

Loans Bursary Fund 2019-2020 – Guidance for Applicants

This is a discretionary and limited fund and meeting the eligibility criteria does not guarantee an award, which depends on available funds and financial need.

Who can apply?

The Loans Bursary Fund is aimed at helping vulnerable and disadvantaged learners to overcome barriers which may prevent them from taking part or continuing in learning and who are funding their learning with an Advanced Learning Loan. If you are using an Advanced Learning Loan to fund your course and meet one of the criteria below you may be able to get financial assistance from the Loans Bursary:

- Live alone or with partner, with household income of under £32,000 (tier depends on household income), or
- Live with parent and receive a personal income (tier depends on your income), or
- Live with parent and you have no income, or
- Are receiving benefits as listed below

Benefits include:

- Income Support
- Job Seekers Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Working Tax Credit Run On
- 'Guarantee' element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (income under £16,190)
- Universal Credit (£7400 pa max)

How to apply

You need to complete an application form which is available at www.boston.ac.uk, from Learner Services at the Rochford Campus or receptions at any other campus. If you are using the application form from the college website you will need to print it. Please be aware that if your application is incomplete for any reason it may be returned to you and any payments you may be awarded will be delayed.

You must:

- Complete **all** the sections
- Provide photocopies of evidence of your household income.
- Make sure the form is **signed** and returned with evidence to Learner Services

What evidence do I need to provide?

You will need to provide evidence of your Advanced Learning Loan approval. Additionally, if you are claiming Tax Credits or Universal Credits, acceptable evidence is:

- Full Tax Credit Award notice for 2019/2020
- Universal Credit Award notice for the last 3 months

if not you will need to provide a selection from the following showing all household income:

- Current wage slips – your most recent 6 weekly slips or 3 monthly slips
- Benefit letters – must be the latest letters and relate to the period from April 2019
- Pension credit letters – must be the latest letters and relate to the period from April 2019
- Certified profit and loss accounts for the self-employed
- P60

What help can I get?

Support levels vary depending upon your income and our available funds. Please see below for the level of support that you may be awarded based on your income and financial need.

Tier 1 Income less than £16,190	childcare, transport costs, food credit and, when not covered by Loan, books, equipment, uniform and trips
Tier 2 Income £16,191 to £23,000	childcare, transport costs, food credit and, when not covered by Loan, books, equipment and uniform
Tier 3 Income £ 23,001 to £32,000	childcare <u>and</u> transport costs

Transport costs support options - we will only support for the most cost-effective method of travel

- Local bus company smartcard or voucher issued by Learner Services as appropriate
- Bank refund of bus or rail tickets for each day you are at college
- Monthly rail ticket paid by LS and collected from Learner Services as appropriate
- Motor mileage allowance of 10p per mile for one return journey per timetabled college day

Childcare costs are paid directly to your childcare provider in arrears upon presentation of an invoice once authorised by Head of Learner Services. Alternatively you can pay them in full and claim a percentage refund from us by bringing in your receipt. We pay at a rate of 80% if you receive any of the above-mentioned benefits or 50% if not, to a maximum of £100 per week.

Books, equipment, uniform and, for Tier 1, trip costs when not covered by your Loan as advised to us by the curriculum area in which you study. Please tick the appropriate box in section 8 of the application form. We may only award a contribution up to the value advised by the curriculum.

Food credit of £2.75 per day on the cashless catering system which can be spent in the college diners. Equivalent bank payments will be made weekly for those at Spalding and SNMC. Food Credit will only be accessible using the cashless catering facility in college. Credit will only be available on days when you are timetabled to be in college. Unused credit does not carry forward and is removed at the end of each day. It is important that you check your Food Credit balance before selecting your food from the catering outlets.

UCAS application fees and university visit costs paid as a contribution

Can I make an appeal with regard to my award decision?

If you feel that the decision not to make an award from the bursary, or that your actual award is unfair you can appeal in writing to the Head of Learner Services, Boston College, Skirbeck Road, Boston.

Other important information

Your Bursary payment is dependent upon you having an attendance level of 90% or over and meeting course requirements. If you fail to maintain these requirements your Bursary payments may be affected.

We will let you know about any award from the Loans Bursary Fund via your student email account. You need to remember to check this regularly.

These guidelines can be applied flexibly to support the needs of individual learners.

To qualify students must be participating in provision that is subject to inspection by a public body that assures quality (e.g. Ofsted).

If you have any further questions, please contact: **Learner Services Info Desk 01205 313218.**