

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GUIDELINES

2010/11

www.solihull.ac.uk

0121 678 7000



Solihull College

Key points

Funds are aimed at those most in need of financial support

Funds are limited and will run out. You should apply as soon as possible.

Priority will be given to the following groups of students:

- If you or your parent(s)/guardian(s) receive income related benefits
- If your household income is less than £19,000 per year before tax
- If you are studying for your first Level 2 course (this includes GNVQ Intermediate, NVQ Level 2 and BTEC First Diploma)
- If you are progressing from a Level 2 to a Level 3 course within your chosen career path (this includes, BTEC National Qualifications, AVCE, NVQ Level 3 and Access courses)
- If you are studying for your first Level 3 course (this includes GNVQ Intermediate, NVQ Level 3 and BTEC First Diploma)
- If you are studying on an Adult Basic Education course
- If you are studying on an English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) course

Further priority will also be given to those who have an additional support need. These include lone parents, those in care, learners with learning difficulties or disabilities, ex-offenders and members of the travelling community.

Funding will be available for September, Spring and Summer enrolments.

You will not automatically receive your award. All awards are dependent on you achieving and maintaining 100% attendance in all of your classes. You attendance is monitored on a monthly basis.

You must supply all necessary evidence with your application. Your application will not be assessed without it.

Funding is normally only available for one course per academic year. If you are on a two year course you will need to make a new application for help each year.

You will not receive funding if:

- You have outstanding debts to the College
- You have previously (within the past 3 years) received financial assistance for a course unrelated to your planned course
- You receive financial assistance through New Deal for Lone Parents
- Your household income is above £19,000 per year before tax

Please note: Even if you are successful in your application for financial assistance you will not receive any payments prior to the start of your course. If you need to purchase items before your start date you may need to pay for these yourself. Please consider this when budgeting for coming to College.

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Fraudulent Claims

This does not often happen, but we must protect ourselves against the possibility of fraudulent claims. We ask for detailed information and may invite applicants for interview so we can distribute the funds fairly. If a claim is considered fraudulent we will ask for any money awarded to you to be repaid in full. If you fail to repay your award we may take court action. You would not be allowed to collect any course certificates until all costs had been paid.

Disclaimer

All of the information in this booklet is correct at the time of going to print. We will try to notify you of any changes or amendments to this booklet where ever possible.

What help can I get?

You don't have to let a lack of money stop you from coming to college. If you are on benefits or have a low income then there are various funds available if you are starting a course at the College.

Funds are limited and will be targeted at those most in need. You should apply as soon as possible as funds will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. We have enough funds to assist around 1500 students and last year received around 2,500 applications.

You can apply for help with fees, travel, childcare books and equipment. Details of what you can receive help with are shown on page 17-19.

You can get application forms and full details about all the funds from the Student Finance Team, in the Student Information Centre at Blossomfield Campus and behind reception at the Woodlands campus.

Contact us by phone **0121 678 7000**

Where does the money come from?

The funding the College has to help you with the cost of studying comes from a government fund and is public money. The assistance you receive is a discretionary award. It will always be conditional on your attendance at college. While we recognise that students face financial pressures, the funding you are applying for is not a right and the College has a duty to make sure that the funds are awarded fairly and to the students most in need.

Our Service

The Student Finance team are here to ensure that your application is processed within our Service Level Agreement and for the past three years we have met our standards of responding to all successful applicants within 3 working days and unsuccessful applicants within 2 working days.

The team are trained to give advice and support with applications to all the national schemes outlined in this booklet including EMA, ALG, Care to Learn and the Lone Parent Schemes for Childcare support. In 2009-10 the number of students in the college in receipt of ALG rose by 36% and in receipt of Care to Learn rose by 80% thanks to this support.

In our 2009-10 Student Evaluation 92% of service users said the service that Student Finance offered was good to excellent. 93% said that the level of financial support awarded was good to excellent and 76% said that it had an impact on their decision to continue with their learning.

Our team includes staff with accounting and advice and guidance qualifications. The team also undertake training to ensure their knowledge of all forms of financial support is up to date for all our learners.

Summary of Funds

Please note the following very important information

If you enrol and your application for financial support is unsuccessful, you will have to pay your course costs in full.

If you withdraw from the course(s) for which you have received financial assistance you will have to repay the funds in full.

If you receive an award that will pay only a part of your fees, you will be responsible for paying the balance of any fees remaining.

The awards are conditional on you attending 100% of your classes (including Learning Support and tutorials) and staying on your course. If you do not meet the conditions then you will have to pay in full the relevant costs of your course.

If you are applying for help with College fees, you must submit your application form to Student Support and obtain a receipt before enrolling on the course.

Non-College Funds

These funds are assessed and awarded under the rules of the awarding body.



Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)

If you are a home student* aged 16, 17 or 18 from 31st August and you or your parent(s)/guardian(s) household income is less than £30,810 p.a., you may be able to get an Education Maintenance Allowance of between £10 and £30 a week. Awards are dependant on 100% attendance.

*For the purpose of EMA, home students do not include young people who are claiming asylum or have been granted exceptional leave to remain, humanitarian protection or discretionary leave.

Please note, if you are studying less than 12 hours a week you cannot apply for an EMA.

For further details and to make an online application you should go to the official website as detailed below:

<http://www.direct.gov/ema> or telephone the EMA Helpline free on 0800 121 8989.

If you need help with your online application please contact Student Finance.

For more details see the EMA section on the Student Services page on the College Intranet: <http://learn.solihull.ac.uk/studentservices/index.cfm>

Summary of Funds



Adult Learning Grant (ALG)

If you are a home student* who is aged over 19 at 31st August, and are studying for your first Level 2 qualification or are aged over 19 at 31st August, and studying for your first Level 3 qualification and your household income is less than £30,810 p.a. for joint income household or £19,513 for single income household**, you may be able to get an Adult Learning Grant (ALG) of £30 a week. Awards are dependant on 100% attendance.

* For the purpose of ALG, home students do not include people who are claiming asylum or have been granted exceptional leave to remain, humanitarian protection or discretionary leave.

Please note, if you are studying less than 12 hours a week you can not apply for an Adult Learning Grant.

** If you are in receipt of Income Support, Jobseekers Allowance or Incapacity Benefit you cannot apply for an Adult Learning Grant.

For further details and to make an online application you should go to the official website as detailed below:

<http://www.direct.gov/alg> or telephone the EMA Helpline free on **0800 121 8989**.

If you need help with your online application please contact Student Finance.

College Funds

These funds are assessed and awarded under the rules in this booklet.

Learner support Fund (Access Fund)

If you are a home student who is 19 or over on the 31st August 2010 there is Learner Support available to help with the costs of exam fees, equipment, travel and childcare.

If you are eligible for an Adult Learning Grant (ALG) you can only apply for Access funds to assist you with your equipment and exam fees.

If you are a home student who is under 19 on the 31st August 2010 and you are eligible for EMA you can only apply for access funds for equipment and materials.

EU Students

If you are a resident in a European Union country you can apply for Access funds as shown above. Please note that EU citizens may only apply once during their stay in the UK and so will not be eligible for funding if a second course is taken. If you have been resident in the EU for less than 3 years you can only apply for assistance with fees.

Summary of Funds

Care To Learn

The aim of Care to Learn is to give financial support to teenage mothers and fathers who want to continue their education or training and need help with the cost of their childcare and travel expenses. You can claim Care to Learn funding if you are under 20 and:

- start a course of learning or training in a school, college or as a trainee with a work based learning provider that receives some public funding;
- are caring for your own child(ren);
- are living in England; and
- use a registered childcare provider.

Applications can be made now for courses that start at any time. For more information and to apply for Care to Learn funding you can visit the Care to Learn website at www.direct.gov.uk/caretolearn

You can also get information and guidance in completing the forms for Care to Learn from a Connexions Personal Advisor.



Lone Parent Scheme

If you do not already have a full level 2 qualification (e.g. NVQ2, 5 GCSEs grades A - C) and are claiming Income Support (IS) you could get help with your exam fees, equipment, travel and childcare. In addition you can get a weekly training allowance. For more information please speak to your local Job Centre Plus Adviser.

Professional and Career Development Loans

A Professional and Career Development Loan (PCDL) is a bank loan designed to help you pay for work-related learning. You don't have to start paying your loan back until at least one month after you stop training. You can use it to fund a variety of vocational (work-related) courses with a wide range of organisations, so you are able to choose the course that best suits your needs. You can take out a PCDL whether you are employed, self-employed or unemployed.

In summary:

- you can borrow anything between £300 and £10,000 to help you fund up to two years of learning (or up to three years if the course includes one year of relevant practical work experience)
- you can get PCDLs through Barclays, The Co-operative Bank and The Royal Bank of Scotland

Summary of Funds

- the government pays the interest on your loan while you're learning and for up to one month after you've stopped training
- you then repay the loan to the bank over an agreed period at a fixed rate of interest

Remember that a PCDL is a personal loan between you and the bank, and you are responsible for repaying it to the bank. Before taking out a loan, check how much your monthly repayments will be, and that you feel confident that you will be able to make them.

Call the PCDL Information Line on 0800 585 505 from 8.00 am to 10.00 pm seven days a week to ask for an application pack and to get advice.

Fund	Who is it for	What can it cover	Opening date	Who do I apply to	Conditions
Education Maintenance Allowance	Students aged 16, 17 or 18 from the 31st August 2010	Costs of coming to College. Up to £30 a week	Now	EMA HELPLINE NUMBER 0800 121 8989	Household income under £30,810 p.a.
Adult Learning Grant	Students aged 19 or over on the 31st August 2010 and studying for 1st level 2 or level 3	Costs of coming to College. Up to £30 a week	Now	ALG HELPLINE NUMBER 0800 121 8989	Household income under £30,000 p.a.
Care to Learn	Students aged between 16-20 on the 31st August 2010	Childcare and Travel costs	Now	Care to Learn HELPLINE NUMBER 0800 121 8989	If you are between 16-19 and in learning or training you can apply for assistance with your childcare.
Learner Support Fund	Students aged 16 or over on the 31st August 2010 and students 16-18 for resource fees equipment	Travel, Exam Fees, Equipment, Childcare	Now	Solihull College	Full details in this guidance booklet.
Hardship Fund for Asylum Seekers	Students aged 19 or over on the 31st August 2010 and claiming Asylum	Travel, Fees, Equipment. maximum payment of £350	Now	Solihull College	Full details in this guidance booklet.
Student Loans and Maintenance Grants / Loans	Higher Education Students	Cost of living and coming to College	Now	Student Finance England 0845 300 50 90	
Access to Learning Fund	Higher Education Students	Cost of living and coming to College	September 2009	Solihull College	You must have taken out your full student loan

How do you assess my application?

How do you assess my application?

It is our aim to target our funding to learners who are in most need of financial assistance, however we must allocate our funds on a first come first served basis.

If you meet the criteria listed below you are eligible to apply to our funds:

- If you or your parent(s)/guardian(s) receive income related benefits
- If your household income is less than £19,000 per year before tax
- If you are studying for your first Level 2 course (this includes GNVQ Intermediate, NVQ Level 2 and BTEC First Diploma)
- If you are progressing from a Level 2 to a Level 3 course within your chosen career path (this includes, BTEC National Qualifications, AVCE, NVQ Level 3 and Access courses)

If you are unsure of the level of your previous qualifications please refer to the table on page 7 or contact us on **0121 678 7000**.

- If you are studying on an Adult Basic Education course
- If you are studying on an English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) course

Further priority will also be given to those who have an additional support need. These include lone parents, those in care, learners with learning difficulties or disabilities and ex offenders.

Successful Applications

If you are successful we will provide you with written confirmation of the amount you have been allocated. However, please note that no money will be paid to you until you have completed the enrolment process. If you have not enrolled on your course by the end of the first week of term your funding will be withdrawn and reallocated to another applicant.

For the past three years all successful applications have received confirmation within three working days.

Unsuccessful Applications

No guarantee can be given that you will be successful in your application for financial assistance. If you are unsuccessful in your application you will also be notified in writing. An unsuccessful application means you will be responsible for all of the costs associated with your chosen course. You will then have to decide whether or not you are able to enrol on your course without financial support from the College.

For the past three years all unsuccessful applications have been notified within two working days.

How do you assess my income?

How do you assess my income?

Funds are targeted at students with a household income of less than £19,000 per year. This is your gross (before tax) salary, but we will take into consideration any of the factors detailed below.

When calculating your income we will give allowances for people who fall into the following groups:

- Those in receipt of Disability Living Allowance or Employment and Support Allowance
- Single Parent Families
- Learners with dependents under the age of 18. If an applicant is under the age of 18 we will take into account the dependents of parent(s)/guardian(s).

We will increase the maximum income we allow when we assess applications where any of these factors apply.

Disability Living Allowance or Employment and Support Allowance	Income limit increased to £20,000
Single Parent Family	Income limit increased to £19,350
Dependents' Income	limit increases by £1800 per child under the age of 18

Please note: If you are under the age of 19 and living independently from your parent(s) or guardian(s) we will assess your income based upon any wages or benefits you receive directly.

Evidence required

If you are in receipt of benefits:

Type of Benefit	Evidence Required
Income Support (IS).	IS Benefit Book/letter dated within 3 months showing name, address and benefit received OR outdated letter plus bank statement within 3 months.
Job Seekers Allowance (JSA)	Letter dated within 3 months showing name, address and benefit received. You cannot study a Full-time course if in receipt of JSA.
Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit.	Letter dated within 3 months showing name, address and benefit received OR outdated letter plus current bank statement within 3 months.
Working Tax Credit (WTC) and Disabled Persons Tax Credit.	Current year Inland Revenue WTC Award Notice TC602 (photocopy not acceptable) showing total family income under £15,400 (@ April 2010).
Benefit Dependant Husband/Wife/Partner). Parent(s)/Guardian(s) if student under 19.	Letter dated within last 3 months showing person receiving benefit and learner names at same address and type of benefit received OR outdated letter plus bank statement within 3 months. Working Tax Credit partners are eligible.

Income related benefits (means tested) include income support, jobseekers allowance and working tax credit.

If you are currently in employment:

- Your last 2 full bank or building society statements - mini statements are not acceptable.
- Your last 2 months wage slips or most recent P60 if you are working (the same for your spouse or partner or parent(s)/guardian(s) if appropriate).

If you are a non-UK national:

- Proof of your residential status to include passport or Home Office papers.

If you are applying for assistance with travel:

- Proof of your address if it is not printed on any other piece of your supporting evidence.

If you are applying for assistance with childcare:

- Proof of childcare costs (completion of Form B).
- Child's birth certificate.

What can I get help with?

If I am eligible for an award, what happens next?

Once we have assessed your application, if successful, we will send you an award notice letting you know the level of support you will receive.

Payments for travel and childcare will be made monthly by BACS. A BACS payment is an electronic method of transferring money directly from the College to your bank account. To set up a payment we will need to obtain your bank details. We will help you to get these. A BACS payment will usually take two to five working days to clear.

Payments for exam fees will be paid directly to the college by internal transfer during your first term. Awards to support you with your equipment costs will be made at the beginning of your first term but with some courses you will receive additional payments at the beginning of terms 2 and 3. Payments for equipment will not be made before the start of your course. You may need to purchase items before we can make a payment.

If I am not eligible for an award, what happens next?

If you are not eligible for an award we will send you a letter to let you know. We will write to you within 10 days of receiving your complete application with all supporting evidence. If you have already enrolled for your course or wish to enrol you will then have to pay in full the costs of your course. You may be able to pay in instalments. (Please see Enrolment for more details).

What can I get help with

	Max. award	Paid by
Exam Fees	£350	Internal transfer - you will not receive any funds as payments are made to the College or awarding body.
Travel	£1,200	BACS payment. (direct to your bank account)
Equipment	Depends on course	BACS payment. (direct to your bank account)
Childcare	£5,500	BACS payment. (direct to your bank account)

It is our priority to use the limited funds we have to help as many students as possible study for a qualification. You can attend more than one course but we will only assist with your main course.

Application for Financial Assistance

Section 1: Personal Details

First Name	<input type="text"/>	Family Name	<input type="text"/>	Male	<input type="checkbox"/>	Female	<input type="checkbox"/>
Address	<input type="text"/>						
Postcode	<input type="text"/>	Date of Birth	<input type="text"/>	Age (as of 31st August 2009)	<input type="text"/>		
Mobile	<input type="text"/>	Contact Tel No.	<input type="text"/>				

Section 2: Residential Status (Please provide passport or home office/IND papers/IND card)

British Citizen	<input type="checkbox"/>	EU/EEA Citizen	<input type="checkbox"/>	Asylum Seeker	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Refugee/Indefinite Leave to Remain	<input type="checkbox"/>	Humanitarian Protection	<input type="checkbox"/>	Discretionary Leave	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Country of Origin	<input type="text"/>	Date of Entry to UK	<input type="text"/>				

Section 3: Course Details

Course Title	<input type="text"/>	Course Code	<input type="text"/>	Full-time	<input type="checkbox"/>	Part-time	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Section 4: What do you need assistance with?

Travel (if living more than 1 mile from the College and aged 19 or over)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Exam Fees	<input type="checkbox"/>
Equipment	<input type="checkbox"/>	Childcare (please complete Form B)	<input type="checkbox"/>
College Trips	<input type="checkbox"/>	CRB Checks	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you are applying for help with travel, book or equipment costs we need your bank details. Please bring these with you when you hand in your application form.

Student Finance Office Use Only:

Evidence Seen	<input type="checkbox"/>	Signature	<input type="text"/>	Date	<input type="text"/>
Pay Slips	<input type="checkbox"/>	Benefit Letter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	
P60	<input type="checkbox"/>	WTC Letter	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Bank Statements	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Section 5: Income (please provide photocopied evidence)

To be completed by parent(s) / guardian(s) if applicant is under 19.

- I am in receipt of an income based benefit (see back of application form)
- I am in receipt of non-income based benefit (e.g. Incapacity benefit). Please complete Section 7 of this form
- I am in receipt of Home Office Assistance / NASS
- I am currently employed (please complete Section 6 and supply at least 2 months pay slips and bank statements)
- I currently have no source of income (please make an appointment to see a Student Support Officer as your application cannot be processed until you do)

Section 6: Financial Statement - To be completed by parent(s) / guardian(s) if applicant is under 19 (only to be completed by those in work or in receipt of a non-income based benefit)

- Your Income - annual income before tax A £
- Your Partner's Income - annual income before tax B £
- Your Parent(s) / Guardian(s) Income (if under 19) - annual income before tax C £
- Household Income - - annual income before tax (A+B+C = D) D £

Section 7: Dependents

- Do you have children of 18 years or below? Yes No
- If YES please tell us how many children you care for
- Are you a lone parent? Yes No

Section 8: Personal Circumstances (Please tick all that apply)

- I am / have been in care I am a carer for someone
- I am homeless I receive help from Social Services
- I don't live at home I receive help from Connexions
- I have a disability or learning difficulty I am a member of the travelling community inc. Gypsy / Romani

Do you receive disability living allowance? Yes No

Do you have any medical conditions that may affect your attendance at college? Yes No

If so please give details

Do you have any criminal convictions? Yes No

Any information you disclose in this section will not adversely affect your application.

Section 9: Previous Study / Career Plan

Details of previous study (Please give details of any previous qualifications you have already achieved)

Qualifications Gained (please tick (✓) any that apply)		Subject(s) Studied	Number achieved	Level or Grades	Completed
GCSE's (only include those graded at A*-C)					Yes / No
AS Levels					Yes / No
A Levels					Yes / No
NVQ (please circle level achieved 1 / 2 / 3 / 4)					Yes / No
GNVQ					Yes / No
BTEC					Yes / No
City & Guilds					Yes / No
Degree					Yes / No
Other Please specify					Yes / No

Career Plan - Please tell us why you want to do this course and how it fits into your plans for the future.

Section 10: Letter of Application

Coming to college can be expensive. Please tell us how you plan to meet any costs that cannot be covered by this fund.
I am applying for financial assistance because...

Evidence Required

Type of Benefit	Evidence Required
Income Support (IS).	IS Benefit Letter dated within 3 months showing name, address and benefit received OR outdated letter plus bank statement within 3 months.
Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) (Part-time courses only).	Letter dated within 3 months showing name, address and benefit received. You cannot study a Full-time course if in receipt of JSA.
Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit.	Letter dated within 3 months showing name, address and benefit received OR outdated letter plus bank statement within 3 months.
Working Tax Credit (WTC) and Disabled Persons Tax Credit.	Current Year Inland Revenue WTC Award Notice TC602 (photocopy not acceptable) showing total family income under £15,400 (@ April 2010).
Benefit Dependant (Husband/Wife/ Partner). Parent(s) / Guardian(s) if student under 19.	Letter dated within last 3 months showing person receiving benefit and learner names at same address and type of benefit received OR outdated letter plus bank statement within 3 months. Working Tax Credit partners are eligible.
Proof of income	Last two months wage slips and bank statements.
Residency	Passport or Home Office / IND papers - IND card
Childcare	Copy of child's birth certificate

Section 11: Bank Details

In order for Student Support to make Financial Assistance payments we need details of your bank account. Please complete all sections of this form.

Bank / Building Society Name

Bank / Building Society Address

Name of Account Holder

Account Number Sort Code

Please note - If you change your bank account details we need to be informed one month before your next payment is due. For example, if you are due a travel payment in April you will need to change your bank details with us at the beginning of March.

Office Use Only:

Reason for different name to applicant

Staff Name

Staff Signature

Section 12: Declaration

- I certify that the information in this application is true and accurate.
- It is my responsibility to inform the College if I withdraw from my course and I understand that I may be required to pay some or all of the money awarded and any fees outstanding to the College.
- I understand that if my monthly attendance level drops below 100% I will lose a months payment. If I fail two monthly attendance reports in a row, I understand my award may be stopped.
- I understand that if my application for financial assistance is unsuccessful or successful in part, I will be liable for all outstanding fees related to my course(s) and it is my responsibility to pay these outstanding fees upon request.
- I am aware that the College will record and hold securely any information of a personal or sensitive nature.
- I understand that my permission will be sought before this information is passed on to others in the College.
- I understand that this will be done on a need to know basis only.

Signature

Date

Solihull College will process your application in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. All information will be held in accordance with the Data Protection Act and will not be passed on to other areas of the College without the consent of the student.

Although we will accept postal applications, we would encourage you to submit the form in person, so your forms can be checked and a receipt for prompt enrolment can be given to you.

Please return to:

Student Finance, Blossomfield Campus, Blossomfield Road, Solihull B91 1SB.
or **Student Finance, Woodlands Campus, Auckland Drive, Smith's Wood, Solihull B36 0NE.**

What can I get help with?

Tuition Fees

Please note that this year the college is not able to grant any direct financial assistance with Tuition Fees. This is due to the changes in the rules set by the government about the type of support we offer. You will be responsible for paying all fees. However, there is a new entitlement, details shown below, which you may be eligible for.

Level 2 Course Funding

The College is funded to support the Government policy of increasing the number of adults with full Level 2 qualifications. If you are over 19 and do not already have a full level 2 qualification (e.g. NVQ2, 5 GCSEs grades A - C) and you are enrolling on a full level 2 qualification, you may be able to get a significant reduction in the costs of doing your course.

For full details please contact the Part-time Enrolment team.

Please note:

- You must be doing a full level 2 qualification. You can combine some qualification such as doing 2 A-level subjects or 5 GCSEs to be eligible for the L2E but not all combinations are allowed to access the entitlement.
- Applies to 'home' fee status learners only.
- Does not apply to all Level 2 courses.
- Entitlement only covers Tuition Fees and not Exam Fees. You can apply for financial assistance with exam fees.

Level 3 Course Funding

The College also supports the scheme to increase the number of adults with full Level 3 qualifications. If you are aged 19 - 25 and do not already have a full level 3 qualification (e.g. NVQ3, 2 A-level subjects) and you are enrolling on a full level 3 qualification, you may be able to get a significant reduction in the costs of doing your course.

For full details please contact the Enrolment team. Please note:

- Applies to 'home' fee status learners only.
- Does not apply to all Level 3 courses.
- Entitlement only covers Tuition Fees and not Exam Fees. You can apply for financial assistance with exam fees.

What can I get help with?

Travel

If you are 18 or under on 31 August 2010 you cannot apply for assistance with travel.

- We will award £50 a month to full-time students for travel and up to £8.00 a day to part-time students. The payment will be made monthly.
- If you live less than a mile away from college you may only apply on health grounds and we will require a letter from your doctor.
- If you are applying for childcare and would like assistance with the journey to the childcare provider, please make this clear on your application form. We will take this into consideration.
- You are expected to take advantage of public transport and any travel discounts that may be available to students.
- If a college closer to you offers a similar course you will need to state on your application form why you have not chosen to go to your local college.

Exam Fees

You will only be charged exam fees if you are over 19 on 31 August 2009. you will be asked to pay this charge when you enrol or register for the exam.

- The award we make to assist you with your exam costs will be based on the exams that are essential in order for you to pass your course.
- You can apply for assistance with any additional exams but this assistance will not be guaranteed as we aim to provide for as many students as possible and our fund is limited. You should check whether you can afford any additional costs before enrolling on the course.
- We do not pay fees to professional bodies for life memberships, except in cases where membership is directly linked to taking the exams you need in order to complete your course.

Equipment and Trips

Each School has provided us with a list of equipment and trips essential to the course together with their associated costs. Based on these figures we have banded the awards we make to assist you with your equipment costs.

N.B. This award will not, in some cases, cover 100% of your course costs and you should bear this in mind when budgeting for your course.

What can I get help with?

Childcare (paid directly to the childcare provider)

Childcare is only available for the time you spend in timetabled classes at college. Therefore, over the Christmas and Easter breaks we will not pay for your child's place. We may pay a retainer amount for these periods if required by the childcare provider, but this will only be for the purpose of keeping your child's place open, please see below.

If you are in receipt of New Deal for Lone Parents you cannot apply to the college for assistance with your childcare.

Your childcare will be paid based on your attendance. Therefore, if your attendance for a month is 90% we will pay your childcare provider 90% of your monthly allocation and you will be responsible for the remaining amount.

- In addition to ticking the childcare box on the front of the financial assistance form you should ask your childcare provider to fill in Form B (opposite).
- Your childcare provider may ask for a retainer to save your child's place in the nursery over the Christmas and Easter breaks. If there is such a charge you should discuss it with your childcare provider and make sure that they tick the related box on Form B.
- If your child is aged 3 or over you may be eligible for a Nursery Education Grant (NEG). If your nursery is registered as a NEG-funded nursery you could claim for up to two sessions per day and up to five sessions each week. If you claim childcare for a child aged 3 or over then we will assess your application, deducting your NEG. If your nursery is not registered you will need to inform us.
- We can only provide assistance for registered childminders/nurseries. Please note that the College takes no responsibility for the quality of care provided.
- It is your responsibility to inform us if:
 - (a) Your timetable changes (you must also let your childcare provider know).
 - (b) Your weekly rate changes.
 - (c) The amount of days/hours your child attends the nursery changes (if you do not inform us your childcare support may be withdrawn)

We cannot guarantee that we will be able to meet any raises in costs and this will depend on the funds we have available at the time.

- If you withdraw from the course we are funding you for the College will take no responsibility for payment of outstanding fees to childcare providers.
- Your childcare provider will be asked to complete a claim form on a monthly basis. We will be writing to your childcare provider to explain the rules surrounding your payments.

Guidance Notes

Please read these notes carefully. Applications will be returned if not completed in full.

Section 1: Personal details - Please complete all sections.

Section 2: Residential Status - Please tick the box that represents your residential status. All non-UK citizens need to inform us of their country of origin and date of entry into the UK as this can affect the funds you are eligible for. You should tell us your last date of entry even if you have entered the UK and then returned to your country of origin, before coming back to the UK again, but this does not include holidays.

Section 3: Course details - Please complete all sections.

Section 4: What you need assistance with - Please tick all boxes which you think you will need assistance with. Please bear in mind the rules that have been stated, such as having to live further than 1 miles from the college to be eligible for travel, to save us time in assessing applications. Do not just tick all boxes. If you miss a box and wish to apply for help at a later date you will be able to do so as long as funds are still available.

Section 5: Income - Please declare your source of income by ticking the appropriate box. For a list of income related benefits please see the evidence list on page 11 of this booklet.

The government make a distinction between means-tested benefits which allow students to have their fees remitted. This remission allows us to not pass on the tuition fees for students in receipt of Income Support, Job Seekers Allowance and some claimants of Tax Credits and Council Tax Benefits. However this offer does not include Incapacity Benefit or Disability Living Allowance both of which are non-means tested.

Section 6: Financial Statement - **This section should only be completed by those in work or in receipt of a non-income related benefit.** Household income refers to your income and/or the income of parents, spouses or partners. You will be required to provide evidence of this income.

Section 7 / 8: Dependants / Personal Circumstances - These sections gives us additional information that can help us make sure that we manage your application and award throughout the year.

Section 9: Previous Study / Care Plan - Priority is given to students who have not yet attained a level 2 qualification. This section allows us to take into consideration your prior learning. Level 2 qualifications include GCSEs, GNVQ Intermediate, NVQ Level 2 and BTEC First Diploma.

Section 10: Letter of application - We assess your level of need and relevant personal circumstances will be taken into account. The more information you can give about your circumstances the better. For example, any items of non-routine expenditure before starting or while attending the College.

Section 11: Bank Details - Please complete all fields with your relevant details so that if successful, the College can make BACS payments directly into your bank/building society account.

Section 12: Declaration - You must sign and date your application. Please read the declaration as your signature means that you agree to abide by it.

Form B

Application for Childcare Costs

This section must be completed by Nursery or Childminder

Company Name Reg. No.

Name of Contact

Address Postcode

Telephone No. Email

Name of Student

Name of Child/ren Date of Birth

Date of Birth

I confirm that I/we are providing childcare for the above child covering the following days/times per week:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
No. children in your care					
No. of hours in your care					
Cost of extras e.g. lunch, pick up	£	£	£	£	£
Total cost per day	£	£	£	£	£
Total cost per week					£ <input type="text"/>

Do you charge a retainer or fees over the Christmas or Easter holiday? Yes No

Does the above cost include the Nursery Education Grant? Yes No

If No, what is the termly amount of the Nursery Education Grant? £

Details about Learner Support Funds at Solihull College

- Please note assistance will start at the beginning of the academic year. Late applications will be processed when received.
- All payments will be made by BACs payment each month. These payments are dependent on attendance reports, in some instances this may delay payment.
- All payments will be made direct to the nursery/childminder.
- All payments are based on student attendance and funding will be withdrawn if this falls below 100%. Students will only get assistance for the hours of care the student is at the college.
- Awards are based on the information shown above. Changes in rates due to annual rises, or due to the age of the child are not covered. You must inform us of any changes in rates.
- If funding is withdrawn the student is responsible for payment of any outstanding accounts.

Solihull College will process the information you have provided in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. The data will be processed for purposes connected with the students studies. The College will record and hold securely any information of a personal or sensitive nature.

I confirm that the above is a true record of care supplied and I will notify the College if there are any changes.

I understand the points listed above.

Signature Date

Name Position

Are there any conditions on my award?

Attendance

To continue receiving your Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA), Adult Learning Grant (ALG) or any other funds from the College you must attend 100% of your classes. Reports for EMA and ALG will be made on a weekly basis. For all other funds reports will be made on a monthly basis (in the first week of the following month). Failure to achieve 100% attendance will lead to the non-payment of assistance for the following month/week. You should follow the College's Absence procedure details of which are available from Student Services

Withdrawals

If you withdraw from your course you will not receive further financial assistance. You will also have to repay any financial assistance you have been awarded and pay any outstanding fees.

Appeals

If for any reason your assistance is stopped or withdrawn due to poor attendance then you have the right to appeal. You should appeal to your tutor who will then contact Student Support to tell them if your award should be reinstated.

If you believe your application has not been assessed correctly, you do not receive an award or you are not happy with the level of support allocated you can appeal. Your appeal should be made in writing and addressed: Appeals, Student Services, Blossomfield Road, Solihull, B91 1SB.

The Appeals Board meets on a weekly basis to assess all appeals.

If you wish to appeal against the level of support we are giving you to help with your fees, you need to make your appeal within two weeks of receiving your award notice.

If, for any reason, you are not happy with the outcome of the appeal please let us know by writing to the Head of Student Services.

If you are unhappy with the decision of the Head of Student Services you can make use of the formal Complaints procedure.

Absences

All absences are considered to be unauthorised unless you have told your tutor and had your absence agreed to in advance. In the case of absence you must notify your tutor, normally before or on the same day you will be absent from class.

If you are not in class and do not contact your tutor you will not receive your EMA.

Are there any conditions on my award?

Authorised Absences

Authorised absences may include:

- Unavoidable medical appointments, however you are expected to make appointments with your GP or dentist out of class time.
- Court or probation appointment.
- Attendance at a funeral or death in the family.
- Driving practical test (not theory or lessons).
- University open days.
- In some circumstances authorised absences due to illness can be allowed. Talk to your tutor for more details.

Unauthorised Absences

Unauthorised absences may include:

- Any holiday taken during term time, apart from a recognised religious holiday.
- Lateness
- Personal / social reasons for not attending College.

If you have any questions about whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised you should talk to your tutor as soon as possible and before being absent from class.

Absence Forms (SR1)

If you are not in class you must complete an Absence Form (SR1). Absence forms are available from your tutor or Curriculum Office. You need to tell us the dates of your absence, detail the reason(s) for your absence. We will not be able to consider the authorisation of an EMA payment without this.

This form will need to be signed by your Personal Tutor and the Head of School.

Frequently Asked Questions

How will I receive my award?

Your payments should be paid to you by the third Friday of the month following a successful attendance report from the month previous i.e. November payments should be paid by 17th November if a successful attendance report for October is received.

How will I know how much I've been awarded?

You will receive notification of your award within 15 days of making an application.

Are there conditions put on receiving an award?

The College monitors attendance of students, particularly those in receipt of financial assistance. You are expected to maintain 100% attendance. Payments will be affected if absences cannot be accounted for.

Do I have to open a bank account?

Yes. We cannot make payments in cash so you will have to open an account if you do not already have one.

Would the College help with existing debts and living expenses?

No.

After my award can I apply again?

Yes. Sometimes you may forget to ask for help with some of your course costs, so if you find that you have missed something you do not have to fill in another application form. Please write a letter detailing your additional claim and we will assess it based on your original application. Please note as funds are limited it is possible that later in the year we may have no money left to allocate, so please ensure you look into all the costs for your course before applying.

I am receiving an income related benefit, how many hours can I study?

If you wish to study a full time course you should check with the Benefits Agency before you enrol.

If I receive funding from the College will it affect my benefits?

You must declare all awards to the Benefits Agency. The majority of payments are 'one off' and are unlikely to affect your benefit. Adult Learning Grant (ALG) may be taken into consideration for Housing Benefit payments after the first £650 received.

What happens if I change my address?

All letters sent to you use the address you have given the College. If you move you need to fill in a change of address form which you can get from your faculty. Your new details will be passed on to the Central Data Team.

Will I be entitled to fee remission?

You must be in receipt of an 'income related benefit'.

Can I apply if I earn more than £19,000 per year?

Yes. Check page 12 for details of how your maximum income may increase above £19,000.

Do you pay for re-sit exam fees?

No.

Other Sources of Funding

The Prince's Trust Development Awards programme.

You could apply for up to £150 to help you into education, employment or training. This could be equipment to help you to start a course, tools to take up a job offer, help towards course fees or help with travel expenses.



Prince's Trust

- **Development Awards** help young people aged 14 – 25 to overcome financial barriers to access education, training or employment.
- **RBS Community Cash Awards** can financially help young people aged 14-25 to start up projects that will benefit the community.
- **RBS Carbon Challenge Cash Awards** can help young people aged 14-25 to run environmentally based projects that will benefit the community.
- **The Business Programme** helps young people aged 18 – 30 to start their own business with a start up loan.
- **The Team Programme** is a personal development course that aims to help young people aged 16 – 25 through an action packed twelve weeks.
- **Get Into programmes** are free short courses that develop young people's skills in a specific sector and supports them into jobs.

For an application form please contact the Prince's Trust on 0121 689 68 98

Regional Cashback Bursary 2010/11

Do a degree at the University of Wolverhampton and you could be entitled to a £1000 Cashback Bursary to aid your study!



If you are applying for a degree course starting in 2010/11 where the fee is £3,145 you may be eligible for the bursary.

In order to qualify for the bursary you must be able to prove that you have taken part in at least 15 hours of Aimhigher or similar activities. Taking part in such activities demonstrates that you have an interest in finding out more about Higher Education and the opportunities it can provide.

These activities must be in addition to your normal academic studies and must not be part of your university application process.

You can prove you have taken part in these activities with:

- Copies of certificates from activities
- An original Individual Learning Plan (ILP) or Aimhigher Reflective Log (RL) print out, with the signature of a nominated member of college staff and their contact details

Other Sources of Funding

- A confirmation letter on headed paper with the signature of a nominated member of college staff and their contact details
- If you use the i-plan in school, you can use this to apply

In order to apply and for more information, log on to www.wlv.ac.uk/cashback. Alternatively you can contact our Regional Cashback Co-ordinator on 01902 321027 or email: cashback@wlv.ac.uk.

The Army FE Bursary Scheme

The scheme is an exciting new way to financially reward you for achieving at college and prepare you for a job in the Army at the end of it.



You must be

- Aged between 16 – 32 years old
- A British citizen
- Willing to spend a minimum of 4 years in the Army

You will receive £1000 whilst on your course and a further £1000 on completion of your first year of army training. While at college the Army will offer work experience and an Army contact to help guide and support you.

It is worth noting that on completion of your course you will also be required to successfully pass selection at the Development and Selection Centre before entering the Army.

To find out more visit your local Army career Adviser at:

AFCO Birmingham


46 The Pallisades

Birmingham

B2 4XN.

Tel: 0121 633 6433

or visit the website: www.armyjobs.mod.uk



**Financial
Assistance
Guidelines
2010/11**



Solihull College

Blossomfield Campus
Blossomfield Road
Solihull, B91 1SB

Woodlands Campus
Auckland Drive, Smith's Wood
Solihull, B36 0NE

www.solihull.ac.uk

0121 678 7000

enquiries@solihull.ac.uk