Scottish Funding Council
Comhairle Maoineachaidh na h-Alba

FE Student Support Bursary Policy AY 2025-26: AWARD ASSESSMENT

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FE Student Support Bursary Policy AY 2025-26: Award Assessment

Eligibility for award

1. A bursary award may only be offered if both the student and their course are eligible for support. Colleges should establish eligibility before considering a student for an award. There is no automatic entitlement to bursary funds, even where eligibility is established.

Eligibility of student

2. A student should only be deemed eligible for an award if they **meet all of the criteria** set out in paragraphs 3 to 17 below:

3. **They are residentially eligible**: To be residentially eligible, the student should satisfy the legislative conditions contained within the Student Support (Scotland) Regulations 2022. The fully updated FE Residency Guidance for AY 2025-26 will be published later in the summer.

4. **They are beyond their statutory school leaving date and have left school:** If a student has not reached their statutory school leaving date when they start the course, but they will have before the end of the course, they are eligible for support from the first day after they reach their statutory school leaving date. However, a college can buy equipment for such a student before they reach their statutory school leaving date. In this case, the college may purchase equipment for that student and then reimburse this cost from bursary funds once that student becomes eligible for a bursary award, provided they are still attending the course at that date. This practice must meet all conditions placed on study allowances.

5. **They are not or will not be eligible to receive alternative funds:** If either (i) or (ii) below applies, then the student will not be eligible to receive the full relevant allowance in this policy during the time they are receiving those alternative funds.

   (i) The student already receives and will continue to receive funding towards all or some of the costs covered by a bursary award. **OR**

   (ii) The student will become entitled to receive funding towards all or some of the costs covered by a bursary award during their course.

6. If the value of alternative funding is less than the student would have received through the bursary policy, then the college may choose to top-up the alternative funding (on a means-tested basis). However, the total amount must not exceed the value of funds that a student would have received if funded solely through bursary funds.

7. Students who are aged under 18 and eligible for an Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) are not eligible to receive an at-home maintenance allowance from bursary funds. However, they may be considered for travel, study and other allowances,

including an away from parental home allowance for students under 18 (see paragraphs 41 to 43).

8. Colleges are required to assess 18- and 19-year-old students at the start of their courses for bursary, unless it is financially better for their household income to be awarded an EMA.

9. Bursary maintenance allowances are not intended to cover additional living costs incurred by virtue of a disability. However, if a student is in receipt of funds to cover additional living costs, such as Adult Disability Payment, then these funds should not result in a deduction or replacement of any maintenance allowance for which that student is eligible.

10. Where a student already receives funding for travel, such as Adult Disability Payment mobility component, colleges may (at their discretion) use the Additional Support Needs for Learning Allowance to top-up, but not duplicate, existing funding. Further information is detailed in the Scottish Government's guidance Partnership Matters (see paragraph 98).

11. They meet the following eligibility criteria on duration of support:

First-time or continuing students

- First-time students (that have never previously been supported), including those who are on their first learning pathway as a continuing student, can be supported for the duration of their studies where they are showing appropriate academic progression in their FE studies.
- The expectation is that students will usually be moving up through SCQF levels 1-6, but students can be supported to repeat levels if the college judges that this is the appropriate academic pathway.
- The student can be allocated an additional year ('+1 year') of support. This can be used for:
  - An academic repeat year.
  - A medical or compassionate repeat year.
- We do not expect the numbers of students who require support over the full range of SCQF levels 1-6 to be extremely high, and that the majority of students will need support for shorter durations averaging around 4 years.
- In considering the position of students on short full-time courses, colleges should apply the same principles outlined above: The student should be progressing appropriately in their studies and the '+1' duration of support may be less than a full Academic Year.

Returner students

- Students who have previously completed a period of FE or HE study at least one full academic year ago and wish to return to the college to upskill or re-train may be supported for an additional period at the college's discretion.
- This can include students who already hold a qualification at the same or a higher level than the course they are enrolling in.
- Priority should be given to first-time students. It is at the college's discretion to determine the duration of support for returning students, but the expectation is that it would normally be less than that provided to first-time students.
- In determining the duration of support for returning students colleges should take account of factors such as the number of additional years support the student is seeking, how much additional support is required, when they last received support and the duration of the previous support.

12. When considering the recruitment of students and the provision of student support, the college should have regard to both its credit threshold and available student support budget. Colleges should also bear in mind that students need to be eligible under SFC Credit Guidance which places strong emphasis on employability, with students enrolled on programmes are suitable for their needs and abilities, and that students' learning pathways need to be actively managed by the college.

13. Students with disabilities may take longer to complete a course for reasons directly related to their disability. If their course has been extended for this reason, they may also receive a longer period of support. Supported learners and students whose educational development does not match a standard progression model may be supported over an extended timeframe and on a non-standard pattern of progression. We do not expect the numbers of such students to be extremely high, but any college that anticipates that this will lead to a significant increase in their Price Group 5 activity should contact SFC's Student Support team.

14. Any previous 'fees-only' awards or support for students received while aged under 18 (including, for instance, EMA, SAAS or bursary awards) should be disregarded when deciding a student's entitlement to support.

15. **They are eligible for recurrent funding from SFC:** The only exception to this is if the student is repeating a course and they are otherwise eligible for support. The reason for this exception is that recurrent funding is not available for students who are repeating a course within an academic year. Although a requirement for recurrent funding eligibility, students are not required to have completed a defined proportion of their course before becoming eligible for consideration for a bursary.

16. Colleges should refer to SFC's Credit Guidance.

17. They can be defined as:

A student under 18 **OR** a parentally supported student **OR** a self-supporting student **OR** a care-experienced student **OR** a Universal Credit student. The relevant definitions of these categories of students is outlined in the Advisors' Notes guidance**.**

Eligibility of course

18. A course is eligible to receive support if **all of the criteria** set out in paragraphs 19 to 21 below apply:

19. **It is eligible for recurrent funding from SFC:** Colleges should refer to SFC's Credit Guidance for more details on eligibility for SFC funding. Colleges should also note paragraph 15 above which describes the exception to this rule.

20. **It is a non-advanced course or is of a level that does not qualify for support from SAAS:** It should be noted that this can include some SCQF Level 7 courses that are not supported by SAAS, such as the full-time SVQ3 course.

21. **It progresses to, or results, in a qualification:** A course that does not progress to such a qualification may be eligible, provided the course either:

    (i) Lasts no more than the FTE of 18 weeks. **OR**

    (ii) Falls under funding group 5 (previously dominant programme group 18). Colleges should refer to SFC's Credit Guidance.

    - Courses not defined in (i) or (ii) that do not progress to, or result in, a qualification may still be eligible if they exclusively cover basic skills. Colleges running such courses should contact SFC to discuss their eligibility.

Calculation of award

22. If both the student and the course are eligible for support, then the college should calculate the student's award. An award can only feature the following allowances:

    - Maintenance allowance
    - Dependant allowance
    - Study expense allowance
    - Travel expense allowance
    - Additional Support Needs for Learning Allowance (ASNLA)
    - Care-Experienced Student Bursary
    - Universal Credit Student allowance

23. Where a student has access to alternative funds, this renders them ineligible for the relevant full allowances. This is outlined above in paragraph 5.

24. A student's alternative funds may cover only some of the purposes for which bursary allowances may be awarded. In such cases, where the student is otherwise eligible, the college may (at its discretion) consider offering support from other bursary allowances.

25. Under no circumstances should colleges offer a student an allowance based on a category that does not define the student. A student can be defined as either:

    - A student under 18
    - A parentally-supported student
    - A self-supporting student
    - A Care-Experienced student
    - A Universal Credit student

26. These definitions are explained further in the Advisors' Notes which support this document.

Means testing

27. Students should be means-tested for any allowance received. The dependant allowance is also subject to a deduction in respect of the adult dependant's income.

28. The only circumstance where a college should not means-test students for allowances paid to them are when the college is awarding:

    - A Care-Experienced Bursary maintenance allowance. **OR**
    - A travel or study allowance to a student under 18. **OR**
    - An additional support needs for learning allowance to any eligible student.

29. In addition, colleges should not take into account benefits covering the equivalent of a maintenance allowance when assessing for travel and study only awards.

30. Further information is detailed in paragraphs 157 to 164 for advice on awards for part-time students or those who are studying on an open learning basis.

Annual period of support

31. Maintenance and dependant allowance rates are weekly rates for which students on full-time courses may be assessed. These allowances can cover the duration of the course including short holidays but not breaks between Academic Years.

32. Funding should not exceed 43 weeks in any one Academic Year (AY). If it is college practice to have full-time courses running for more than 43 weeks, the college must apply to SFC for dispensation to provide students with any additional support required.

33. Awards should cover the full number of course weeks and should include short holidays. Colleges should calculate any maintenance and/or dependants' allowances for short holidays in line with the student's typical award during term-time.

Bursary maintenance allowance

34. Maintenance allowances should only be offered to students attending on a

full-time basis. Allowances set out below should only be paid to students meeting the defined categories.

Self-supporting students

35. The maintenance allowance for self-supporting students is **£125.55** per week.

Parentally-supported students

At parental home

36. The *at parental home* maintenance allowance for parentally supported students is **£99.35** per week.

37. To be eligible for this allowance the student must:

    - Live at their parental home within what the college determines as a reasonable travelling distance of the college. **AND**
    - Not have an established permanent home of their own.

Away from parental home

38. The *away from parental home* maintenance allowance for parentally supported students is **£125.55** per week.

39. To be eligible for this allowance the student must:

    - Not live in their parental home because it is not within reasonable travelling distance of the college. **AND/OR**
    - Have an established permanent home of their own.

Students under 18

At parental home

40. Students who are under the age of 18 and are not defined as self-supporting will usually be entitled to be assessed for an EMA. This is the equivalent to an *at parental home maintenance allowance*. The EMA programme is distinct from bursary funding and the allowance is paid from another source of funds. Students under 18 cannot be paid an *at parental home maintenance allowance* from bursaries. This is detailed further in the Advisors' Notes between paragraphs 48 to 50.

Away from parental home

41. The *away from parental home allowance* amounts to **£49.91** per week. Colleges may pay students this element over the short holiday periods.

42. Students under 18 may be considered for an *away from parental home maintenance* element payable from bursaries, subject to meeting the other eligibility criteria. This

allowance takes account of and is offered in addition to any EMA allowance.

43. To be eligible for this allowance the student must:
    - Not live in their parental home because it is not within reasonable travelling distance of the college. **AND/OR**
    - Have an established permanent home of their own.

College-approved accommodation

Parentally-supported or self-supporting students

44. As an alternative to the *away from parental home maintenance allowance* for a parentally-supported student and the *maintenance allowance* for a self-supporting student, the college may use bursary funds to contribute to the costs of college-approved accommodation.

45. Only students who meet the above criteria (paragraph 43), staying in college accommodation or college approved lodgings, may receive this support. In this situation, the student would be eligible to have a contribution towards their rent paid from bursary funds and to receive a *personal allowance* of **£36.70** per week.

Students under 18

46. The college may also use bursary funds to contribute to the accommodation costs of a student under 18, who meets the criteria in paragraph 43 above, staying in college accommodation or college approved lodgings.

47. In this situation, the student would normally be eligible for an allowance contributing to their rent and an EMA only. However, students who are under 18 and living in college accommodation but are self-supporting or not eligible for an EMA because their parental income is higher than EMA income threshold, can be assessed for the *personal allowance* of **£36.70** per week from bursary funds.

General

48. Under no circumstances should the amount provided to contribute towards rent exceed **£140.13** per week.

49. If the student is not required to pay for this accommodation over any short holiday period, then the maintenance allowance should revert to the weekly rate the student would otherwise have been eligible to receive.

50. Colleges must bear in mind that by providing this allowance they are approving the accommodation as suitable to live in, and as such, the college must be satisfied that it meets all expected legal requirements, such as Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO) standards.

Care-Experienced Bursary

51. The Care-Experienced Bursary maintenance allowance is **£225.00** per week.

    - This is a non-means-tested award to any student who has, at any time in their life, been looked after by a local authority in the UK; **or** has been in an informal care arrangement which can be confirmed by their Local Authority; **or** has experienced care outside of the UK, and meets the residential eligibility criteria to access student support funds as detailed in Schedule 1, Part 1 of the Student Support (Scotland) Regulations 2022, as amended in the Education (Fees and Student Support (Miscellaneous Amendments) (Scotland) Regulations 2024 (effective from 1 August 2024). The residential eligibility criteria is outlined in the Scottish Government's FE Residency Guidance.

    AND

    - Is beyond their statutory school leaving date (for most students this will mean a minimum age of 16 (see paragraph 47 of the Advisors' Notes).
    - There is no upper age limit on the Care-Experienced award.

52. When allocating funding to Care-Experienced students, colleges should ensure that the student receives the **optimum** funding award, taking account of the student's wider circumstances. This will usually mean that the student should receive the maximum level of funding (for example, a bursary rather than an EMA).

53. Colleges should also have regard to the student's potential entitlement to social security benefits. If the student is eligible to remain on benefits whilst they study and the amount that the student would receive through benefits is higher than £225.00 per week, then the college should allocate EMA or the Universal Credit (UC) rate instead of the Care-Experienced Bursary rate.

54. A key intention is to enhance rather than replace existing funding and sources of financial support. As such, students receiving a Care-Experienced Bursary will also continue to be eligible to receive additional funding elements, such as travel, study costs, additional support needs, childcare and discretionary awards. Colleges should not means-test Care-Experienced students as self-supporting.

Example 1

The optimum weekly award for 18-year-old care experienced student with monthly rent of £325.
If awarded EMA of £30 per week, the student can receive UC of £641.98 per month. • Their total income is £771.98 per month. • If awarded full bursary £225: They will receive no UC. Their total income is £975 per month. The student would be £203.02 per month better off receiving a bursary than an EMA.

Example 2

The optimum weekly award for 20-year-old care experienced student with 22-year-old partner and 4-year-old child and monthly rent of £950 (this is within the rate payable for a 2-bed private rented property in Edinburgh rate – the rate varies by local authority).
The couple's maximum UC is £1,740.36 per month. • If awarded bursary of £225 per week, they can get UC of £850.36pm during course (40 week bursary is £890 income for UC: 9000 / 9 – 110 = 890). £1,850.36 total monthly income from UC and student funding (monthly bursary worked out as 225 x 40 / 9). • If awarded bursary of £28 per week, they can get UC of £1,725.92pm during course (bursary is £14.44 income for UC: 1120 / 9 – 110 = 14.44). £1,850.36 total monthly income from UC and student funding (monthly bursary worked out as 28 x 40 / 9). Total income is the same whether get £225 or £28 bursary rate.

Example 3

The optimum weekly award for 27-year-old care experienced student with 3-year-old child and monthly rent of £950 (this is within the rate payable for a 2-bed private rented property in Edinburgh rate – the rate varies by local authority) on UC.
The student's maximum UC is £1,642.95 per month. • If awarded bursary of £225 per week, they can get UC £752.95 during course (bursary is £890 income for UC: 9000 / 9 – 110 = 890). £1,752.95 total monthly income from UC and student funding. • If awarded bursary of £28 per week, they can get £1,628.51 UC (bursary is £14.44 income for UC: 1120 / 9 – 110 = 14.44). £1,752.95 total monthly income from UC and student funding. Total income is the same whether get £225 or £28 bursary rate.

Specific categories of Care Experience

55. The categories of Care Experience which qualify for a Care-Experienced Bursary are listed below. A more detailed explanation of these categories is set out on the SFC website.

- Permanence order
- Foster care
- Residential care
- Formal kinship care
- Informal kinship care which can be confirmed by a local authority.
- Compulsory Supervision Order with no condition of residence (Looked after at home) *(Previously known as a Supervision Requirement).*
- Compulsory Supervision Order with a condition of residence (Looked after away from home) *(Previously known as a Supervision Requirement).*
- Care experienced outside of the UK.

Students receiving Universal Credit

56. In some circumstances, students may be able to study full-time and receive Universal Credit (UC), for example where they are:

- A parent of a child.
- Severely disabled.
- A young person estranged from their parents.
- Living with a non-student partner and making a joint UC claim.

57. Students in receipt of UC will have their award of UC reduced, on a pound for pound basis, in respect of any non-earned income they are awarded which exceeds £110 per month for the duration of their studies.

58. Students in receipt of UC should be assessed for student support in the usual way. If they are found to be eligible for funding, they should receive a maximum weekly allowance of **£28.00** per week.

59. Students in receipt of UC may also receive funding for specific purposes (e.g., travel, study, and additional support needs allowances) without this having an impact on their UC award. However, the student's letter of award should clearly state that these additional elements have been allocated for a specific purpose. It is worth noting that whilst the full payment of £28.00 per week is likely to make a slight adjustment to the UC award, it should mitigate the need for the student to have any work-related requirement whilst studying.

60. Further details on award letters are set out in the Annex of the Advisors' Notes guidance.

Students on Universal Credit whose circumstances change

61. If the circumstances of a student who is receiving a full bursary award change during the AY and they begin to receive Universal Credit (UC) mid-year, then the annual nature of the UC calculation means that the full bursary award already paid will be taken into account and deducted from their UC award, even if the actual amount awarded reduces. To avoid a detrimental impact on students, in circumstances where a student previously receiving full bursary begins to receive UC part-way through the year, the student should continue to be allocated their original award of full bursary until the end of the AY.

Assessing the income of parents or a partner receiving Universal Credit

62. In most circumstances where a student's parent(s) or partner are receiving Universal Credit (UC), the amount received by the parents/partner will be less than the minimum income threshold and the student will be eligible for full bursary. However, there are some circumstances where the total household income including UC will be over the minimum threshold (see example below), particularly where the parent(s)/partner are working. When means-testing parental income in these circumstances, if the parents'/partner's UC has been reduced because they have other income, it should be assumed that the standard allowance is reduced first (see example below).

Universal Credit – Parental/Partner Earnings Example

Assessing Universal Credit (UC) where there are parental/partner earnings

Working lone parent with two children (one an 18-year-old at college), with rent (based on Edinburgh 3-bedroom private housing rate) and childcare costs.

Standard Allowance	*£400.14*
Child Elements	*£631.81*
Housing Costs	*£1,300*
Childcare	*£365.50*
Maximum Universal Credit Award	*£2,697.45 per month*
Gross Earnings of £27,600 with £50pm pension contributions (ie net income for UC)	*£1,896.87 per month*
Earnings taken into account for UC	*£1,896.87 - £411 = £1,485.87* *£1,485.87 x 55% = £817.22*

Maximum UC is reduced by £817.22

Final Universal Credit Award	**£1,880.23 per month**

In this example parental earnings are above the bursary minimum threshold, so a means-test should be performed, based on the income of £27,600.

It should be assumed that the reduction of £817.22 which was applied to the UC award was applied to the Standard Allowance element of the UC award first.

Therefore, in this example, there would be no UC element included in the assessment for student funding because the Standard Allowance has already been deducted under the UC reduction.

Dependant Allowance

63. This allowance is **£67.55** per week.

Student eligibility

64. Students attending full-time can receive this allowance if they have care or financial or

legal responsibilities for an adult dependant. This may be their husband, wife, civil partner, partner, or any other adult dependant for whom they act as carer. Students cannot claim a dependant allowance for anyone eligible to receive FE or HE student support.

65. Claims for a dependant allowance must be supported by documentary evidence such as proof of benefits. This evidence could include proof of receipt of a Carer Support Payment received by the student for the adult dependant.

66. A dependant allowance can only be included as part of a student's bursary award when the adult dependant's weekly income is lower than £67.55.

Partial caring responsibilities

67. In situations where a student is claiming for an adult dependant who they do not care for on a full-time basis, then the college should only give the allowance if they are satisfied that the student is the primary carer of that adult dependant.

68. A student cannot claim for an adult dependant who someone else is claiming for as part of his or her FE or HE award.

69. Where the adult dependant will suffer hardship because the student is undertaking the course, but the student is not the primary carer, the college may use its discretion to decide if the student's award should include a dependant allowance.

Reducing the dependant allowance

70. A dependant allowance should be reduced on a 'pound for pound' basis, according to the adult dependant's income, prior to being added to the rest of the student's award to be means-tested (see the Financial Assessment section).

71. This pound for pound reduction should be calculated by including all earned and unearned income available to the adult dependant over the period of support requested by the student.

72. For the purposes of the pound for pound deduction, colleges should ignore any income that will also be included in the student's overall means-test.

Study Expense Allowance (Study Costs)

73. Colleges are expected to use their core teaching grants to provide appropriate teaching facilities and equipment for the courses they deliver to students. The subject price groups which core teaching grant is based upon reflect that some subject areas are more expensive to deliver than others. However, there are some learning materials and equipment that are provided to the individual student and which, in many cases, become the student's personal property. The Study Expense Allowance can be used to fund essential items that are supplied to individual students or to compensate individual

students who supply these essential items themselves.

74. The principles that the college should bear in mind when allocating this allowance to students are:

- **Colleges should not use this allowance to offset the costs of items which should be met from their core teaching grant.**
- Colleges should only fund **essential** items required by the student.
- Colleges should be satisfied that they are achieving best value for money.
- Colleges should ensure that they are properly accounting for the items supplied through this allowance.

75. The specific items that a college may fund will be dependent on the course, but the following table provides guidance on the types of expenses that may and may not be included. The examples contained in the table are not exhaustive.

Example of items that can be funded through Study Expense Allowance:
• Items that, if absent, do not prevent the course being taught but are essential in allowing the student to fully participate in learning, such as specific clothing, footwear and tools that are supplied to the student. • Items that are essential to the course, e.g. essential texts. • Items that are required for health and safety reasons. • The costs of paying for eligible students to have a criminal check.

Example of items that <u>cannot</u> be funded through Study Expense Allowance:
• Items that are key to the teaching of the course, such as classroom facilities, fuel, core teaching equipment and materials. • Items that are not essential to that course, e.g. additional reading materials. • Study trips. This includes any trip associated with any course of study, i.e. a short trip to museum, a day trip out of college, and overnight or longer trips such as those associated with sports or tourism courses. • Basic stationery, regardless of the student's choice of course.

76. Colleges are reminded that they cannot charge students additional fees to complete essential elements of the course.

77. There is no cap on the amount that can be spent on an individual student, but colleges should ensure that the purchase or supply of study items achieves best value for money.

78. When reporting spend on study items it is essential that colleges itemise costs against **individual students**, showing that the allocation has been calculated on the basis of need for specific items or materials. **Colleges should not allocate set amounts to groups of students, regardless of subject of study or level of spend**.

79. We have published an updated table which details the average sector spend on Study Expenses in recent years. This is included in Annex B. The average sector spend has been recorded as between 5-6% of the overall student support budget across the most recent Academic Years.

80. In AY 2021-22, there was a modest increase on Study Expenses, with spend rising to 6.9% of the overall student support budget, as colleges potentially made reasonable adjustments in response to the pandemic. In AY 2022-23, the spend on Study Expenses, as a proportion of the overall Student Support Budget, returned to the average pre-pandemic level between 5-6%.

81. We do not expect colleges to claim above the pre-pandemic sector average (6%) for Study Expenses.

82. Colleges should be aware that the SFC actively monitors college expenditure on Study Expenses, and we will query colleges whose spend exceeds 6%. We expect colleges to be able to evidence, and provide a reasonable explanation for Study Expense expenditure, in line with the guidance set out above – particularly if such expenditure is considered to be excessive.

83. Colleges should aim to retain any study cost items that can be reused. If the study cost item cannot be reused it can be retained by the student. However, if a student does not complete the course and/or attain the planned qualification, the college may insist that these items should remain the property of the college, as it is assumed that the student will not require the materials/equipment for their future vocation.

Travel Allowance

84. In January 2022, Transport Scotland introduced free bus travel for under 22s. For new students enrolling in AY 2024-25, students up to 21 years old should not be allocated Travel Allowance if they can reasonably get to college using free bus travel.

85. In October 2024, the Scottish Government confirmed that they would seek to provide free bus travel for asylum seekers in Scotland by 2026. There is no further information available, at this stage, on the roll-out of the scheme on a national level.

86. Colleges can continue to allocate the Travel Allowance for alternative travel types (car mileage, train, college contract bus or taxi) to students under the age of 22, if using free bus transport is not a feasible option for the student or would add significantly to their journey time.

87. For students aged 22 and over or those under 22 who cannot use free bus travel, colleges should use the following guidance:

    - Students who live more than two miles from the college are eligible for consideration for a travel allowance to meet travel costs. Colleges may use their discretion to establish a different limit of distance in considering applications for

travel allowances. Such limits should take account of the accessibility, frequency, and cost-effectiveness of available transport within and outwith their boundaries. Consideration may also be given to locally recognised geographical boundaries and/or obstacles, including safety issues. We would expect neighbouring colleges to take a consistent approach. Where this discretion is used, the revised limit should be clearly defined and available to students. In all cases the college should seek to fund the most economical direct return route.

- For those students whose cases are considered, priority should be given to those in greatest need of travel support and to those whose most economical and direct travel costs are the highest. The college has discretion to consider the most appropriate route or modes of transport (including bicycle or foot) for each student's travel allowance application. The college should prioritise the cheapest forms of transport where possible, for example, making use of monthly/termly travel passes and student discounts.
- If the student is eligible to receive an Additional Support Needs for Learning Allowance (ASNLA), colleges should not award a Travel Allowance to the student and should meet their travel costs from the ASNLA.
- If the student will be using a car to travel to/from college, then the college should pay the public transport equivalent cost. In situations where there are no public transport equivalents, or the student has additional support needs that justify the use of a car, the college should use a mileage rate of **22 pence per mile**.

88. Travel Allowance is dependent on the student's circumstances and may cover one or more of the following expenses:

- **Students without dependent children:** return travel from a student's term-time address to the college for the days when they are attending college.
- **Students with dependent children:** on the days the student is attending college, return travel between:
    - Their term-time address and the student's childcare provision, for the student and the children in childcare.
    - The childcare provider and the college for the student.
- **Students living away from their permanent home:** travel from a student's permanent home to their term-time address to start their course and to return to their permanent home at the end of the course. In addition to this, the student may receive an allowance for return journeys between their term-time and permanent home address for each of the college's short holidays. This excludes weekends, bank holidays, and public holidays. A student may not receive support for more than the equivalent of eight single journeys between their term-time and permanent addresses in any academic year. **AND**

- **Students on mandatory placements:** return travel from the student's term-time address to their placement, including travel to college if applicable, for the days on which it is a mandatory requirement of their course to be on this placement.

89. Travel expenses do not include:
    - Travel between campuses, although the return travel may be calculated for separate campuses (e.g., the student may set out for one campus in the morning but return from a different campus in the afternoon).
    - Additional residential expenses.
    - Post-course travel expenses such as job interviews.

Alternative Travel Allowance

90. Colleges may use their bursary funds to provide transport for students, where they have assessed this as being a more cost-effective method than providing allocations to individual students. This may involve options such as:
    - Securing a transportation agreement with a local transport provider.
    - Purchasing their own transport for students.
    - Running their own transport for students.

91. Colleges that wish to operate an alternative travel allowance must inform SFC before using bursary funds for this purpose. Colleges should ensure that this request highlights:
    - Evidence of the need for an alternative arrangement to the standard travel allowance.
    - Value for money i.e., that the alternative arrangement is more economical and better value than the standard travel allowance. This comparison must be after means-testing of the standard travel allowance has taken place.
    - The AY or period for which they wish to use their bursary funds in this manner.

92. If SFC does not consider the alternative to be value for money, then it will ask colleges to return those funds. SFC will monitor spend and will query outlier data, with a view to ensuring that colleges are allocating Travel Allowance in a consistent manner.

Additional Support Needs for Learning Allowance

93. Additional support towards study and travel-related expenses may be offered to a disabled student who, as a result of their disability, may incur additional personal expenditure arising from their attendance at college. For example, colleges can use bursary funds to pay for taxi transportation for a student. This allowance should not be means-tested.

94. Colleges can pay support to students with additional support needs for learning out of uncapped funds. Colleges should record these funds as Additional Support Needs for Learning Allowances (ASNLA) in their FES returns.

95. Where a student already receives funding for travel, such as Adult Disability Payment mobility component, colleges may use the ASNLA to top-up the existing funding, particularly where the Adult Disability Payment assessment took place prior to the student joining the college and did not factor in the student's travel to college.

96. Additional Support Needs for Learning Allowance (ASNLA) can be used to support the mental health needs of individual students, but it should not be used to replace funding previously allocated by the Scottish Government to pay for Mental Health Counsellors as part of the four-year commitment.

Eligible students

97. A student who is on a course which the SFC defines as 'Price Group 5' - previously Dominant Programme Group (DPG) 18 - or is receiving Extended Learning Support (ELS) from college funds will normally be eligible for this allowance, if required. However, it is recognised that there may also be cases where, on assessment, a student's disability does not bring them into either of these categories, but additional support needs are identified which must be met to allow them to access learning. Where this support is not the responsibility of any other body or fund, the college may consider meeting these costs from this allowance.

98. The Scottish Government's publication, Partnership Matters, provides guidance to NHS boards and voluntary organisations on supporting students with additional needs in Further Education, and describes the roles of relevant agencies in providing support to people with disabilities (see paragraph 4.6.6 Disability Living Allowance and Motability).

Needs assessments

99. The costs of assessments of additional study support needs should be covered by core college funds, not bursary funds. Guidance on responsibility for other needs assessments is available in the Scottish Government's Partnership Matters (see paragraph 98 above). Colleges should not normally use bursary funds to pay for diagnostic assessments.

Use of funds

100. There is no threshold where items remain in the ownership of the college. Study items and equipment should be recycled or re-used where it is practical to do so. The college may use its discretion to pass ownership to the student where appropriate.

101. Other items purchased using this allowance should remain the property of the student, even if the college buys these items centrally. However, as with the Study Expense Allowance, if a student does not complete the course and/or attain the planned qualification, the college may insist that these items should remain the property of the college.

102. If the student faces higher rent costs as a direct result of their disability and these are not the responsibility of another body, then the college may use this allowance to top up

the student's maintenance allowance to meet this additional rent. This does not include additional rent charged for college accommodation. If a college is using this fund to top-up a maintenance allowance to meet this additional rent, then the top-up section of the maintenance allowance should not be subject to any means-testing.

Financial Assessment

General

103. This section sets out the financial assessment processes for students attending on a full-time basis. The financial assessment of students on part-time or open learning courses is set out in the following section between paragraphs 157 to 164.

104. It is expected that a student's household income should help support the student during their course, where it can. The financial assessment works out whether the household can afford to help support the student and how much the college should assume this support might be. Similarly, account should be taken of other income the student will receive during their course.

105. The bursary financial assessment will consider benefits which provide replacement living costs, whilst benefits which provide for additional costs (such as those related to a disability) will be disregarded.

106. Tables 1-4 at the end of this document indicate how various forms of income are to be treated. These lists provide a range of examples, but they are not exhaustive. College staff may consult SFC for advice on any other forms of income.

Means-tested allowances

107. Having considered the student's access to alternative funds (see paragraph 5), the college should determine the student's eligibility for each of the bursary allowances. The combination of these allowances forms the potential award available to the student, which must then be means-tested.

108. As explained in paragraph 27 and 28, all allowances are means-tested except:

- Care-Experienced Bursary.
- Travel and Study Expense Allowances for students under 18.
- Additional Support Needs for Learning Allowance for all eligible students.

109. The Dependant Allowance is also subject to a deduction (prior to means-testing) in respect of the adult dependant's income. There is further information on the Dependant Allowance outlined between paragraphs 63 to 72.

110. All other allowances that make up a student's award are subject to the following financial assessment.

Financial assessment outline

111. The college should consider the monies available to the student to determine the amount of the bursary award to be offered. The monies available should include, where applicable, income from the student's parent(s), parent's partner, or the student's partner.

112. Colleges should ensure they disregard income that has been allocated for a specific purpose, e.g., Adult Disability Payment. (See Table 1 for more information).

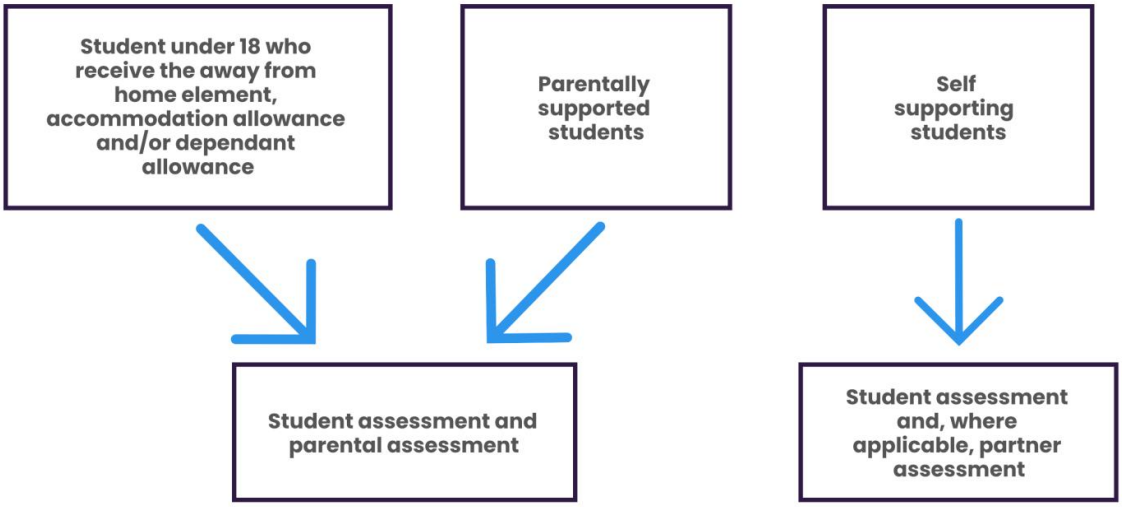
113. The following new benefits will be delivered within this year:

- Pension Age Disability Payment (PADP): this benefit has replaced Attendance Allowance for people over State Pension age who need additional support from someone to care for them due to a disability or long-term health condition. The national rollout of PADP for new claims was completed in Spring 2025.
- Pension Age Winter Heating Payment (PAWHP): this benefit will replace the UK Government's Winter Fuel Payment in Scotland from winter 2024-25. PAWHP will provide an annual payment to pension households to assist with heating costs in winter.
- Scottish Adult Disability Living Allowance (SADLA): this benefit has started to replace the UK Government's Disability Living Allowance (DLA) from spring 2025, with recipients of DLA being transferred onto SADLA. The Scottish Adult Disability Living Allowance is not open to new applicants – it is only available through a case transfer from DLA.

114. The Carer Support Payment should be excluded from the means-test of student awards. This is reflected in Table 1.

115. Colleges must request documentary evidence to clarify the nature and value, if any, of child support allowance and/or maintenance payments paid either into or out of the household. This should be from a reliable and authoritative third party.

116. The diagram below identifies whose income to assess:



117. As noted in paragraphs 51 to 54, Care-Experienced students should not have their income assessed.

Income Assessments

Student assessment

Assessing the student's available income

118. The college should assess the student's income in terms of the money available to them over the period of support required.

119. The following income received, over the period of support required, should be **excluded**:

- Any income identified as compensating for additional living costs.
- Any income from the student's own earnings.
- Adoption and fostering allowance (both elements).
- Kinship care allowance.
- All "additional cost" benefits (including child benefit).
- Child maintenance.
- Universal Credit – (all elements should be excluded except the standard allowance e.g., exclude amounts for children, disability, housing, etc).
- The disability element of a war pension or other pension.
- Any loan income or payment from FE Discretionary funding or Childcare funding.
- Any funds the student receives from privately funded grants or scholarships for educational purposes.

120. Table 1 at the end of the document gives further information.

121. Unearned income received above **£24.19** per week over the period of support required, should be **included**. This includes:

- All trust income.
- Income replacement benefits.
- Maintenance payments paid to the student (for the student).
- All pension income (state/private/employer's).
- Other unearned income.

122. Table 2 at the end of the document gives further information.

123. The income identified above should then be reduced by all child support or maintenance payments that the student will have to pay over the period of support required. This only includes payments made for any children and/or former partner(s) not living in the household.

Reducing the student's award: the student's contribution

124. The college should reduce the student's award on a 'pound-for-pound' basis based on the income remaining after applying paragraphs 119 to 123.

Parental assessment

125. The college should assess the assessable parent's income to identify how much, if anything, they should contribute towards the student's support. If the assessable parent has a partner, that partner's income will be included as income available to the assessable parent.

Exemptions from parental assessment

126. Students who are estranged from their assessable parent are exempt from providing income details of their assessable parent. However, the college must be satisfied that the student's relationship with their parents has broken down and that they cannot be supported by their assessable parent. The student should provide confirmation from a professional person who knows the student's circumstances and can verify their estrangement from their parent.

127. Care-Experienced students are eligible for support without recourse to an assessment of the assessable parent's income.

128. In these circumstances, colleges should process the award by entering £0 for the parental income.

Assessing the available parental income

129. The incomes that should be included and excluded in this calculation are shown below. Under no circumstances can a college calculate a parent's income on a pro-rata basis. Further information on the pro-rate contribution is outlined in paragraph 143.

130. The following income received over the previous full financial tax year should be **excluded**:

- All “additional cost” benefits (including child benefit, child tax credit, Adult Disability Payment).
- Any loan income.
- If the parent is also a student, any payment from bursaries, FE hardship/ discretionary funding, childcare funding or SAAS equivalent and any student loan income.

131. Table 1 at the end of the document gives further information.

132. Colleges assessing the parent of a student under 18 in relation to a possible *away from parental home allowance* and/or *dependant allowance* may choose to use the evidence of income supplied with the student’s EMA application instead of the above.

133. This income should be reduced by any child support or maintenance payment made in respect of any children (other than the student), or former partner, not living in the household. See Table 3 at the end of the document.

134. If income for the current financial tax year is likely to be at least 15% less than that of the previous full financial tax year, the college may allow a provisional assessment to be made. Colleges must do this during the college term and students cannot make a claim for a re-evaluation of their award on a retrospective basis. This should be based on the parent’s estimated income for the current financial tax year, provided the college is satisfied that any inaccuracies can be corrected within the period of the award.

Reducing the student’s award: the parental contribution

135. Once the college has calculated the income available, they can calculate how much the parent(s) are required to contribute to the student’s support. The actual level a parent will have to contribute differs by category of student and colleges must ensure they apply the correct scale when making this calculation.

136. For *students under 18,* if the income identified is £20,351 or more, then the assessable parent will be liable to contribute to a student’s support. Colleges should calculate this based on an initial payment of £45 and a payment of £1 for every £9 above £20,351. This is demonstrated in the table below:

Income	Contribution
less than £20,351	*£0*
£20,351	*£45*
£21,521	*£175*
£24,401	*£495*
£26,471	*£725*

137. For *parentally supported students aged 18-24 years*, if the income identified above is £24,275 or more, then the parents will be liable to contribute to a student's support.

138. This is calculated as an initial payment of £45 and a payment of £1 for every £9 they are above £24,275 up to a threshold of £50,977, where it will change to £1 for every £6.50 to a maximum contribution of £7,998. This is demonstrated overleaf:

Income	Contribution
less than £24,275	*£0*
£24,275	*£45*
£31,745	*£875*
£41,735	*£1,985*
£49,664	*£2,866*

139. After the contribution has been assessed, it should be reduced by £152 for each child (excluding the student being assessed) who is dependent on the assessable parent and their partner.

140. Colleges should reduce the parental contribution further if the assessable parent and/or the assessable parent's partner have other parentally supported students who are dependent on them. If the assessable parent or the assessable parent's partner is also a student, then they too can be included in the reduction of support. If both parents are students, then only one parent can be included in the deduction.

141. To be clear, for the purpose of this reduction, a student is defined as someone who is above school leaving age and is eligible to receive EMA, FE Bursary, or SAAS support. To reduce the contribution the college should divide the contribution by any other students who are dependent on the assessable parent or the assessable parent's partner.

142. Deductions from the calculated parental contribution are shown in Table 4 below.

143. Colleges should apply the parental contribution to the bursary award in full if the course lasts for 43 weeks or more. Where the course lasts less than 43 weeks the college should divide the contribution by the 43 weeks and multiply it by the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) weeks in the course. This includes short holidays.

144. The deduction of the calculated contribution, as detailed between paragraphs 135 to 143, from the student's award will create the student's final award.

Partner assessment

Assessing the partner's available income

145. The college should assess the student's partner's income to identify how much, if anything, the partner should contribute towards supporting the student.

146. Under no circumstances can a college calculate a partner's income on a pro-rata basis. More information on the pro-rata of a contribution is detailed in paragraph 151.

147. The following income received over the previous full financial tax year should be excluded:

- All "additional cost" benefits (including child benefit, child tax credit, Adult Disability Payment).
- Any loan income.
- If the partner is also a student, any payment from EMAs, bursaries, FE hardship/discretionary funding, childcare funding or SAAS equivalent and any student loan income.

148. Table 1 at the end of the document gives more information.

149. This income should be reduced by any child support or maintenance payments made in respect of any children or former partner, not living in the household. This is shown in Table 3 at the end of the document.

150. Where income for the current financial tax year is likely to be at least 15% less than that of the previous full financial tax year, the college may allow a provisional assessment to be made. Colleges must do this during the term and students cannot make a claim for a re-evaluation of their award on a retrospective basis. This should be based on the partner's estimated income for the current financial tax year, provided the college is satisfied that any inaccuracies can be corrected within the period of the award.

Reducing the student's award: the partner's contribution

151. If the income identified above is £20,643 or above, then the partner will be liable to contribute to a student's support. This contribution is calculated as an initial payment of £45 and a payment of £1 for every £9 they are above £20,643 up to a threshold of £50,977, where it will change to £1 for every £6.50 up to a maximum contribution of £7,998. This is demonstrated in the table below:

Income	Contribution
less than £20,643	£0
£20,643	£45
£27,933	£855
£35,538	£1,700
£50,568	£3,370

152. After the contribution has been assessed, it should be reduced by £152 for each child dependent on the partner.

153. A college should reduce the partner's contribution further if they have any other (parentally supported) students who are dependent on them. For the purpose of this reduction, a student is defined as someone who is above school leaving age and is eligible to receive EMA, bursary or SAAS support. To reduce the contribution the college should divide the contribution by any parentally supported students who are dependent on the partner or the student.

154. Table 4 below shows the deductions from calculated partner contribution.

155. Colleges should apply the partner's contribution to the bursary award in full if the course lasts for 43 weeks or more. Where the course lasts less than 43 weeks the college should divide the contribution by the 43 weeks and multiply it by the number of FTE weeks in the course. This includes short holidays.

156. The deduction of the calculated contribution) from the student's award will create the student's final award.

Calculation of award for part-time students and open learning students

157. If both the student and the course are eligible for support but the student is studying part-time then the college can still assess the student for an award. Part-time students should not be considered for maintenance allowances. The award should still be means-tested. However, the means-test that should be used is the one set out in the Fee Waiver Policy. In addition, colleges should not take into account benefits covering the equivalent of a maintenance allowance when assessing for other elements of the bursary award. These awards must also meet the conditions set out in this policy for awards based on full-time attendance.

158. SFC's Fee Waiver Policy for AY 2025-26 will include details on eligibility for fee waivers. It will be published alongside this policy and is available on our website.

Part-time students

159. Students studying part-time are eligible for support towards appropriate study and travel expenses without further means-testing if they are either:

- Under the age of 18. **OR**
- Eligible for a fee waiver.

160. Part-time students are also eligible for support through the additional support needs for learning allowance which is not subject to means-testing for any student.

Open learning students

161. Open learning students whose study commitment is more than 16 hours per week may be considered for a maintenance allowance in the same way as any other student attending on a full-time basis.

162. Open learning students may be eligible for support towards appropriate study and travel expenses if they are either:

- Under the age of 18. **OR**
- Eligible for a fee waiver grant.

163. These expenses may be awarded without means-testing provided:

- The student has commenced learning with the college, evidenced by receiving academic tutorial guidance.
- The college does not pay this support in advance of need.

164. Open learning students, who meet the above criteria, are also eligible for support through the additional support needs for learning allowance, which is not subject to means-testing for any student.

Table 1: Household income NOT used in assessment

Table 1			
Table 1: Household income NOT used in assessment	**Student Assessment**	**Parental Assessment**	**Partner Assessment**
Additional cost benefits, including:			
Adult Disability Payment	✓	✓	✓
Armed Forces Independence Payment	✓	✓	✓
Attendance Allowance	✓	✓	✓
Back to Work Bonuses	-	-	✓
Benefits classed as additional living costs	✓	✓	✓
Bereavement Support Payment and Bereavement Support Allowance	✓	✓	✓
Best Start Grant – pregnancy and baby, early learning, and school age payments	✓	✓	✓
Carer's Allowance Supplement	✓	✓	✓
Care leavers and Care Experienced – payments made by local authorities	✓	✓	✓
Carer Support Payment	✓	-	-
Child Benefit	✓	✓	✓
Child Disability Payment	✓	✓	✓
Child maintenance and child support (paid for the student’s child/children)	✓	-	-
Child Tax credit	✓	✓	✓
Child Winter Heating Assistance	✓	✓	✓
Childcare element of Working Tax Credit	✓	✓	✓
Christmas bonuses	✓	✓	✓

Table 1			
Table 1: Household income NOT used in assessment	**Student Assessment**	**Parental Assessment**	**Partner Assessment**
Clothing allowance	✓	✓	✓
Cold weather payment	✓	✓	✓
Comfort allowance	✓	✓	✓
Constant attendance allowance	✓	✓	✓
Council Tax reduction	✓	✓	✓
Disability Living Allowance	✓	✓	✓
Disability element of Working Tax Credit	✓	✓	✓
Educational endowment	✓	✓	✓
Funeral Support Payment	✓	✓	✓
Housing Benefit	✓	✓	✓
In-work and Return-to-work credits or Back-to-work credits	✓	✓	✓
Income from student loans, discretionary/hardship funds or childcare funds	✓	✓	✓
Industrial injuries benefit: Constant attendance allowance and severe disablement allowance	✓	✓	✓
Job Start Payment	✓	✓	✓
Mobility supplement	✓	✓	✓
Part 1 Adoption / Fostering fees	✓	✓	✓
Part 2 Adoption / Fostering fees	✓		
Pension-age Disability Payment	✓	✓	✓
Pension-age Winter Heating Payment	✓	✓	✓
Personal Independence Payment	✓	✓	✓
Privately funded grants, scholarships, and training bursaries	✓	✓	✓
Scottish Adult Disability Living Allowance	✓	✓	✓
Scottish Child Payment	✓	✓	✓
Scottish Welfare Fund – community care grant	✓	✓	✓
Scottish Welfare Fund – crisis grants	✓	✓	✓
Social Fund Payments	✓	✓	✓
Student's own earnings (PAYE and SE)	✓		

Table 1			
Table 1: Household income NOT used in assessment	**Student Assessment**	**Parental Assessment**	**Partner Assessment**
Universal Credit – all elements should be disregarded except the standard allowance (e.g. disregard amounts for children, disability, housing, etc.) If a reduction has been applied to the UC award, it should be assumed that this reduction was applied to the standard allowance first.	✓	✓	✓
War pension – disability element only	✓		
Winter Fuel Payments	✓	✓	✓
Winter Heating Payment	✓	✓	✓
Young Carer's Grant	✓	✓	✓
All other earned and unearned income received over the previous full financial tax year should be included.			

Table 2: Household income used in assessment

Table 2			
Table 2: Household income used in assessment	**Student Assessment**	**Parental Assessment**	**Partner Assessment**
Bank / Building society interest	✓	✓	✓
Bonds, National Savings Accounts, Premium Bonds (interests)	✓	✓	✓
Carer's Allowance	-	✓	✓
Carer Support Payment	-	✓	✓
Child Maintenance and child support paid by ex-partner for the student parent	✓	✓	✓
Dividends	✓	✓	✓
Employment and support allowance (both income related and contributory)	✓	✓	✓
Fees paid for fostering childcare (part-two income for fosterers only)	-	✓	✓
Gross earnings from employment	-	✓	✓
Gross earnings from self-employment	-	✓	✓
Income from property, boarders / casual fees (net income after mortgage, agency costs or other payments)	✓	✓	✓
Income replacement benefits (other than those mentioned in Table 1)	✓	✓	✓
Income support	✓	✓	✓
Industrial Death benefits scheme pension	✓	✓	✓
Industrial Injuries Benefit: • Industrial injuries disablement benefit • Industrial reduced earnings allowance • Industrial injuries retirement allowance	✓	✓	✓
Job Seekers Allowance	✓	✓	✓
Maintenance paid into household by someone not resident in the household (this belongs to the person it is paid to regardless of who it is paid for)	-	✓	✓
Maternity Allowance	✓	✓	✓
Money paid as compensation for loss of income	-	✓	✓
Pension income (other than those listed in Table 1)	✓	✓	✓
Reduced earnings allowance	✓	✓	✓
Redundancy payments	✓	✓	✓
Retirement pension (state, private, employer's)	✓	✓	✓

Table 2			
Table 2: Household income used in assessment	**Student Assessment**	**Parental Assessment**	**Partner Assessment**
Severe Disablement Allowance	✓	✓	✓
Statutory Sick Pay	✓	✓	✓
Statutory Maternity / Paternity / Adoption Pay	✓	✓	✓
Trust income	✓	✓	✓
Un-employability allowance	✓	✓	✓
Universal Credit • All elements should be disregarded except the standard allowance (e.g. disregard amounts for children, disability, housing).	✓	✓	✓
War widow's Pension/war pension	✓	✓	✓
Widowed Parent's Allowance	✓	✓	✓
Working tax credits (not childcare element or disability element)	✓	✓	✓

Table 3: Deductions from income (parental and partner income)

Table 3			
Table 3: Deductions from income (parental & partner income)	**Student Assessment**	**Parental Assessment**	**Partner Assessment**
Maintenance for any children and/or former partner not living in the household	✓	-	-
Maintenance for former partners and other children in the family, not in the household	-	✓	✓

Table 4: Deductions from calculated contributions (parental and partner income)

Table 4			
Table 4: Deductions from calculated contribution (parental & partner income)	**Student Assessment**	**Parental Assessment**	**Partner Assessment**
Maintenance paid in support of other (parentally supported) student(s)	-	✓	✓
Other children in the household who are dependent on the parents/spouse (£152)	-	✓	✓

Annex A

FE Student Support Rates for AY 2025-26

Maintenance Allowance	
Self-supporting students	£125.55 per week
Parentally supported students	
Away from parental home	£125.55 per week
At parental home	£99.35 per week
Students under 18	
Away from parental home	£49.91 per week
Students in receipt of Universal Credit	£28.00 per week
Care-Experienced award	£225.00 per week
Dependants allowance	£67.55 per week
Accommodation	£140.13 per week
Personal allowance	£36.70 per week
Mileage	£0.22 per mile
Unearned income disregard per week, over the period of support	£24.19 per week

Reducing the student's award: Parental contribution (not applied to Care-Experienced Bursary)

Students under 18	
If the income identified is £20,351 or above, then parents will be liable to contribute to a student's support. The minimum contribution is £45 and a payment of £1 for every £9 above £20,351. For example:	£20,351 per annum

Income	***Contribution***
less than £20,351	*£0*
£20,351	*£45*
£21,521	*£175*
£24,401	*£495*
£26,471	*£725*

Parentally supported students	
If the income identified is £24,275 or above the parents will be liable to contribute to a student's support. The minimum contribution is £45, then £1 for every £9 above £24,275 up to a threshold of £50,977, where it will change to £1 for every £6.50 to a maximum contribution of £7,998. This is demonstrated below: ***Income*** — ***Contribution*** *less than £24,275* — *£0* *£24,275* — *£45* *£31,745* — *£875* *£41,735* — *£1,985* *£49,664* — *£2,866*	£24,275 per annum

Reducing the student award: Partner income assessment (not applied to Care-Experienced Bursary)

If the income identified is £20,643 or above, then the partner will be liable to contribute to a student's support. The minimum contribution is £45 and a payment of £1 for every £9 they are above £20,643 up to a threshold of £50,977, where it will change to £1 for every £6.50 up to a maximum contribution of £7,998. This is demonstrated below:	£20,643 per annum

Income	***Contribution***
less than £20,643	*£0*
£20,643	*£45*
£27,933	*£855*
£35,538	*£1,700*
£50,568	*£3,370*

Per child deduction after assessment

After the contribution has been assessed, it should be reduced by £152 for each child / and or student dependent (excluding the student being assessed).	£152 per child

Annex B

Study Expense Allowance: average sector spend

Overall sector spend on Study Expense Allowance			
Academic Year	**Total student support spend**	**Study Expense Allowance spend**	**Study Expense Allowance spend as % of total student support spend**
2016-17	£108,911,794	£6,303,662	5.7%
2017-18	£112,713,041	£6,205,251	5.5%
2018-19	£119,410,555	£5,795,871	4.8%
2019-20	£124,625,098	£6,438,676	5.1%
2020-21	£113,842,406	£6,898,491	6.0%
2021-22	£120,102,504	£8,324,386	6.9%
2022-23	£119,528,306	£6,821,762	5.7%
2023-24	£122,813,321	£6,303,185	5.1%