Support for course trips will be provided at a per head rate for learners in receipt of benefits or with a household income of less than £22,000 per annum. These costs will be confirmed by the curriculum area where the trip is shown to have 'Added Value' to the main learning programme or where it supports a positive destination (i.e. University visits)

There are certain groups of learners who are SFA priorities because they are at particular risk from not being able to engage in education. We will treat all these on an individual basis and provide extra financial help if needed.

Remittance is a payment made directly between one bank to another bank

5.3. Learners aged 19+

- Those in care or have recently left it
- Those on probation
- Adults undertaking a first level 2 qualification
- Learners aged 19-24 undertaking a first level 3 qualification
- Learners on 'Skills for Life' programmes
- Learners with severe difficulties or disabilities
- Those recently made redundant
- Those supported through the '6 month unemployed training' package

5.3.1. In these cases, some evidence will be required for the College's audit trail. It is expected that learners will only go down this route for support if all others have been exhausted.

5.3.2. If a learner requires funding for an additional course then the learner can amend the original application and re-submit for funding.

5.3.3. Any information provided is treated confidentially and each application is assessed in line with this policy.

5.3.4. Learner Services staff can support anyone who has difficulty in understanding or completing the forms.

5.4. Eligibility for 19+ Financial Support

5.4.1. To be eligible for a financial support for 19+, the learner must be:

- aged 19 or over on 31st August in the year in which the programme of study starts,
- on a programme of study funded by the SFA or funded/co-financed by the European Social Fund (ESF), or
- not eligible for the 24+ Advanced Learning Loans, i.e. studying a level 2, year programme and be over 24 on 31st August on the year in which the programme of study starts.

5.4.2. All financial support will be dependent upon good attendance (minimum of 85%) and behaviour

5.4.3. Payments to support with fees will be made within four working weeks of the learner's enrolment.

5.5. Financial Support for 24+ Advanced Learning Loans

5.5.1. SGS College will offer two bursary schemes to support learners eligible for the 24+ Advanced Learning Loans.

5.5.2. These will be the Discretionary Learning Support Bursary and Additional Learning Support Bursary.

5.5.3. These will be made available for learners in receipt of benefits or with income details as stated in the Discretionary Learning Support Bursary

5.5.4. The Discretionary Learning Support Bursary will offer financial support or in-kind support to assist learners with transport, equipment and study costs

5.5.5. The rate will be based on the average costs for supporting this group of learners through the Learner Support Scheme, but learners will not be required to demonstrate that the funds have been used for this exclusive use

5.5.6. Learners who require childcare support will be paid a rate of £160 per child per week.

5.5.7. Learners with three or more children will be reviewed by the Head of Learner Services and will be made awards where demand for the limited budget allows.

5.6. Additional Learning Support Bursary

5.6.1. This Bursary is for the payment of staffing and resources to support any additional learning support.

5.6.2. Charges for additional learning support will be made on a needs assessed basis.

5.6.3. This assessment will be made by the Head of Learning Support and Head of Learner Services based on declaration and independent evidence, such as a 'Statement of Need' and any other assessment tools the College feels fit for purpose.

5.6.4. The rate of charges for Additional Learning Support, will be set by those agreed for use in the College's main Additional Learning Support claim which will be recorded on the Individual Learning Record (ILR).

5.6.5. These charges will be off-set by the use of the 'Additional Learning Type Support Bursary' and no payments will be made directly to the learner.

5.7. Eligibility for 24+ Advanced Learning Loans Bursary Schemes

5.7.1. To be eligible for an South Gloucestershire and Stroud College Discretionary Learning Support Bursary and Additional Learning Type Support Bursary, the learner must be:

- aged 24+ on 31st August on the year in which they start the programme of study,
- studying a programme at Level 3 or above (not including Higher Education Funding Council of England (HEFCE) funded provision),
- eligible and have taken out a 24+ Advanced Learning Loan,
- learners who undertake another learning aim which was not covered by the 24+ loan – these learners will be supported from other funds at the discretion of the College, i.e. if a Learner on 24+ Loan is studying a level 3

programme, but also undertakes another learning aim at level 2, the College will retain the right to support the learner's financial support. This includes the costs of additional learning support from other College budgets the learner is eligible for.

5.8. Changes of Circumstances

5.8.1. Learners will be required to disclose any change of circumstances during the year, which may affect their eligibility for assistance.

5.8.2. If a learner in receipt of assistance leaves before the completion of the course, they may be required to repay all or part of their award, or return any equipment purchased with their award.

5.9. Notification of Award

5.9.1. Notification of Awards, provided the application is completed in full for the Bursary, will normally be made in writing 4 weeks from receipt of application forms.

5.10. Appeals Procedure

5.10.1. If a learner wishes to appeal against a decision, they should note the following:

- Unsuccessful applicants may appeal in writing to the Bursary Panel within 14 working days of receipt of their notification, setting out their reasons for appeal
- The panel will review the application and inform the learner in writing within 14 working days of the Panel date of the outcome of the appeal
- If the learner is appealing against a decision made by the Panel, they need to appeal, in writing, to the Vice Principal, Learner Services and Quality at South Gloucestershire and Stroud College who will reply within 14 working days of receiving the letter.
- The Vice Principal Learner Services and Quality decision is final.

5.11. Complaints

5.11.1. The College Compliments and Complaints Policy & Procedure can be followed if the learner is not satisfied with their treatment under this policy and procedure.