

UTC Leeds Bursary

Policy

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Contents

1 Purpose of the Bursary	4
2. 16–19 Bursary Structure	4
3. Vulnerable Groups Bursary.....	4
4. Discretionary Bursary	4
5. Discretionary Bursary Priority Bands	5
8. Use of Bursary Funds	6
9. Application Process.....	7
10. Conditions of Payment.....	7
11. Data Storage and Retention	7
12. Fraud, Overpayments and Recovery	8
13. Appeals Process	8
14. Policy Review	8
Student Declaration	9

1 Purpose of the Bursary

The 16–19 Bursary Fund exists to provide financial support to students who face barriers to participation in post-16 education, enabling them to remain in learning.

The bursary is intended to support participation and should not be viewed as an incentive to attract learners. Awards are based on individual need and available funding.

Due to limited funding, priority will be given to students with the greatest financial need.

2. 16–19 Bursary Structure

UTC Leeds will administer the 16-19 Bursary Fund in accordance with Department for Education (DfE) guidance and funding conditions. The bursary fund is intended to remove financial barriers which might otherwise prevent a student from participating in education. Awards will be based upon individual need, actual participation costs, and the funding available to the academy. Funding is not guaranteed and all awards remain subject to eligibility, assessment, and available funding.

The academy will ensure bursary funding is:

- Distributed fairly, consistently, and transparently.
- Based on individual financial need.
- Linked directly to participation in education.
- Supported by appropriate evidence.
- Used efficiently to maximise support for eligible students.

There are two categories of bursary support available.

3. Vulnerable Groups Bursary

Students may qualify for a Vulnerable Groups Bursary if they are:

- In care.
- A care leaver
- Receiving income support or universal credit in place of income support in their own right.
- Receiving employment and support allowance or universal credit in their own right together with Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment.

Students meeting the vulnerable group criteria are not automatically entitled to receive £1,200. UTC Leeds will assess each student's actual participation costs and financial need before determining the level of support required. Support will be based on evidenced participation costs and individual circumstances. Eligible vulnerable group students will normally receive priority consideration over discretionary bursary applicants.

4. Discretionary Bursary

The Discretionary Bursary is available to students who require financial assistance to participate fully in education.

- When assessing applications, UTC Leeds will consider:
- Household income.

- Number of dependent children within the household.
- Travel and transport costs.
- Course-related expenses.
- Individual student circumstances.
- Evidence of financial hardship.
- Actual participation costs.

Priority will be given to students facing the greatest financial barriers to participation.

5. Discretionary Bursary Priority Bands

As bursary funding is limited, UTC Leeds will prioritise applications according to financial need and evidenced participation costs. The academy reserves the right to depart from these indicative bands where exceptional circumstances apply.

Priority Band	Gross Household income	Priority level	Typical support available
A	Up to £20,000	Highest	Full assessment of essential travel, equipment, PPE, curriculum visits, industry placement costs, and other approved participation costs.
B	£20,001 to £30,000	High	Significant contribution towards approved participation costs based on assessed need.
C	£30,001 to £40,000	Moderate	Partial contribution towards approved participation costs where financial hardship is demonstrated.
D	Above £40,000	Exceptional circumstances	Considered on a case-by-case basis where significant hardship or exceptional circumstances are evidenced.

6. Determination of Awards

Award values will not be based solely on household income. The academy will also consider:

- Actual participation costs.
- Distance travelled to UTC Leeds.
- Number of dependent children within the household.
- Availability of alternative financial support.
- Exceptional personal, medical, or family circumstances.
- The overall bursary budget available.

The academy does not operate fixed annual bursary awards. All support will be determined following an assessment of individual need and evidenced participation costs. Awards will reflect actual participation costs rather than a predetermined amount.

Household income may be evidenced through:

- Universal Credit.
- Income Support.

- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance.
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance.
- Child Tax Credit where annual gross household income does not exceed the relevant DfE threshold.
- Support provided under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit.
- Working Tax Credit run-on payments.

The academy reserves the right to request additional evidence where necessary to determine eligibility.

7. Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for support, students must satisfy the requirements of the DfE 16-19 Bursary Fund guidance. Normally students must be:

- Aged 16 to 18 on 31 August preceding the academic year in question; or
- Aged 19 or over and continuing on a programme of study commenced aged 16 to 18;
or
- Aged 19 to 25 and subject to an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) where permitted under current funding guidance.

Applicants must be enrolled on an eligible programme of study at UTC Leeds.

Meeting the eligibility criteria does not automatically result in an award. All applications will be assessed against financial circumstances, available funding, and evidenced participation costs.

The academy reserves the right to consider exceptional circumstances where a student is experiencing significant hardship.

8. Use of Bursary Funds

Bursary funding will only be used for costs directly associated with participation in education.

Support may include:

- Travel to and from UTC Leeds
- Books, equipment, and stationery
- Specialist clothing or personal protective equipment
- Curriculum visits and educational trips
- Industry placements
- University interviews and open days
- Other essential course-related costs.

The academy will seek to provide support in kind wherever possible. This may include direct purchase of items, travel passes, equipment or payment to suppliers. Cash payments will only be made where the academy determines there is no more appropriate method of support.

All awards must be supported by evidence and be linked to genuine participation needs. The academy may request receipts, invoices, or other evidence before or after support is provided in order to verify expenditure.

9. Application Process

Applications must be completed using the academy's approved application process and submitted together with all supporting evidence. Applicants may be required to provide:

- Evidence of address.
- Evidence of household income.
- Benefit award notices.
- Universal credit statements.
- Tax credit documentation.
- P60 documentation.
- Self-employment income evidence.
- Any other evidence required by the academy.

Applications should normally be submitted during the first term of the academic year. The academy reserves the right to request additional information and to verify any information provided. Applications containing false, misleading, or incomplete information may be rejected, and any awards may be withdrawn.

10. Conditions of Payment

Students are expected to:

- Attend regularly, maintaining at least 95% attendance.
- Engage positively with their programme of study.
- Comply with academy expectations for conduct and behaviour.
- Use bursary support for its intended purpose.

11. Data Storage and Retention

The academy will process personal information in accordance with data protection legislation and RMAT policies. Information collected during the bursary process will be:

- Used solely for administering bursary funding.
- Stored securely.
- Accessible only to authorised staff.
- Retained in accordance with RMAT's records management policy and funding requirements.
- Destroyed securely when no longer required.

The academy may share information with the DfE, auditors or other authorised bodies where required for funding assurance, fraud prevention, or legal compliance purposes.

12. Fraud, Overpayments and Recovery

UTC Leeds reserves the right to investigate any application where information appears inaccurate, misleading, or fraudulent. Where an overpayment has occurred, the academy may seek repayment or recover funds through future payments.

Fundings may be withdrawn where:

- False information has been provided.
- Eligibility requirements are no longer met.
- Bursary support is used for purposes unrelated to participation in education.
- Requested evidence is not provided.

13. Appeals Process

Students have the right to appeal decisions relating to eligibility, award values, payment arrangements, or withdrawal of support.

Stage 1: An appeal must be submitted in writing within five school days of the decision being communicated. The appeal will be reviewed by the Principal, and a written outcome will be provided.

Stage 2: Where the student remains dissatisfied, a final appeal may be submitted within five school days of the Stage one outcome. The appeal will be considered by one of RMAT's Chief Executive, Chief Financial Officer, Chief Operating Officer, Executive Director of School Improvement or a Trustee who has not previously been involved in the original decision. The stage 2 decision is final.

14. Policy Review

UTC Leeds will publish its bursary arrangements annually on its website. The policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner where changes to legislation, funding guidance or academy arrangements require amendment.

The review will consider:

- Changes to DfE guidance
- Audit recommendations
- Funding requirements
- Operational effectiveness
- Student need and participation trends.

Student Declaration

- I declare that the information on this form is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I have made this claim for a Bursary payment, fully aware that any false statements can lead to withdrawal/refusal of any financial support and may lead to me being prosecuted.
- I understand that if I refuse to provide information which may be relevant to my claim, the application will not be accepted.
- I understand that monies I receive under the Bursary Scheme will be paid on condition of standards of attendance and behaviour.
- When changes to my household financial circumstances occur (which may result in changes to my claim), I will notify the school immediately.
- I understand that monies I receive under the Bursary Scheme have been awarded to provide me with financial support to allow me to continue learning, and if I leave all financial support will stop.
- I understand that I do not have an automatic entitlement to Bursary payments, and all payments are based on the information I have provided.
- I understand that I have the right to appeal if I disagree with the outcome of my Bursary Application. This appeal should be made to the Principal.
- I understand that receipts for expenditure must be produced upon request. Failure to comply will result in cancellation of the bursary.

By making an application via Applica, I confirm I have read the '16 -19 Bursary Fund Information' which was given to me with this application.