

## Adult Community Learning Essex

### Financial Support Guidelines 2018/2019

(Please retain these Guidance Notes for your records)

#### **Introduction**

These guidance notes should be read in conjunction with the application form. If you would like help with the application form, please speak to Student Services at the centre or your tutor.

Adult Community Learning Essex County Council is given specific allocations of funding to provide assistance to learners studying on a course funded by the Funding Agencies or funded by 19+ Advanced Learning Loans (Level 3 courses only). Learners are advised to apply early as the funds do run out. Applications will be dealt with on a strict date received basis and this will be dependent on all paperwork being fully completed with all the necessary accompanying documentation. Incomplete documentation will be returned to learners.

#### **Multiple Applications**

Additional applications will be considered depending on funding available. All requests for funding will be considered although it may not always be possible to help.

#### **Eligibility and Conditions**

Eligibility does not mean an entitlement as funds are limited. The funds will close when fully allocated. No guarantee can be given that funds will be available when you apply. If there is a high demand on the funds, awards may be given at a reduced rate. Payments in subsequent terms (where paid) may be at a lower rate if there is a high demand.

**Eligibility:** Learners are eligible to apply for funding if they meet the requirements as stated in the Funding Rules 2018/19 issued by the Skills Funding Agency.

Eligibility to funding does not give the individual the right to funding. Assistance awarded to a learner will always be conditional on behaviour, remaining on the course and maintaining **a minimum of 85% attendance**.

If the student does not meet the conditions then they may be required to return equipment and any cash award they have received.

Awards will be made in accordance with the published guidance from the Skills Funding Agency. While it is recognised that learners face financial pressures, funding is not a right and the College has a duty to make sure that funds are awarded fairly and to the learners most in need.

#### **Additional information required for Financial Support**

Evidence of income/benefit which must be in date and should be **one** of the following:

##### **Qualifying benefits:**

- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Income Support
- Jobseeker's Allowance (income based)
- Employment Support Allowance (income based)
- Working Tax Credit (2018/19) income below £16,190
- Child Tax Credit (2018/19) income below £16,190 and not entitled to Working Tax Credit
- Pension Credit
- Universal Credit
- Housing Benefit
- Council Tax Benefit – not single adult reduction

##### **Evidence of Income:**

- P60 – 2018 (Household income needs to be under £30,000)
- 3 x wage slips (most recent)

Please be aware that it is your responsibility to tell the Department of Work and Pensions about any discretionary learner support that you received from the college, as discretionary learner support payments may affect your eligibility to some benefits.

#### **Au pairs**

Please note for the purpose of administration of DLSF, Adult Community Learning Essex is required to have criteria for how it will administer and distribute the funds. Under the criteria, au pairs are regarded as family members and proof of low household income is required. Financial

assessment would be based **not entirely** upon an au pair income, **but** on the household income.

### **19+ Discretionary Learner Support Fund (DLSF)**

Please note: Learners aged 19+ studying a qualifying level 3 to 6 course will be considered for an award from the 19+ Advanced Learning Loan Bursary Fund. (see below)

You can apply for help from the DLSF if you are 19+ as at 31<sup>st</sup> August 2018 and you:

- Are studying an ACL course that leads to a government funded qualification
- Meet the residency criteria
- Can demonstrate a financial need

#### **And meet one of the following criteria:**

1. In receipt of an eligible benefit (see application form)
2. Have a gross annual household income of £30,000 or less

The DLSF could help you with the cost of travel, educational visits, books and equipment needed for your course as well as childcare.

There is also a limited fund to assist with tuition and examination fees for those who are not eligible for a fee reduction.

### **19+ Advanced Learning Loan Bursary for learners studying a qualifying level 3 to 6 course**

If you are aged 19+ at the start of your learning aim and meet the following criteria, you may be eligible for a discretionary award towards the cost of travel and childcare, educational visits, books and equipment. The following applies:

- Studying an ACL course that is being funded through an approved 19+ Advanced Learning Loan
- Meet the residency criteria
- Can demonstrate a financial need

#### **And meet one of the following criteria:**

1. In receipt of an eligible benefit (see application form)
2. Have a gross annual household income of £30,000 or less

### **Childcare 19+ Discretionary and 19+ Advanced Learning Loan Bursary**

Financial assistance with childcare is available for the timetabled hours of your course. To claim support you – you must be using an Ofsted registered childcare provider and not in receipt of Childcare support from any other Agency. Payments for childcare will be based on your attendance and excludes childcare costs outside term time. If you withdraw from the course or have payments stopped due to poor attendance, you will be responsible for the payment of outstanding fees to the childcare provider. If your application is to cover costs for 3 children or more, this will be reviewed by the Business Operations Officer at the centre and will be given support where budget allows.

Please note that Early Years Education Entitlement (EYEE) must be used before making a claim for assistance with childcare from ACL.

Childcare will **not** pay:

- For Christmas and Easter holiday periods and periods of half term
- Deposits or make advance payments
- If the learner changes the number of days or hours their child attends their childcare provider and fails to inform the College Childcare Administrator.

Please note that any free government funding for 2, 3 and 4 year olds must be used for college and placement days before additional hours can be paid for with college funding.

ACL reserves the right to cap childcare fees if they are considered to be excessive.

Funds are capped and allocated at the discretion of the ACL Support Fund Committee, in line with current policy. The funds are limited and applications received when the fund is low or exhausted may be refused childcare funding.

ACL reserves the right to alter or amend the childcare funding policy at any time.

## Community Learning Bursary Funding 19+

Adult Community Learning Essex will consider applications for financial assistance to learners studying on a Community Learning course (these courses do not lead to a qualification). To be eligible for funding, you should meet the criteria in the guidance below. Bursary funds are limited and will close when fully allocated.

Applications will be dealt with on a strict date received basis and dependent on all paperwork being fully completed with ALL THE NECESSARY accompanying documentation. Incomplete documentation will be returned to learners.

In the first instance, financial support will only be given for **one course per learner**. Bursary funds are awarded to support the cost of travel, equipment, resources and childcare. Awards to pay tuition fees will not be given if you are entitled to the concession fee on the course.

**Eligibility does not mean an entitlement and no guarantee can be given that funds will be available when you apply. If there is a high demand on the funds, awards may be given at a reduced rate.**

If you are aged 19+ as at 31 August 2018 and meet the following criteria, you may be eligible for fund contribution towards cost of travel, compulsory books and equipment needed for your course as well as childcare. The following applies:

- Studying on an ACL Essex, Community Learning course
- Meet the residency criteria
- Can demonstrate a financial need

**And meet one of the following criteria:**

1. In receipt of an eligible benefit (see application form)
2. Have a gross annual household income of £30,000 or less

### Appeals Procedure

If you have concerns regarding the decision made on your application for Discretionary Learner Support Funds, please appeal in writing to the Business Operations Officer at the centre.

**Support through the Discretionary Learner Support Fund is not guaranteed.**

The above information contained is correct at the time of going to print and may be subject to change and alteration (April 2018).