

# Procedure and Guidance for students age 19 plus applying for financial support

## Adult Education Discretionary Learner Support Fund (DLS)

### Introduction

The above fund exists to enable students who have been identified as experiencing the greatest need for financial support to remain in education and thereby improve their choices in life.

We recognise that education brings with it a financial burden and for this reason we are likely to receive many more applications than we can approve. We are committed to assessing all applications received in a fair, consistent and objective manner.

As students can apply at any point in the year, we may find the available funds are fully utilised during the year and be unable to consider any further applications from that point. Please note that this source of support is limited.

### Eligibility and Criteria

To be eligible for financial assistance learners must: (1) be an enrolled student as defined by the college; (2) have been 'ordinarily resident' in the British Isles or European Economic Area (EEA) for purposes other than education for the last three years, and students must satisfy the residency criterion. This means having a British or Northern Ireland passport, or

- ◆ Having your passport endorsed to show you have the right of abode in the UK
- ◆ Having 'settled status' in the UK.

This guide seeks to outline the eligibility criteria for the Adult Education Discretionary Learner Support Fund and how to apply.

DLS is aimed at supporting learners with a specific financial hardship that prevents them from taking part in learning. The specific financial hardship categories are:

- 19 and over in financial hardship
- 20 or over with childcare issues
- Residential Access Fund

Learners who are eligible for the fund will not automatically be entitled to it.

### Eligibility for DLS

You must meet all the usual eligibility criteria for ESFA funding for your main programme of study. This will be assessed at enrolment. If you are eligible to be funded for your programme of study by the ESFA, then you are eligible to apply for DLS. Please seek advice if you are unsure.

- If you are being "fully funded" by the ESFA for your programme of study, you may only apply to DLS for support with childcare issues (if you are 20 plus), transport or Residential Access Fund.
- Learners who are paying something for their programme of study and are part funded by ESFA may apply under any of the three categories, 19 and over in financial hardship, 20 or over with childcare issues, Residential Access Fund.

Learners whose needs would be better supported with the provision of learning support rather than DLS will be advised accordingly.

## Income thresholds for eligibility

You can apply to the DLS if you, your parent/carer (if you are living at home) or your spouse/partner are receiving “out of work” income based benefits or have a low income. Please see below for income thresholds.

You can apply to the DLS if your household income does not exceed £26,000. For a household with more than one dependent child, the income threshold is £30,000.

Reasons for which you can apply for DLS:

<b>19+ Hardship</b>	<p>Please note, depending on your application, if successful you may be offered items, services or money to enable you to take part in learning. The most suitable means of support will be assessed and discussed with you. Any award made will normally be a contribution towards total costs, not payment in full.</p> <p>You must attach proof of household income/income based benefits to your application as well as indicate your reason (s) for applying.</p> <p>The outcome of your assessment for DLS will be recoded on a learning agreement for you to sign.</p>
Course related costs e.g. trips, books, equipment	
Transport	
Exam fees or registration fees	
<b>20+ Childcare</b>	
Payment for OFSTED registered childcare for childcare required to enable you to attend your course	
<b>Residential Access Fund</b>	
Currently the college does not offer programmes with a residential element.	
<b>Other</b>	
You may indicate a need not outlined above	

## Application Forms

Forms can be requested from Higher and Adult Education Admissions. Please contact [ljp@asfc.ac.uk](mailto:ljp@asfc.ac.uk) or call 0161 6668215. The form can also be downloaded from the College website. We cannot accept on-line applications. Applications must be submitted by paper and must be accompanied by supplementary evidence, as requested.

## Incomplete Applications

Please ensure that your completed application form is submitted with the supporting evidence we have requested. We cannot process your application without the evidence required and this will almost certainly lead to delays in assessment. No back payments will be made.

## **Payments or other support**

If your DLS application is successful, you will be notified of the outcome and the support you are to receive and by what means. Awards are dependent upon full attendance. The College can also stop payments if you do not adhere to the conditions of your Learning Agreement.

## **Agreement**

You will be asked to sign a learning agreement which indicates you are to receive DLS.

## **Appeals**

If you believe that the decision regarding your DLS application is incorrect, you should put in a Letter of Appeal to the Senior Admissions Officer at the College address. You will receive a decision on your appeal within two weeks of our receipt of the appeal. If you are still unhappy with the decision, you should use the College's usual Complaints Procedure.

## **Future changes**

This policy and procedure will be updated in accordance with funding body guidance.

## **Privacy Notice for Students – Adult Education Discretionary Learner Support Fund (DLS)**

This privacy notice explains how the college use your personal information. If you have any questions about the way we use your personal data, please contact our Data Protection Officer on 0161 330 2330 or by email to [carolyn.wright@asfc.ac.uk](mailto:carolyn.wright@asfc.ac.uk). Your personal information is used by us to exercise our official authority to provide further education services within the legislative framework of the Further and Higher Education Act and the Education (Government of Further Education Colleges) Regulations 1992. We also have requirements placed on us by the Department for Education (DfE), and the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).

### **What information do we collect about you?**

We collect information from you when you submit an application to the Adult Education Discretionary Learner Support Fund. The information we collect includes your name, address, contact details, date of birth and information about your household and personal circumstances.

### **How will we use information about you?**

We will use the information you provide to process your application for the Adult Education Discretionary Learner Support Fund. We also pass information to relevant government bodies and agencies as part of our mandatory duty. You can view a separate privacy notice from the Education and Skills Funding Agency on behalf of the Department for Education at the end of this notice.

Your information will be securely destroyed after it is no longer required for these purposes, in accordance with our retention policy. You can request a copy of this policy from the college's data protection officer.

### **Special Categories of Information**

The college will also ask you to provide information relating to your residency and nationality, and information relating to benefits your household may receive which may be relevant to your health and other personal circumstances. This information is used to assess your eligibility under the categories of the support fund, and to ensure that we meet our obligations under the Equality Duty. If you would like to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact us.

## **Privacy Notice 2018 to 2019 Education and Skills Funding Agency How we use your personal information**

This privacy notice is issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) on behalf of the Secretary of State for the Department of Education (DfE). It is to inform learners how their personal information will be used by the DfE, the ESFA (an executive agency of the DfE) and any successor bodies to these organisations. For the purposes of relevant data protection legislation, the DfE is the data controller for personal data processed by the ESFA.

Your personal information is used by the DfE to exercise its functions and to meet its statutory responsibilities, including under the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 and to create and maintain a unique learner number (ULN) and a personal learning record (PLR). Your information will be securely destroyed after it is no longer required for these purposes.

Your information may be shared with third parties for education, training, employment and well-being related purposes, including for research. This will only take place where the law allows it and the sharing is in compliance with data protection legislation.

The English European Social Fund (ESF) Managing Authority (or agents acting on its behalf) may contact you in order for them to carry out research and evaluation to inform the effectiveness of training.

You will be asked/have been asked about preferred methods of contact during the enrolment process.

Further information about use of and access to your personal data, details of organisations with whom we regularly share data, information about how long we retain your data, and how to change your consent to being contacted, please visit: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/esfa-privacy-notice>.

## APPLICATION FOR SUPPORT FROM THE DISCRETIONARY LEARNER SUPPORT FUND 18/19 PART-TIME STUDENT (ESFA Funded Learners)

Please read the information on this page carefully. If you do not understand any of the points, please ask the Senior Admissions Officer. Learner Support Funds are used to assist students who may have difficulties in completing their course because of financial considerations.

To be eligible for financial assistance from the Learner Support Fund you must: (1) be an enrolled student as defined by the college; (2) have been 'ordinarily resident' in the British Isles or European Economic Area (EEA/EU) for purposes other than education for the last three years.

Please remember that each application is judged on the basis of 'relative financial need' and that not all applications will be successful.

Your completed application form should be delivered to the Senior Admissions Officer, Higher and Adult Education, as soon as possible, as funds are limited and will be distributed on a first come first served basis.

<b>To qualify for the Discretionary Learner Support fund you will need to meet one of the following criteria</b>	Tick
19 and over in financial hardship –for course related costs such as trips, books, equipment, transport, exam fees and registration fees.	
20 or over with childcare issues (childcare to be provided by an Ofsted registered childminder or childminder agency).	
Residential Access Fund	N/A
Other need not outlined above	

\*If you are being 'Fully Funded' by the ESFA for your programme of study you may apply to DLS for support with childcare (if you are 20 plus), transport and residential costs only.

<b>You will also need to meet the criteria below</b>	Tick
You, your parent/carer (if you are living at home) or your spouse/partner are receiving 'out of work' income based benefits or have a low income <b>and</b>	
Your household income does not exceed £26, 000 <b>or</b>	
For a household with more than one dependent child, the income threshold is £30,000	

**Please note: you will need to provide evidence that you fall into the above categories, so attach copies of any relevant documentation (household income, income based benefit letters).**

<p>Please give your reason/s for applying for support below: (Please attach any relevant documentation e.g. childcare invoice, transport costs)</p> <p>Course related costs – trips, books, equipment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- transport</li> <li>- exam fees or registration fees</li> <li>- 20 + childcare</li> <li>- other need</li> </ul>
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