

# R U N S H A W C O L L E G E

**POLICY TITLE:** Adult Skills Fund

**APPROVED BY:** Senior Management Team

**AUTHOR:** Clare Quin/ Camilla Gregory

**POLICY OWNER:** Andrea Neild

**POSITION:** Assistant Principal

**VERSION:** 17

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## 1 Introduction

This policy defines the eligibility for, allocation and administration of Learner Support Funds in line with Department for Education (DfE) guidelines.

## 2 Scope

The policy applies to students aged 19 years or over on Further Education courses at Runshaw College.

## 3 Purpose

Learner Support Funds are to be used to assist students who may have difficulty in accessing, staying on and completing their course because of financial hardship.

## 4 Definitions

DfE – Department for Education

LSF – Learner Support Funds allocated to the College by the DfE

FEE – Free Early Education

## 5 Procedures

### 5.1 Eligibility for LSF assistance

#### 5.1.1 To be eligible for LSF assistance a student must:

- a) be an enrolled student\* aged 19 or over on 31 August 2025 on a Further Education course (20+ if applying for funding towards childcare).
- b) have completed an on-line application form for assistance
- d) show evidence of income, and childcare costs,
- e) be attending directly funded DfE provision
- g) meet the residency eligibility criteria set out in the Adult skills fund funding rules 2025-26

- 5.1.2 Students must evidence their household income to be eligible for this support. The threshold for support is a household income of less than £40000.
- 5.1.3 Students who are approved will be eligible for assistance towards costs that will support the need to attend your course or study, that are not covered by your course fees. This could include travel costs; UCAS fees, essential course equipment, laptop loans and WIFI plus support towards the cost of trips that are essential to the completion of your course.
- 5.1.4 With the exception of those aged 19-23 undertaking their first full level 3 qualification, students enrolled on an FE course at Level 3, 4, 5 or 6 and who are aged 19+ when their course starts are **not** eligible for LSF – a separate 19+ Advanced Learner Loans Bursary is available.

## 5.2 **Childcare**

Students aged under 20 at the time of enrolment will be eligible for childcare support from Care to Learn and will not be supported by LSF.

- 5.2.1 LSF may only be used to fund childcare that is registered in accordance with the Children Act 1989.
- 5.2.2 Students will only be eligible for childcare payments if they have a dependent child aged under 15 (16 for children with disabilities) for which they provide care AND they satisfy the general eligibility conditions above.
- 5.2.3 Funding will only be considered for timetabled college days or placement days if they form an essential part of the course.
- 5.2.4 Students who choose to take holidays during term time will not have their childcare funded for that period of absence.
- 5.2.5 The student must not have a partner who can care for the child(ren) on the day(s) when they attend timetabled lessons. If both adults are students, payment will only be made when both attend lessons.
- 5.2.6 Students applying for childcare funding must both satisfy the above eligibility criteria and additionally submit evidence of their childcare costs.
- 5.2.7 If childcare funding is available from another source, for example Nursery Education Grant, Tax Credits, students must access that funding first and will not be double funded.
- 5.2.8 If students have extra hours on placement as part of their course, then additional help may be available on production of evidence from the course tutor. Additional help for exam times may also be considered, on production of an exam timetable or confirmation from the course tutor.

## 5.3 **LSF Committee**

The LSF Committee will comprise of the Head of Student Services (or in his/her absence any other suitable nominee of the Assistant Principal) and one other middle manager. The Student Finance & Welfare Adviser (or in his/her absence any other suitable nominee of the Student Services Manager) will advise the Committee.

## **5.4 Allocation of LSF**

- 5.4.1 The Student Finance & Welfare Adviser will decide on 'a first come first served' basis whether or not to award LSF assistance according to the eligibility criteria above. Any applications not meeting the eligibility criteria will be referred to the LSF Committee.
- 5.4.2 In allocating funds the LSF Committee will give priority to:
- a) students aged between 19 and 23 without a Level 2 qualification
  - b) students aged between 19 and 23 studying their first full Level 3 qualification
  - c) students who are economically or socially disadvantaged such as those on benefits or a low income
- 5.4.3 All LSF allocations will be made in accordance with the College's Equality & Diversity Policy.
- 5.4.4 90% of the LSF will be available for ordinary allocation. Funds will be allocated according to the eligibility above. Once available funds have been paid no other applications can be considered.
- 5.4.5 Of the remaining 10%, 5% will be held for emergency payments and 5% will be allocated to administration costs.
- 5.4.6 Notification of LSF awards will normally be made in writing within 21 working days of receipt of a completed application and enrolment.
- 5.4.7 We will contribute 85% towards childcare assistance up to a maximum annual allocation of £3,500 per student for each child, total maximum of £7,000 per student each year. Payments will be made monthly to the student, as the parent/guardian, subject to students meeting the attendance criteria and on completion of the nursery confirmation form. Funding will be paid one month in advance. Reductions will be made in the following month's payment based upon attendance levels of the previous month.
- 5.4.8 Students will be able to apply for assistance with transport costs (based on 40p per mile for their own vehicle) up to an annual limit of £400 per student. Payments will be made at the start of each term by bank transfer into the student's bank account once enrolment and attendance have been confirmed and a transport claim has been approved.

## **6 Emergencies**

Emergency applications may be made in exceptional and urgent circumstances through Student Services. Such applications should be made using the LSF application form and submitted to any member of the LSF Committee. Any two members of the Committee may sign the form to signify approval of the emergency payment. In doing so, they will take account of the eligibility criteria above.

## **7 IT Access**

- 7.1 LSF students who do not have access to a suitable device may be loaned a laptop. The device must be returned in good condition at the end of the course. Failure to meet the conditions of the loan will result in the student being liable for repair or replacement costs.

## **8 Conditions for receipt of LSF**

- 8.1 Students awarded LSF assistance must agree to abide by Runshaw College's terms and conditions, including the monitoring of attendance at College and notifying the College if they finish courses early.
- 8.2 Students receiving LSF assistance must disclose any change of circumstance during their course that may affect their LSF eligibility.
- 8.3 If a student in receipt of LSF assistance leaves before completing their course, they may be required to repay all or part of their LSF assistance.
- 8.4 Any books or equipment bought by the LSF remain the property of Runshaw College and must be returned if students leave their course early
- 8.5 Students must inform the Department for Work and Pensions about any learner support they are receiving.

## **9 Appeals**

- 9.1 Appeals against the outcome of any application should be made in writing within 10 working days of receiving a decision and should state fully the grounds of appeal. Appeals should be addressed to: Andrea Neild, Assistant Principal, Runshaw College, Langdale Road, Leyland, PR25 3DQ.

In hearing the appeal, the Assistant Principal will have regard to the eligibility criteria above.

- 9.2 Responses to appeals will be made, in writing, within 10 working days. The appeal decision is final. Please note appeals cannot be considered where a refusal has been made due to the funds being exhausted.

## **10 Implementation**

- 10.1 The Assistant Principal will oversee this policy.
- 10.2 A variety of methods will be used to publicise the LSF to staff and students.

## **11 Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually in line with DfE guidelines.

## **12 Data Protection**

All personal data processed by Runshaw College is maintained in compliance with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. If you have any questions or concerns about the College's collection, use, or disclosure of personal information, please email the College's Data Protection Officer:

[DataProtectionOfficer@runshaw.ac.uk](mailto:DataProtectionOfficer@runshaw.ac.uk).

Further information can be found by visiting <https://www.runshaw.ac.uk/college-policies/>