



2024 -25 Student Bursary and Free College Meals Information

2024-25 Student Bursary and Free College Meals Information

These guidelines are for any young person who will be attending St John Rigby College from September 2024 and any Parents/Carers who are financially responsible for the young person.

What is the Student Bursary?

The Government provide College with an allocation of funds to help students who face financial barriers to continue in full-time education. St John Rigby College ensures that this money is awarded to those students who are in most financial need.

The Student Bursary can assist with the costs of food and refreshments, essential trips and visits, travelling to College, stationery, print credits and other associated costs related to attending a programme of study.

Who can apply for the Student Bursary?

A student can apply for the bursary if they have already applied, been offered or have accepted a place on a full-time course at St John Rigby College, and also meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Aged 16-18
- Aged 19+ who are in the second year of a course that they started when they were aged 16-18
- Aged 19+ who have an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP)
- Students who are settled in the UK and have been ordinarily resident in the UK for at least three years prior to the start of their course.

Will the Student Bursary be Income Assessed?

The Student Bursary will be assessed on household income as follows:

- Applications from students who live with both parents/carers will be assessed on the household income of both parents/carers combined
- Applications from students who live with a parent/carer and a step-parent/carer will be assessed on the income of both adults combined
- Applications from students who live with foster parents/carers within a private foster care arrangement will be assessed on the household income of those foster parents/carers
- Applications from students who live with a lone parent/carer, will be assessed on the income of the lone parent
- If a student lives with a partner, the household income of both the student and partner will be assessed
- If a student lives independently, and their parents/carers do not contribute towards their living costs, only the student's income will be assessed.

Where a student lives with somebody other than those mentioned above, the application will be considered on a case by case basis.

Will I need to provide evidence when I apply for the bursary?

Evidence will be required to provide proof of earnings, benefits, number of dependents, and any other sources of income coming into the household. If all required evidence is not received, then the application for funds cannot be assessed. The bursary office will contact the applicant, or their parents/carers, to request any missing evidence, but please attempt to provide as much as possible when the application is submitted.

Please note that evidence does not have to be submitted via paper copies (unlike the application form); it can be sent via email to bursary@sjr.ac.uk.

What are the different types of bursary available at St John Rigby College?

	Bursary Name	Eligibility Criteria	Other Information												
1	<p>Enhanced Bursary</p> <p>The Enhanced Bursary can be up to a maximum of £1,200 a year to assist with the costs of studying at College (such as meals, travel, books, equipment etc.).</p>	<p>This bursary is available to any student who meets one of the following eligibility criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students who are in care (including a young person placed with a foster carer by the local authority and unaccompanied asylum seekers) Care leavers Students who receive Income Support (IS), or Universal Credit (UC) because they are financially supporting themselves and live independently OR financially supporting themselves and someone living with them such as a child or partner Students who receive Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or Universal Credit (UC) in their own right AND Personal Independence Payments (PIP) or Disability Living Allowance (DLA). 	<p>It should be noted that even if a student meets the criteria for the Enhanced Bursary this does not necessarily mean that they will automatically receive a financial award (as this would be dependant upon their actual financial need). Some students may be entitled to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> all elements of the bursary (travel, meals, essential trips and other associated costs) one element of the bursary (such as travel) and others could potentially not be entitled to any. 												
2	<p>Income Assessed Bursary</p> <p>This bursary is available to any student who does not meet any of the above criteria for the Enhanced Bursary, and lives in a household where the total household income (including earnings, benefits, pensions, lettings and other sources) is beneath a set amount per year. When assessing whether a student is eligible for financial support from the Income Assessed Bursary, St John Rigby College will take into consideration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the number of dependents within the household distance needed to travel to College and costs associated with the student's programme of study. 	<p>The table below shows the household income bandings that are currently used to assess the Income Assessed Bursary. Please note, that the below figures are based on one dependent living in the household, if an application is received from a household with more than one dependent, then their household income will have £5,000 deducted for each additional dependent. For example, if a household has three dependents and the household income has been calculated to be £33,500, then £10,000 will be deducted from this total for the two extra dependents.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="824 1145 1305 1353"> <thead> <tr> <th>Band</th> <th>Household Income Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>A</td> <td>£10,000 - £25,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>B</td> <td>£25,001 - £30,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>C</td> <td>£30,001 - £35,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>D</td> <td>£35,001 - £40,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>E</td> <td>£40,001 - £45,000</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Band	Household Income Total	A	£10,000 - £25,000	B	£25,001 - £30,000	C	£30,001 - £35,000	D	£35,001 - £40,000	E	£40,001 - £45,000	<p>A dependent is defined as a child/young person that resides in the household and for whom child benefit is received.</p> <p>When calculating the total household income, St John Rigby College uses net earnings (rather than gross) and does not include any PIP or DLA payments as part of the calculation.</p> <p>The amount, and type, of financial support provided will be confirmed if your Income Assessed Bursary application is successful. Therefore, any bursary provided will be based on an assessment of circumstances and actual financial need.</p>
Band	Household Income Total														
A	£10,000 - £25,000														
B	£25,001 - £30,000														
C	£30,001 - £35,000														
D	£35,001 - £40,000														
E	£40,001 - £45,000														

	Bursary Name	Eligibility Criteria	Other Information
3	<p>Free College Meals</p> <p>Students can apply for Free College Meals as a standalone entitlement (when they are not eligible for the Enhanced or Income Assessed Bursary).</p>	<p>Students who are between 16-18 on 31st August 2024 will be eligible for Free College Meals if they, or their parents/carers, are in receipt of at least one of the following benefits (students who turn 19 during the academic year are still eligible for that year):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income Support • Income-based Job Seeker’s Allowance (JSA) • Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) • Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 • The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit • Child Tax Credit (provided they are not entitled to Working Tax Credit) and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190 as assessed by HMRC. Assessment will be based on the most recent award letter to be eligible. • Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for 4 weeks after stopping qualifying for Working Tax Credit. • Universal Credit with net earnings not exceeding the equivalent of £7,400 per annum. This will be assessed on the three most recent Universal Credit Statements to be eligible. 	<p>N.B. If the student/household is no longer in receipt of one of these benefits, and the student received Free School Meals in Year 11, they will still be able to receive Free College Meals because the Government has stated <i>“All students already receiving free meals from 1 April 2018 will continue to receive free meals until March 2025 and then until the end of the course they are enrolled on at this point. This will apply even if their household earnings rise above the new threshold during that time”</i>.</p> <p>We will need a copy of a letter / email from the relevant High School confirming that the student received free school meals in Year 11.</p>

What other forms of financial support may be available to students?

1. Childcare Costs

Students aged 16-19, as of the 31st August 2024, can apply for support with childcare via Care to Learn (C2L). This is a government scheme that helps with childcare costs so that a student can attend a course of their choice. The maximum amount of money that a student can get is up to £180 per week per child which is paid directly to the chosen childcare provider. C2L not only helps with the costs of daily childcare, it can also help with the cost of a deposit and registration fees, a taster session for up to 5 days, keeping the childcare place over the summer holidays and travel expenses associated with taking the child to the provider. Payments are made on a monthly basis after the childcare provider has confirmed that the child is attending nursery and after we have confirmed that the student is attending college. All students who wish to apply for C2L must provide College with either the child's full birth certificate or proof that the student receives child benefit for them.

In exceptional cases, the bursary fund may be used to provide further help with childcare costs for those young parents already in receipt of C2L. This would only occur if the childcare costs exceed the C2L scheme's weekly maximum rates (i.e., £180 per week). Only childcare provision eligible under the C2L scheme rules can be used and the claimant must hold evidence that the maximum amount is already being paid by the C2L scheme, thus confirming that a top up is required. Any such top-up will be paid directly to the childcare provider, not to the student.

You can find out more information about C2L and apply by visiting <https://www.gov.co.uk/care-to-learn/how-to-claim>

N.B. Applying for C2L does not affect the bursary application because the two are totally separate.

2. Our Pass Travel Scheme

'Our Pass' is a free bus travel scheme for 16-18 year olds who live and travel within the Greater Manchester area. Visit www.ourpass.co.uk for more information on the scheme and to apply.

It is always advisable to apply for this as soon as possible so that the student will have their Our Pass when they start their college course. An 'Our Pass' will cost £10 and this fee will be reimbursed by the Bursary Fund if the bursary application is successful and the student is applying for an Our Pass for the first time. If a student is returning for a second year at College and had an 'Our Pass' during the last academic year, they can continue to use it again this academic year but will not receive a further refund.

Please note: if a student uses an 'Our Pass' for journeys to and from college, they will not be eligible for a travel contribution from the bursary (other than claiming back the £10 administration fee).

The pass can be used from the 1st September following the student's 16th birthday until 31st August following their 18th birthday.

If the student lives outside the Greater Manchester area, is not eligible for an 'Our Pass' or has to use alternative transport methods they may be eligible for financial support for travel from the bursary fund.

3. Emergency Support

Where a student is experiencing severe financial hardship, due to a domestic emergency for example, St John Rigby College may be able to provide emergency support on a short-term basis. This support could be providing meal support on the days that the student attends College, or alternatively, by covering the cost of other items such as print credits or an essential text book.

Such emergency support can only be awarded for a student that St John Rigby College considers to be in real need without undertaking the usual checks on household income or gathering of other evidence that would normally be required. These awards are therefore exceptional and will be made on a case by case basis and are at the discretion of the Vice Principal for Students.

When can I apply to the Bursary Fund?

Applications for the 2024-25 Student Bursary can be made after 8th July 2024 for existing and new students. The deadline date for the first phase of applications is 31st August 2024. (Note: the second phase is explained in a later section of this document).

Applications are available on the College website and are available from reception.

A paper copy of the bursary application, with original signatures, needs to be returned to College for processing.

How will I know if I have been successful and when will I receive my bursary?

We will write to all applicants to let them know whether their application has been successful. If successful, the letter will contain details of the student's individual Bursary Entitlement for the academic year 2024-25.

All applications from students who have not received financial assistance from the bursary fund previously will be treated as successful during September 2024 (i.e., they will receive the bursary entitlement for this month). Therefore, a letter will be sent to all new applicants at the end of September to let them know whether the bursary entitlement will be continuing for the rest of the academic year.

It is hoped that those students who received a bursary entitlement in 2023-24 will be made aware of whether their application for 2024-25 is successful before the start of September 2024.

Bursary awards will be backdated to the date that the application is ready to be processed (i.e., when the application form and all required evidence has been received).

Please note that a successful award in one year does not guarantee a future award. New evidence of eligibility must be submitted each academic year.

Bank Details

BACS transfers (Bankers Automated Clearing Services) are one method of ensuring that students receive their bursary entitlement. **Such BACS transfers can only be made into the student's own bank account – they cannot be paid into a parents/carers account.** Students can open a basic bank account at aged 16 which will allow BACS transfers - a request for bank account details is included on the Student Bursary Application Form.

Changes in Circumstances

It is very important that St John Rigby College is notified of any changes to the student's, and or parents/carers, personal or financial circumstances. This is especially important if these changes result in the student no longer being eligible for bursary funding. Failure to notify College of such changes may make the student and or parents/carers liable to repay the cost of funds already received.

What should I do if I am not happy with any decision relating to my bursary application?

If a student (or parent/carer) wishes to appeal against a decision, they should write to the Vice Principal (Students) within 10 days of the decision, stating fully their reasons for the appeal.

If I miss the initial deadline of 31st August 2024 can I apply later in the year?

Students can apply at any time during the academic year for the Student Bursary. However, as stated above they will only start to receive any awards when their application and evidence have been received in full so that the assessment process can be undertaken.

In addition, it should be noted that the amount of money that the College receives from the Government is fixed and is not increased at any point during the academic year. St John Rigby College aim to provide financial assistance to as many students as possible, but it is always advisable to apply as soon as possible.

In the event that there is a shortfall in funding and St John Rigby College is unable to make awards to all eligible applicants, the College will prioritise eligible students based on their individual needs and circumstances.

Can I only apply for the Student Bursary once during an academic year?

If an application for the Student Bursary has been rejected, students can apply again at any point during the remainder of the year if their circumstances have changed, or if their parents/carers financial circumstances have changed.

Are there any conditions for receiving support from the Student Bursary?

Bursary Funds are available to support the costs of attending College and associated study. Therefore, if a student's attendance or behaviour is not deemed to be satisfactory, or assessed work is not being handed in on time, then the bursary support may be suspended until improvements are evident. It is important that all applicants are aware that they may be asked to repay funds, and could be billed accordingly, if the student fails to complete the course.

Confidentiality and Data Protection

The data requested on the bursary application form, and any associated evidence, will only be used for the purpose of assessing a student's eligibility for financial support from the bursary fund. The applications and evidence are only seen by staff involved in the implementation and monitoring of the Student Bursary. All such information is stored securely in a locked cabinet within College.

Government auditors can request to see the bursary application data. This is to ensure that St John Rigby College are complying with Government guidelines in relation to administering the 16-19 Student Bursary.

Our external catering company must be informed of successful applicants so that the students can receive any necessary food and refreshment entitlements. They will only be provided with the assessment decision and no information relating to the application and associated evidence.

If you have any queries relating to the need and use of the data provided as part of the application process, please contact the Data Protection Officer (details available on page four of the application form).

Completing the Student Bursary and Free College Meals Application Form 2024-25

All applications for the Student Bursary and Free College Meals are assessed on an individual basis and the support offered will vary according to each student's individual circumstances. There is not an automatic entitlement to the bursary fund even if all criteria is met, students must demonstrate an actual financial need.

Please work your way through all of the sections on the application form, reading all information and answering all questions carefully. When completing the application form please ensure that you print clearly and complete all relevant sections in full.

Section 1: Student Details

Section 1 needs to be completed by all applicants and it is important that the details supplied in this section are accurate.

Section 2: Course Details

Section 2 needs to be completed by all applicants. Please provide the full name of the courses you are, or intend to, study at College.

Section 3: Travel to and from College

This section needs to be completed by all applicants.

Information regarding the Our Pass travel scheme can be seen on page 5 of this document. If you do not reside in the Greater Manchester area, it is very important that you choose one of the transport options available and, if applicable, provide an estimated cost of this choice.

Section 4: Free School Meals Entitlement

All applicants must answer this question.

Section 5: Other Information

The three questions within this section need to be answered by all applicants.

Please note that a Young Carer is a young person who looks after a family member because they are ill, have a disability, or have a drug/alcohol addiction. Young Carers sometimes require extra help due to their additional responsibilities.

Section 6: Student's Personal Circumstances

Each applicant needs to tick ONE option in Section 6 (please make sure that you do not tick more than one option).

- If you tick **A, B** or **C** then please go to Section 7 (and then ignore Sections 8 and 9)
- If you tick **D** then you will need to provide evidence that you are living independently. For example, you will need to provide a copy of your tenancy agreement, a copy of a utility bill in your name etc. (You can then ignore Section 7).
- If you tick **E** or **F** then you will need to go to Sections 8 and 9 (and ignore Section 7)

Section 7: Evidence Required if you have ticked Boxes A, B or C

Please ignore this section if you ticked D, E or F in Section 6.

This section details the evidence that needs to be provided based on the student's personal circumstances. Please tick the relevant box to indicate what evidence will be provided with the application form.

Section 8: Household Details

Please ignore this section if you ticked A, B or C in Section 6.

Within Section 8 the applicant needs to provide the details of their parents, step-parents, carers, guardians or partner's who reside at the same address as them (Adult A and Adult B if applicable).

The details of all other household members then need to be recorded (if there is not enough space to do this please provide details on a separate piece of paper).

Section 9: Household Income Details

Please ignore this section if you ticked A, B or C in Section 6.

All sources of income coming into the household need to be identified within this section (by ticking the relevant box to indicate that evidence will be provided) for each relevant income/benefit. Please read through the list of income/benefits slowly and ensure that you identify all of those that apply to your household (this will be checked as part of the assessment process).

Evidence will need to be provided for each source of income – if you are not sure of what evidence to provide for any of the options please see page 3 of the application form or contact bursary@sjr.ac.uk / 01942 214797.

Section 10: Bank Details

All applicants need to complete this section and it **MUST** contain details of the student's own bank account. If the student does not have a bank account in their own name, please write 'does not have an account yet, will be opening one soon' and **do not** write the details of a parent/carer's bank account.

Section 11: Privacy Notice

Please read the contents of this section to ensure that you are happy with the College's Privacy Notice.

Section 12: Declaration

All applicants, and their parents/carers, need to read the declaration statements in full. It is very important that you understand the contents of this section and therefore, if you have any queries please get in touch with the Bursary Office at College.

Once the student, and their parents/carers, have read and understood the declaration statements, please sign and date the application form as follows:

- If the student lives independently, then only the student needs to sign and date the application.
- If the student lives with one parent/carer only, then only the student and that parent/carer needs to sign the form.
- If the student lives with either both parents, one parent and a step-parent, or two carers then all three individuals need to sign the application form.
- If the student lives with a partner, then both need to sign the form.

If you need any help completing your application form please contact the Bursary Office on 01942 214797 ext. 231 or email bursary@sjr.ac.uk

All applications can be returned to College reception which will be open 08.30 a.m. to 05.00 p.m. Monday to Friday. Any original supporting evidence will then be photocopied and returned.

Alternatively, you can return the application form by post to the following address:

Bursary Office
St John Rigby College
Gathurst Road
Orrell
Wigan
WN5 0LJ

Emailed applications will not be processed (evidence can be emailed but the actual application needs to be a paper copy with original signatures).