

About the Learning Grant

At Forge we encourage our sixth form students to be aspirant; to strive to progress to the top universities, the very best apprenticeship providers and seize every opportunity available to them. We also fully recognise that this can come with a cost. Travelling further afield to university open days or job interviews incurs expenses, as do some additional courses, such as virtual work experience programmes that are designed to enhance students' learning experiences, develop commercial awareness and make them more marketable when entering the world of work.

Our Learning Grant is funded from the Academy budget and not ESFA 16-19 bursary funding. It is designed to contribute towards some of the costs our students may face during their time in sixth form. These may be costs directly linked to the courses they undertake, costs linked to accessing resources that will support their learning and / or costs linked to progressing towards their post-sixth form goal, be it university or employment.

The level of support available

The Learning Grant can provide a student with up to £200 of financial support per academic year, so a total of £400 by the time they complete their programme of study and leave at the end of year 13.

Eligibility

The Learning Grant is for all students in sixth form following a programme of study equivalent to 3 or more A levels, irrespective of household income and irrespective of whether a student is already entitled to one of the other sixth form bursaries, such as the Vulnerable Group Bursary or the Discretionary Bursary.

To be eligible, students also need to maintain the following standards:

- Attendance above 95% overall and for individual subjects (*including enrichment qualifications and non-qualification enrichments*)
- Exemplary behaviour and excellent conduct at all times
- Punctual attendance to all lessons and morning form sessions
- Good commitment to the completion of homework and private study
- Good attendance to weekly university and employment workshops (*Year 13 students only*)

Using the Learning Grant

The Learning Grant can be used to contribute towards some, or all of the cost of the following:

- Educational textbooks or revision guides linked to the courses being studied
- Material and equipment that will support learning, such as art material
- IT devices such as a Chromebook if there is limited IT access in the family home
- A school visit, such as field study, integral to the successful completion of a course
- An extra-curricular trip, such as a theatre visit, designed to enrich learning experiences
- The fee for an online course linked to current studies or subjects that are likely to be studied at university
- The fee for a virtual work experience course
- Any fees for university admissions tests, such as the UCAT and UMAT tests for students intending to study medicine.
- Travel to a university open day, university interview or a job interview
- An additional external tutoring programme linked to the sixth form courses being studied.

The Learning Grant cannot be used to cover the cost of clothing or daily travel to and from the Academy.

How the Learning Grant works

-Those who wish to use the Learning Grant to contribute towards costs such as those listed above, can apply for financial support at three points during the academic year: October, January and April.

-At each point a Learning Grant request form must be completed, outlining the financial support required at that particular point in the academic year and an approximate amount for each itemised cost (*forms are available from the sixth form centre*).

-Completed forms must be submitted to a member of the sixth form pastoral team for approval. An amount to cover all approved costs will then be paid directly into the student's bank account.

-The grant is also designed to enlighten students to the importance of forward thinking, good financial planning and budgeting; a student who utilises the majority of their Learning Grant in October, must realise that this will leave them with very little financial support from the rest of the academic year.

-Year 12 students cannot bring their second-year grant allocation forward. Year 12 students can, however, roll over any unspent money from their first-year grant allocation into year 13.

Providing evidence of purchases

Students receiving contributions towards approved costs must keep receipts of their purchases / train tickets etc and submit them to the Academy finance office. Failure to do this will result in future grant requests not being approved.