

# HE Bursaries and Hardship Fund Policy and Procedure 2023/2024

Myerscough College and University Centre has clear criteria under which is administers and distributes funds from the Higher Education Bursary and Hardship Fund for all HE students, subject to meeting eligibility criteria as detailed in this policy.

The College will ensure that all applications for the Bursary and Hardship Fund are considered on the same basis, irrespective of age, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, belief or faith.

This policy applies to all students on HE programmes of study, subject to meeting eligibility criteria, as detailed in this policy, and as required by the funding bodies.

## Introduction

### Myerscough College and University Centre – Higher Education Bursary Fund

The Myerscough College and University Centre HE Bursary Fund is open to students from low income households who are not in receipt of a scholarship. Successful applicants will be awarded a bursary, bursaries will vary and will be tailored to those in greatest need, the maximum award will be £1,000 (pro-rata amount for part time students studying a minimum of 25% intensity of the full time equivalent). Students will be able to select how they would like the funds to be allocated through a financial bursary and/or discounted accommodation, course equipment, food and travel or other similar institutional services. However, for students in accommodation, priority will be given to payments towards outstanding costs. Bursaries will be targeted at students from low income households with a declared income of less than £25,000 to ensure students with the greatest need receive the maximum award. If students are experiencing financial hardship following receipt of a HE Bursary award they may apply to the HE Hardship Fund, this fund also supports IT course related costs. Students will be asked to provide evidence of financial hardship.

A limited number of bursaries and hardship funds are available and will be awarded to those with the greatest need. Meeting essential eligibility criterion does **not** equate to an entitlement to a bursary. This is a one-year benefit, not a recurrent annual entitlement, annual applications must be submitted.

#### Students:

- must be enrolled and in attendance at the time of payment on an Undergraduate course.
- must have a declared household income of less than £25,000 (inc benefits) be eligible for the HE low income bursary.
- may apply for more than one bursary award (see below) but will only be awarded one bursary (usually the highest value for which the student is eligible).

Any debt outstanding to the College at the time of Bursary instalments will be deducted from the bursary payment.

**Funds are limited therefore eligibility as per the above criteria does not guarantee an award.**

Students can also apply for the following bursaries:

- **Care Leavers Bursary** – full time HE students who have been in the care of a local authority for 13 weeks or more: £1000 bursary for each year of their course.
- **Carers Bursary** – full time HE students who have full time carers responsibility: £1000 bursary for each year of their course.
- **Local Region Bursary** – full time first year of Higher Education study at Myerscough College, HE students whose home address is in Lancashire, South Lakeland & Furness, Merseyside or Greater Manchester: £1000 bursary for the first year only.
- **Republic of Ireland Bursary** – full time first year of Higher Education study at Myerscough College, HE students from the Republic of Ireland: £1000 bursary for the first year only.
- Awards to students will be towards tuition costs, accommodation costs, travel costs, food, books and equipment or other similar institutional services.
- All awards will be on a pro-rata basis for students who start late or finish early.

- Students must comply with the Student Code of Conduct and ensure they attend, behave and complete assignments on time. Payments will be withheld / withdrawn from students who do not comply.
- Any student found to have submitted a fraudulent application will be subject to action under the student disciplinary code.
- Should family circumstances change students are able to submit revised applications, new applications are also permitted. However, it must be stressed that the fund is limited and when it has been fully committed no further allocations will be considered.
- **Higher Education Hardship Fund** - students in receipt of means tested bursary funds who find themselves in financial hardship may apply for additional funds from the hardship fund. Students from the following groups identified in our Access and Participation Plan may also apply to the Hardship Fund, regardless of eligibility for a means tested bursary
  - BAME students
  - Mature students
  - Disabled students
  - Care leavers and carers

Students will be asked to supply evidence through the application process, the **maximum** award is £1,000. Following review by the Finance Team all applications to the Hardship Fund will be approved by the Deputy Principal Finance & Corporate Services.

**There are a number of categories of students who are not eligible for the Bursary and Hardship Fund, irrespective of their income levels**

- Students undertaking a postgraduate initial teacher training course leading to qualified teacher status.
- Students undertaking a postgraduate qualification.
- Part time students studying less than 25% intensity of the full-time equivalent.
- Any other student whose fees are paid or part-paid through a sponsorship arrangement.
- Non-resident UK online students, EU and International students.

**Procedure**

- All applicants must complete an online application.
- Applications will be available through the students MyPage.
- All relevant questions in the application must be completed.
- To avoid delays all evidence requested should be uploaded within the application or sent to the Finance Office immediately on submission.
- All declarations must be read and approved as detailed on the application.
- All applications will be responded to by email, using the address supplied in the application, whether successful or not within 3 weeks (5 weeks if the application has been made in September).
- Applications will be assessed on total household income.
- Decisions on the level of financial support offered to applicants will be made by a member of the Finance Office.
- Tuition awards will be paid direct to Myerscough College - Student Finance will be notified in order for the tuition element of your loan to be reduced.

- Awards in respect of accommodation, bus passes etc will be paid either directly to Myerscough College or be paid by BACS direct to the student in three instalments at the beginning of each term (following the third week after attendance has been checked).
- Appeals against an award should be made to the Deputy Principal - Finance and Corporate Services, stating clearly the grounds upon which the appeal is based - only appeals that are made in writing will be considered.

If funds allow, additional awards may be made at the discretion of the Deputy Principal Finance and Corporate Services.



| <b>Document History</b>                                                               |                                                       |                                       |                                                               |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Author:</b>                                                                        | Director of Finance                                   | <b>Ref and Document Version:</b>      | HE Bursaries and Hardship Fund Policy and Procedure - 2023/24 |
| <b>Approval:</b>                                                                      | Finance & Resources Committee                         | <b>Approval Date:</b>                 | March 2023                                                    |
| <b>Review Date:</b>                                                                   | March 2024                                            |                                       |                                                               |
| <b>Publication:</b>                                                                   | Staff Intranet<br>Student Intranet<br>College Website |                                       |                                                               |
| <b>Quality Assurance</b>                                                              |                                                       |                                       |                                                               |
| This Policy and Procedure maps to the following external quality assurance frameworks |                                                       |                                       |                                                               |
| <b>Framework</b>                                                                      |                                                       | <b>Framework Section Reference(s)</b> |                                                               |
| <b>Education Inspection Framework</b>                                                 |                                                       |                                       |                                                               |
| <b>MATRIX</b>                                                                         |                                                       |                                       |                                                               |
| <b>QAA</b>                                                                            |                                                       |                                       |                                                               |
| <b>QIA</b>                                                                            |                                                       |                                       |                                                               |
| <b>ESFA</b>                                                                           |                                                       |                                       |                                                               |
| <b>Key Changes to Document</b>                                                        |                                                       |                                       |                                                               |
| HE Hardship Fund eligibility criteria updated                                         |                                                       |                                       |                                                               |

**All Myerscough College Policies are subject to screening for Equality Impact Assessment**

Equality Impact Assessments are carried out to see whether the policy has, or is likely to have, a negative impact on grounds of: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, marriage or civil partnership, sex or sexual orientation.

Myerscough College not only fulfils its legal position in relation to current and future equality legislation, but additionally goes beyond compliance in providing and promoting “Opportunities for all to succeed”, free from any aspect of discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

All staff have a duty of care to look after the interests of and support their colleagues. This policy takes account of our commitment to eliminating discrimination, identifying and removing barriers and providing equal opportunities for our learners, staff and visitors to ensure that no one feels excluded or disadvantaged.

**Safeguarding, Child Protection, Prevent and Missing from Education**

All staff have a responsibility to support and promote the College’s commitment to providing a safe environment for students, staff and visitors. Additionally, all staff have a responsibility to report any safeguarding or Prevent issues to the Designated Senior Lead for Safeguarding and Prevent.