

THE BOSTON COLLEGE HIGHER EDUCATION (HE) FINANCIAL SUPPORT SCHEME 2023- 2024

This policy is annually reviewed to ensure compliance with current regulations

Approved/reviewed by	
Approved by: Vice Principal: Finance & Corporate Services	
Date of next review	May 2024

This policy and procedure is subject to The Equality Act 2010 which recognises the following as Protected Characteristics: Age, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion and Belief, Sex, Sexual orientation, and Disability

1. Document Control

1.1. Document Details

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1.2. Revision History

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1.0	May 2023	Debbie Holland / Sharon Posey	Definitive Release

1.3. Distribution

Name	Email	Organisation
All Staff	Uploaded to SharePoint	Boston College

1. Scope and Purpose

- This Financial Support Scheme is for applicants, learners, and staff of Boston College.
- These policy and procedures must be followed when making Boston College Bursary, Fee waivers and Hardship fund awards and are also for use when considering potential Learner appeals.

2. Key responsibilities

- Overall responsibility for maintenance and operation of Boston College Bursaries and Hardship funds lies with the Head of Learner Services.
- The key responsibility of the Head of Learner Services with the support of the Vice Principal Finance and Corporate services is to assess applications and confirm awards as per the procedure. Learners will be advised of awards made, and payment will be authorised by the Head of Learner Services or Vice Principal Finance and Corporate services and paid through the Finance team via BACS.
- Boston College is committed to a fair and transparent policy in respect of the award and administration of its bursaries.
- Boston College reviews its Financial Support Scheme annually. Bursaries are liable to change year on year in line with funding changes.

3. Bursaries for 2023-2024

The criteria set out in the guidance below has been written in line with our Access and Participation Plan for 2022/23 to 2026/27 with the intent of ensuring the limited funds are allocated to identified target groups.

Number Available	Amount Awarded	Criteria (<i>Evidence source</i>)
14	£500 (Pro rata for PT Learners)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners on undergraduate HE Provision (<i>Enrolment</i>) • Household income £25,000 or under • Learner's fee is neither paid or part paid through a sponsorship arrangement • Learner is not NHS funded • Learner is not undertaking a postgraduate initial teacher training course leading to Qualified Teacher Status • If there are more applications than bursaries available, priority will be given to applicants who meet Boston College eligibility criteria which include one or more of the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Individual income below £20,319 per annum</i> 2. <i>Mature learner with dependent children</i> 3. <i>Learner undertaking part time study and not eligible for maintenance grants.</i> 4. <i>First in family to undertake a higher education award.</i> 5. <i>Identified as 'leaving care' as per Children Act 2004</i>

The number of bursaries available may be subject to change.

Awards will be made in two instalments in December and April – this will be dependent on production of the required evidence and 90% course attendance.

Eligibility

- Be enrolled/holding an offer (as confirmed by Registry) on a Boston College HE programme on a full or part time basis
- Be paying the expected tuition fee in full
- Be registered as a UK Learner.
- Meet the appropriate income criteria as set at less than £25,000.
- Be willing to partake in a student focus groups and case studies to evaluate the outcomes of the bursary fund.

4. Administration Process for 2023-2024 for Bursaries administered by Boston College

4.1 Application

- 4.1.1 Eligible Learners are required to complete the appropriate application form at **Annex A** and indicate their 'consent to share'.
- 4.1.2 If a Learner does not 'consent to share' Boston College is unable to assess the Learner's financial situation and therefore it is not possible to award a Bursary.
- 4.1.3 The opening date for applications is **2nd October 2023** and forms will be available to download on Boston College's website and HE Teams page, or on request from Learner Services Bursary Office. The closing date to submit applications is **27th October 2023**. Please submit completed application forms and evidence to Bursary Finance at bursary@boston.ac.uk or hand in at main receptions.
- 4.1.4 The number of bursaries is limited, so meeting the eligibility criteria cannot guarantee an award. Bursaries will be awarded by priority of need based on the evidence provided and above criteria in section 3.
- 4.1.5 Bursaries are awarded at the discretion of Boston College and are not a learner entitlement.

4.2 Payment

- 4.2.1 Bursaries will be paid in 2 equal instalments throughout the year, expected to be in December and April each year: on condition that the recipient has achieved a target of 90% attendance at college.
- 4.2.2 Where bursary eligibility changes (for example, due to non-attendance at college) Boston College will recover any payment by either:
- reducing any subsequent bursary payments to recover the overpaid amount (this may occur where a Learner is continuing with their studies)
 - requesting the overpayment be repaid in full. Failure to repay the amount due may result in commencement of litigation.

5. Partial Fee Waivers: Leaving Care Learners

- 5.1 This award will be made to any learner who is currently a Care Leaver. This is a non-means tested partial fee waiver of £2,000 per annum.
- 5.2 To apply for the partial fee waiver, a letter including the date you are eligible for Leaving Care support from your Leaving Care team would need to be uploaded as evidence on enrolment to the course. Please speak to the Registry department if any support or guidance is required.

6. Hardship Funds

- 6.1 Where a learner experiences hardship that impacts upon continuation, achievement, or progression, regardless of household income and outside of the bursary facility they may be able to access the HE Hardship Fund.
- 6.2 The application form is at **Annex B**.

7. Outstanding fees and other monies owing to Boston College

7.1 Where a Learner has fees or other monies owing to Boston College relating to their studies, Boston College will withhold the bursary payment until such time as the outstanding amount has been paid. Please see Boston College's Fees Policy for further information about non-payment of fees.

8. Withdrawals

8.1 Learners must be fully enrolled at the time that the Bursary payment is due. No payment will be made to Learners who have interrupted or suspended their studies. Learners who withdraw prior to the payment date will not be entitled to a pro rata payment.

9. Appeals

9.1 Unsuccessful applicants wishing to appeal should write to the Head of HE within 10 working days of the date of notification of the outcome of their application clearly stating the grounds for appeal.

9.2 Appeals will only be considered where there is evidence that a procedural irregularity has occurred in processing the application. Appeals against the content of the published Boston College Bursary guidance itself cannot be accepted.

2023/2024 - Application Form

Higher Education Bursary Application

Closing Date: 27th October 2023

Office Use Only	
Date received:	
Application No:	

1. Learner details

First name:	Last name:
Date of birth:	Age at 31/08/23:
Your post code:	

2. Course details

Learner ID / Ref No:	Days attending college (if known) - M T W T F
Course:	Place of study: Rochford / Spalding / SNMC/PPC

3. Living arrangements at your term time address (tick as appropriate)

Alone <input type="checkbox"/>	With spouse or partner <input type="checkbox"/>
With parent or guardian <input type="checkbox"/>	In halls of residence or shared house <input type="checkbox"/>

How many other dependants living at the same address are under 18 years old?	
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4. Eligibility (tick as appropriate)

Qualifying criteria	Yes
Declared household residual income is £25,000 or less	
Learner's fee is neither paid or part paid through a sponsorship arrangement	
Learner is not NHS funded	

Learner is not undertaking a postgraduate initial teacher training course leading to Qualified Teacher Status	
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If there are more applications than bursaries available, priority will be given to applicants who meet Boston College eligibility criteria which include one or more of the following (please tick if these apply to you)

Individual income below £20,319 per annum	
Mature learner with dependent children	
Learner undertaking part time study and not eligible for maintenance grants	
First in family to undertake a higher education award	
Identified as "leaving care" as per Children Act 2004 within 5 years prior to start of course	

5. Income

a. If you receive any of the following benefits tick appropriate box and include awarding letters as evidence. If not, go to 5b.

Jobseekers Allowance		Council Tax Benefit	
Guaranteed Pension Credit		Income Support	
Housing Benefit		ESA	
Working / Child Tax Credit		Universal Credit	

b. If you do not receive any of the benefits listed above, please complete this section. Please provide copies of wage slips, P60 etc.

Gross earnings (before deductions) per year	
Applicant	£ pa
Partner	£ pa

6. Applicant declaration for scanning documents

I understand that:

- All application forms and associated documents may be scanned and stored electronically, and if that happens, all paper copies will be disposed of through confidential waste once my application has been processed. I have included evidence or supporting documents that:

Evidence type	Tick one box only
can be disposed of as explained above <u>or</u>	
must be returned to me and not disposed of	

7. Additional Information to Support Your Application

8. Data Protection statement

The College is a Data Controller in terms of the Data Protection Act 1998 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2016. The Learner Services Department follows College Policy in matters of Data Protection. The data requested in this form is covered by the notification provided by the College under the Data Protection Act and GDPR. Personal data will be used solely within the Learner Services Department for the purpose of determining whether you should receive assistance from the Bursary Fund. Your application form and any accompanying documents may be scanned and kept electronically for 7 years and then securely deleted. Paper copies of all documents may be destroyed through a confidential waste disposal system once scanned. As part of this process, auditors will wish to view a small sample of application forms. The data will not be passed to any other third party without your consent, except where the College is legally required to do so.

9. Applicant declaration

I understand that:

- It is my responsibility to tell the DWP about any support I receive from the Higher Education Bursary and that this may affect my eligibility to some benefits.
- Awards from the Higher Education Bursary are made on a non-repayable basis; however, you may not receive your full award if you do not meet the required attendance and progress criteria.

- I will be notified of details of my award through email. Once enrolled any further correspondence will be sent to my college email account only.
- Any award or payment is dependent upon me having an attendance level of 90% or over, engaging with any home learning provision and demonstrating appropriate behaviour. If I fail to maintain these requirements my Bursary award or payments may be affected.
- If false or incomplete information is submitted, or if I do not tell the college about any part of our income that may be relevant, the matter may be referred to the Vice Principal Finance and Corporate services. I understand that the college will seek to recover any payment I am not eligible for.
- By submitting this application and receiving any subsequent award, I am also giving consent to be part of marketing of awards, being part of Boston College research into financial assistance within a HE learner cohort.
- Boston College may discuss my award with the following to assist with delivery of support and I give permission for this (clearly indicate your choice). **Please note that if you indicate “No” we cannot process your application:**

Boston College staff	Yes / No
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I confirm that I have read the applicant declaration, that all the details I have provided on this form are correct, and I will notify Learner Services of any changes to my circumstances.

Signed (learner) _____

Date _____

10. Awarding Panel use only

Decision of award panel

Signed:

Date:

ANNEX B

Hardship Fund Application- Higher Education

Name:	Learner ID:
Course:	
Person making application:	Date:

Brief outline of reason for application:

What assistance is required:	Cost:

Staff member supporting application:	
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Authorisation:

Has the award been authorised?	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/>	No: <input type="checkbox"/>	Date:
Comments:			

Signed: _____

Date: _____