LIPA SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

2026/27 LIPA Sixth Form Bursary Policy

Aim

The **16-19 Bursary Fund** is designed to help support those students in college who face the greatest financial barriers to participating in their studies at college. Bursary is money that can be used to pay for and reimburse for essential costs associated with college, such as:

- travel to attend college
- meals in the college canteen or when on trips and visits
- clothing, books and other equipment students need for their course
- essential college trips
- UCAS fees

College will always aim to pay for items in kind, where possible, (e.g., travel passes, college lunches, laptops etc.) or to reimburse students for costs they have already incurred, rather than to pay amounts of money into students' accounts.

The DfE specifies that **16-19 Bursary Fund** cannot be allocated to support with accommodation or living costs.

This booklet aims to provide clear and transparent information about how students qualify for bursary, what they can expect to receive and how they can apply.

When to apply

If students/families think they qualify for bursary, college encourages applications to be submitted as soon as possible after enrolment. Applications are accepted from students in years 12 or year 13 who meet the qualifying criteria described on page three of this document.

Applications for bursary in the academic year 2026/27 can be made and will be assessed from Thursday 20th August 2026 onwards.

New bursary applications can be made at any point during the 2026/27 year if household income changes.

Please note that if a student received bursary in year 12 AND they can confirm in writing that the family financial circumstances have not changed, students will continue to be able to access bursary going into year 13.

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Do I qualify for bursary?

1. **Discretionary bursary**

Discretionary bursary is awarded based on the following qualifying criteria:

- ✓ Household income needs to be less than £35,000 gross (£28,720)
- ✓ Students whose family income is up to £38,000 gross may also apply. However, the amount of bursary awarded to students in this bracket may be smaller, with a focus most likely on essential college travel, depending on individual need and how much money remains in the bursary pot throughout the year.

2. **Accessibility bursary**

Students in the following groups may qualify for bursary up to the value of £1200:

- are in in local authority care (also known as 'looked after') providing that educational costs are not covered in full by local authority.

or

- are a care leaver* (see below for more detail)

or

- receive Income Support or Universal Credit **in their own name 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**

or

- **receive either:**

Disability Living Allowance (DLA) in their own right	OR	Personal Independence Payment (PIP) in their own right
AND		
Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) in their own name	OR	Universal Credit in their own name

*A 'care leaver' is defined as:

- a young person aged 16 and 17 who was previously looked after for a period of 13 weeks consecutively (or periods amounting to 13 weeks), which began after the age of 14 and ended after the age of 16; or a young person aged 18 or above who was looked after prior to becoming 18 for a period of 13 weeks consecutively (or periods amounting to 13 weeks), which began after the age of 14 and ended after the age of 18)

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3. Free School Meal

Free meals are provided for students who meet the following qualifying criteria.:

a. Household income below £7,400
b. and/or in receipt of the following benefits:

- Universal Credit
- 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 guaranteed 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 His Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC))
- Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for 4 weeks after someone stops qualifying for Working Tax Credit

If a student qualifies for free school meals, they will be able to claim a meal from the college canteen on each day they are in attendance, as well as during rehearsal and performance weeks.

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When to apply for bursary

Students will be able to apply to receive bursary for the 2026/27 academic year from start of year 12.

How to apply

1. Students and families who think they qualify for the discretionary bursary should log into the college bursary website below. Parents can support with the application, however, the application needs to be made in the name of the student themselves.

   https://lsfcbursary.applicaa.com/bursary

2. Students will be asked to create their own log-in details for the college bursary website.

3. Students will need to provide relevant household financial evidence so that college can fully assess eligibility.

What happens next if I qualify for bursary?

1. Once students have submitted their bursary applications, these will be assessed by the Trust Finance team and an award decision will be received via email.

2. After being assessed as meeting the qualifying criteria, all qualifying students/parents will receive notification of this by email.

3. Students/parents will be instructed in this email to log in again to their bursary accounts to find out their allocation and to make requests for bursary support.

4. Support will be allocated as soon as possible after the bursary application has been assessed and it has been confirmed a student has been awarded bursary.

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How do I request bursary support once I have been assessed as qualifying?

Once a student has been notified that they qualify for bursary, the student can then log into their bursary account to make requests for specific items they need support with through the bursary.

Each student will make request for different items, depending on their individual needs and circumstances.

Students may apply for bursary support with any of the following essential college costs:

- **travel to attend college**
  - *for students who live in the Merseyside region and who require support with travel to college:*
    - these students can request to be allocated a Merseyside bus, train or bus and train travel pass, dependent on what they need.
  - *for students who live outside the Merseyside region:*
    - students will be asked to submit weekly receipts of the cost of their journeys on the online bursary system. College will use the amounts on submitted receipts to contribute to these travel costs. Students/families need to be aware college may not be able to reimburse in full, in particular where students live at very significant distances from college and therefore have very high travel costs.
  - *for students aged 18 or above who travel by train, students can request to be reimbursed for the cost of an 18-25 railcard to reduce train journey costs across the academic year.*
- **daily meals from the college canteen to the value of £6.50 per day** (please note, students who do not qualify for Free School Meals can also request canteen meals from bursary funding if they feel they have a need for this)
- **specific clothing or equipment items from the student's enrolled course equipment list**
  - students can buy items from the equipment list and submit receipts to request reimbursement through the bursary
- **specific books or stationery items**
  - students can buy items from the equipment list and submit receipts to request to be reimbursed*
- **a laptop for students to loan from college for the year** if students do not have access to a computer at home to complete their coursework.
  - students can request to be allocated a college laptop for the academic year (this will need to be returned if/when the student leaves college)

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How will I receive my bursary?

College will always aim, where possible, to pay for items in-kind – e.g., allocate travel tickets, allocate meals, allocate laptops, pay/reimburse for essential trips.

For any items which cannot be provided in-kind by college, students and families will mainly be expected to pay for required bursary items and to then submit receipts to their online bursary account to request reimbursement into their bank account.

College will always aim to make full reimbursements, but as explained above, requests for support with very significant travel fees, for example, or for very large trip costs will need to be considered on a case-by-case basis dependent on the amount of bursary money in the pot.

If a student cannot afford to pay up-front for an item with a view to claiming reimbursement, students are advised to contact a member of the bursary team. Students are able to use the online system to request college buy an item on behalf of them instead, if needed. Students would need to provide clear information on items required i.e. relating to sizing etc.

Students will be able to log in at any point during the year to make requests for bursary support for items from the list above, dependent on their individual needs.

Students' requests are processed on a monthly basis and reimbursements are paid directly into students' bank accounts by the end of the second week of every month.

How much bursary will I receive?

Please note, the exact amount of discretionary financial support provided to each student will vary dependent on the following factors:

- the total number of bursary applications received each year
- the individual circumstances and needs of each student who qualifies
- the number of requests for different types of support

College is allocated a limited amount of bursary money each year and is obliged to remain within this limited budget. Therefore, college may unfortunately not be able to provide support for all items requested by each student.

Who can I contact if I have any questions or queries?

Any general questions or queries about college bursary can be directed to any of the following members of staff who can support with bursary enquiries:

Telephone number: 0151 330 3232

The following internal members of staff may also be able to answer questions and queries:

- Amy Deane, Assistant Principal - Inclusion: a.deane@lipasixthformcollege.org
- Maria Dougan from the Administration team: m.dougan@lipasixthformcollege.org

Any queries specific to financial evidence and assessment may need to be taken onwards to the Trust Finance Team, so please allow up to 5 working days for a response to a query of this nature.

Bursary appeals

Students may appeal an award decision made through the Bursary Policy, for example if they believe the policy has not been followed correctly, that following the policy has manifested an injustice. For the purpose of clarity, an appeal is not a complaint.

If a student, parent/guardian wished to make a complaint about a member of staff the Staff Disciplinary Procedure would be used to address the complaint.

If the complaint regarded a college function or operation the College's Complaint's Policy would be used. The College is the awarding authority and therefore the academy is the final authority for the appeal, there is no right to complain to the ESFA as the funding body.

An appeal would normally be made by the student who is the person holding the legal relationship with the college, and we would encourage those with parenting responsibilities to support the student in making the appeal.

The appeal should be made in writing to the college principal (for example an email) and explain the reason for the appeal. An appeal can be made on the basis that the college policy has not been followed correctly or that additional information not previously shared could have a material impact on the original decision made.

The following procedure is used to gather information from all relevant parties, consider the appeal, reach a decision, and communicate the outcome of this.

Action	Method	Timescale
Appeal in writing	Letter or email to the Assistant Principal – Inclusion	Within one month of the original decision
The Appeal is acknowledged, and next steps explained	Standard email 1	5 working days from receipt
A lead manager is appointed	Email / phone call / face to face meeting	5 working days from receipt
Lead manager investigates the appeal gathering evidence from all relevant parties.	GDPR and safeguarding guidelines and policies to be carefully considered when gathering evidence. A particular focus is to protect and enhance the student voice when gathering evidence.	5 working days from receipt or initial meeting with the student as appropriate.
Lead manager carefully considers and weighs the evidence gathered before proposing a written outcome to the college principal.	The test is whether another reasonable manager would have reached the same decision, not whether the original decision is right or wrong. Three outcomes are available, to • uphold, • partially uphold, and to • reject the appeal.	10 working days from receipt
The principal communicates the outcome of the appeal to the appellant.	Standard letter 2 from the administration team Principal's PA	10 working days from receipt

This policy has been created in order to comply with the requirements laid out in the following government guidance:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/16-to-19-bursary-fund-guidance/16-to-19-bursary-fund-guide-2026-to-2027