

# **FINANCIAL HELP FOR STUDENTS**



**FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE  
GUIDELINES  
2011/2012**

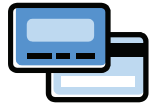
## Introduction




When you are planning your College course, it is important to consider how to manage your finances. This booklet aims to provide background information about financial help for which you may be eligible from the College or from other sources while you are a student.

## Full-Time Students

If you are aged 16 to 18 when your course commences, no course fees are payable for that year or subsequent years on the same course.



 If you are aged 19 or older when your course commences, you are a 'mature student' and will be liable for course fees. See the section **BENEFITS** for details of exemptions. Fees are payable at enrolment.

If you are studying towards your first level 2 qualification, or if you are aged between 19 and 24 years old and studying towards your first level 3 qualification, you may be eligible for a course fee remission. Please discuss this with our Admissions Team.

## Part-Time Students

Students aged 16-18 will be exempt from both course and exam/registration fees.

If you enrol on a part-time course you will be liable to pay course fees if you are 19 years or older. See the section on **BENEFITS** for details of exemptions.

Payment of fees can be arranged by instalments or by direct debit. Please discuss this option on enrolment.

## Other Course Costs

Remember that other costs are incurred while studying. Your course may involve field trips or residential trips, art materials, hair and beauty items, stationery, etc. You should be informed of the essential course costs relating to your course(s) on enrolment - **if not, ask**. You may be able to apply for help to pay essential course costs from the Discretionary Support Fund - forms will be available from the Student Support Centre.

All full-time students will be asked on enrolment to pay a £40 Student Resources Fee, which contributes to the cost of learning materials, handouts, access to textbooks, CD-ROMs, DVDs etc.

Examination and registration fees are payable by all part-time and full-time students aged 19 and older. Students aged 16-18 will be liable to pay fees for retakes.

## Benefits

**PLEASE CLARIFY YOUR POSITION REGARDING BENEFITS WITH YOUR LOCAL DEPARTMENT OF WORK & PENSIONS BEFORE ENROLLING ON A COURSE.**

It is possible to claim certain benefits while studying, depending on your circumstances.

You may be exempt from paying course fees if you receive (or are the unwaged dependant of someone in receipt of the following):

- Job Seekers Allowance (income based)
- Employment Support Allowance

You will not be exempt from examination fees, registration fees or other costs of studying. You should produce current evidence of benefit entitlement on enrolment. Please discuss this with our Admissions Team on 01458 844444.

## Income Support

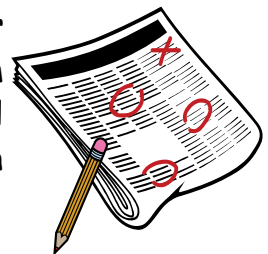
You may study full time without losing Income Support if you are:

- Disabled
- Are under 21 years old and 'estranged' from your parents or with no one acting in place of your parents and you started your course before you were 19 years old
- The lone parent of a child under 7 years of age for whom you are responsible for and who lives in the same household as you

While studying, you may be asked to complete a questionnaire regarding your benefit claim. If you need help completing the form, please contact Mandy Greville, the College Financial Advisor, in the Student Support Centre.

## Job Seekers Allowance (JSA)

You can study while receiving JSA if you are studying on a part-time course (as evidenced by your Learning Agreement). You must continue to pass all the basic rules for JSA including being available for work and actively looking for work. Should a suitable job be offered to you, you must be able to rearrange your study around employment or leave your course. Seek guidance from Mandy Greville, the College Financial Advisor, in the Student Support Centre on this matter.



## Housing Benefit & Council Tax Benefit

Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit is claimed from your local District or Borough Council and may be available if you:

- Claim Pension Credit, Employment and Support Allowance, Income support or Job Seekers Allowance
- Are disabled, in some instances
- On a low income

Full-time students under 21 years old may be eligible if they are not on a higher education course and started their course before they were 19 years old

Contact your local Council for advice or visit [www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk)



## Council Tax Exemptions

If you require evidence that you are a full-time student for the purposes of Council Tax, please call in to the CIS Office on the ground floor of B Block or send a written request to the Data Request Administrator in the CIS Office stating your name, address, date of birth, course name and start/end dates.

**PLEASE CLARIFY YOUR POSITION REGARDING BENEFITS WITH YOUR LOCAL DEPARTMENT OF WORK & PENSIONS BEFORE ENROLLING ON A COURSE.**

## Discretionary Support Fund (DSF)

Strode College manages the Discretionary Support Fund (DSF) to help students who are, or whose families are, on a low income or have a particular financial difficulty. Financial help, funded by the Young People's Learning Agency and the Skills Funding Agency, is available for all students aged 16 years or older, studying a course of further education at Strode College, whether they study on a full-time or part-time basis.

Help can be offered for the essential costs of studying including transport and childcare expenses but **NOT** general living expenses.

Once a completed application form has been submitted together with all of the required supporting evidence, we will endeavour to inform you of the outcome of your application within 15 College working days.

Students in receipt of an Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) or Adult Learning Grant (ALG) are not eligible for financial assistance from the DSF.

Those students using Career Development Loans may receive limited additional help from the DSF, if eligible.

For further information about Discretionary Support Funds contact Mandy Greville in the Strode College Student Support Centre on 01458 844546 for an application form.



## 16-19 Bursary

The 16-19 Bursary is a pot of money given to the College by the Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA). It is a scheme to help the most vulnerable 16-19 year olds continue in full-time education. The scheme is made up of two parts:-

- A Guaranteed Payment Scheme
- A Discretionary Support Fund

It is administered by the College and receipt of the bursary is conditional on the learner meeting expected standards of behaviour, attendance and quality of work.



### 16-19 Bursary - Guaranteed Payment

Young people in vulnerable groups - those in care or care leavers; those in receipt of Income Support; young people in receipt of Employment Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance —are eligible to receive a guaranteed bursary of £1200. The College has the flexibility to pay more to those who need it.

### 16-19 Bursary—Discretionary Support Fund

Students from low income families can apply to the Discretionary Support Fund for financial assistance where there is genuine financial barriers to participation such as the costs of transport, materials and equipment.

## Transport to College

Parking is limited at Strode College, and we encourage all students to travel by public transport wherever possible.

Students travelling by bus are able to purchase a County Ticket Bus Pass from Somerset County Council (SCC). The cost for this is £535 for the 2011/2012 academic year and allows travel 7 days a week on First Bus services (with geographical restrictions) and home to college (and return) travel on other bus services. To apply, please download an application form from the SCC website [www.somerset.gov.uk](http://www.somerset.gov.uk).

For further information, advice and guidance on transport to and from College and the student bus pass scheme, please contact our Admissions team on 01458 844444

## Strode College Travel Bursary

All full time students old who buy a Somerset County Ticket bus pass will receive £100 from Strode College towards the cost of the ticket. There is no need to apply for this bursary, but bank details are required for reimbursement. Those students aged under 19 years old who are not entitled to an Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) in the 2011/2012 academic years and who have a family income below £25,000 (gross), will receive additional support of £200 towards the cost of the Somerset County Ticket bus pass. To apply for this additional support contact Mandy Greville, Financial Advisor, on 01458 844546 for an application form.

## Care to Learn

The aim of Care to Learn is to give financial support to teenage parents who want to continue their education or training and need help with the cost of their childcare and travel expenses. You can claim Care to Learn if you are younger than 20 and:

- Start a course of learning or training in a school, college or as a trainee with a work-based learner provider that receives some public funding
- Are caring for your own child(ren)
- Are living in England and
- Use a registered childcare provider.



A booklet produced by the Young People's Learning Agency, 'Care to Learn' is available from the Student Support Centre.

For further information or an application form, contact the Care to Learn helpline, 0800 121 8989, or the Strode College Student Support Centre on 01458 844546.



## Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)

This scheme is now closed to new applications.

All students who successfully applied for an Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) in 2009-2010 will continue to receive payments at the same level (ie £10, £20 or £30 per week) in 2011-2012.

Students who applied for an EMA in 2010-2011 and were eligible to receive £30 a week will be eligible for £20 a week in 2011-2012.

Students who applied in 2010/2011 and were eligible for £20 or £10 EMA per week will no longer receive any EMA.



## Adult Learning Grant (ALG)

This scheme is now closed to new applications.

All students who successfully applied for an Adult Learning Grant (ALG) in 2010/2011 and are continuing onto the second year of their course in 2011/2012 will continue to receive ALG until the end of their course in this academic year.

## Student Loans

Students applying through UCAS for a university level course will also need to apply for financial support.

Go to [www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance](http://www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance) to register. Parents/step parents who live with you may need to do the same.

For specific questions about applying and assessment, contact Student Finance England helpline on 0845 300 5090.

The College Careers Team (Tel 01458 844409) can answer broader questions on the level of support you can expect.

Useful website addresses

[www.aimhigher.ac.uk](http://www.aimhigher.ac.uk)

<http://bursarymap.direct.gov.uk>

[www.nusonline.co.uk](http://www.nusonline.co.uk)

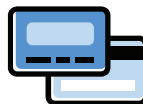


## Access to Learning Funds

The Access to Learning Fund provides discretionary financial assistance for students to help them access and remain in higher education - particularly those students who need financial help to meet extra costs that cannot be met from other sources of support. It is available to full-time and part-time Higher Education students. For further information contact Strode College Student Support Centre on 01458 844546.

## Student Bank Accounts

If you are looking for a bank account, the main high street banks and building societies offer various incentives, particularly for student accounts. It is worth comparing the accounts on offer so that you choose the right one for you.



## Professional and Career Development Loans

These loans are available for students older than 18 on full or part-time vocational courses for up to two years. You can borrow £300 to £10,000 to cover 80% of your course fees and other related expenses (including living expenses). The Young People's Learning Agency pays the interest on the loan until the course ends; you then pay a fixed rate. Please contact the College Financial Advisor for further information or contact the Professional and Career Development Loan information line 0800 585 505 for an application pack.



## Educational Trusts and Charities

In some circumstances you may be eligible for help from Trusts and Charities. Please contact the College Financial Advisor for details of useful websites.

## Income Tax Exemption

Full-time students who work during College holidays may be exempt from paying Income Tax. Form P38 (S) is available from the Student Support Centre.

## Other Information



Stationery, art materials, College clothing, memory sticks and many other useful items can be purchased at competitive prices from the College Shop, located in A Block near the Refectory. You can also buy print credits there and have photocopying, binding and laminating done by the shop staff. Educational Visits are paid for at the College Shop. You may be asked for your student ID or proof of enrolment.

## Checklist

- Am I eligible for Discretionary Support Funds?
- Can I claim benefits while studying?
- Do I have to pay course fees?
- What costs does the course involve? Clothing? Materials? Stationery? Books? Trips?
- Will I have to pay an awarding body registration fees or exam fees?
- Will I receive a Student Loan (HE students only)?
- Do I have enough income to complete the course?

For information, advice and guidance please contact Mandy Greville in the Student Support Centre

## Useful Websites

[www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/index.htm](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/index.htm)

[www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/UniversityAndHigherEducation/StudentFinance/index.htm](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/UniversityAndHigherEducation/StudentFinance/index.htm)

[www.bis.gov.uk/studentfinance](http://www.bis.gov.uk/studentfinance)

[www.nus.org.uk](http://www.nus.org.uk)

[www.adviceguide.org.uk](http://www.adviceguide.org.uk)



## Further Information

### Discretionary Support Funds, Financial queries

Student Support Centre 01458 844545

Mandy Greville, Financial Advisor 01458 844546

### EMA/ALG Queries

Paulette Sibley, EMA Co-ordinator 01458 844472

### Career, Higher Education & Adult Guidance

Learning Centre 01458 844410

Richard Frapwell & Chris Harvey 01458 844409

### Transport

Admissions Team 01458 844444

### Exams

Exams Team 01458 844413

**This information is correct at the time of going to press  
(28/7/2011).**

**We cannot accept any liability for any inaccuracies.**

2011/2012 Financial Help for Students.



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