

Godalming College

Vulnerable Bursary Fund Information 2026-2027

The Vulnerable Bursary is aimed at supporting students who fall into specific groups to help overcome financial barriers they may have to face when attending College. All information provided to us is treated in the strictest confidence and we are happy to answer any queries.

Eligibility for the Vulnerable Bursary Fund

This award is for students who are in one of the defined vulnerable groups below. There is no requirement to prove household income to be eligible. This 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.

Groups	Evidence required
Looked After Children, or previously Looked After Children (Care Leaver) i.e. cared for by the Local Authority or placed with a foster carer by the Local Authority. If privately fostered you are not eligible for the Vulnerable Bursary.	A letter or email from your Social Worker, Key Worker or Local Authority confirming your current or previous looked-after status. As a Care Leaver you must have been looked after for a period of more than 13 weeks consecutively, or periods amounting to 13 weeks, which began after the age of 14 and ended after the age of 16.
Receiving Universal Credit (UC), or Income Support (IS) because they are financially supporting themselves or financially supporting themselves and someone who is dependent on them and living with them, such as a child or partner	A copy of their Universal Credit award notice clearly stating that the claim is in the student's name/confirming they are entitled to the benefits in their own right. If they are in receipt of Universal Credit we must also see a document such as a tenancy agreement or utility bill in the student's name, dependent's birth certificates or a child benefit receipt
Receiving Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payments (PIP) in their own right as well as Universal Credit (UC) or Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) in their own right	A copy of their UC/ESA and DLA and PIP award notice from DWP. If they receive DLA or PIP evidence of receipt must also be provided

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).

What can the Vulnerable 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)

If you are eligible for a Vulnerable Bursary you may also be eligible for Free School Meals (FSM), but this would be dependent on your household income. Please see the Discretionary Bursary information leaflet for detail on eligibility criteria. If you do 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. Please email bursary@godalming.ac.uk for more details.

How to Apply

You can apply to the Vulnerable Bursary 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 Vulnerable 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