

Advanced Learner Loans

Art and Design Bursary Fund Policy

Purpose of the Bursary Fund

The Advanced Learner Loans Bursary Fund is a scheme to help support students who are eligible for an Advanced Learner Loan and need additional financial support. This financial support is in addition to the loan amount received.

Introduction

1. This policy sets out the financial support available through, and eligibility for, bursary funding for students aged over 19 who are in receipt of an Advanced Learner Loan (ALL) and attending the Foundation Diploma Art & Design course.
2. The Advanced Learner Loan Bursary Fund (ALLBF) is targeted towards those learners facing the greatest financial barriers to continuing education after the age of 19.
3. This Policy sets out how the University will allocate ALLBF and should be read in conjunction with the ESFA Advanced Learner Loans funding rules.
4. The level of bursary funding available is limited. The allocated budget to Oxford Brookes University for the academic year 2023-24 is £ **£1,538** in total. All unspent funds will be recovered by ESFA.
5. The ALLBF is a discretionary fund and due to the limited budget, meeting the criteria **does not guarantee funding**. High cost support such as childcare is limited.
6. Applications for Bursary Fund awards are income assessed and operated on a first-come, first-served basis, taking into account the students' needs and available funds.

Context

7. A bursary award may be provided where a disadvantaged student who is funding their learning with an ALL has demonstrated a financial barrier which impacts on their learning.
8. The ALLBF may be used to fund Learner Support: hardship, childcare and residential support, but not tuition fees. Hardship support can include course related costs (such as books, equipment, trips) and travel and accommodation.
9. It can also fund Learning Support: activity for 'in-learning' support such as support for teaching assistants or reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010.

10. Students aged 19+ are normally assessed as independent students and household income is assessed on their own income, together with that of their spouse/partner if applicable. However, if a student has no income, household income will be based on the income of the person(s) on whom the student is dependent.

LEARNER SUPPORT

Eligibility

11. Students must have applied and have been approved for an ALL for tuition fees.
12. In most cases, all of the following must apply. The student must be:
- Studying on the Foundation Diploma in Art and Design course at Oxford Brookes
 - Aged 19 or over on the first day of the course
 - Living in the UK on the first day of your course
 - A UK national or have 'settled status' (this means there are no restrictions on how long you can stay)
 - Living in the UK, Channel Islands or Isle of Man for 3 years before starting your course.
For the full eligibility criteria, please visit <https://www.gov.uk/advanced-learner-loan/eligibility>.
13. A bursary may be available to students who meet the following criteria:
- Annual household income which does not exceed £35,000 (parental income will not be taken into account, but the income of any spouse or co-habiting partner will be taken into account).
14. The amount of bursary awarded will depend on individual circumstances and may be subject to change due to the availability of funds.

Conditions and Procedures

15. Students who apply for the Advanced Learner Loan Bursary will be required to supply evidence of household income and information about their actual need for support. This should be in the form of benefit or other official documents or verification from statutory or other agencies.
16. Applications should be made using the form available on the website, and only fully completed forms accompanied with the required evidence will be assessed.
17. Applications can be accepted, and awards agreed provisionally prior to the start of the academic year. No payments, however, will be made until the student has commenced study on the course
18. Applicants will be notified in writing how much has been awarded and how payment will be made.

19. The University reserves the right to suspend, delay or reduce payments where a student's attendance or conduct is giving cause for concern
20. All payments will be made by BACS into the students own bank account.
21. Payments are subject to satisfactory attendance (90%), conduct and progress on the course
22. Payments are only backdated to the start of the Semester that the application is received
23. In all cases the application will be judged on its individual needs as outlined in the ESFA guidelines. The amount awarded will be specific to each application
24. If a student is unhappy with their award decision, the procedure for appeal is outlined in the letter informing them that the application has been unsuccessful
25. For Learner Support actual payments made will need to be recorded in the ILR.

Assessment

26. Assessments will be undertaken by the Financial Aid Manager or the Financial Aid Advisor.

Hardship Awards

27. Awards are assessed on household income (including income from certain benefits) with priority given to students whose household income is below £21,000 or who are in receipt of benefits as defined in the regulations:
28. Awards can be given to assist with the following:
 - a. Course costs - equipment packs, local day visits and field trips
 - b. Daily travel expenses to and from University:
(The student is expected to take advantage of any subsidised travel, travel cards; Payments for travel by car will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances. Students must keep evidence of their travel costs as they will be asked to provide them.)
 - c. Childcare where childcare is provided by an Ofsted registered provider e.g. nursery, child-minder or after school club. Due to the limited nature of the allocation, any award for childcare can only be a contribution towards these costs.
 - d. If your circumstances change during the year please contact your University Financial Aid Advisor.
29. Awards are made as follows. However, should the number of applications be greater or lesser than anticipated, the amounts awarded may be amended accordingly

Income less than £21,000 or in receipt of benefits:

- Course costs: we will pay for equipment packs and local day visits

- Field Trip costs: where applicable we will pay for the UK trip
- Travel costs: we will pay travel costs up to a maximum of £700

Income between £21,000 and £35,000:

- Course costs: we will pay for equipment packs and local day visits
- Field Trip: where applicable we will pay for the UK trip
- Travel costs: we will pay travel costs up to a maximum of £350

Payments

30. All payments are made subject to an attendance rate of at least 90%. Awards are not guaranteed to cover all costs.
31. Course costs awards (e.g. equipment packs, study trips and local visits) will be paid directly by the University where practical, otherwise paid via the Access Expenses System
32. Travel awards will be paid directly to the student through a BACS transfer to a bank account in their name only. Awards are generally paid termly in advance. Students are required to submit their travel receipts at the end of each term in order for next term's payment to be made.
33. Childcare awards will be paid termly in advance and are generally paid directly to the provider e.g. child minder. Payments to third parties will require a signed authority from the student.

Appeals

34. If a student wishes to appeal they are required to appeal in writing within 14 days from the date of the decision letter; enclosing any additional supporting evidence.
35. Appeals should be sent to:
Charlie Williams, Head of Financial Services (HFS), Finance & Legal Services
(cawilliams@brookes.ac.uk)
36. The appeal will be considered within 14 days of receipt, and the decision of the HFS will be final.

Learning Support

37. Eligibility
 - Where Learning Support is required, students must also have been assessed by the University.
 - Learning Support must be reported using rate 2 (£150 per month) in the Learning and Delivery Funding and Monitoring field of the ILR

- Learning support is NOT paid to the student.

General Data Protection Regulations

38. As part of the application and assessment process for bursary support, students and any adults supporting the application will be asked to consent to the collection and processing of all personal data submitted as part of this process.