

Harton Academy 16 – 19 Bursary

Aims

Harton Academy aims to:

- Have clear and transparent processes for the use and allocation of 16 to 19 bursary funds
- Make clear to parents and students the type of support which is available and the means of applying for it

Guidance

This policy is based on advice from the Department of Education (DfE). The 16-19 Bursary Fund provides financial support to help students overcome specific financial barriers to participation so they can remain in education. The fund is money given to post-16 providers by the Department of Education (DfE).

Many will experience financial difficulties with costs such as transport or equipment. Eligibility is based on the student meeting residency requirements and being on a means-tested or disability benefit.

The Governing Body

The Governing Body has overall responsibility for approving the 16 to 19 bursary fund policy, but can delegate this to a committee, an individual councillor or the Head Teacher. The Governing body also has overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy. At Harton Academy, responsibility for approving the 16 to 19 bursary fund policy has been delegated to the Head Teacher.

The Director of Sixth Form, as directed by the Head Teacher, along with the CFO is responsible for ensuring staff are familiar with the 16 to 19 bursary fund policy, and that it is being applied fairly and consistently.

Director of 6th Form / CFO

The Director of 6th Form and CFO are responsible for implementing the 16 to 19 bursary fund policy consistently.

Parents

Parents are expected to notify Director of Sixth Form of any concerns or queries regarding the 16 to 19 bursary fund policy. This can be done via the Bursary email, bursary@hartonacademy.co.uk

How we use the Bursary Fund

Support is available to eligible students from the 16 to 19 bursary fund. The fund is intended to support student's aged 16 to 19 in overcoming specific barriers to participation so they can remain in education.

There are two types of 16 to 19 bursaries:

1. Vulnerable bursary (defined vulnerable groups - high priority) who could receive a bursary of up to £1,200
2. Discretionary bursaries which institutions award using policies they set, in line with funding rules

Students who wish to apply for support from the bursary fund should complete and submit an application form by the initial deadline of 2 October 2026. All applicants should be aware that no claim is guaranteed and that claims can be made at any point in the academic year should family circumstances change.

Please see the Sixth Form website to access the application form.

We use the fund to provide students with financial support for example:

- Transport
- Books
- Equipment
- Field trips and other course-related costs
- The costs of attending university interviews and open days
- Business wear clothing

Eligibility criteria

A student must be aged 16 or over but under 19 on 31 August 2026 to be eligible for help from the bursary fund in academic year 2026 to 2027.

The only exceptions for the discretionary bursary are students aged 19 and who are continuing on a study programme they began aged 16 to 18 (19+ continuers) or students aged 19 or over who have an Education, Health, and Care (EHC) Plan.

These 2 groups of aged 19+ students can receive a discretionary bursary while they continue to attend education (in the case of a 19+ continuer, this must be the same programme they started before they turned 19), as long as their eligibility continues, and you consider they need the support to continue their participation.

Students aged 19 or over are not eligible for bursaries for vulnerable groups.

Students must meet the residency criteria in [DfE funding rules](#) for post-16 provision. This document also specifies the evidence institutions must see and retain for audit to confirm eligibility for post-16 funding (and therefore meet the residency criteria for bursary fund eligibility).

Harton Academy specifies the evidence the school must see to confirm eligibility.

The Senior Leadership Team reserves the right to award discretionary bursaries in other, exceptional personal circumstances.

Bursary	Amount	Criteria for eligibility
Bursaries for young people in defined vulnerable groups	Variable, based upon assessed need. <i>There is a possibility of no award or a limited award</i>	• in care* • care leavers • student is themselves receiving Income Support (IS), or Universal Credit (UC) because they are financially supporting themselves or

		financially supporting themselves and someone who is dependent on them and living with them, such as a child or partner • receiving Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payments (PIP) in their own right as well as Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or UC in their own right
Discretionary bursaries	Variable, based upon assessed need. <i>There is a possibility of no award or a limited award</i>	• Students with a household income of less than £30,000 • Any other student experiencing financial hardship is encouraged to apply and will be supported based on needs assessment

Appropriate evidence includes:

Vulnerable Bursaries:

- For students who are in care or a care leaver, written confirmation of their current or previous looked-after status from the relevant local authority. This is the local authority that looks after them or provides their leaving care services. This could be a letter or an email but must be clearly from the local authority
- For students in receipt of Income Support or Universal Credit (UC), a copy of their Income Support or UC award notice. This must clearly state that the claim is in the student's name/confirm they are entitled to the benefits in their own right. The evidence must not state any conditions that prevent them from participating in further education or training. For students in receipt of UC, institutions must also see a tenancy agreement in the student's name, a child benefit receipt, children's birth certificates, utility bills and so on
- For students receiving UC/ESA and Disability Living Allowance and Personal Independence Payments, a copy of their UC claim from DWP. Evidence of receipt of Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment must also be provided.

In some cases, a young person might meet the eligibility criteria for a bursary for vulnerable groups but their financial needs are already met, they have no relevant costs or do not need the maximum award.

Discretionary bursaries

Discretionary bursaries can be awarded to anyone who is deemed to require financial assistance, based on the evidence provided. Whilst claims are encouraged at the start of the year there is a

recognition that family and personal circumstances change throughout the year. Families should contact the Director of 6th Form to discuss support requirements and eligibility.

The following evidence will be required for students in this group:

- A copy of entitlement to means-tested state benefit, or Tax Credit Award Notice confirming household income of less than £30,000 (we will take household income in conjunction with other factors, such as travel distance, number of dependent children per household, participation needs); or
- 3 to 6 months' worth of bank statements as evidence; or
- Three most recent monthly award statements for Universal Credit Applications

If a student's bursary is approved in Year 12, they do not need to reapply in Year 13 but we must obtain a signed and dated self-declaration form from the student to confirm that their household circumstances have not changed.

Students and their families need to be aware that giving false or incomplete information that leads to incorrect or overpayment may result in:

- future payments being stopped
- any incorrectly paid funds being recovered

This may also result in a referral to the police with the possibility of facing prosecution.

Allocation

All decisions about which students receive a discretionary bursary and how much bursary they receive are based on each student's individual circumstances and their actual financial need.

Once it is established who will be supported, the funds will need to be divided:

- Up to 5% of the fund will be held back to cover administrative costs
- Some funding will be held back for applicants who join later on in the year or whose personal circumstances change
- The allocation criteria will reflect the school's policies, practices and ethos
- Where a student is required to attend a subject related trip (e.g. Geography field trip) the appropriate amount can be deducted from the allocation
- The funding for High Priority students comes from the Student Bursary Support Service (SBSS) and is held centrally, so does not form part of the allocation set out above

Payment

Payments are awarded directly to individual students using the following process:

- Make in-kind payments, such as travel passes or books
- Make payments by BACS transfer to the student's bank account

Conditions for the receipt of bursary payments

Payments are conditional on students meeting the following conditions in relation to their standards of attendance and behaviour:

- Attendance above a certain amount (90%, not including authorised absences)
- Following our Sixth Form code of conduct

We reserve the right to take back money/equipment from students where it is not used for the reasons it was awarded or if attendance drops below the amount specified above. Attendance will be checked on a regular basis.

We will consider the impact of such an action on the individual student before taking a final decision to do so.

Appeals

Students have the right to appeal a decision. Students, or their parent/carer, will be required to put any appeal in writing within 21 days of receiving confirmation of an award or a rejection.

The letter should set out the reasons for the appeal, which must prove that the student has been wrongly assessed as falling outside the eligibility criteria, plus any further evidence to support the Appeal. It should be sent to bursary@hartonacademy.co.uk

The decision of the Appeals panel is final and will be given in writing within 14 days of the decision.

The Appeals panel will consist of:

- A member of the Sixth Form team
- A member of the Governing Body
- A member of the Senior Leadership Team

The Appeals panel meeting will be clerked by a member of the school's administrative/finance team.

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by the Director of Sixth Form annually, in line with the updated funding guidance released by DfE. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Governing Body. The Bursary Fund will be subject to internal audit and included within the audit schedule as per the guidelines