



2026-27

BHASVIC

16-19 Bursary and Free College Meals Guidelines

These guidelines apply to students aged 16, 17 or 18 on 31 August 2026. If you are 19 on or before this date, please email bursary@bhasvic.ac.uk to discuss your options for financial support.

The 16-19 Bursary Fund helps students overcome specific barriers to participation and attendance. The Free College Meals scheme supports eligible students with food costs.

BHASVIC offers three types of financial support:

- **Enhanced Bursary** - for students in priority groups identified by the government
- **Discretionary Bursary** – for households with an annual income of £30,000 or below
- **Free College Meals (FCM)** - for households receiving Universal Credit or other qualifying benefits

Please read these guidelines carefully to understand what support is available and whether you are eligible to apply. **The application deadline is 18 September 2026.**

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IMPORTANT:**You will need your BHASVIC student number to apply for financial support**

- You can find this in communications from our Admissions team

Make sure you can access your BHASVIC email account

- Log in details were sent at the beginning of June
- If you cannot access your account, contact [IT Support](#) before applying

You (the student) must have your own bank account, in your own name

- We cannot make payments by cash or cheque
- If you do not have a bank account, or cannot open one, email bursary@bhasvic.ac.uk for advice

Submit ONE application only

- We assess your eligibility for all funding through a single application

All evidence must show the same address as we have recorded on the BHASVIC system

- If you live between two homes, provide details for the household you live in **most of the time**
- If you cannot find your evidence, please email bursary@bhasvic.ac.uk to ask which alternatives may be suitable

Your application is not complete until all evidence is received

- If we need more information, we will email you with a deadline
- Applications may be cancelled if this deadline is not met

Funds are limited and may run out

- Apply as early as possible
- **Application deadline: 18 September 2026**

Being awarded a bursary does not guarantee payment

- You must meet the attendance and behaviour conditions outlined on page 15
- Payments may be reduced or withheld if you do not

The college has a right to refuse your application

- Even if you are eligible, we may not award funding where there is no financial need
- This may be because your financial needs are being met in another way, or because you have no college-related costs

All information is accurate at the time of publication

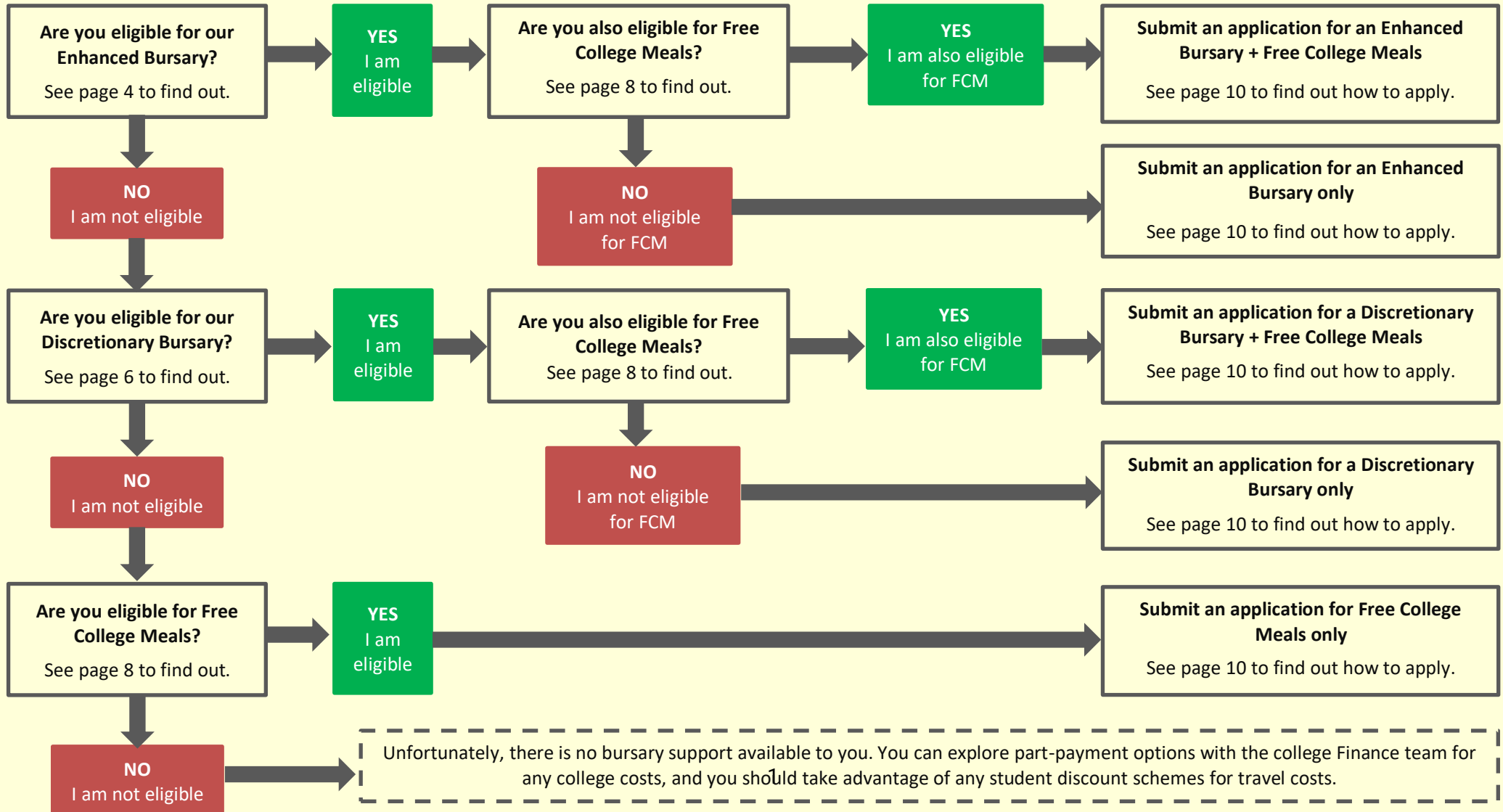
- The college may amend this guidance in response to changes in external requirements or where necessary to manage its budget effectively



2026-27

How to Use These Guidelines

We try to make applying for financial support as easy as possible. Following the steps below will help you work out what you are eligible to apply for:



Enhanced Bursary: Are you eligible?

The following students are eligible to apply for an enhanced bursary:

- Students **in local authority care** or who have **recently left local authority care** (also known as 'Children in Care' and 'Care Leavers' or 'Care Experienced'). You can find out how we define Care Experienced young people in Appendix III on page 19.
- Students who receive **Income Support or Universal Credit** in their own name
- Students receiving **Disability Living Allowance (DLA)** or **Personal Independence Payments (PIP)** in their own name **as well as Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)** or **Universal Credit (UC)** in their own name.

Enhanced Bursary: What evidence do you need?

If you are eligible to apply for an Enhanced Bursary, you must provide us with at least one of the evidence types listed below.

Eligibility	Evidence Type
Students who are ' in care ', or ' care leavers '	A letter/email from the relevant Local Authority, on headed paper, or from a local authority email address.
Students in receipt of Universal Credit in their own name	A copy of your three most recent monthly Universal Credit award statements. (These should be accessible to you from your online account).
Students in receipt of DLA or PIP in their own name And in receipt of.... ESA or UC in their own name	Your DLA / PIP Award Letter and evidence of payments made into your account within the last 3 months. AND A copy of your three most recent monthly ESA / Universal Credit award statements.

Enhanced Bursary: What does it cover?

If you are eligible for an enhanced bursary, the college may support the following:

Course Charges	Mainly for Visual Arts, Performing Arts and/or Geography courses. You can find more information here: Student Charges Policy for 2026-27
Travel	If you live more than 1.5 miles from BHASVIC (BN3 6EG), and within Brighton & Hove, East Sussex or West Sussex Local Authority areas.
Compulsory Trips	Course-related, compulsory, one-day, non-residential, UK trips.
Scientific Calculator	Up to £72 for students studying Maths, Chemistry, Physics or Life Sciences.
Books / Key Texts	For students studying English Literature (up to £65), English Language & Literature (up to £25) or French, Spanish or German (up to £12 per language).
Sports Competition Costs	Up to £200, budget allowing , for students representing BHASVIC in a sporting event.
Visits to universities / employers / apprenticeship providers	Budget allowing , we will support costs of up to £150 for the travel expenses related to visiting a university, employer or apprenticeship provider if it relates closely to your future progression plan. The £150 limit can be used on either a single trip or across multiple trips.

More information about what we pay for and what we don't pay for can be found on pages 11 to 14.

Discretionary Bursary: Are you eligible?

You can apply for a Discretionary Bursary if:

- you are **not eligible for an Enhanced Bursary**
- your gross household income is **£30,000 per year or below**

Discretionary Bursary: What evidence do you need?

You must be able to provide us with evidence of your gross household income being £30,000 per year or below

Eligibility	Evidence Type
Evidence of a household income of £30,000 per year or below	To be considered for the Discretionary Bursary, you must provide evidence of your total gross household income. Depending on your circumstances, this may include a combination of the following: If you, or your parent(s)/carer(s), receive benefits: • Universal Credit statements (most recent 3 months) • Tax Credit award notice (full document) • Letters from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), Jobcentre Plus, HMRC, or your Local Authority Benefit evidence must be dated within the last 3 months. If older, you must also provide a bank statement showing a relevant benefit payment going in to your account. If you, or your parent(s)/carer(s), are employed or self-employed: • Most recent 3 months' payslips • P60 (2025-26 tax year) • Self-employment evidence (e.g. tax return or accountant's letter) for the 2025-26 tax year

Discretionary Bursary: What does it cover?

If you are eligible for a discretionary bursary, the college may support the following:

Course Charges	Mainly for Visual Arts, Performing Arts and/or Geography courses. You can find more information here: Student Charges Policy for 2026-27
Travel	If you live more than 2 miles from BHASVIC (BN3 6EG), and within the Brighton & Hove, East Sussex or West Sussex Local Authority areas.
Compulsory Trips	Course-related, compulsory, one-day, non-residential, UK trips.
Scientific Calculator	Up to £72 for students studying Maths, Chemistry, Physics or Life Sciences.
Books / Key Texts	For students studying English Literature (up to £65), English Language & Literature (up to £25) or French, Spanish or German (up to £12 per language).
Sports Competition Costs	Up to £150, budget allowing , for students representing BHASVIC in a sporting event.
Visits to universities / employers / apprenticeship providers	Budget allowing , we will support costs of up to £75 for the travel expenses related to visiting a university, employer or apprenticeship provider if it relates closely to your future progression plan. The £75 limit can be used on either a single trip or across multiple trips.

More information about what we pay for and what we don't pay for can be found on pages 11 to 14.

Free College Meals: Are you eligible?

You can apply for Free College Meals if:

- You, or your parent(s)/carer(s), are **in receipt of Universal Credit**.

OR

- You, or your parent(s)/carer(s), are **in receipt of support under part V1 of the Immigration & Asylum Act 1999**

Households receiving income-related Employment & Support Allowance or the guarantee element of Pension Credit may also be entitled to Free College Meals. If this applies to you, please contact us on bursary@bhasvic.ac.uk before you apply.

Free College Meals: What evidence do you need?

Eligibility	Evidence Type
You, or your parent(s)/carer(s), are in receipt of Universal Credit	A copy of your three most recent monthly Universal Credit award statements. These must be the full documents, not partial copies or screenshots. Please see Appendix I on page 16 for instructions on how to download Universal Credit statements as a PDF file.
You, or your parent(s)/carer(s), are in receipt of support under part V1 of the Immigration & Asylum Act 1999	A letter from the UK Home Office confirming asylum support (Section 95 or Section 4). If the letter is not dated within the last 12 months, we may ask for additional confirmation (e.g. ASPEN card).

Free College Meals: What does it cover?

If you are eligible for Free College Meals, the college will support you in the following way:

A meal allowance for each day that you are timetabled to be in college	The college is not allowed to provide Free College Meals support in cash, or by paying directly into bank accounts. The allowance you are awarded is loaded on to your BHASVIC ID card which can then be used as a cashless payment method in each of our catering outlets.
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Important Additional Information about Free College Meals

The **Department for Education** sets the Free College Meals (FCM) base rate at **£2.66** per timetabled day.

The college provides **two levels** of FCM support:

- Households in receipt of Universal Credit, with an income of **more than £30,000 per year**, will receive the base rate of **£2.66 per timetabled day**.
- For Households in receipt of Universal Credit, with an income of **£30,000 per year or below**, the college will top the base rate up to **£4.20 per timetabled day**. You would also be eligible to apply for the Discretionary Bursary – please see pages 6 to 7 for more information.

FCM funding is limited - apply early as funds do run out. **Universal Credit status does not guarantee payments** - you still need to **make a full and successful application** to the college **before the 18 September deadline**. Once funding is exhausted, eligible applicants will be placed on a waiting list in case additional funding become available.

FCM support will begin from the Monday following confirmation of a successful application. This means funding may not be in place from your college start date, and you should be prepared to cover your own costs while your application is being processed. **FCM support is not backdated**.

Allowances are issued weekly, reset each Monday, and cannot be carried forward.

How to Apply:

The application process is the same for all bursaries. Apply as early as possible.

- Apply online **from Monday 13 July**: [Financial Support Portal](#).

IMPORTANT:

- Complete each section of the application form carefully – answer all the questions. We can only process completed applications.
- Upload electronic copies of the required evidence:
 - **Do not** send evidence by post or email unless we ask you to. Only uploads via the application portal are correctly attached to your application.
 - **Do not** upload multiple photos or screenshots of documents. Each piece of evidence must be submitted as a single, individual document.
- Email bursary@bhasvic.ac.uk if you need help with your application.

When to Apply:

- **Deadline: Friday 18 September 2026. The college reserves the right to close applications earlier if funds run out.**
- Acceptance of applications received after any deadline set will be at the college's discretion.
- **Do not wait for GCSE results to apply** – apply as soon as you can. If you do not enroll at BHASVIC in September we will destroy your application in line with data protection guidelines.

What happens after an application is submitted?

- Applications are assessed by Student Services.
- Remember, we can only process **completed** applications that include the required evidence.
- **If your application is incomplete**, we will use your BHASVIC email to request more information. We will also contact your parent(s)/carer(s). If we do not receive any additional requested evidence within 10 working days we will close your application. We will email you to tell you that we have done this.
- **All decisions are emailed to your BHASVIC email account. We will try to let you know the outcome of your application within 15 working days but it may take longer during college holiday periods.**
 - **If a bursary is awarded:** the email we send to you will tell you how much you have been awarded, what the award is for, how the payments will be made, and the month in which payments are made. **You can also view all this information in the application portal.**
 - **If a bursary is refused:** the email we send to you will explain why. The most common reason is not having the required evidence or not completing the application in full.

Further information about payments: Costs we do support

The following table explains each type of payment in more detail:

Course Charges	Amounts awarded are based on the course(s) you enrol on. Some students will have no charges. Two-year courses are paid in two parts, half in each academic year. You need to re-apply for the bursary for each academic year. Support for course charges is assessed automatically at the point of application and you do not need to provide additional evidence for this.
Travel	To receive support with travel costs you must: • Live in Brighton & Hove, East Sussex or West Sussex • Live over 1.5 miles away for an Enhanced Bursary, or 2 miles away for a Discretionary Bursary • Provide the college with receipts if requested • Not receive travel support from another source (e.g. a local authority) Distances are calculated from BHASVIC (BN3 6EG) using the shortest walking route on Google Maps. You may want to check this yourself, so you know in advance whether you are likely to receive travel support. The reason for calculating awards in this way is to ensure that distance is fairly applied to each student, decisions are transparent, and that our allocation process for travel does not require college staff to analyse the various routes that may be available to an individual. We will not fund travel for students who do not meet the 1.5 or 2 mile distance threshold, unless there are exceptional or medical circumstances, which will be considered on a case-by-case basis. You will need to contact us via bursary@bhasvic.ac.uk if you think this applies to you. All travel awards are based on the cheapest form of public transport available to you, and we also expect you to take advantage of any discounts or subsidies available. The award you are given may not cover 100% of your costs. Please see our Travel Guidelines for more information on amounts paid per term, determined by area. If you are travelling to college by train or bus and also live more than 1.5 miles / 2 miles from your nearest station/stop, we may offer you additional funds to cover travel costs between your home and the train/bus station/stop. Support for travel is assessed automatically at the point of application and you do not need to provide additional evidence for this, unless you are applying on the grounds of exceptional or medical circumstances.

Free College Meals (FCM)	£2.66 or £4.20 per timetabled day to spend in our food outlets. The amount you receive will depend on your household income as per the information on page 9. FCM funding will be assigned to your BHASVIC ID card which you then use as a cashless payment method. Eligibility for Free College Meals is assessed automatically at the point of application and our decision is based on the evidence you supply to us.
Compulsory Trips	We can cover the essential costs of trips that are: • one-day • compulsory • non-residential • UK-based • during term-time • linked to a specific course Please follow college trip procedures as directed by your teacher. You should also contact bursary@bhasvic.ac.uk as soon as you are made aware of a trip so we can authorise an internal payment to cover the cost. If you have already paid for a trip and would like to organise a refund, email bursary@bhasvic.ac.uk with the trip details and payment receipt. Support for trips is not assessed automatically. You will need to contact us each time you have the opportunity to participate in a trip. We only cover costs for trips that the college deem as compulsory. Please note that we cannot provide any support for trips that include an overnight stay, regardless of whether they are in the UK or abroad. You should expect to meet all costs for residential and overseas trips yourself. The college usually offers a payment plan for these trips.
Sports Competition Costs	Students representing BHASVIC in a sporting event can receive funds towards compulsory Sport Competition Costs for each year of study. Support for Sports Competition Costs is not assessed automatically. You will need to contact us to request this support and we will contact the Sports Department to confirm that you are representing BHASVIC in a sporting event.
Scientific Calculator	Only for students studying Maths, Physics, Chemistry or Life Sciences. We will pay up to a maximum of £72. Support for a calculator is not assessed automatically. With enough notice, we may be able to order the item on your behalf. The alternative is that you purchase a calculator with your own funds and provide us with a copy of the receipt so we can refund you (up to a maximum of £72). You can only receive support to purchase one calculator during your time at the college. If you are unsure of the calculator functions required for the entirety of your study, please ask your teacher(s) for more information.
Books / Key Texts	Only for students studying English Literature (up to £65), English Language & Literature (up to £25) or Modern Foreign Languages (up to £12 per language). Support for this cost is not assessed automatically. With enough notice we may be able to order the item(s) on your behalf. The alternative is that you purchase the book(s) with your own funds and provide us with a copy of the receipt so we can refund you (up to the maximum allowances given above).

Visits to universities / employers / apprenticeship providers	Budget allowing, we may support you with travel costs to attend university, apprenticeship and/or employer events such as Open Days, Applicant Days or Admissions/Job Interviews, where there is a clear link with your future progression plan. When deciding whether we can support a request, we will consider whether the trip is compulsory or optional, whether the university, apprenticeship provider or employer offers financial support for this purpose, and whether there is a viable alternative e.g. taking part virtually. If funds are available, we will support Enhanced Bursary recipients with a maximum of £150 per academic year, and Discretionary Bursary recipients with a maximum of £75 per academic year. The amount awarded will be calculated using the cheapest form of public transport from BHASVIC to your destination, and will also take all available travel discounts into account. We will not pay for overnight accommodation costs associated with visits of this type, and can only support the costs of the student, not those of anybody travelling with them. Support under this category is not assessed automatically and you will need to contact us if this cost arises for you.
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Further information about payments: Costs we do not support

The following table provides information about the costs the bursary **does not** cover, and why:

Printing	All students receive print credits at the beginning of their first year - when these have run out, more print credits can be purchased from the Library desk. We strongly encourage students to carefully consider what needs to be printed, to cut down on both cost and waste.
Exam resits	We cannot support students with the cost of exam resits.
Enrichment or extra-curricular activities (including Duke of Edinburgh Awards)	We cannot support the cost of any enrichment activities which are not a compulsory part of a course you are studying. The college offers a wide range of enrichment activities and tries to ensure there are always options with zero costs.
Compulsory admissions examinations	Some university courses require an admissions test as part of their application process. For example: • LNAT for some Law courses • UKCAT for some Medicine courses Many of these processes waive their fees for students who are in receipt of a 16-19 Bursary, so we do not meet this cost for you. If you are unsure whether you are required to pay a fee for a compulsory admissions test, please email bursary@bhasvic.ac.uk and we can help you contact the relevant university to request a fee waiver.
High value equipment	Due to a limited budget, we cannot support you with the cost of high value equipment such as laptops and cameras. We may however be able to provide a laptop on long-term loan. If you do not have a laptop that you can bring into college with you, please email bursary@bhasvic.ac.uk and a member of staff will get back to you.
General living costs	The bursary will not cover general living expenses, e.g. mobile phone bills, accommodation, utility bills, gym membership, social/sporting activities unrelated to your college course(s).
Petrol	All awards for travel are based on the cheapest form of public transport available to you, after all available discounts have been applied.
Car parking	There is no student parking onsite. If you chose to travel by car we will not contribute towards the cost of metered parking. We do not recommend students travel to college by car, as parking is very limited in the local area.
Small items of stationery	We will not allocate additional funds to you for small items of stationery, e.g. pens, paper, folders.
Assessment and examination fees	Students with attendance below 90% by the time examination or assessment entries are made may be required to pay a contribution towards the cost of assessment. The bursary fund will not cover this cost for you.

Attendance and Behaviour Conditions

The bursary fund is intended to help you participate fully in your education at BHASVIC and we expect all students to maintain high levels of attendance and punctuality. Regular and full attendance and punctuality have a direct and positive impact on achievement.

We also expect the behaviour of all members of the college community to support a calm and purposeful atmosphere which respects others and enables effective learning to take place.

To ensure bursary payments are made to you in full and on time, you must:

- Maintain attendance of 90% or over in all timetabled lessons, including tutorial.
- Follow the college's absence procedures for any unavoidable absences e.g. illness. You can find more information here: [Attendance and Absence Procedures](#)
- Check your college email and Teams accounts regularly and respond promptly to any messages from staff.
- Provide receipts evidencing your costs when requested to do so (this mainly applies to students receiving support for travel costs)
- Adhere to the terms and conditions of your college contract and uphold the expectations laid out in the Student Code of Conduct. You can find more information in our [Student Behaviour Policy](#)

If your attendance falls below 90%, or you are subject to any disciplinary proceedings, your bursary payments may be reduced, delayed or withheld.

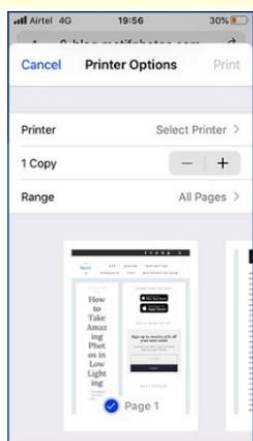
Appendix I: Providing Evidence of Universal Credit

When uploading evidence to the application portal, it is important that each piece of evidence is uploaded as a single PDF document. Uploading multiple photographs or screenshots of evidence makes it more difficult for staff to assess your eligibility and process your application.

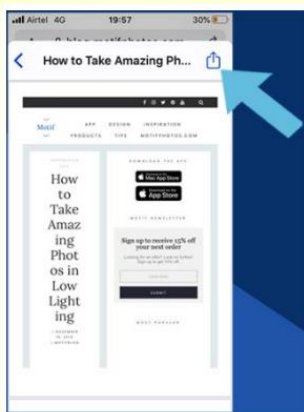
How to download your online Universal Credit statements

1. [Sign in to your Universal Credit account - Universal Credit](#)
2. Go to the 'payments' section.
3. You should see a list of months in which you have received Universal Credit. Click on these to view your statements.
4. Click on 'print this statement' – usually found in the top right-hand corner of the statement. If you can't click 'print this statement' you may need to use a different web browser e.g. Google Chrome, Microsoft Edge, Safari etc.
5. Depending on the device you are using, please follow the relevant instructions below:

If using an Apple device:

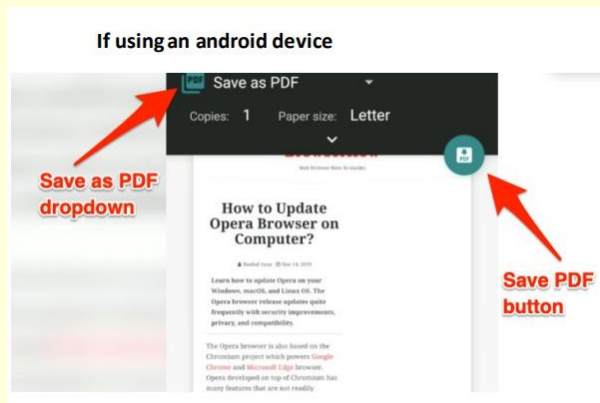


You'll see a small preview first. To take a closer look, use the pinch-out gesture on the preview. Alternatively, you can press hard on the preview to view the document in full.



Once you're in full preview, you'll be able to see this option. Select whether you'd like to save this to cloud or send via email. If you save it, you can then upload it to the portal when you complete your application.

If using an Android device:



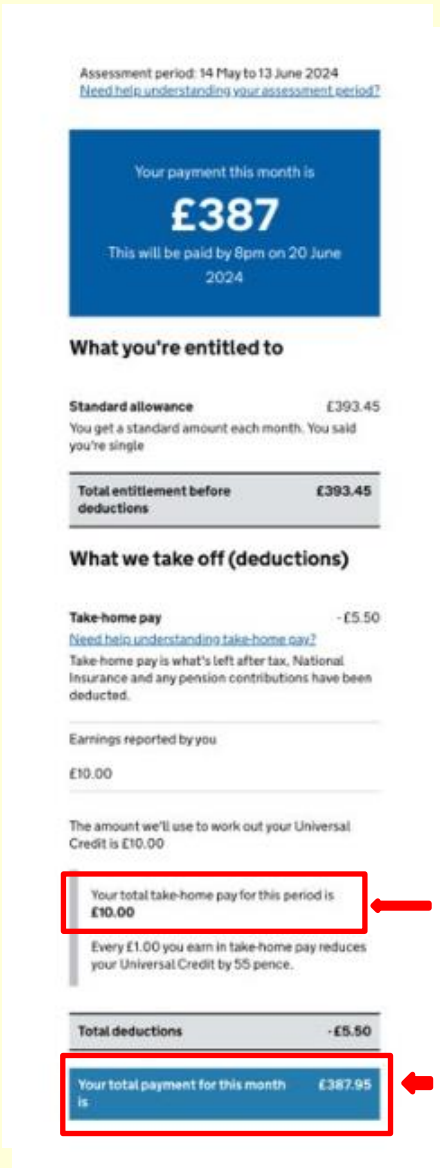
From the print preview screen you can click on the printer selection drop-down box and choose 'Save as PDF'. The 'save PDF' button will then appear. Click on the button to save the document.

Appendix II: Universal Credit Award Notice Calculations for the 16-19 Bursary

If you are in receipt of Universal Credit, we ask that you upload your three most recent monthly award statements when you submit your application.

As per the guidance from the Department for Education, the take-home pay figure **in addition to** the amount of Universal Credit after all deductions gives the total monthly income. Using three months of statements acts as a guide to the household income for a quarter of a year. This figure is then used to estimate income for a full year.

The screenshot from a claim below shows “What we take off (deductions)”. This shows the take-home pay that Universal Credit takes into account – in the example it is £10. This section will show earnings reported by an employer or self-employed income and expenses reported by the claimant, as appropriate. The formatting of a claim in a mobile view and desktop view will look slightly different, but both will contain the same information.



The screenshot displays a Universal Credit award notice. At the top, it states the assessment period is 14 May to 13 June 2024. A large blue box shows the monthly payment of £387, to be paid by 8pm on 20 June 2024. Below this, it lists the standard allowance of £393.45 for a single person. A table shows the total entitlement before deductions as £393.45. The 'What we take off (deductions)' section shows a take-home pay deduction of £5.50 and earnings reported by the claimant of £10.00. At the bottom, it states the amount used for Universal Credit is £10.00. Two red boxes highlight specific figures: one for 'Your total take-home pay for this period is £10.00' and another for 'Your total payment for this month is £387.95'.

The calculation the college would do based on this UC statement would be as follows:

$$\begin{array}{r}
 \text{Take home pay figure (£10)} \\
 + \\
 \text{UC amount after deductions (£387.95)} \\
 = \\
 \text{Monthly income (£397.95)}
 \end{array}$$

If the applicant submitted three statements showing the same amount, the quarterly income would be:

$$£397.95 \times 3 = £1,193.85$$

Which would be used to calculate an annual income of:

$$£1,193.85 \times 4 = \mathbf{£4775.40}$$

**Take Home
Pay Figure**

**UC After
Deductions**

Appendix III: 'Children in Care' and 'Care Leavers'

Defining 'in care' and 'care leavers'

For the purposes of the 16 to 19 Bursary Fund, the definitions are:

- 'in care' means:
 - young people looked after by a local authority on a voluntary basis (Section 20 of the Children Act 1989); **or**
 - under a care order (Section 31 of the Children Act 1989).

Section 22 of the Children Act 1989 defines the term 'looked after child'

- 'care leaver' means either:
 - a young person aged 16 or 17 who was previously looked after for a period of 13 weeks consecutively (or periods amounting to 13 weeks), which began after the age of 14 and ended after the age of 16; **or**
 - a young person aged 18 or above who was looked after prior to becoming 18 for a period of 13 weeks consecutively (or periods amounting to 13 weeks), which began after the age of 14 and ended after the age of 16

Most care-experienced young people have, or will have had, a Social Worker.

Foster care, including privately arranged foster care

A young person placed with a foster carer by the local authority, including where the foster carer is on the register of an independent fostering agency, is classed as looked after. They meet the 'in care' criteria for the Enhanced Bursary.

A young person who is privately fostered (in other words, a private arrangement is made between the parent and the person who will care for the young person) is not classed as a looked after child and is not eligible for the Enhanced Bursary, but may well be eligible for the Discretionary Bursary.

In some instances, a young person may have been in the care of the local authority and the care transferred to another party via a permanent form of fostering such as a Special Guardianship Order. In these circumstances, the young person is defined as having left care so is now a care leaver. They must meet the definition of a 'care leaver' in full (so, the period of weeks and age range set out above). If they do, they are eligible to apply for help from the Enhanced Bursary.