

## **Learner Support Fund FAQ for staff: 2023-2024**

### **General:**

*Q. Where can learners apply to the Learner Support Fund*

An email will be sent with a link to the online application form. The email will be sent once a student has enrolled.

If a learner is using an Advanced Learner Loan, they will not be sent a link to the LSF application form until their loan has been agreed and is showing on ProSolutions.

*Q. How will learners provide evidence of household income?*

Learners must take copies of their eligibility evidence to admin support for checking and retaining.

### **Eligibility:**

*Q. What is the eligibility for 16-19 year olds?*

Learners with a gross household income of £30,000 or below

*Q. What is the eligibility for 19+ year olds?*

Learners with a gross household income of £30,000 or below

*Q. What is the eligibility for Adult Learner Loan students (ALL)?*

- Advanced Learner Loan learners with a household gross income of £30,000 or below (earned income only) will be eligible for support.

*Q. What evidence do you need to see?*

- Tax credit award notice
- Universal credit statement
- Income support entitlement letter
- Receiving support through the Ukraine Family Scheme and Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme
- Housing benefit and/or council tax support entitlement letter
- Home office letter and or ASPEN or ARC card
- Employment and support allowance letter
- Income based Jobseekers allowance
- Income related employment and support allowance (ESA)
- Child tax credit run-on – paid for 4 weeks after someone stops qualifying for working tax credit
- Three months or 12 weeks of current wage slips.

## **Priority Fund**

### *Q. What is the Priority Fund?*

Learners who are aged 16 and under 19 on August 31st 2023 **and** fall into one of the following vulnerable groups may be eligible to receive weekly payments up to a maximum of £1,200 for the year:

- In care of the local authority
- Care Leaver
- Claiming income support/Universal Credit in their own right to support him/herself
- Receiving PIP (Personal Independence Payments) **and** Income Support/Universal Credit
- Claiming DLA (Disability Living Allowance) **and** Income Support/Universal Credit

### *Q. How do learners apply for the Priority Fund?*

Learners who feel they meet the criteria for Priority Fund must complete the online application form. Staff or students will need to scan evidence and bank details to [priorityfund@leedscitycollege.ac.uk](mailto:priorityfund@leedscitycollege.ac.uk) in order for us to schedule payments.

An assessment will then be carried out to assess how much the learner needs to help them succeed at college.

### *Q. How often and how much are Priority Fund payments?*

Payments are made on a weekly basis, including during the holidays.

The amount will vary for each learner, depending on the number of remaining weeks left on their course.

### *Q. How much does a learner receive each week?*

The amount will vary depending on the length of the learners course and how much the learner requires for support. The payments are usually just under £30 per week.

## **Meals**

### *Q. How much do learners receive per day for meals?*

For the sites that have canteen support then cashless meal cards will be issued as normal with a value of £3.60 per day.

### *Q. Do all eligible learners receive the same amount for meals?*

No - All students will receive £3.60 per day, however 16-19 year olds will receive an additional amount for breakfast support.

*Q. How do learners receive their meal card?*

Once a learner has been assessed for eligibility they will be able to use their ID card as a combined meal card.

*Q. What can learners purchase with their meal cards?*

Food service outlets will provide a meal deal to the value of £3.60. Learners may choose from other food items, however these must have nutritional value and the card will exclude sweets, chocolate, snacks and any drinks. Water is made available.

*Q. What if a learner needs to do extra days in college?*

The meal card system is designed to work from a learner's timetable on ProSolution. However, if the extra days can't be timetabled in, please contact [supportfund@leedscitycollege.ac.uk](mailto:supportfund@leedscitycollege.ac.uk) and we can ask for £3.60 to be manually applied to a learners card.

*Q. What if a learner is on work experience?*

Contact the Student Funds Team, [supportfund@leedscitycollege.ac.uk](mailto:supportfund@leedscitycollege.ac.uk) and we will provide you with a template to complete showing learner details, placement length, supermarket preference and email address. Supermarket e-vouchers will be sent to cover the placement and have a value of £3.00 per day.

*Q. What are the supermarket choices?*

Tesco, Asda, Morrisons and Aldi

*Q. What if a meal card does not work?*

First check that the learner is timetabled for that particular day, then contact [supportfund@leedscitycollege.ac.uk](mailto:supportfund@leedscitycollege.ac.uk) so we can check that there is a record of meals against the learner on ProSolution. If the problem persists then we can contact MIS who can check if there is a problem with the system, if the learner has already used their allocation for the day, or manually apply funds if necessary.

## **Travel**

*Q. Which travel passes are available?*

First mTickets are no longer available for 16-19 year old learners. They will instead be required to use the Mcard Mobile app. This bus pass must be requested via your departmental travel sheet, and then it is sent directly to the learners phone by the Student Funds Team. This is an annual bus pass and not to be confused with the Metro train and bus passes. Learners can access First Bus, Arriva and Transdev services that run in West Yorkshire. There is no need to issue an Arriva smartcard to 16-19

learners, and if they are travelling from Keighley to Leeds you don't need to request a Transdev Go pass. Below are slides detailing how to use the Mcard Mobile app

#### Metro Mcard Mobile Guide

Metro train passes are available and can also be accessed using the Mcard Mobile app. Requests must be placed on your departmental travel sheet. If a learner doesn't have access to a smartphone to use either First or Transdev then paper or card versions of the passes can be made available. Monthly or weekly vouchers are available for holders of the plastic Mcard.

*Q. How far from college must a learner live, so they can receive a travel pass?*

A 19+ learner must live 1.5 miles from their campus of study. This is based on shortest walking distance according to Google Maps which is built into the staff assessment side of the application form. We appreciate that the shortest walking distance is not always the safest, therefore the Student Funds Team can make a discretionary decision if a learner is under this distance or if there is a possible safeguarding issue. If a learner is under 1.5 miles and has a medical need for a travel pass, please contact [supportfund@leedscitycollege.ac.uk](mailto:supportfund@leedscitycollege.ac.uk) attaching a letter from a GP or medical practitioner.

The 1.5 mile threshold has been removed for 16-19 year olds.

*Q. What happens if there is a medical need and travel is less than 1.5 miles?*

Please complete an Exceptional Travel form and submit it alongside medical evidence.

*Q. What if there are no suitable travel passes for a learner?*

If no suitable travel passes are available then a member of staff must apply for exceptional travel payments instead.

*Q. How do you apply for exceptional travel?*

An exceptional travel request form must be completed showing timetabled days, cost per day, and number of weeks left on their course. Based on the information provided we will assess the application and if successful decide on a termly payment. Payments are capped at £250 per term. Exceptional travel is not to be used to circumvent the policy guidance on the issuing of Metro for 16-19 year old learners.

#### [Exceptional Travel Form](#)

*Q. What if a travel pass stops working?*

The Student Funds team is limited by what they can provide if a pass stops working, as often the problem may lie with the company. In the first instance please choose one of the following:

If an mTicket stops working it may be because the learner didn't verify their account via the email from First Bus. Please contact First customer services on: 0345 646 0707

If a Transdev Go pass stops working please contact Transdev on 01423 56 60 61

If an Arriva card stops working please contact Arriva on 0344 800 44 11

If there is a back end problem that we become aware of then this will be communicated to admin teams/coaching tutors.

## **Childcare**

*Q. How do I apply for childcare for Learners 20+ ?*

Learners can fill out an application form through the Leeds City College website.

Learners must take their application form and evidence to a tutor/admin support for checking and submitting to [childcarefunding@leedscitycollege.ac.uk](mailto:childcarefunding@leedscitycollege.ac.uk). Student Funds Finance Manager will then assess the application and provisionally approve the application for support.

*Q. How do I apply for childcare for Learners under 20 ?*

If a learner is under 20 and requires childcare they may be able to access Care to Learn. Please ask them to contact [childcareadvice@leedscitycollege.ac.uk](mailto:childcareadvice@leedscitycollege.ac.uk)

*Q. How do I provide evidence to support my Childcare application?*

The evidence will need to be included alongside the application and checked by admin staff. Admin staff must complete and sign off the checklist before sending the application to us.

*Q. How much will you pay for childcare?*

We set our rates at £55 for a full day and £30 for a half day. The amount we agree to pay the childcare provider over the course of the academic year is based on the students timetable, length of the course. No payments are made to students directly.

*Q. Does the childcare provider need to be registered with Ofsted?*

Yes, they must be Ofsted registered childcare providers and their Ofsted number clearly stated on the childcare quote form.

