



BOA Stage & Screen Production Academy

16 – 19 Bursary Policy

Last review date:	September 2023		
Next review date:	September 2024		
Statutory Policy:	Yes		
Date	Version	Reason for change	Review
17.02.23	2	Academic dates Point 13	Annually

1. This policy is in line with the ESFA 16-19 Bursary Fund Guide for 2023/24. The government gives the Academy a fund to help 16-19 year olds in most financial need with the cost of study. This fund is split into two types of bursary:

- Vulnerable student bursary of £1,200 per year

- Discretionary bursary of up to £850 per year

Eligibility

2. To be eligible to receive the 16-19 Bursary in the 2023-2024 academic year, the student must be aged 16 or over and under 19 on 31st August 2023. Where a student turns 19 during their programme of study, they can continue to be supported to the end of the academic year in which they turn 19, or to the end of their programme of study, whichever is sooner.

Vulnerable Student Bursary

3. This is paid to students from the following defined vulnerable groups:
 - Young people in care
 - Care leavers
 - Young people in receipt of income support (IS) or Universal Credit (UC) in their own name
 - Young people in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payment (PIP) in their own right as well as Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or UC in their own right
4. Eligibility for a Vulnerable Bursary must be proven by relevant official documentation:
 - letters from social services relating to young people in care or leaving care;
 - letter confirming eligibility of nominated benefits above from relevant local authority.
5. Payments will be made termly: in September, November, January, March, May and July of each academic year in which the student is eligible. Should circumstances alter during the year, such that a student is no longer eligible, the second payment will be withheld. Applications should be made by the end of September for the first payment, although applications will be considered throughout the academic year.
6. If a student becomes eligible for the Vulnerable Bursary mid-year, s/he must contact the Academy Pastoral Manager immediately and give notice that s/he wishes to be considered for a Vulnerable Bursary payment. Late applications will be considered at any point throughout the academic year, although any payment awarded will be pro rata dependent on when the student became eligible and the course length remaining, at a maximum rate of £40 per week.

Discretionary Bursary

7. This **may** be awarded to students who are experiencing financial difficulty. The main criterion the Academy uses to determine eligibility for this award, is eligibility for free school meals, as confirmed by the student's payment authority. However, the Academy will consider applications from students who are not eligible for free school meals that can demonstrate their household earning a gross annual income of £25,000 or less as evidenced by receipt of benefit and/or P60, Tax Credit Award notice or evidence of self-employment income.
8. The actual bursary paid will depend on the funds available each year and the number of applicants to the fund.

9. Payments will be made termly: in mid-November, mid-February and mid-April of each academic year in which the student is eligible. Should circumstances alter during the year, such that a student is no longer eligible, the second or third payment will be withheld. Applications should be made by the end of September for the first payment, although applications will be considered throughout the academic year.
10. If a student becomes eligible for the Discretionary Bursary mid-year, s/he must contact the Academy Pastoral Support Manager immediately and give notice that s/he wishes to be considered for a discretionary bursary payment. Late applications will be considered at any point throughout the academic year, although any payment awarded will be pro rata dependent on when the student became eligible and the course length remaining, at a maximum rate of £20 per week.
11. Applications from students in receipt of either the Vulnerable Bursary or the Discretionary Bursary may apply for further support in respect of payment of:
 - exam resit fees
 - travel to open days
 - course-related trips
12. This funding will be considered on a case-by-case basis, subject to there being funds available. Eligibility for these payments must be demonstrated in writing giving clear justification.
13. For the 2022/2023 academic year the Academy can use its bursary fund to provide emergency food support to individuals in cases of severe hardship. This support is provided for students that the Academy consider to be in real need, without having to carry out the usual checks on household income. We expect this to only apply to a very small number of 16 to 19 students

Data and Confidentiality

14. The Academy will treat all information supplied under this policy as confidential and subject to the usual care and security measures taken by the Finance Office, including disposing of material no longer required at the end of a student's time at the Academy.

Conditions and monitoring

15. Vulnerable Bursary: payment of the six instalments is subject to maintaining at least 95% attendance in all lessons and registrations timetabled and attending all examinations entered. This will be monitored by the Pastoral Manager.
16. Discretionary Bursary: payment of the three instalments is subject to maintaining at least 95% attendance in all lessons and registrations timetabled and attending all examinations entered. This will be monitored by the Pastoral Manager. The discretionary bursary can also be withdrawn if independent study, work ethic or behaviour causes concern to the extent that the Principal has to intervene, which would occur if students failed to heed formal warnings from the form tutor or subject teachers.

Payments

17. Payments of the vulnerable and discretionary bursaries will be via bank transfer directly to the student. In the case of applications from students in receipt of both the Vulnerable Bursary and

the Discretionary Bursary for further support, payment will be in kind and will entail a transfer of funds from the bursary fund to the relevant department (examinations, trips). The exception is in the case of travel to open days, where payment will be via bank transfer to the student and will be authorised following receipt of a valid travel or fuel receipt and proof of participation at the open day event.

Decisions and appeals

18. Vulnerable Bursaries are only available to students in a narrow range of circumstances. If the external authorities do not deem the student to be eligible for the relevant benefit or designation, the student must appeal to the relevant local authority and resubmit an application to the Academy once eligibility has been demonstrated.
19. The funds available for Discretionary Bursaries will vary from year to year. Students are only eligible for a bank transfer payment if they are deemed eligible for free school meals or have proven hardship as evidenced by household documentation. They can appeal to the Principal over their proven household hardship or appeal to their local authority over eligibility for free school meals. If a student has launched such an appeal the Academy must be notified so that bursary money can be set aside pending the result of the appeal.
20. The Assistant Principal: Pastoral will make the decision as to whether a student meets the attendance or behaviour criteria set out in this policy. If a decision is made to withhold a payment the student will be notified in writing by the usual payment date.
21. Appeals against decisions made regarding attendance, behaviour or proven financial hardship should be made in writing to the Principal. The appeal must be lodged within 5 working days of the decision letter being received and a decision regarding the appeal must be reached and communicated within 5 working days of the appeal letter being received.

Fraud

22. If the Academy is notified by the relevant funding agency that a student has been found to be fraudulent in their claim for free school meals or for income support, Universal Credit or Employment and Support Allowance, Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence payment, then the Academy will:
 - cease all further payments.
 - take steps to recover any money paid out under this fraudulent claim, including legal measures.
23. Students claiming any benefit fraudulently should also expect to be prosecuted by the paying agency in question.