



Lady Margaret School

16 – 19 Bursary Policy

2023/2024

Dear Applicants to the Sixth Form and Students,

If you are thinking of applying to Lady Margaret School Sixth Form or currently a student of our Sixth Form, this policy will advise you whether you are eligible for a Sixth Form Bursary and how to apply. It also sets out how Lady Margaret School seeks to use the Bursary Fund.

We encourage all applicants to the Sixth Form and existing students to apply to the bursary fund if they believe that they meet the criteria. Lady Margaret School is committed to removing all barriers to learning so that all of its students can each achieve to the best of their abilities.

If you have any questions about the Sixth Form Bursary please contact the school's Sixth Form Administrator who will be more than happy to help you.

1. Introduction

The Lady Margaret School 16-19 Bursary Fund provides financial support to help students overcome the specific financial barriers to participation they face, so that they can remain in education.

The bursary fund is intended to help students with the essential costs of participating in their study programme, so to help with the cost of essential books or equipment or with the cost of travelling to school, for example. The bursary fund is not intended to support costs that are not related to education or services which are already provided by the school such as counselling or extra tuition.

There are two types of 16 to 19 bursaries:

- Vulnerable Bursary
- Discretionary Bursary

2. Who is eligible for a bursary?

Eligibility will be assessed every academic year and applications will be invited in September or as and when a student's circumstances change. Students previously in receipt of a bursary will be expected to reapply the following September.

To be eligible to receive a 16 to 19 Bursary in the 2023/2024 academic year the student must meet the following criteria:

Age

- Be aged 16 or over and under 19 on 31st August 2023; or
- Be aged 19 or over at 31st August 2023 and have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP); or
- Be aged 19 or over at 31st August 2023 and continuing a study programme they began aged 16 to 18.

The last two groups are only eligible for discretionary bursary.

Residency

The student must meet the residency criteria in the ESFA 2023/2024 funding regulations. See detailed guide: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/funding-rates-and-formula/funding-guidance-for-young-people-2022-to-2023-rates-and-formula>.

If the student is an accompanied asylum-seeking child, providing that they have not had their application for asylum refused, the student may receive in-kind student support such as books or equipment. Cash will not be paid directly under any circumstance, unless the student is an unaccompanied asylum-seeking child.

If the student is an unaccompanied asylum-seeking child they will be treated as a looked after child and be eligible for a bursary for vulnerable groups ('in care' group), where it is identified that they have a financial need.

In addition, providing the above age and residency criteria are met, the student must also be eligible to receive either a vulnerable or discretionary bursary:

3. Vulnerable and Discretionary Bursaries

Vulnerable Bursary

To qualify for a Vulnerable Bursary, students need to meet one of the following criteria:

- To be in care
- To be a care leaver (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)
- To be receiving Income Support or Universal Credit because they are financially supporting themselves and someone who is dependent on them and living with them, such as a child or partner
- To be receiving Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments in their own right as well as Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit in their own right.

The bursary for vulnerable groups can pay up to £1,200 per year to a student participating on a study programme that lasts for 30 weeks or more. Students on study programmes of less than 30 weeks will be paid a pro-rata amount, as appropriate based on an assessment of their needs.

Students will only receive the amount they actually need to fully participate in their education and the school will not automatically award students the full £1,200 if they do not need the full amount.

The school will make an assessment for each individual student as to whether they have the financial need for a vulnerable bursary.

The school may decide that although a student may be eligible for a bursary because they are in one or more of the defined vulnerable groups, they do not have any actual financial need. The school may refuse a student's application on this basis.

Equally the school may determine that a vulnerable student requires a payment greater than £1,200 if the extra help is required so that student may remain in education. Any payments over £1,200 will be met from the discretionary bursary fund or the school's own funds.

Discretionary Bursary

To qualify for a Discretionary Bursary, students need to meet one of the following criteria:

- To be in receipt of Free School Meals, or

If the student's parents or carers are in receipt of any of the following:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit - if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

Or;

- Total household annual income is less than £19,380 net.

Low Income Households are defined as having an income which is 60% or under the UK median household disposable income as calculated by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). In the financial year ending (FYE) 2022 the ONS calculation was £32,300. 60% of £32,300 is £19,380 net.

Or;

- A student has been affected by sudden and exceptional changes to their financial circumstances which impacts on their ability to participate in education.

For students who live in Hammersmith and Fulham, Kensington and Chelsea, Wandsworth, Westminster, Brent and Merton, applications can be made through Hammersmith and Fulham. Copies of the relevant forms are available on the Hammersmith and Fulham website or from the school.

For students who live elsewhere applications should be made via your own local authority. Details of your local authority can be found on www.direct.gov.uk/LDGRedirect

The bursary fund which is allocated to the school each year by the Government is a fixed amount and therefore the school can only allocate bursaries within the total sum available. The amounts paid will therefore be subject to the number of students in the categories above and the availability of the funds.

Furthermore, even if a student falls into one of the categories above there is still a possibility of no award or a limited award being made. A bursary is not guaranteed and will be awarded on an individual basis.

The school will make an assessment for each individual student to determine whether they have the financial need for a discretionary bursary.

4. Use of bursary

The school will only award a bursary payment on condition that the student in receipt of the funds agrees to use the payment towards:

- Travel to and from school
- Books
- Educational materials
- Breakfast, break and lunch time food costs (when not in receipt of Free School Meals)
- IT equipment to assist with studies
- School trips and extra-curricular activity related to student's study programme
- Trips to university open days or interviews
- Other essential costs to participate in their study programme

The school will not seek to award bursary funding for:

- Learning support
- Extra-curricular activities that are not related to the student's study programme
- Supporting general household incomes

The school will also not allocate the bursary funding in such a way that may give it a competitive edge over other institutions or as a block allocation for all of the school's students.

5. Conditions for receiving a bursary

The school will only pay the bursary if the student agrees to the following conditions:

- To spend their bursary payment on the purpose for which it is intended as set out in 4 above.
- To evidence bursary expenditure in full and with receipts, as and when required.
- To fully comply with the Sixth Form Home-School Partnership Agreement.
- To have a UK bank account in the student's name.

The Bursary payment will be reduced or even removed if any of the above conditions are not met.

6. Payment of the bursary

All bursaries will be payable from 1st September to 31st August of each academic year providing the student remains on roll for the entire period and meets the eligibility criteria.

Vulnerable bursaries will be calculated and paid to the student once the funds have been confirmed by the Student Bursary Support Service.

Discretionary bursaries will be calculated and paid to the student once all applications are completed in full and received by the prescribed deadline. The school aims to make the first payment of discretionary bursaries in November of each academic year, backdated to September.

If an application is received after the deadline it will be at the school's discretion whether to honour the application.

If there is a change in circumstances within the year which means a student becomes eligible for a bursary, any bursary payment that may be awarded will be pro-rated from the date that the application is received.

The school will pay the bursary directly to the student and will not make payment in kind. After much consideration the school believes that given the low numbers of students that historically receive a bursary, payment directly to the student avoids stigmatisation and aligns better with the wider values of the school and Sixth Form. A condition of the bursary is that students must evidence expenditure in full and with receipts, as and when required. Furthermore, that the bursary will be spent on the purpose for which it is intended as set out in 4 above.

Payment will be made on the same day of each month (nominated by the Bursar) direct to the student's bank account by BACS payment only.

7. Application Process

All students joining or continuing in the Sixth Form at the start of September will be given information about the bursary. All documentation and the application form can be found on the school website and are also available from the Sixth Form Administrator and the Sixth Form Google Classroom.

Eligibility will be assessed every academic year and applications will be invited in September or as and when a student's circumstances change. Students previously in receipt of a bursary will be expected to reapply the following September and there is no guarantee of funds from year to year.

At the end of the application form, students and their parent or carer must sign a declaration.

Parents and carers should be aware that the School is under a duty to protect the public funds it administers and to this end may use the information provided on the application form within this Authority for the prevention and detection of fraud. It may also share this information with other bodies administering public funds solely for these purposes. If a person knowingly provides misleading or false information they may be liable to prosecution.

The school expects to be notified in writing of any changes to the information provided, which may affect the eligibility of the bursary. If the student leaves the Sixth Form or fails to abide by the Sixth Form Home-School Partnership Agreement, the student must repay the bursary award in full to the school.

All applications and supporting documents will be checked and they will then be stored securely and will only be used for the purpose of assessing their eligibility for the Bursary Fund. The documentation will be retained in accordance with the school's Data Retention Policy.

8. Right to Appeal

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your application, you have the right to appeal against the decision. You should follow the school's normal complaints procedure.

9. Further Information

Further information on the 16-19 Bursary Fund can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/16-to-19-bursary-fund-guide-2022-to-2023-academic-year/16-to-19-bursary-fund-guide-2022-to-2023-academic-year>