

Godalming College Discretionary Bursary Fund Information 2026-27

Godalming College has a Bursary Fund aimed at supporting students to overcome financial barriers they may have to attending College. If you have concerns about being able to meet the cost of transport or the necessary equipment for your College courses then you should consider applying to the Bursary Fund. All information provided to us is treated in the strictest confidence and we are happy to answer any queries.

The Discretionary Bursary Fund is for students who face genuine financial barriers to attending College. A bursary is awarded for specific educational requirements and cannot be awarded for costs unrelated to your programme of study. Bursaries tend to be given for transport, course costs, books and equipment.

If your gross annual household income is £30,000 or less you may be eligible for a discretionary bursary. Receipt of bursary funding does not affect receipt of other means tested benefits paid to your household.

What can the Discretionary Bursary Fund help me with?

What can the College pay for?

- Public transport travel costs – to receive financial assistance for your travel costs you must live over 2 miles away from the College site. We recommend purchasing a 16-17 Saver Railcard (for anyone travelling by train) and/or a FREE Surrey LINK Bus Card (if you live and travel in Surrey) to gain reduced ticket prices; the initial cost of purchasing these cards can be reimbursed by the Bursary Fund. It is not normally worth you buying a 16-25 Railcard, as there is a minimum ticket fare at peak times of £12.
- College bus service – annual pass
- Books and equipment required for your courses e.g. revision guides, course books, art materials
- Course related UK day trips and any travel relating to those trips
- Stationery purchased from the College Stationery Shop at Student Reception
- UCAS applications
- Printer top up credit
- Aspire travel costs if necessary

If a bursary student is purchasing anything that is not specifically listed in the above list, they must check directly with the Bursary Team before making such purchases. We trust that students will use reasonable endeavours to purchase appropriately priced items. Please make sure you keep all receipts to enable you to claim your expenses.

What will the College not pay for?

- General living costs e.g. mobile phone bills/top ups, accommodation, utility bills etc
- Petrol costs and costs relating to car travel – e.g. repairs/insurance
- Car parking/fines
- Taxis or Ubers, unless in exceptional pre-authorised circumstances

- Assessment and examination fees including LNAT/UCAT etc fees
- Any other trips or travel, including DofE and University Open Days

Laptop Assistance

The College has a supply of laptops that can be loaned to students in receipt of a College bursary for use during their time at College and will need to be returned once they leave College. These are allocated on a first come first served basis, so if this is something that you need assistance with please stipulate on your application form.

Free School Meals (FSM)

The College operates a FSM policy. If you qualify you will be entitled to up to £4.50 a day of food and drink from the College's catering facilities. Students will need to use their College ID Card to obtain their free meals allowance. If you received FSM in your previous school you will need to be reassessed for eligibility when you start at College. Please email bursary@godalming.ac.uk for more details.

Eligibility for a Discretionary Bursary

Circumstances	Evidence Required
<p>You, or your parent(s)/carer(s) in your household, are currently in receipt of one or more of the following benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Credit with a gross annual income from employment of less than £30,000 • Income Support • Income based Job Seekers allowance • Income-related Employment and Support Allowance • The Guarantee Element of State Pension • Housing Benefit 	<p>A letter confirming your entitlement to benefits from one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Last 3 months full Universal Credit statement copies • Job Centre Plus • Department for Work and Pensions • Your local Authority • HMRC Tax Credit Award letter for 2026 – 27 • The most recent 3 months' payslips from any employment your household may have <p>Any letter provided to us should be dated in the last 3 months. If your letter is older than 3 months then please also provide a recent bank statement showing a payment going into your account within the last 3 months.</p>
<p>OR</p> <p>You, or your parent(s)/carers(s) in your household, are not in receipt of a benefit listed above, but are employed or self-employed with a gross annual household income of less than £30,000</p>	<p>Please provide one of the following for each parent/carers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The most recent 3 months' payslips • Evidence of self-employed income e.g. tax return or accountant's letter

To be in receipt of this bursary, you must meet the residency conditions in the DfE funding regulations. All students must be aged 16 or over but under 19 on 31st August 2026. For those students aged 19 or over on 31st August 2026 they are not eligible for the vulnerable bursary, but

can receive a discretionary bursary while they continue on a study programme they began aged 16 to 18 (19+ continuers) or have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

Eligibility for Free School Meals (FSM)

The national FSM transitional protections (in place since April 2018) have now ended. Households must now meet the national FSM eligibility criteria from 1 September 2026 to continue receiving FSM. Eligibility will be assessed in both your first and second years at College.

Households need to be in receipt of one or more of the following benefits to be eligible for Free School Meals:

Benefit	Evidence
Universal Credit (regardless of household income)	Documentary evidence – last 3 months of full Universal Credit statements
Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)	Award letter dated within the last 3 months
Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999	Letter from Home Office showing Immigration status
The guarantee element of State Pension Credit	Pension or Pension credits award letter

How to Apply

You can apply as soon as you have enrolled as a student and receive a Student ID number. Applications should be made as close to the start of the academic year as possible via the [PayMyStudent portal](#).

You register on the portal and then log in to complete the online application form, attaching the relevant evidence as required. For more detailed instructions please look on the College website - [Bursary Fund \(godalming.ac.uk\)](#)

How to Make Expense Claims

Once you are approved for the Discretionary Bursary it is your responsibility to claim your expenses that we will then reimburse.

All claims are made via the PayMyStudent portal - <https://godalming.paymystudent.com/portal/> .

Log in and use the 'Claiming an Expense' option to upload your receipts and give more details about your claim. Students are reimbursed on a weekly basis for approved claims. They need to be submitted by Tuesday afternoon at the latest in order to receive the bank transfer by the Friday of that week. Claims should be made in a timely fashion and within the half term of the purchase. If you are in any doubt about whether your claim is eligible or not, please check with us before you make a large purchase.

Bank Accounts

We cannot make payments to students in cash. All payments will be via BACS directly into a student's own bank account. If you need any assistance with this, please get in touch.

Contact details

If you have any queries, please contact the Bursary Co-ordinator on:

Email bursary@godalming.ac.uk

Telephone 01483 411235