



Bursary Support Guide

2026/27

Practical information for learners and families

Developing Skills. Changing Lives.

Support with essential participation costs may be available if financial barriers are affecting your education.

This guide summarises CTA's Bursary Policy. Eligibility and awards are subject to individual assessment, appropriate evidence and available funding.

Welcome to bursary support

Central Training Academy, known as CTA, recognises that financial difficulties can sometimes make it harder to participate in education and training. The 16 to 19 Bursary Fund helps eligible learners meet essential participation costs.

Support may be available towards

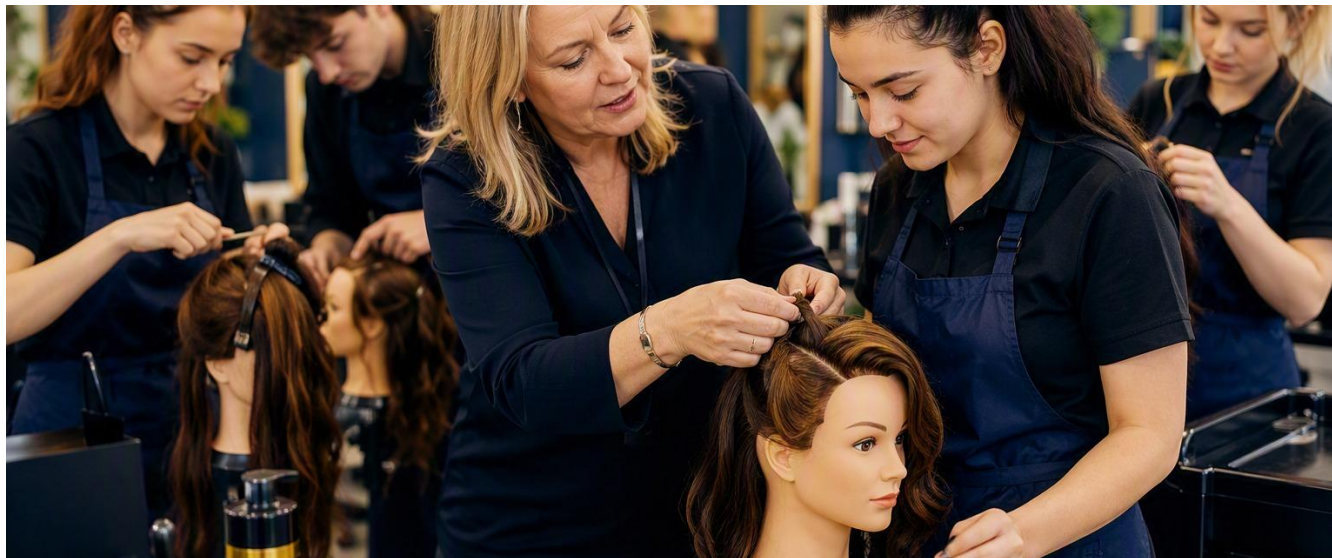
- Travel
- Essential books and learning materials
- Course equipment
- Uniform or protective clothing
- Essential course trips
- Meals, where eligible
- Temporary meal or travel assistance in severe hardship

The fund cannot be used for

- General living costs
- Non-essential or extra-curricular activities
- Counselling, mentoring or tuition CTA would normally provide

Important

All decisions are subject to eligibility, individual assessment of actual need, evidence and available funding.



Who can apply?

- Aged 16 or over but under 19 on 31 August 2026
- Meet DfE residency requirements
- Enrolled on an eligible publicly funded CTA programme
- Have essential costs creating a financial barrier
- Can provide requested evidence

Learners aged 19 or over

May qualify for discretionary bursary only with an EHC plan or when continuing the same programme started aged 16 to 18. They cannot receive the defined vulnerable group bursary.

Apprentices

Apprentices are not eligible for the 16 to 19 Bursary Fund. Eligible care-experienced apprentices may qualify for the separate Apprenticeships Care Leavers Bursary.

Bursary for defined vulnerable groups

- In care
- A care leaver
- Receiving Income Support or Universal Credit in your own right because you support yourself or a dependant
- Receiving DLA or PIP as well as ESA or Universal Credit, with all relevant benefits in your own right

Up to £1,200

For programmes lasting 30 weeks or more. CTA will not automatically award or claim £1,200.

The award reflects evidenced actual participation costs, programme length, hours and individual circumstances. Additional assessed need must be separately considered and evidenced.



Discretionary bursary

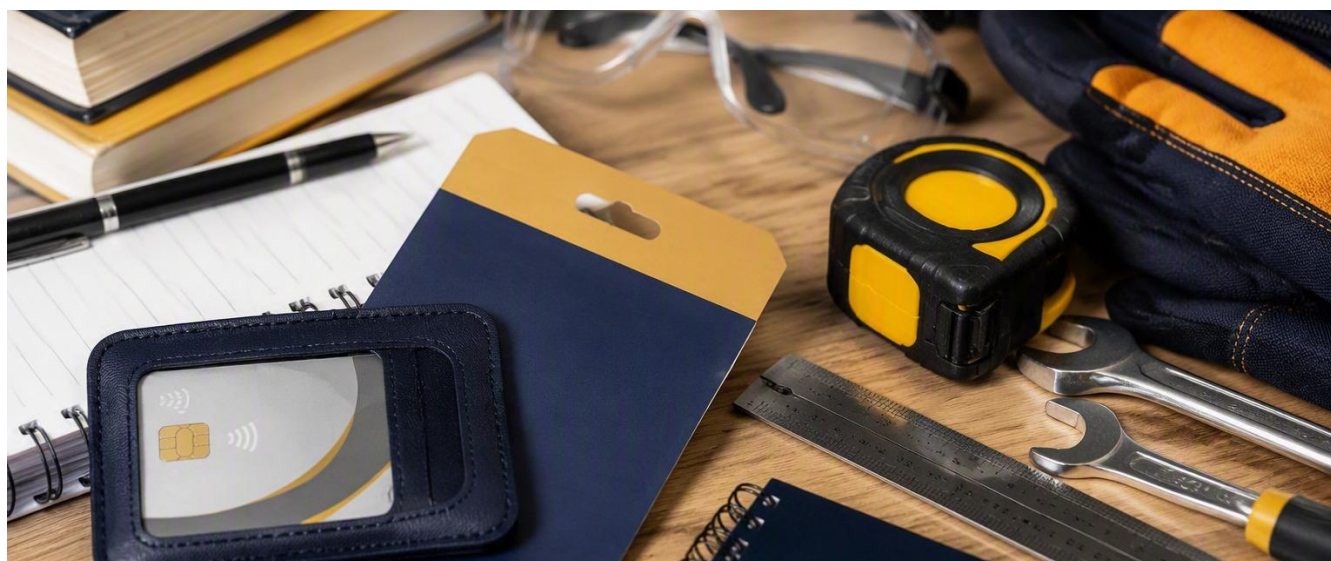
CTA may award support where a learner has an identifiable financial barrier to attendance or participation.

CTA household income limit

£50,000 gross annual household income or below. Meeting the limit does not automatically entitle you to an award.

CTA will consider

- Gross household income and benefits
- Travel costs
- Dependants and caring responsibilities
- Essential books, equipment, uniform or protective clothing
- Essential course trips and other necessary programme-related costs
- Other support available
- Available bursary funding



What support might be available?

Support type	Costs that may be considered
Travel	Necessary bus, train or other transport costs
Books and materials	Essential books and learning resources
Equipment	Items required for the study programme
Uniform and PPE	Required uniform, specialist clothing and protective equipment
Course trips	Required programme-related trips or visits where essential for participation
Free meals	A meal on appropriate attendance days where separate criteria are met
Emergency support	Temporary meal or travel assistance in severe hardship

Support is not automatic. CTA will assess whether each cost is essential, appropriately evidenced and affordable from available funds.



Free meals in further education

CTA will make a free meal available on each appropriate attendance day to eligible learners.

Age and programme eligibility

- Aged 16 or over but under 19 on 31 August 2026
- Over 19 with an EHC plan
- Over 19 and continuing the same programme started before age 19

Qualifying benefits may include

- Universal Credit
- Income Support
- Income-based JSA
- Income-related ESA
- Immigration and Asylum Act support
- Guarantee element of Pension Credit
- Qualifying Child Tax Credit
- Working Tax Credit run-on

Separate assessment

Free-meals eligibility is separate from discretionary bursary and checked at least annually.



Emergency and hardship support

In severe hardship, CTA may temporarily provide meal or travel support on attendance days before normal checks are complete.

- Limited to food or travel
- Only in exceptional circumstances
- Followed by a full discretionary bursary assessment
- Authorised and recorded by CTA

CTA will record

- Reason for support
- Dates and supported attendance days
- Value provided
- Confirmation of receipt

Need urgent help?

Speak to CTA staff if an immediate lack of food or travel is preventing attendance.



What evidence will I need?

- Universal Credit statements or benefit letters
- Payslips or P60
- Care-status confirmation
- Travel quotations, tickets or fare information
- Course information confirming equipment, clothing or trip requirements
- Receipts, invoices or evidence of approved purchases

Household income checks

CTA may check income annually or once at the start of a typical two-year programme. If not repeated, you must sign a declaration confirming circumstances have not changed. Actual need is reassessed each academic year.

Keep your receipts

CTA may request updated evidence during the year, including January 2027.

Applications and payments

How to apply

1. Complete the CTA Bursary Application Form via <https://centraltraininggroup.paymystudent.com/portal/>
2. Provide requested evidence
3. Sign required declarations
4. Provide payment information where applicable
5. Tell CTA if circumstances change

Remember

Submitting an application does not guarantee an award.

How support may be provided

- BACS payment
- Direct purchase
- Travel passes or vouchers
- Reimbursement
- Payment directly to a supplier

Withdrawal, absence and overpayments

Payments stop on withdrawal. After four continuous weeks of absence, excluding holidays, CTA reviews whether costs continue. Materially incorrect information may lead to recovery of overpayments.

Attendance and participation

Attendance-related support may be linked to actual attendance, but CTA will not apply an automatic blanket sanction without considering individual circumstances.

CTA may review support where concerns arise about

- Attendance
- Engagement
- Participation
- Behaviour

Individual circumstances matter

- Disability or health needs
- Safeguarding concerns
- Caring responsibilities
- Authorised absence
- Agreed reasonable adjustments
- Whether bursary support is needed to improve participation

Talk to us

CTA will explain any decision and your right to appeal.

Questions, reviews and appeals

Contact the Bursary Team

bursary@centraltraininggroup.com

Ask for a decision to be reviewed

1. Contact the Bursary Administrator
2. Explain why the decision should be reconsidered
3. Provide additional supporting evidence

Where practicable, a manager or panel not responsible for the original decision will review the case. CTA will give the outcome and reasons in writing. The complaints procedure remains available.

Important

An appeal does not guarantee an award. All awards remain subject to eligibility, assessment and available funding.

About this guide

This guide summarises CTA's Bursary Policy and does not replace the full policy or current DfE funding requirements. Current requirements take precedence if guidance changes.

