

Adult Community Learning (ACL)

Financial Support Guidelines 2020/2021

For learners who are aged 19+

(Please retain these Guidance Notes for your records)

Introduction

These guidance notes should be read in conjunction with the application form. If you would like help with the application form, please speak to the Customer Services team at any of our centres, or your tutor.

You can apply for help from the funds mentioned below if you are 19+ as at 31st August 2020.

- Discretionary Learner Support Fund (DLSF)
- Advanced Learner Loan Bursary Fund
- Community Learning Bursary Fund

The funds can help you with the cost of travel, educational visits, books and equipment needed for your course as well as childcare.

There is also a limited fund to assist with tuition fees (DLSF & Community Learning Bursary Fund only) for those who are not eligible for a fee reduction. It may also be possible to provide technology that is essential for participation, all requests for technology will be reviewed on a case by case basis.

ACL Essex are allocated funding by the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) to aid learners funded by the ESFA or funded by 19+ Advanced Learning Loans. Learners are advised to apply early as the funding is limited. Applications will be dealt with on a strict date received basis and this will be dependent on all paperwork being fully completed with all the necessary accompanying documentation. Incomplete applications cannot be considered and will be returned to learners.

Multiple Applications

Additional applications may be submitted and all requests for financial assistance will be considered although it may not always be possible to allocate funding.

Eligibility and Conditions

Eligibility does not mean an entitlement as funds are limited. No guarantee can be given that funds will be available when you apply. If there is a high demand on the funds, awards may be given at a reduced rate.

Eligibility: Learners are eligible to apply for funding if they meet the requirements as stated in the Funding Rules 2020/21 issued by the ESFA.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/adult-education-budget-aeb-funding-rules-2020-to-2021>



Funding support awards are always conditional on learners remaining on the course, maintaining an attendance level as stated on the learning agreement and complying with ACL's code of conduct. Learners who do not meet these conditions may be required to return equipment, resources and any funding support they have received.

Awards will be made in accordance with the published guidance from the ESFA.
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/adult-education-budget-aeb-funding-rules-2020-to-2021>

Additional information required for Financial Support

Evidence of income/receipt of certain benefits which must be current and should be **one** of the following:

Qualifying benefits:

- Child Tax Credit (2020/21) income below £16,385 (figure taken from GOV.UK website) and not entitled to Working Tax Credit
- Council Tax Benefit – not single adult reduction
- Employment Support Allowance (income based)
- Housing Benefit
- Income Support
- Jobseeker's Allowance (income based)
- Pension Credit
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Universal Credit
- Working Tax Credit (2020/21) income below £16,385 (figure taken from GOV.UK website)

Evidence of Income:

- P60 – 2020 Household income of £30,000 or less (not including house shares, or where rent is paid separately).
- 3 x wage slips (most recent)

Please be aware that it is your responsibility to declare any financial support that you receive from ACL Essex to the Department of Work and Pensions, as discretionary learner support payments may affect your eligibility to some benefits.

Au pairs

Please note for the purpose of administration of DLSF, ACL is required to have criteria for how it will administer and distribute the funds. Under the criteria, au pairs are regarded as family members and proof of low household income is required. Financial assessment would be based **not entirely** upon an au pair's income, **but** on the household income.

Discretionary Learner Support Fund (DLSF)

For learners studying a qualifying accredited course (from beginners to Level 2)

Please note: If you have an approved Advanced Learner Loan for your course fees, you can apply for financial assistance from the Advanced Learner Loan Bursary Fund. (see below)

The DLSF could help you with the cost of course fees, travel, educational visits, books and equipment needed for your course as well as childcare.

Advanced Learning Loan Bursary

(for learners who are funding their course through an Advanced Learner Loan).

For learners studying a qualifying Level 3 to 6 course.

You may be eligible for a discretionary award towards the cost of travel and childcare, educational visits, books and equipment.

Please note: There is no assistance with course fees available with this fund.

Community Learning Bursary Fund

For learners studying a Community Learning course (these courses do not lead to a qualification).

You may be eligible for a contribution towards cost of travel, compulsory books and equipment needed for your course as well as childcare.

Awards to pay tuition fees will not be given if you are entitled to the concession fee on the course.

Childcare (All funds)

Financial assistance with childcare is available for the timetabled hours of your course. To claim support, you must be using an Ofsted registered childcare provider and not be in receipt of Childcare support from any other Agency.

Payments for childcare will be based on your attendance and excludes childcare costs outside term time. If you withdraw from the course or have payments stopped due to poor attendance, you will be responsible for the payment of outstanding fees to the childcare provider.

If your application is to cover costs for 3 children or more, this will be reviewed by the DLSF panel and support will be given where budget allows.

Please note that Early Years Education Entitlement (EYEE) must be used before making a claim for assistance with childcare from ACL.



Childcare will **not** pay:

- For Christmas, Easter and Summer holiday periods and periods of half term.
- Deposits, retainers or to make advance payments.
- If the learner changes the number of days or hours their child attends their childcare provider and fails to inform the College Childcare Administrator.
- Food for your child.

ACL reserves the right to cap childcare fees if they are considered to be excessive. Funds are capped and allocated at the discretion of the ACL Support Fund administrators, in line with current policy. The funds are limited, and applications received when the fund is low or exhausted may be refused childcare funding. ACL reserves the right to alter or amend the childcare funding policy at any time.

Applications will be dealt with on a strict date received basis and dependent on all paperwork being fully completed with all the required accompanying documentation. Incomplete applications will be returned to learners.

Eligibility does not mean an entitlement and no guarantee can be given that funds will be available when you apply. If there is a high demand on the funds, awards may be given at a reduced rate.

Appeals Procedure

If you have concerns regarding the decision made on your application for Discretionary Learner Support Funds, please appeal in writing to the DLSF panel at the following email address.

ACL.StudentFinances@essex.gov.uk

Support from the above funds is not guaranteed.

The above information contained is correct at the time of going to print and may be subject to change and alteration (June 2020).

