

To be reviewed every year

Title	Author	Approved By and Date		Review Date
Higher Education Bursary Policy	Steve Mulligan	Latest Update: SM	10 May 2021	1 May 2022
		Latest Update: SLT	18 May 2022	
Impact Assessment:				Oct 2020

To be reviewed at least every year

HIGHER EDUCATION BURSARY POLICY

PLEASE NOTE: This policy applies to people aged 18 or over undertaking a Level 4, 5 or 6 prescribed Higher Education programme.

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of the Higher Education Bursary is to:

- Assist students to overcome financial barriers in order to access higher education
- Support and retain these students
- Stimulate a positive attitude to learning.

Higher Education bursaries are available in addition to funding from national funding bodies and hardship funding.

THIS DOCUMENT SETS OUT HOW THE COLLEGE USES ITS HIGHER EDUCATION BURSARY ALLOCATION TO SUPPORT STUDENTS FINANCIALLY. GUIDANCE RELATING TO THE OTHER FUNDS IS AVAILABLE SEPARATELY FROM STUDENT SERVICES.

2.0 Statement of Principles

- Funding is based on financial need and additional factors affecting access to Higher Education
- Funding will be utilised fairly and consistently
- The process will be uncomplicated to understand and accessible to students
- The scheme is intended to maximise the number of students supported whilst offering appropriate funding for students to be able to access Higher Education, continue with their programme and achieve their intended outcome.

3.0 Statement of Practice

The student must have achieved satisfactory attendance, punctuality and academic performance.

4.0 Bursary Panel

The College Bursary Panel is set up to hear appeals from students who do not meet the eligibility criteria. It consists of:

- Student Support Manager (Chair)
- Assistant Director for Higher Education
- Student Support and Engagement Officer
- Relevant subject Programme Leader
- Named Governor/s with responsibility for Bursary Funding (for appeals only)

Three members of the Panel will normally be required for a decision to be made for an appeal; no member of the panel will have been involved in the original decision. The Chair may co-opt a suitable college manager to the Panel as required.

5.0 Eligibility

5.1 General Eligibility Criteria

Students will be assessed each academic year and must meet the eligibility criteria in any given year to qualify for a bursary in that year.

- Students must be aged 18 or over on the first day of their designated loans qualification.
- Students must be approved for a Student Loan by the Student Loans Company.
- Students must be enrolled to an eligible course. Awards will not be made to students who are not enrolled, or where an enrolment is pending
- Students must be able to demonstrate financial hardship. Evidence of income is required

The College reserves the right to make awards to students who appear to be outside the financial criteria, based on individual and exceptional circumstances

5.2 College priorities

In line with Office for Students (OfS), the college prioritises students from groups who are under-represented in Higher Education or disadvantaged:

- Students with mental health problems, Specific Learning Difficulties and/or an autism spectrum disorder such as Asperger Syndrome
- Carers
- Estranged young people
- Students from gypsy and Traveller communities
- Refugees
- Care leavers
- Students living in a household under £25,000

5.3 Repeating years of study

Students who are required to repeat all or a part of a year of study will not normally be considered for a bursary, however, they can apply for special consideration.

5.4 Topping up from foundation degree

Students who top up from a foundation degree will be considered for a bursary if they are charged fees of £7,320 (or pro-rated if part-time).

5.5 Students who have studied previously

Students who have previously studied a Higher Education course will not automatically be eligible for a bursary, however, if they are from an under-represented group or face disadvantage (particularly if they meet the college's priority list), they may apply for special consideration. This includes students who are studying for an equivalent or higher qualification and who are as such not eligible for funding from other sources. Such students must be able to demonstrate that they can pay their tuition fees.

6.0 Value of Awards

Student awards will be made based on their household income and their course-related costs. In most cases students will be expected to contribute towards their course-related costs but in extenuating

circumstances the College reserves the right to make awards to individual students who do not necessarily meet all the listed criteria or to pay 100% of the course-related costs.

7.0 Decision Making

The criteria identified in this document are guidelines to the decision-making process. In extenuating circumstances, the College reserves the right to make awards to individual students who do not necessarily meet any of the listed criteria, but can demonstrate significant barriers to their continuing education.

The funding available is limited and awards are not guaranteed. Students who apply after the budget has been allocated will not be made an award.

Full-time students will not need to provide evidence of their household income as this will be provided by Student Finance England. If students have not applied to Student Finance England they may need to provide evidence based on an individual basis. Both the student and their sponsor(s) will need to give consent to share information with the college when completing their student finance application to be assessed.

Part-time students who are eligible for maintenance funding will not need to provide evidence. Those who are not eligible for maintenance funding will be required to provide evidence of any relevant income if they are not eligible for maintenance funding.

7.1 Learning Support Assessment

Students with learning difficulties or disabilities will be assessed by the Additional Learning Support team for 'in learning' support e.g. teaching assistance or reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010

7.2 Assessment of Applications

All applications for funding will be considered by the eligibility criteria as laid out in this document. Every effort will be made to look at each application on its own merits. In extenuating circumstances, the College Bursary Panel reserve the right to make awards to individual students who do not necessarily meet all the listed criteria. The Panel will meet on a regular basis, or as the need arises; at least two members of the Panel will be required to make a decision.

The College aims to ensure that the funds available to support students are: -

- Distributed wisely and fairly
- Allocated according to individual need, considering each individuals' own circumstances
- Used to widen access to, and participation in, Higher Education
- Used to support priority groups as defined by the OfS and as appropriate to the local area

7.3 Notification

Students will normally be notified in writing of the outcome of their application within 28 days of submission. Students will normally be notified by email.

8.0 Payment

8.1 Payment dates

Bursaries will be paid as a one-off or termly depending on a student's course and situation.

Students who are on courses that require a significant up-front investment in equipment will be able to access their bursary in full after October half-term.

All other students will normally receive their bursary in equal payments during term 1 and term 2

8.2 Method of payment

Funding will normally be paid by BACS payments to the student.

8.3 Suspension of studies

Where a student suspends their studies, bursary payments will also be suspended. Students will then be reassessed when they resume.

8.4 Withdrawal from programme of studies

Where a student withdraws before receiving the full amount of their bursary, they will not normally receive any amount that has not already been paid. Students will not normally be required to repay any funds they have already received.

8.5 Transferring programmes within college

Students who transfer from one eligible programme in college to another will remain eligible for their bursary and any payments will be made in line with the agreed payment profile.

9.0 Appeals

All applicants have the right of appeal. Students who wish to appeal will need to write to the Student Support Manager, stating clearly the reasons for appeal and giving any additional details they think should be taken into consideration.

Appeals will be considered by members of the Funding Appeals Panel; no member of the Panel will have been involved in the original decision. The Chair of the Appeals Panel may co-opt a suitable College manager to sit on the Panel as required. Notification of the outcome of the appeal will be within 10 working days of the Panel meeting taking place.

Students who disagree with the outcome of the appeal and believe that their application has not been assessed in accordance with the policy can then follow the formal complaints procedure.

Students who remain unhappy with the outcome can then appeal to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA). Further details of the process can be found at <http://www.oiahe.org.uk/making-a-complaint-to-the-oia/oia-complaint-form.aspx>.

10.0 False or Fraudulent Claims

Where students are found to have intentionally given misleading or inaccurate information Selby College will claim back the award made. Providing false statements may result in the student being sanctioned in accordance with the Selby College Disciplinary Policy and/or prosecution.

In accordance with the College's Fraud Policy, a record will be made of fraudulent incidents, and subsequent actions taken. These incidents will be reported to the Senior Leadership Team both as they occur and through an annual report.

11.0 Equality and Diversity Statement

Selby College welcomes and celebrates equality and diversity. We believe that everyone should be treated equally and fairly regardless of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation and socio-economic background. We seek to ensure that no member of the

College community receives less favourable treatment on any of these grounds which cannot be shown to be justified.

This document is written with the above commitment, to ensure equality and diversity is at the centre of working life at Selby College.

12.0 Safeguarding Policy

Selby College recognises its moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of students. We work to provide a safe and welcoming environment where students are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow procedures to ensure our students receive effective support, protection and justice. Selby College expects Governors, staff and volunteers working on behalf of the college to share this commitment.

13.0 Fraud, Bribery & Corruption

The Fraud Act 2006 introduces a new offence of fraud, which can be committed in three ways:

- Fraud by false representation
- Fraud by failing to disclose
- Fraud by abuse of a position of trust

All offences occur where the act or omission is committed dishonestly and with intent to cause gain or loss. The gain or loss does not have to succeed, as long as there is intent.

The Bribery Act 2010 makes it a criminal offence to bribe or be bribed by another person by offering or requesting a financial or other advantage as a reward or incentive to perform a relevant function or activity improperly performed.

Further information, including how to raise concerns, is included within the Anti-Fraud and Anti-Bribery & Anti-Corruption Policies.

14.0 General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

Personal data held by Selby College is subject to General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). For information about your rights under GDPR you can see our Privacy Notice – www.selby.ac.uk/privacy.

15.0 Covid 19 Virus Precautions

Selby College has attempted, so far as is reasonably practicable, to reduce the risk exposure to staff and students from Covid 19. It is essential that government and college guidance is followed. Wherever possible a social distance of 2m should be maintained both indoors and outdoors. Anyone experiencing symptoms must seek a test and stay away from college.

This document is designed for viewing through Sharepoint. Printed copies, although permitted, are deemed uncontrolled. Please refer to Sharepoint for the latest version.