



16-19 Bursary 2025-2026

Procedures and Guidance

Outline

The ASFC Bursary Scheme exists to enable students who have been identified as experiencing the greatest need for financial support to remain in education and thereby improve their choices in life.

We recognise that post-16 education brings with it a financial burden for parents/carers and that, for this reason, we are likely to receive many more applications than we can approve. We are committed to assessing all applications received in a fair, consistent and objective manner.

The bursary falls into three main categories – Cat A students in defined vulnerable groups (see overleaf for definition of groups) and Cat B and C students who fall below a set household threshold (reviewed annually) who will be eligible for the discretionary bursary. Those who are eligible for any categories of bursary will not receive a weekly payment, but will be reimbursed for things like essential equipment, travel where they are not eligible for an Our Pass/b_line, initial £10 cost of an Our Pass, University visits and compulsory trips related to their programme of study.

Free College Meals

Please note that the application form for free college meals is incorporated in the Bursary Application Form. Free College / Ashton meals are supplied by a monetary amount (to be decided annually by College but never Less than £2.41 per day) being put onto the students college card, this is on a daily “use it or Lose it basis”, any purchases above the allocated amount will need to be paid for in cash/debit card. Students on the Free College / Ashton Meals will be paid an equivalent amount in cash with their weekly bursary when out of college on authorised placements. Please note that college **sometimes** offer a discretionary “Free College Breakfast” on the ID cards for students not eligible for free meals. This facility is only available in college and on production of a valid student card, it is not available on college authorised placements or without your valid college card. Only students eligible for the full Free College Meal amount can claim a voucher if they forget/misplace their ID card – **not those who receive the discretionary amount.**

Eligibility and Criteria

To be eligible, students must satisfy the residency criterion. This means having a British or Northern Ireland passport, or

- having your passport endorsed to show you have the right of abode in the UK
- having 'settled status' in the UK.

*Students must be aged **under 19 years** on 31st August in the academic year in which they start the course.

Students that are aged 19 or over at 31 August 2025 **and** have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

Students that are aged 19 or over at 31 August 2025 **and** continuing on a study programme they began aged 16 to 18 ('19+ continuers')

Category A	<p>Students who are Looked After Children (in care), care leavers or on a Special Guardianship Order, those who are on Income Support or Universal Credit Payment in their own name, and those registered as disabled and in receipt of Employment Support Allowance or UC and Disability Living Allowance/Personal Independence Payment.</p> <p>Students in this category can be entitled to a bursary payment, in cash or goods (determined by the college) amounting up to £1,200 per year. Category A has been determined externally (by central government) and students in this category are therefore eligible to apply for the Bursary, subject to them requiring financial assistance.</p>
Discretionary bursary/Category B	<p>Students from households with a gross annual income (inclusive of any benefits/tax credits) of less than £30,000 are likely to be eligible for a discretionary bursary, but students from households where the gross annual income is up to around this figure are welcome to apply with a supporting statement and will fit into Category C. Students who fall near the threshold are advised to apply as we constantly review the bursary. We require as evidence your FULL up to date evidence including your current P60 or P45 where applicable confirming annual income and your last three full statements of Universal Credit.</p> <p>We require a copy of your latest Council Tax Bill and Housing Benefits statement (if appropriate). If self-employed please see additional details on application form.</p>

Category C	<p>Students who may or may not be in the above categories but who are experiencing significant financial hardship due to current/changed circumstances or with an exceptional situation.</p> <p>Note: Students making a category C application must complete the 'Additional Information' section and provide evidence of household income.</p>
<p>You will not be eligible for the college bursary if your household income is above £30,000 per annum unless there is more than one sibling studying at Ashton Sixth Form College or you are making a Category C application.</p>	

We cannot accept online applications. Applications must be submitted in paper form and must be accompanied by **FULL** supplementary evidence copies, as requested.

Incomplete Applications

Please ensure that your completed application form is submitted with **ALL SUPPORTING EVIDENCE** we have requested. We cannot process your application without the evidence required and this will almost certainly lead to delays in payments or missing closing deadlines. **Please do not send original documents.** We **do not have the facility to photocopy** these and they will be returned to you for photocopying which will delay your application and may mean you will miss the **first closing deadline**.

Parents/ Guardians and Means tested benefits

Receipt of bursary funding does **not** affect receipt of other means-tested benefits paid to families, such as Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance, Child Benefit, Working Tax Credit, Housing Benefit or, generally, Universal Credit (the Universal Credit section of this document contains more detail about this benefit).

Bursary Payments

Bursary payments will be made by BACS where in-kind payments cannot be made. The College can also stop Bursary payments if you do not adhere to the conditions of your Learning Agreement with regard to progress, attitude or behaviour. All decisions in respect to how a bursary is delivered to a student is completely at the college's discretion and can be changed at any time.

Reasons why Bursary may be withheld

Bursary payments are dependent upon **adherence to the conditions laid out in the College Learning Agreement** especially in relation to behaviour, attitude and punctuality.

Appeals

If you believe that the decision regarding your Bursary application is incorrect, you should put in a Letter of Appeal to the **Bursary Appeals Committee or Victoria Clough, Assistant Principal - Engagement and Achievement at the college address**. You will receive a decision on your appeal within two weeks of our receipt of the appeal. If you are still unhappy with the decision, you should use the college's usual Complaints Procedure.

Future changes to the Bursary Scheme

As the Bursary Scheme is always evolving, we monitor closely its implementation for consistency, fairness, appropriateness and impact. Where we feel that improvements can be made, we will make the necessary changes at appropriate times during the academic year.

Please make sure all documentation and supporting evidence copies are supplied. There are NO PHOTOCOPYING FACILITIES available so please supply copies, if original documentary evidence is submitted, they cannot be returned and may cause a delay in processing the documentation and you missing the deadline. No backdated payments will be made to students missing the deadline.

Please note that the Bursary is paid in arrears where monetary payments are made. The College may substitute travel passes, meal vouchers or other non-monetary items at the Colleges discretion.

Privacy Notice for Students and Parents – ASFC Bursary Scheme

This privacy notice explains how the college use your personal information. If you have any questions about the way we use your personal data, please contact our Data Protection Officer on 0161 330 2330 or by email to c.j.haigh@spt.ac.uk. Your personal information is used by us to exercise our official authority to provide education services across the trust according to the provision of the Academies Act 2010. We also have requirements placed on us by the Department for Education (DfE), and the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). The legal basis which we often rely on for processing your personal data is to perform our public task. We may also rely on the following lawful bases, and you will be informed if this is the case:

- Your consent – where this is relied upon, you can ask to remove your consent at any time by contacting us.
- A contractual obligation
- A legal obligation
- To protect a person's vital interest

For the purposes of relevant data protection legislation, Stamford Park Trust are the data controller for personal data processed by our academies.

What information do we collect about you?

We collect information from you when you submit an application to the ASFC Bursary Scheme. The information we collect includes your name, address, contact details, date of birth and information about your household and personal circumstances.

How will we use information about you?

We will use the information you provide to process your application for the ASFC Bursary Scheme. We also pass information to relevant government bodies and agencies as part of our mandatory duty. The Education and Skills Funding Agency publish a privacy notice explaining how they use your personal information and this can be viewed on their website at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/esfa-privacy-notice/esfa-privacy-notice>. Your information will be securely destroyed after it is no longer required for these purposes, in accordance with our retention policy. You can request a copy of this policy from the college's data protection officer.

Special Categories of Information

The college will also ask you to provide information relating to your residency and nationality, and information relating to benefits your household may receive which may be relevant to your health and other personal circumstances. This information is

used to assess your eligibility under the categories of the bursary, and to ensure that we meet our obligations under the Equality Duty.

If you would like to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Please note that all documentation sent into us by students / parents is treated confidentially and all files are kept in locked cupboards. For further information on how we use your data, your data rights, and how to contact us and the Information Commissioner's Office, please see our website at <https://www.asfc.ac.uk/about-us/privacy-notice>

This policy applies to :	All Bursary / Free College Meals students
Author/Department:	Bursary Administrator
Area/Person responsible:	Chief Financial Officer
Date approved:	June 2025
Related Documents/ Policies:	
Date of Next Review:	May 2026

Date of most recent review:	June 2025
Changes made:	Updated Assistant Principal details.

The Equality Act 2010: The Equality Duty

The College has a duty to consider the needs of all individuals in our day-to-day work – in shaping policy, in delivering services and in relation to our employees. The Equality Duty has three aims, which require the College to have due regard to the need to:

- **Eliminate unlawful discrimination**, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- **Advance equality of opportunity** between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and
- **Foster good relations** between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.