

THE NEW 16-19 BURSARY AND CHANGES TO EDUCATION MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCE (EMA)

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

The Government has proposed new arrangements to support the most vulnerable young people to continue in full-time education.

The arrangements are made up of two parts:

1. The 16-19 Bursary:

There are guaranteed bursaries of £1,200 a year for the most vulnerable learners. It is estimated that around 12,000 young people are in this group, consisting of:

- Young people in care
- Care leavers
- Those on income support (income support is paid to young people such as teenage parents, young people with severe disabilities, teenagers living away from their parents and young people whose parents have died).

Colleges and training providers will then be able to award bursaries to any student who faces genuine financial barriers to staying on in education and training to help with costs such as transport, food or equipment.

2. Young people who currently receive Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA):

There are transitional arrangements planned to help those young people who are part-way through their studies and are currently receiving the EMA.

The most vulnerable young people identified above (young people in care, care leavers and those on income support) who are currently receiving EMA will be eligible for a guaranteed bursary of £1,200 a year in place of their current weekly EMA payments (this works out at around £40 per week over a 30 week college year).

Students who successfully applied for EMA in 2009/10 will continue to receive payments at the level set out in their EMA guarantee for each week they are in education or training, until the end of the 2011/12 academic year.

Those students who successfully applied for the maximum weekly EMA payment of £30 in 2010/11 will be eligible for £20 for each week they are in education or training, until the end of the 2011/12 academic year.

For other young people it will be entirely down to their college to decide how much support they receive towards the costs associated with studying such as food, transport, books and other course-related essentials.



When will all this happen?

The new scheme will start in September 2011 and the money will be distributed by schools, colleges and training providers during the 2011/12 academic year.

Who decides who will get the money?

The most vulnerable young people identified in the groups above are guaranteed funds. For all other young people, this will depend on personal circumstances and colleges will decide and have the flexibility to award bursaries to the young people who most need support to stay on in education or training.

What can the money be spent on?

Bursary payments are to be used for things like books, meals, transport or other course-related costs needed to help a young person stay in education. Colleges and training providers may choose to pay bursaries as a cash payment or they may provide 'in kind' support under the bursary scheme, for example, by bulk purchasing equipment that students need for particular courses.

When can I apply for a bursary?

All bursaries – including those for the most vulnerable young people – will be administered by schools, colleges and training providers, who will set out details of how the scheme will operate locally.

If you get the transitional EMA support funds can you also apply for a bursary?

Yes. However, this will depend on circumstances and the college or training provider will be expected to take into account the fact that a young person is receiving regular weekly EMA payments in determining what they should receive.

When will the money be available?

The new 16-19 Bursary Fund will start from September 2011. Colleges and training providers will have the flexibility to decide when payments should be made.

How do we know Colleges will be fair?

The Department for Education will monitor the use of the 16-19 Bursary Fund closely in the first year of its operation. Colleges and work-based training providers should all have established complaints processes. They are the first place to go for any young person who thinks that they have been treated unfairly.

