

POLICY/PROCEDURE: STUDENT SUPPORT FUND APPEALS PROCEDURE

Approval required by:	SMT	Y	Governing Body	Y
SMT Lead:	Deputy Principal Culture, Place & Communities			
Responsible Manager:	Assistant Principal Students			
Date approved:	March 2023			
Date to be reviewed:	March 2024			

Relevant to:	Students	Y	Staff	Y
	Visitors	N	ITS	Y
Relevant to:	All students	Y		
	16-18 Vocational	Y	Sixth Form	Y
	Higher Education	Y	Adults	Y
	Apprenticeships	N	14-16	Y
	Other	N	
Relevant to:	All staff	N		
	Board	Y	SPH	N
	Managers	Y		
	Teaching staff	N	Support staff	Y

Accessible to	Students	Y/N	Staff	Y/N
Friendly version	Students	Y/N	Staff	Y/N

EQIA required N

Significant changes to policy

None

Impact of changes

N/A

SCOPE AND PURPOSE

This policy is designed to deal with appeals raised by students against the outcomes of an assessment for student financial support. Responsibility for the management and implementation of this policy and procedures lies with the Head of Student Services.

Currently six separate support funds are available to students at Barnsley College and ITS (“the College”):

- 14-16 Learner Support Fund
- 16-19 Learner Support Fund
- 19+ Learner Support Fund
- Advanced Learner Loan Bursary
- 16-18 Enhanced Bursary
- Student Opportunity Fund (HE only)

14-18 LEARNER SUPPORT FUND

Students must be enrolled and funded directly by the Education Funding Agency and be 18 or under on 31 August 2023. Where a young person turns 19 during their programme of study, they can be supported to the end of the academic year in which they turn 19. The 14-16 EHE element of this is funded through College.

19+ Learner Support Fund

The 19+ LSF is available to students aged 19+. This fund is not available for students receiving an Advanced Learning Loan to cover the cost of course fees.

Advanced Learning Loan Bursary

This fund is only available to students who are claiming an Advanced Learning Loan

Enhanced Bursary

Young people in care, care leavers and those on income support or universal credit in replacement of income support aged under the age of 18 at the start of their course will be eligible for an enhanced bursary that is determine on receipt of the College’s LSF allocation.

Student Opportunity Fund (SOF)

The SOF is a discretionary fund intended to help students who have genuine unavoidable financial difficulties.

The Appeals Procedure

1. A student must make best effort to resolve any issues arising from the decision reached on their eligibility for financial support, in informal discussion with a Student Services Adviser.
2. In the event that the issue cannot be resolved, a student wishing to appeal against a decision made by a Student Services Adviser must lodge their appeal in writing with the Head of Student Services within 10 working days of the date of the award letter containing the outcome of the assessment for financial support. Grounds for appeal should be clearly stated and supporting evidence provided.
3. Appeals against a financial support decision will only be considered on the grounds of one of the following:
 - The process of decision making in respect of an application did not follow the prescribed procedure or is deemed to be unfair.
 - Pertinent new information is available which was not included in the original application.

4. Appeals against rules governing funds will not be accepted.
5. The Head of Student Services reserves the right to reject any appeal immediately if it clearly does not fall within the grounds stated above.
6. If it is deemed that there are valid grounds, the Head of Student Services will convene an Appeal Panel, normally within 10 working days. The appellant and the Student Services staff member who made the assessment will be present to establish the facts of the matter to the satisfaction of the Appeal Panel.
7. The appellant shall be advised in writing as follows:
 - They are entitled to give evidence to the Appeal Panel in person or via online platform, and may be accompanied or represented, if so desired, by a friend or colleague.
 - They have a right to submit a written statement for consideration by the Panel. Any such statement must reach the Head of Student Services at least 5 working days prior to the hearing.
 - They may call witnesses to attend the hearing, but the responsibility for their attendance rests with the appellant.
 - They shall inform the Head of Student Services, at least 5 working days prior to the hearing, of their intentions in respect of personal attendance and of the names of any friend or witnesses who will be attending or giving evidence.
8. Written evidence shall be made available to the Appeals Panel, to the appellant prior to the hearing.

The Appeal Panel should be quorate with the following:

- Head of Student Services who will act as Chair.
- A representative of the Students' Union.
- A senior independent member of Barnsley College Staff.
- A Student Services Officer, who will act as secretary to the Panel but will not have a vote.

The Hearing of an Appeal

1. The Appeal will be heard as soon as possible and normally within 10 working days of a valid appeal being lodged.
2. The appellant (and if the appellant so chooses, a friend) and the assessing Student Services Adviser shall be entitled to be present throughout the giving and receiving of evidence but must withdraw when this is completed.
3. Evidence shall be taken in the following order:
 - The appellant.
 - The appellant's friend and witnesses in support of the appellant.
 - A Student Services Adviser.
 - Other witnesses, if any.
 - The appellant.

4. Where the appellant does not appear in person, the Appeal Panel may nevertheless proceed.
5. When the giving and receiving of evidence is concluded the Appeal Panel shall deliberate with the secretary present. The findings shall be reached by simple majority vote, with the Chair having a second or casting vote where this proves to be necessary.
6. The Appeal Panel shall inform the appellant of its decision immediately, or if the appellant is not present, within five working days of the hearing.
7. The findings shall be recorded, and the Student Services Officer shall be advised of the findings in writing, by the Chair of the Appeals Panel, within 5 working days of the hearing.
8. The findings of the Appeal Panel shall be final.
9. If the appellant is a Higher Education learner and remains dissatisfied after exhausting Barnsley College's internal Student Financial Support Appeal Procedure, they may request a review from the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA). Further information can be found at www.oiahe.org.uk.

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

The EqIA for this policy is available on the College's intranet.

LOCATION AND ACCESS TO THIS PROCEDURE

This policy is available on the College's intranet.

STUDENT SUPPORT FUND APPEALS POLICY

STUDENT FRIENDLY SUMMARY

Collect an appeals form from Student Services if you are unhappy with the financial award you have been given (choose from option 1 or 2).	
Option 1- State the reason for the appeal.	Option 2 - Make sure you include all the details.



The Head of Student Services will review this with a panel (choose from option 1 or 2).	
Option 1 - You will be asked to attend a panel meeting to discuss the appeal.	Option 2 - You are able to bring someone with you to support you if you would like.



The panel make the final decision (choose from option 1 or 2).	
Option 1 - The outcome is decided by the panel.	Option 2 - If you are unhappy with the decision you are able to appeal again externally.