



Bursary Policy

The government provides Mencap with money to allocate to young people who need financial support attending Supported Internships and Study Programmes. Mencap has a duty to ensure that bursaries are awarded fairly to learners most in need.

The Discretionary and Vulnerable Group types of bursary funding are designed to help you overcome individual financial barriers to participation. The **Bursary Application** Form will assess your actual financial needs in addition to checking eligibility. You will not be automatically awarded a set amount of funding.

The bursary fund is intended to help with the essential costs of participating in your programme. Bursary funds will cover the cost of travelling, clothing (including PPE), books or DBS certificate applications. The bursary fund is not intended to support you with costs not related to education, including living costs, extra-curricular activities or providing learning support, such as counselling, mentoring or extra tutoring.

The impact of receiving the Discretionary Bursary Fund or Vulnerable Group Bursary on other benefits is as follows:

- Receipt of bursary funding **does not affect** receipt of other means-tested benefits paid to families, such as Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance, Universal Credit, Child Benefit, Working Tax Credit and Housing Benefit.

Discretionary Bursaries Eligibility

Eligibility criteria:
• Learners aged 16-18
• Learners aged 19+ with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)
• Learners on a Supported Internship or Study Programme
• Learners who have been a continuous resident in the UK for the last 3 years before the start of their course
• Total annual household income is under £30,000 (Outside London) £33,000 (Inside London) these figures are based on the % difference of the current living wage.

Discretionary Bursary applications are means tested. Discretionary Bursary awards will vary depending on need and will be made on a **first-come, first-served** basis. Evidence of **all household income** must be provided when handing in completed applications. **We will not be able to process any applications without all supporting documentation.**

The Discretionary Bursary is available to contribute towards the following costs:

- **Travel costs** (public transport). **Parking and fuel costs are not covered.**
- **Clothing** e.g. uniform or personal protective equipment (PPE)



- **Books** (up to £50)
- **DBS certificate** applications

Bursary funds are normally **paid directly to your bank account** and support can be given to purchase items with bursary funds. However, **Mencap will consider who will manage the bursary on our behalf if you are unable to manage your own funds**. Please provide your bank details when handing in your application; we cannot process applications if these are not provided.

Vulnerable Group Bursaries Eligibility

Eligibility criteria:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners aged 16-18 years old (under 19 years old on 31 August 2025)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners on a Supported Internship or Study Programme
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners who have been a continuous resident in the UK for the last 3 years before the start of their course
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners defined by the government as being a 'vulnerable Student' <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Are in local authority/foster care or have recently left local authority/foster care (are you aged 16 and 17 and have been looked after for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14) ◦ Receive Income Support or Universal Credit in your own right (not parents) ◦ Are disabled and receive both Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments in their own right and Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit in your own right (not parents)

You need to **provide all up to date supporting documentation** for the category you sit under. **Applications will not be accepted without the evidence.**

The **Vulnerable Group Bursary** is up to the value of **£1,200** and provided to assist with **educational costs** for your course, e.g. travel, equipment, books, etc. If there are any remaining funds after all relevant essential costs are met then you may be paid weekly/monthly payments into your own individual bank account to meet up to the maximum **£1,200** value. **Mencap will consider who will manage the bursary on our behalf if you are unable to manage your own funds**. Please **provide your bank details** when handing in your application; we cannot process applications if these are not provided.

How to Apply for a Bursary

- The **Bursary Application Form** can be requested from your Tutor/Skills coach.