



## POST-16 STUDENT SUPPORT POLICY 2007/8

### Post 16 Learner Support Fund – for post 16 pupils in schools

The intention of this Fund is to provide assistance so that any pupil, subject to current eligibility criteria, who is experiencing financial difficulty in relation to any aspect of their attendance at a school, shall receive assistance.

The Fund will be targeted at those pupils from lower income families and will provide an incentive for those least likely to stay on at school after the age of 16.

- **Available Funds**

The budget for the LA's Learner Support Fund - for post 16 pupils in schools is limited to the level of grant awarded for this purpose by the Learning and Skills Council and is likely to be exhausted before all cases are considered. Pupils are advised to submit their applications as early as possible. The allocation of funding to students will be capped to the amount of the grant. If the value of applications exceeds the level of grant funding, then a bid for an additional allocation will be made to the LSC. Should this be unsuccessful, allocations will be made to students on a first come first served basis up to the point that the grant funding is fully spent. **Any offer of assistance will be applicable to the 2007/2008 academic year only.**

- **Eligibility Criteria**

Applicants must satisfy the following criteria:

- attending a 6<sup>th</sup> form at a maintained school within the UK.
- taking a relevant full time course, i.e. A - Levels, GNVQ etc....
- aged 16-19 years at the start of the academic year (1st September).
- be resident in the Borough of Bracknell Forest by 31 August 2007.
- parental gross income not exceeding £30,811 after the deduction of £1050 for each child other than the student.
- students **unearned** income below £200 for the academic year, disregarding payments from Disability Living Allowance or Social Services payments for students placed in supported lodgings.
- application submitted no later than one month before the end of the summer term.

- **Types of assistance**

The Post 16 Learner Support Fund is a means tested allowance, a student's parents' gross income, for the financial year ended 5 April prior to the academic year, from all sources is taken into account. Documentary evidence must be submitted to confirm income for this period. The LA will disregard £1050 for each dependant child other than the applicant.

The student's income from all sources during the academic year is taken into account. The LA will disregard any earned income, income from the Disabled Living Allowance, income from Social Services for students placed in the supported lodgings scheme and £200 of income from any other source. The remaining income will reduce the attendance allowance pound for pound.

Applicants will have to make a written detailed case for assistance on their application form and specify which areas of expenditure they urgently require assistance with.

Students whose parental income is confirmed to be under £30,811 may apply for the assistance to be given for the following costs:

**1. General payments up to a maximum of £1000 per student per year, in cases of financial hardship for the following:-**

- Resources not ordinarily provided by the school:

Payments for resources not provided by the school, for example sportswear, art materials, books, revision aids etc...

- Cost of travel to open days/interviews for Higher Education;

Students are expected to obtain the cheapest available fare and should retain receipts to verify costs. The LA retains the right to refuse/reduce excessive claims.

- School Trips/Visits:

Payments towards the cost of school trips up to a maximum of £300.00 per trip, examples of costs considered are field trips, theatre visits, etc...

Please note it is only possible to consider reimbursing the cost of the actual trip/visit. Students will be responsible for all additional expenditure, including meals not included in the cost of the trip and spending money.

**2. Attendance Allowances for students who are refused an EMA but who still comply with the income levels:**

This is likely to be when:

- The household income has dropped from £30,811 or more in the 2006/07 financial year to £30,810 or less in the 2007/08 financial year;
- The student is too old to apply for an EMA.
- EMA residency rules make him/her ineligible for an EMA.

In these instances any application must be supported by:

- An EMA refusal notice for 2007-08; **or**
- An explanation as to why you would not be eligible for an EMA.

Levels of allowance will be as follows and will be paid termly:

<b>Parental Income</b>	<b>Annual Assistance Available</b>
Income ≤ £20,817	1140
£20,818 - £25,521	765
£25,522 - £30,810	381
£30,811 +	0

- **Appeals**

If an application is refused for whatever reason there is the right of appeal to the Appeals Committee.

### **Applying for Learner Support Funds**

All applications must be made on a Bracknell Forest - Learner Support Fund 2007/08 Application Form. Forms are available through your school or from the Student Finance Team, Seymour House, 38 Broadway, Bracknell, RG12 1AU or Tel:01344 354025/6.

The available Learner Support Fund is limited. It may be exhausted before all applications have been received and/or considered. Applications will be refused if insufficient funds remain. Applications should not be delayed even if a definite place has not been offered or it is subject to examination results.

### **Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)**

EMAs are weekly payments of £10, £20 or £30. They are payable to students who are aged 16 or above, who come from households whose income is less than £30,811, and who enrol on courses of further education in schools, sixth form colleges or FE colleges. They were introduced in September 2004. Bonuses of £500 can also be made available to students through the year.

EMAs will be paid in addition to other support or benefits that the family might be receiving. Students can still have part time jobs and their pay will not be affected. In order to be eligible for the payments they will have to regularly attend their course, complete the necessary coursework and make good progress in their studies. Schools and Colleges will manage and monitor each student.

There is a national payment body who receives applications and assesses eligibility. They also receive weekly reports on students from schools and colleges and issue the payments (via bank accounts) to students.