



Travel Passes and Funds

Policy and Procedures

2021/22

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1. Policy Statement

The College is committed to providing financial support for students in a range of ways under the guidance of the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and in line with its Access and Participation Strategy for Higher Education. As part of this process the College will operate a Travel Pass and Travel Funds scheme.

2. Travel Passes

Full time students at the College will be eligible to apply for a travel pass. Sections 2.1 – 2.3 outline and categorise the various age groups. The calculation of distances is based on the shortest walking distance, as measured by Google maps.

2.1 16-19 Bursary (ESFA funded courses)

Walking Distance	Age	Eligibility
3 miles +	16-19	All
1-3 miles	16-19	MTB or household income of less than £35,000

For those students aged 16-19 (1-3 miles) means testing household income must be less than £35,000 or must be in receipt of means tested benefit.

For those students aged 16-19, in receipt of the £1,200 bursary, part of their award will be used to cover the cost of the pass.

All other 16-19 year old students (3 miles+) will be eligible for a pass however they will be required to have their household income assessed to allow the College to use funds from appropriate funding streams.

For full details of the funds please see 16-19 Bursary Fund Policy and Procedures 2021/22.

For further information you can contact the Student Information Centre by telephone on 01704 392704 or by email at guidance@southport.ac.uk.

2.2 19+ Discretionary & Adult Learner Loans (ESFA funded courses)

Walking Distance	Age	Eligibility
1 mile +	19+*	MTB or household income of less than £35,000

** Students enrolled on a Level 3 or above loan funded course that are liable for tuition fees are eligible to apply only if they have taken out an Advanced Learner Loan.*

For those students aged 19+ (1-3 miles) means testing household income must be less than £35,000 or must be in receipt of means tested benefit.

For students 19+ the full cost of the travel pass, will be funded through the 19+ Learner Support Fund or Advanced Learner Loans Bursary Fund. Students must be able to demonstrate they are within a priority group, on a means tested benefit or have an household income of less than £35,000

For full details of eligibility groups please see 'Discretionary Learner Support Fund Policy and Procedures 2021/2022' and 'Advanced Learner Loans Bursary Fund Policy and Procedures 2021/2022'.

2.3 Higher Education (undergraduate courses - HND/HNC, Fdn Degree, BA/BSc Degree)

Walking Distance	Age	Eligibility
3 mile +	18+*	Means tested*

** Students enrolled on a Level 4 or above higher education course that are liable for tuition fees are eligible to apply only if they are eligible for the full/maximum maintenance loan.*

For HE students 18+ the cost of the travel pass will be funded through the College Travel Fund.

3. Apprentices aged 19-24

Apprentices aged 19-24 years and who live within the Liverpool City Region can apply directly to Mersey Travel for a half-price weekly and four-weekly bus pass. Prices are in line with Merseytravel's Solo bus tickets for under-19s, which means that any eligible apprentice will get half-price travel on buses, saving up to £420 per year. Further information is available via the link below:

<https://www.merseyrail.org/tickets-passes/apprentice-travelcard.aspx>

4. Types of Passes

The College will look to fund the most cost effective single form of transport. The College offers students who are eligible for a travel pass the option of applying for a TRIO (where available) on payment of the price difference between the most cost effective pass available and the cost of the TRIO, Arriva 7 day travel pass, Merseyrail train passes etc. Where students live in an area not covered by the passes listed they are able to apply for travel funds (*see section 6*).

5. Withdrawal from a course

If a student withdraws from or does not start their course they must return their travel pass within:

- 2 weeks of the course start date (in the case of a student not starting the course)
- 2 weeks of leaving the course
- 2 weeks of transferring to a part time course

Passes must be returned by hand to the Student Information Centre or sent 'recorded delivery'.

Students must also inform the College if their address changes prior to the pass expiring as entitlement to the pass may be affected and students will be liable for any lost rebate.

6. Lost, stolen or destroyed tickets.

If a ticket is lost, stolen or destroyed students must inform the College immediately and request a form to apply for a duplicate ticket. The cost of a duplicate ticket will vary from £10 for Merseyrail Electrics to £25 for Arriva and Stagecoach and £5 for Trio, Merseytravel, depending on the type of ticket issued and must be paid for by the student. A duplicate ticket will be issued approximately 2 days after receiving the duplicate application form and fee. Once the duplicate ticket is issued, the fee is non-refundable. Travelling expenses incurred whilst waiting for the duplicate ticket will not be refunded.

Only 1 duplicate ticket can be issued within an academic year (except TRIO passes which can only be replaced once every 5 years). Where passes are reported lost or stolen within the later part of the term, duplicates may be refused if it is cost prohibitive.

7. Eligibility for Travel Funds

7.1 Students in Further Education

For full time students who live outside of the areas where passes are available the College operates a limited subsidised travel costs fund for students. Funds are limited and therefore this fund is allocated on a first come first served basis.

Students must meet the following criteria:

- Enrolled on a full time Southport College course
- Live more than 1 mile from College (measured by shortest walking distance on google maps)
Not able to apply for a travel pass
- Not entitled to assistance with travel costs from another source
- Household income will be assessed as per travel passes for all age groups of students

For students living in Burscough and the surrounding area they can apply for the cost of their return ticket up to a maximum of :

Southport College – Burscough to Southport, £6.60 x 5 days x 37 weeks = £1,221.00

KGV – Burscough to Meols Cop £5.90 per day x 5 days 37 weeks = £1091.50

If students are eligible they will be issued 5 half termly payments linked to attendance. The first payment will be made during the first half term. Subsequent payments will be linked to attendance for the previous half term:

- 90% attendance or above – full amount payable
- 75% – 89% attendance – 50% of half-termly allocation to be paid
- Below 75% - no funds to be paid.

For students aged 19+ applications can be made to the Discretionary Learner Support fund for assistance with other travel expenses e.g. petrol, 15p per mile per timetabled day (this will be capped at the cost of the cheapest ticket / pass available on public transport.)

6.1 Students in Higher Education

For students who live outside of the areas where passes are available the College operates a limited subsidised travel costs fund for students. Funds are limited and therefore this fund is allocated on a first come first served basis.

Students must meet the following criteria:

- Enrolled on a Southport College higher education course
- Live more than 3 miles from College (measured by shortest walking distance on google maps)
- Not entitled to assistance with travel costs from another source

For students living in Burscough and the surrounding area they can apply for the cost of their return ticket up to a maximum of :

Southport College – Burscough to Southport, £6.60 x 5 days x 37 weeks = £1,221.00

KGV – Burscough to Meols Cop £5.90 per day x 5 days 37 weeks = £1091.50

If students are eligible they will be issued 5 half termly payments linked to attendance. The first payment will be made during the first half term. Subsequent payments will be linked to attendance for the previous half term:

- 90% attendance or above – full amount payable
- 75% – 89% attendance – 50% of half-termly allocation to be paid
- Below 75% - no funds to be paid.

Applications can be made to the Higher Education Travel Fund for assistance with other travel expenses e.g. petrol, 15p per mile per timetabled day (this will be capped at the cost of the cheapest ticket / pass available on public transport.)

8. Application Process and Documentary Evidence

The application process for funds will be open from w/c 5th July 2021 and until such time as funds be used up. All applications will be considered based on the funding available.

Pay My Student

For all funding, including applications for travel passes, students must complete an application using the on line student support bursary service, Pay My Student. Documentary evidence is required to make an assessment of income and / or identification of being in a priority group (as laid down in the ESFA guidance). This could be pay slips, P60, proof of earning for self-employment, bank statements, Tax Credit Award Notice, Universal Credit monthly statement, proof of benefits (letters from DWP / Job Centre) this list not exhaustive.

The 'application date' will be the date the completed form is received along with all relevant documentation.

Students will also need to provide evidence to support their request e.g. College order form for kit/equipment/uniform, signed book list from tutors, compulsory trips, receipts for individual items etc.

9. Appeals

Any student, who is dissatisfied with the decision made regarding the allocation of a travel pass or travel funds, may appeal in writing to the Head of Central Services within 15 term time days of receipt of letter.

The Head of Central Services or Student Finance Administrator will present the information to the panel. The Appeals Panel will be made of a member of the Senior Leadership Team and 2 managers.

The student will be informed of the decision of the Panel within 10 term time days of receipt of the letter of appeal.

10. Essential Elements

This policy and procedures will operate as a transparent, consistent system, with clear criteria for eligibility, allowing funds to be targeted to those students in financial hardship within the ESFA guidelines. This is ensured by:

- Procedures / guidelines for staff, updated annually
- Staff training and development meetings

A variety of methods will be used to publicise the availability of travel passes and subsidies, including the application procedure and appeals procedure. This includes:

- Financial information booklet – updated annually, available on line and within the Student Information Centre
- Admissions / offer letters
- Information from admissions tutors at course discussions
- Information at the point of enrolment
- Information at Induction
- Posters, media screens and Moodle information advertising funds

11. Confidentiality, data protection and retention

All personal and sensitive information will be managed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Common Law Duty of Confidentiality.

The Data Protection Act and General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) are not only restrictions on disclosure of information about the College, they are bound by a common law duty of confidentiality. This duty prevents the College from releasing information about students or other stakeholders, without their consent. This duty applies to manual records as well as information held on computers.

Information which must be treated as confidential includes the names and addresses of students and any other information about them which is not publicly known, i.e. "personal data". Accordingly, to ensure that the College does not breach its duty, no information, even if it only exists in printed form, should be disclosed unless all the relevant procedures have been followed.

All documents are held for the assessment of eligibility to the fund and audit purposes only. All information will be stored securely and treated sensitively. All documents will be kept by the College for 6 years.

12. Policy Update

The procedures will be reviewed annually and are the responsibility of the Head of Central Services.

13. Other Sources of Funding

The College operates or has links to a number of other sources of funding. For further details of any of the funds listed below please contact the Student Information Centre.

- 19+ Discretionary Learner Support Fund (Including 19+ Childcare funding)
- 16-19 Bursary Fund
- Advanced Learner Loans Bursary Fund
- Care to Learn
- Professional and Career Development Loan
- Support via Student Loans Company (HE Students)
- Disabled Student allowance (HE Students)