

Higher Education

Bursary Policy

2026/27

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Responsible Manager:	Chief Finance Officer
Committee for Approval:	Finance and Corporate Services
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Impact Assessment Status: In preparing the Policy, any potential disproportionate impact it might have upon individuals with protected characteristics, as defined in the Equality Act 2010, have been carefully considered. It is the conclusion of the College Group that the Policy does not adversely impact on individuals with any of the protected characteristics.

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Aim

The policy aims to ensure that:

- Students facing financial hardship can access the appropriate financial support during their time at college to maximise participation and increase retention and achievement.
- The college fulfils its responsibility to ensure that bursaries are awarded appropriately in accordance with the aims of the scheme.

Scope

Chesterfield College is committed to promoting and supporting the success of students undertaking higher level studies. The HE Bursary Fund is means tested and made available to support students with costs directly related to their studies.

A summary of this policy is available in other formats upon request. Reference to bursaries and funds available to support students will also be made in all part-time and full-time prospectuses.

The college is committed to doing everything it can to support its students; however, bursary funding is limited and cannot be guaranteed.

Any bursaries or financial support awarded are dependent upon satisfactory behaviour and attendance at college, in line with the college's Code of Conduct.

This policy and associated operating procedures apply to Chesterfield College, which includes our subsidiary companies: Training Services 2000 Ltd (Learning Unlimited Derby), Learning Unlimited ATA Ltd, Recruit Unlimited Ltd and Chesterfield College Enterprises Ltd.

Policy Statements

Eligibility and Assessment

Essential Criteria

To be eligible for a Higher Education Bursary, the student must meet the following essential criteria:

- A household income of £25,000 or less as assessed by Student Finance England (SFE).
- Entitlement to and approval to receive, or in receipt of, the full student loan for 2026/27.
- Not already a holder of a higher-level qualification such as a degree, foundation degree, CertHE, HNC or HND, unless the prior qualification was taken at Chesterfield College and is part of the natural progression route for the subject.
- Not in receipt of full or part sponsorship for tuition fees (e.g., from an employer).
- Meeting a minimum attendance requirement of 88%.

Assessment

The college will prioritise applications based on the above conditions. There is a limited amount of funding which is granted on a priority basis, with students identified as having a greater need receiving funding first.

Prioritisation of Funding

High priority students are those who are:

- In, or have recently left, local authority care.
- Disabled and receiving Income Support.
- Disabled and receiving Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) and either Personal Independence Payment (PIP) or Disability Living Allowance (DLA).
- Disabled and receiving Universal Credit in place of Income Support or ESA.
- Students with children, especially single parents.
- Carers.
- From BAME groups.
- Mature students with existing financial commitments.

Evidence of Eligibility

Evidence of eligibility must be provided by the student at the time of application:

- For full-time students the income assessment is that used by SFE to assess entitlement to funding.
- For part-time students, as SFE do not income assess applicants, students will need to provide evidence of their income, benefit entitlement and, if appropriate, parents' or partner's gross income.
- Approval and/or receipt of the full student loan.

The Bursary Panel will assess attendance using registers.

Bursary Panel

The Bursary Panel is made up of:

- Director of School responsible for Higher Education or equivalent.
- Chief Finance Officer or equivalent.
- Assistant Principal Student Experience and Wellbeing or equivalent.
- Higher and Adult Education Support Coordinator or equivalent.

The Bursary Panel meets to:

- Assess eligibility for the HE Bursary.
- Prioritise applications.
- Discuss individual students' attendance and whether they are up to date with their work.
- Approve funding awards.

The Bursary Panel meets on three separate occasions throughout the year that coincide with payments being made.

Application

Applications can be made from October 2026, once applications open. This will be communicated to students by the Higher and Adult Education Support Coordinator.

Payments for eligible applications will only be made at set points and only to students who are currently enrolled.

The deadline for applications to be submitted to qualify for the first instalment payment is Friday 6th November 2026.

The application form can be found within the appendices of this policy.

Students must provide evidence of eligibility at the time the application is submitted, otherwise the college may not be able to make bursary payments on the grounds of eligibility.

Notification

Confirmation of awards granted by the Bursary Panel will be made to students' college email accounts.

Payment

Payments will be made by BACS bank transfer to the student only and no other third party.

Payments are made in three instalments:

Time Period	Bursary Awarded
Instalment 1 Term 1 - September 2026 to December 2026	Quarter of total award
Instalment 2 Term 2 - January 2027 to April 2027	Half of total award
Instalment 3 Term 3 - April 2027 to June 2027	Quarter of total award

Students must remain enrolled to continue to receive the bursary. If a student withdraws during the academic year, no further payments will be made.

Payments will normally be made in December, February, and May.

If an eligible application is made after the deadline of 6th November 2026 and there are funds available, assessment will be made on a case-by-case basis in line with the eligibility criteria outlined above. Funds will not be paid retrospectively for past payment dates.

If a student is in debt with the college, their bursary payment will not be paid until the student arranges repayment with the college's Finance Team. The student may choose to offset their bursary against outstanding debt.

If it is late discovered that an application is based on false information or circumstances, the college will seek to recover any payments and the student may be subject to the college's Student/Apprentice Disciplinary Policy (TLA03).

Awards

Chesterfield College has a finite amount of funds available to award as bursary grants. The amount awarded to each student is at the discretion of the Bursary Panel, who will consider:

- Total funds available.
- Number of applications.
- Household income of each student.

A portion of the bursary fund is reserved for hardship payments.

Appeals

Students may appeal the decision made by the Bursary Panel if they feel that they have mitigating circumstances that can explain either:

- Why they have not met the minimum attendance requirement.
- Why they are not up to date with their work.

Hardship

Throughout the academic year students who find themselves in financial hardship may apply for a one-off payment to support them in continuing their studies.

Applications should be made in writing to the Higher and Adult Education Support Coordinator.

Applications will be assessed on a case-by-case basis by the Bursary Panel.

Withdrawal of Payment

Students are expected to meet minimum standards of attendance and participation throughout their programme. Failure to do so may result in the withdrawal of bursary payments.

Where a student has been absent for a period of four consecutive weeks or more, excluding holidays, and where a student has made the decision to withdraw from their programme of study, all payments of student support will be stopped. Payments will restart when attendance restarts and meets agreed minimum standards.

Protection of Bursary System from Abuse

Where a student in receipt of bursary is withdrawn from college and later reinstated, the student will not automatically continue to receive bursary funds.

Implementation

College staff involved in the administration of the bursary scheme will comply with college policy on the storage and transfer of information supplied in the course of application and payment of the Higher Education Bursary.

The policy will be reviewed on an annual basis and submitted to the Finance and Corporate Services Committee for approval.

Complaints concerning failure to comply with the policy should be made in accordance with the college's Complaints and Compliments Policy and Procedures (CSE06).

Communication Flow

The Higher Education Bursary Policy is available for staff and students to view on the college intranet and website.

All staff with responsibility for processing application forms and payments within the Higher Education, Student and Apprentice Services, and Finance departments are familiar with and work to the policy outlined in this document.

Monitoring

Implementation of the policy is continuously monitored by the Chief Finance Officer. The Chief Finance Officer will consult with staff on changes to this policy.

The policy will be reviewed on an annual basis and submitted to the Finance and Corporate Services Committee for approval.

Associated Information and Guidance

Chesterfield College website – Financial Support:

<https://www.chesterfield.ac.uk/knowledge-base/financial-support/>

Related Chesterfield College Group Policies and Documents

- Complaints and Compliments Policy and Procedures – CSE06
- Student/Apprentice Disciplinary Policy and Procedures – TLA03

Summary of Changes

Version	Date	Author	Summary of Changes
8	March 25	T Kidsley	
9	June 26	T Kidsley	Dates and titles

Appendices

Documentation

- HE Bursary and Hardship Fund Application Form 2026/27
- HE Bursary BACS Form

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HIGHER EDUCATION BURSARY AND HARDSHIP FUND APPLICATION FORM 2026/27

- Only complete this form if you are a **higher education** student in academic year 2026/27.
- Please read carefully and complete **all** sections. All questions are designed to check your eligibility for funding; if you leave sections blank this may mean that you are not awarded all the money you may be entitled to.
- Where additional evidence is required, this will be clearly stated.
- If you include additional evidence, please ensure that these are **photocopies or scans** and not original documents.
- If you prefer to complete the form electronically and email, please send to hebursary@chesterfield.ac.uk.

WHAT COSTS COULD THE BURSARY COVER?

If your **household income is £25,000 or less**, you may be eligible to receive a cash payment to support with costs directly related to your studies. Please note that due to the high demand for financial support, awards are discretionary and are subject to change. Late or incomplete applications may not receive an award.

HE Bursary is intended to cover standard payments to any higher education students meeting the requirements.

HE Hardship Fund is intended to offer additional exceptional support for students in more extreme need.

ANY QUESTIONS?

If you have any questions or need assistance with any sections of this form, please contact the Higher and Adult Education Support Coordinator or email hebursary@chesterfield.ac.uk or contact Main Reception at our Infirmary Road campus.

I am applying for the HE Bursary (standard financial award). <i>Please complete sections 1-7, section 9, and the checklist.</i>	☐
I am applying for the HE Hardship Fund (extraordinary payment for exceptional circumstances). <i>Please complete sections 1-9, and the checklist.</i>	☐

SECTION 1 – STUDENT DETAILS				Admin Check
Forename		Surname		
Student Number				
Date of Birth		Age on 31/08/2026		
Title of Course				
Mode of Study	☐ Full-Time ☐ Part-Time			

SECTION 2 – TUITION FEES		Admin Check
Please confirm how you are funding the tuition fees for your course.		
Student Finance England Loan.	☐	
Self-Funded. <i>You will not be eligible for HE Bursary but may be eligible for HE Hardship Fund.</i>	☐	
Employer Funded. <i>You will not be eligible for HE Bursary but may be eligible for HE Hardship Fund.</i>	☐	

SECTION 3 – PREVIOUS QUALIFICATIONS		Admin Check
Please confirm your current highest level of qualification before starting your current course. This may affect your eligibility for the HE Bursary and HE Hardship Fund.		
A Levels/BTEC/Level 3 equivalent.	☐	
HNC/CertEd/Level 4 equivalent.	☐	
HND/Foundation Degree/Level 5 equivalent.	☐	
BA/BSc/Honours Degree/Level 6 equivalent.	☐	
Was the qualification stated gained at Chesterfield College?	☐ Yes ☐ No	

SECTION 4 – HOUSEHOLD INCOME		Admin Check	
Please check and complete EITHER section A or section B depending on whether you are a full-time or part-time student.			
A. Full-Time Student			
I have applied for and been awarded maintenance support from Student Finance England. <i>EVIDENCE: you will need to provide evidence of this, for example:</i> - A copy of your letter from Student Finance England (SFE). - A screenshot from SFE showing your maintenance support. - A copy of a bank statement showing income from SFE.	☐		
I have not applied/are not eligible for maintenance support from Student Finance England.	☐		
B. Part-Time Student			
Please indicate your living arrangements.			
I live alone or with my child/children only. <i>Only your own income will need to be evidenced.</i>	☐		
I live with my parents. <i>Only your own income will need to be evidenced.</i>	☐		
I live with my spouse or partner. <i>Both incomes will need to be evidenced.</i>	☐		
I live with other friends/flatmates/relatives. <i>Only your own income will need to be evidenced.</i>	☐		
Please tick which of the following forms of income applies to you or to your spouse/partner (if applicable).			

EVIDENCE: you will need to provide evidence of any income indicated below, for example: • Copy of a bank statement. • Copies of recent payslips. • Tax credits confirmation. • P60. • Employer letter. If you have ZERO income, please provide a copy of a recent bank statement confirming this.		
	Student	Spouse/Partner
Weekly/monthly salary (wages).	☐	☐
Child Tax Credits.	☐	☐
Working Tax Credits.	☐	☐
JSA/ESA/Universal Credit/Income Support.	☐	☐
Housing Benefit/Mortgage Interest Relief.	☐	☐
Child Support Allowance.	☐	☐
Council Tax Benefit.	☐	☐
Pension.	☐	☐
Any other state benefit (not including Child Support).	☐	☐
Any other income.	☐	☐

SECTION 5 – EMPLOYMENT		Admin Check
Please confirm your employment status.		
Employed (full-time).	☐	
Employed (part-time).	☐	
Self-employed.	☐	
Unemployed and looking for work.	☐	
Unemployed and not looking for work.	☐	

SECTION 6 – DEPENDENTS			Admin Check
Do you have any children under 18 who are financially dependent on you?		☐ Yes	
If yes, please give details below.		☐ No	
Full Name(s)	Date of Birth	Relationship to you	
Do you have any adults who are financially dependent on you?		☐ Yes	
If yes, please give details below.		☐ No	
Full Name(s)	Date of Birth	Relationship to you	

SECTION 7 – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	Admin Check
The college is committed to improving access, success, and progression in Higher Education. As such, it follows the Office for Students' good practice advice to target those groups which are underrepresented in HE. The following information will enable us to continue to support those groups.	

Are you in care/a care leaver? <i>EVIDENCE: you will need to provide a letter from your social worker/MAT worker/support worker to confirm this.</i>		☐ Yes ☐ No	
What is your ethnicity?			
Are you registered disabled, or do you receive any disability-related benefits?		☐ Yes ☐ No	

SECTION 8 – HARDSHIP FUND You only need to complete this section if you are applying for the HE Hardship Fund . Please give any additional information to support your application, for example: • Any additional expenses you are incurring for your course. • Any additional pressures on your income. • Recent changes in your employment status or income.	Admin Check

SECTION 9 – DECLARATION AND SIGNATURE Please read and sign the declaration.			
I declare that the information provided is correct at the time of application, and that providing false information may result in the retraction of any awards made. I agree to inform the Higher and Adult Education Support Coordinator if my income changes and exceeds the £25,000 threshold during the academic year.			
Student Signature		Date	

DATA PROTECTION

The information you have provided on this form will be used by Chesterfield College Group to process your bursary application and for planning of support in future academic years. Your information will be kept for up to 7 years, after which it will be removed from our paper and electronic records. You can find full information about how we use your personal information from the Student Privacy Notice, which you can find at www.chesterfield.ac.uk/dataprotection.

WHAT HAPPENS NOW?

If your form is fully completed, and has all the evidence we require, we will usually process your application within 3 weeks of receiving it. However, due to the high volume of applications this process may take longer. You will be notified of the outcome via email and further information regarding your bursary award can be obtained by sending an enquiry to hebursary@chesterfield.ac.uk. We are unable to process a bursary application without all evidence of income indicated in Section 4 of this form. Bursary funds for students submitting incomplete forms or without the required evidence will not be earmarked and the college cannot guarantee the availability of funds upon resubmission of the form.

CHECKLIST Before submitting your application, please check that you have completed the following.	
Section 1-7 completed in full.	☐
Section 8 completed if applying for HE Hardship Fund.	☐
Declaration signed in section 9.	☐
Any evidence requested has been included.	☐
HE Bursary BACS form completed to allow any bursary awarded to be paid.	☐

ADMIN USE ONLY			
Date received		Date checked	
Date assessed by panel		Date student informed	
Attendance %		Meets essential criteria for HE Bursary?	☐ Yes ☐ No
Meets priority criteria for HE Bursary?	☐ Yes ☐ No	Award for HE Bursary	☐ Approved ☐ Declined
Bursary amount awarded (total)		Termly payments	Term 1
			Term 2
			Term 3
Award for HE Hardship Fund	☐ Approved ☐ Declined	Hardship amount awarded (total)	
Signed, Head of School responsible for Higher Education			
Signed, Finance Manager			

FINANCE USE ONLY			
Bank details received	☐ Yes ☐ No	Added to LSF ledger	☐ Yes ☐ No
Payments made (date)	Term 1		
	Term 2		
	Term 3		

PLEASE CONTINUE FOR BACS FORM

HE BURSARY BACS FORM

Bursary payments will be made by BACS transfer into a student's bank account. Please complete and return this form **with your HE Bursary and Hardship Fund Application**.

Please ensure that the details provided below are accurate; any funds misdirected or lost due to errors in the details given below will not be repaid.

Student Name: _____

Student Number: _____

Bank Details

Name as it appears on bank account: _____

Bank Sort Code: _____ - _____ - _____

Bank Account Number: _____

Account Holder Address: _____

Student Signature: _____

Print Name: _____

DATA PROTECTION

The information you have provided on this form will be used by Chesterfield College Group to process your bursary application and for planning of support in future academic years. Your information will be kept for up to 7 years, after which it will be removed from our paper and electronic records. You can find full information about how we use your personal information from the Student Privacy Notice, which you can find at www.chesterfield.ac.uk/dataprotection.