

# Peter Symonds College Student Support Fund

## Guidelines for applications

The Student Support Fund is a cash-limited fund which is intended to support students from low income households with the essential costs associated with attending College. The priorities for the fund will be help towards travel costs to College, and books and equipment that are essential to your course. Overseas trips cannot be subsidised, but help may be available for local trips to theatres etc. It is not anticipated, under normal circumstances, that exam re-sit fees and costs associated with applying to Universities will be paid through the Student Support Fund. Priority will be given to students who are in receipt of a low household income, **and** have difficulty meeting the specific financial costs of attending College.

### Who is eligible?

You may receive a payment from the Student Support Fund if you are:

- Aged 16 – 18 at the start of your course
- Living in a household where the joint annual income is less than £21,000
- Facing exceptional financial circumstances, even where the household income is above £21,000. In this situation a covering letter should be attached to the form detailing the circumstances you wish us to take into account.

You should be aware that each application will be judged on the basis of “**relative financial need**” and that not all applications will be successful, regardless of income level.

**If you are a Looked After Child (looked after by the Local Authority), a Care Leaver, a student who is a parent and you are claiming Income Support, or if you live independently and receive Income Support, please speak to Student Services staff, as you may be entitled to the Student Bursary. The Bursary Scheme guarantees students in the above groups a minimum level of support of £1,200 per year. There is a separate application form for the Bursary. (NB: students from households in receipt of Income Support who do NOT fall in to the above categories are not eligible for a Bursary but can still apply to the Student Support Fund.)**

### How do I apply?

If you would like to apply for an award from the Student Support Fund you should:

- Complete the attached application form, taking time to ensure that you fill in all sections, and give all the requested information. Any gaps in information could result in your application being delayed.
- Attach the relevant evidence of income as described on the form. Please let us know whether your documents are originals that you need to have returned, or copies that we can keep.
- If your income is over £21,000 and you are applying because you face exceptional financial circumstances, please attach a letter to the form, outlining your own personal situation. The information you give will be treated in the strictest confidence.
- Return the form and your evidence to Student Services.

- If you are applying to the fund for a second or subsequent time during the academic year, you should ask at Student Services for the Re-application Form. You will not be required to submit your income details again.
- However, if you re-apply during your second year you will need to submit updated income details.

### **What happens next?**

Fully completed forms with all supporting evidence attached will normally be processed within 14 days of receipt, but can take longer during peak periods – i.e. beginning of the Autumn term. We will email you on your College email account if we have any queries with your application, and with the outcome of your application. It is your responsibility to check your email account.

Where possible payments will be made via internal college transfers, e.g. to the Second Hand Bookshop, so you should not purchase any books before applying to the fund. You cannot claim back cash you have spent on books.

### **Additional Information**

The Student Support Fund is intended to support those students in most financial need, to enable them to attend College and achieve their full potential. On receiving your application to the Fund we may check your attendance and applications may be refused in cases of poor attendance.

Books and equipment paid for from the Student Support Fund remain the property of the college, and should be handed back to Student Services on completion of your course.

### **Can I appeal against the outcome of my application to the Student Support Fund?**

Yes. If you are unhappy with the decision you receive from the fund you can appeal in writing to Julia Tucker, Assistant Principal (Students). Your letter should outline why you feel the criteria set out above have not been applied in your circumstances.

If you need any further information, or any help completing the form, please speak to any member of Student Services staff, in person or by telephone on 01962 857547.

The Student Support Fund is a cash-limited fund which can only be allocated whilst funds last. Funding cannot be guaranteed later in the academic year, and so you are advised to submit your application as early as possible.