

Higher Education Student Grant Policy

Author:	MIS Compliance Manager
Version:	Academic Year 2026/27
Effective Date:	June 2026
Date of next review:	June 2027
Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) required:	
EIA ref and completion date:	
Reviewed and recommended by:	Higher Education Academic Board May 2026
Approved by and date:	Policy Scrutiny Group (10/6/26)
Ratified by and date:	
Publication:	College Website / SharePoint / Student Intranet

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

Alternative Format

This policy is available in alternative formats, to request this, please email marketingcampaigns@mkcollege.ac.uk

Version Control

Version Number	Author	Approver	Date approved	Next review date
1	MIS Compliance Manager	Policy Scrutiny Group	10/6/26	June 2027

Change log

Version Number	Summary of changes
1	New policy

Contents Page

Introduction.....	4
Bursaries/Grants Offered for Academic Year 26/27	4
Eligibility	5
Bursary Payments	5
Meals.....	6
Conditions and Procedures	6
Related Policies and Legislation	8

Introduction

This policy sets out the Colleges internal financial support available in 2026/27; the eligibility criteria and the conditions for receipt of Bursary (funds/grants) to support students who are attending the HE provisions at Milton Keynes College.

Milton Keynes College Group currently operates under the strategic plan centred upon 'Building Fairer Futures' that spans all provision types in the college, including higher education, and is fundamental to driving further the diversity, inclusion and belonging aspects fundamental to equitable access and participation for all.

Milton Keynes College recognises that the HE Bursary offer has an important role to play in removing barriers for some learners accessing and completing HE courses. It is the aim of the College to optimise the impact of support linked to this funding on recruitment, attendance, retention, student progress and achievement rates.

The HE Bursary Fund has a resource of £40,000 per annum Budgeted. This fund will be distributed in a consistent and transparent manner in accordance with guidance and eligibility criteria set for the 3 HE Grants (Bursaries) offered for academic year 2026-27. Learner eligibility will be determined through assessment.

Bursaries/Grants Offered for Academic Year 26/27

1: HE- Continuing student Grant

Grant of £500 - over 2 instalments in the academic year.

Only for existing students from academic year 25-26 Progressing on a Pathway of either >>

- from Level 3 to either HNC or 1st year Degree Programme

OR

- HNC to HND **in academic year 26/27**

2: HE- Hardship Fund (Previous Discretionary Support Fund)

Grant of £600- over 2 instalments in the academic year, for those experiencing exceptional support needs or hardship.

This payment is made at the discretion of the College Management who may ask you to provide details of your household income and outgoings.

Students can claim only one Hardship Fund per academic year.

3: HE – Opportunity Fund (New for 26/27)

Grant of £500- over 2 instalments in the academic year.

For External applicants from households where the total annual income does not exceed £35,000, and/or who come from target ethnic minority groups.

Evidence of all household income must be declared, and evidence provided.

Eligibility

- Be a home or EU (settled status) student
- Be paying the required tuition fee for your full or part time course either self-funded or using a tuition fee loan from Student Finance England (SFE)
- Be in receipt of a maintenance loan or have explored options from SFE for any additional loans and grants available
- Be enrolled and attending as a full or part time student on a Higher Education course at Milton Keynes College
- Attendance - subject to a rate of attendance exceeding 90%
- Where required to provide— Total household income must be below £35,000, evidence of all household income must be declared, and evidence provided.
- Students receiving the HE- Opportunity Grant or the HE- Continuing Student Grant can claim the Hardship Fund but must include this payment in their assessment.

Bursary Payments

The amount of bursary provided will depend on individual circumstances and may be subject to change due to the availability of funds.

Payments will be adjusted for programmes that do not run over a full academic year.

Meals

Bursary Meal and Free School Meals options are not available for those enrolled on the courses under Higher Education (HE) provisions.

Conditions and Procedures

The HE Bursary funding should be utilised only to meet the eligibility criteria set as outlined in the APP guidance for academic year 26/27 and no funds should be utilised in conjunction with other discretionary learner bursaries. The financial support is from a limited fund and will be paid on a first come, first serve basis. Once the fund has been exhausted, it will not be renewed until the following academic year. The College reserves the right to close the application process for students at any stage, with immediate effect, to ensure that spending does not exceed the allocation.

Students are advised to apply at the earliest opportunity and ensure that all relevant supporting evidence linked to an application is provided in a timely way to access funding.

Learners who apply for the Bursary will be required to supply evidence of all household income and information about their actual need for support. This should be in the form of benefit or other official documents or verification from statutory or other agencies.

A household income threshold of **under £35,000 per annum** is applied to determine bursary eligibility.

Payments are subject to satisfactory attendance, conduct and progress at college. The College reserves the right to suspend, delay or reduce payments where a student's attendance or conduct is giving cause for concern, in consultation with their curriculum area.

Staff administering the fund will examine attendance, disciplinary records and the timely submission of assessments for all bursary recipients on a weekly basis. Should the attendance of a student currently receiving bursary drop below 90% across a given four-week period, their award will be reviewed and may be either withdrawn or adjusted. This decision will be taken in

consultation with relevant curriculum teams and will be informed by an understanding of the context of the issues linked to the performance of the student in question.

Should an applicant withdraw from their chosen course of study and decide to leave college, they may be required to repay monies or return equipment supplied/bought by the support fund.

Students will be required to disclose any change of circumstances during the year, which may affect their eligibility for assistance. If a student in receipt of assistance withdraws or transfers before the completion of the course, they may be required to repay all or part of their award, or return any equipment purchased with their award.

Applicants will be notified in writing if their application has been successful including how payment will be made.

Applicants will receive written confirmation confirming the outcome of their application together with a payment schedule. The student will be required to sign an agreement agreeing to the terms of the allocated bursary. If this agreement is not returned the College has the right to withdraw the offer of financial support

Incomplete application forms will be held until all requested information is received.

If a student is unhappy with their award decision, the procedure for appeal is outlined in the letter informing them that the application has been unsuccessful.

Organisation and Responsibility

This Policy reflects the Milton Keynes College Structure in June 2026. The policy is the responsibility of the Higher Education Academic Board

The Bursary team are responsible for the administration of the fund. The Bursary Team is on hand at both Chaffron Way and Bletchley sites to provide advice and guidance linked to bursary applications.

Quality Assurance and Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Activity and budgets are reviewed monthly through the College Financial Review process.

Related Policies and Legislation

Refer to the following documentation in conjunction with this policy:

HE Fees Policy

HE Admissions Policy