Policy: 19+ Discretionary Learner Support Fund & 19+ Advanced Learner Loans Support Fund Policy Statement –2026/2027

Author	**HoD - Adult Learning**
Date last reviewed	June 2026
Approval route	College Leadership Team
Date Approved	10th June 2026
Review cycle	Annual
Date Review Due	June 2027
Contractual or Non-Contractual	Non-contractual
Location of copies	Website
Policy version	2

FRANKLIN COLLEGE TRUST

Contents

		Page No.
1. Purpose		3
2. Scope and legal definitions		3
3. Policy statement		
3.1	Summary of 19+ Discretionary Learner Support Fund	4
3.2	20+ Childcare Fund	4
3.3	19+ Hardship Fund	6
3.4	19+ Advanced Learner Loans Support Fund	7
3.5	Awards Process	9
3.6	Appeals and Complaints Process	9
4. Policy References		10
4.1	Access to the policy	
4.2	Quality and Assurance Monitoring	

1. Purpose

1.1 The 19+ Discretionary Learner Support Fund (referred to as DLS Fund) exists to help students continue with and complete their course where they would otherwise be prohibited from doing so on financial grounds.

1.2 19+ DLS funding and the guidance concerning the administrative arrangements, priority groups for support and monitoring arrangements are issued by Franklin Sixth Form College (referred to as the College).

1.3 The DLS Fund is intended to help with the hardship needs of individual students. Its intent is to "enable" a learner to continue with his or her education and should not be viewed as an incentive to attract people into learning. Generally, awards from the DLS Fund will be used towards essential course-related costs such as childcare, books, equipment, travel, field trips, professional fees, visits and other costs associated with living and learning. The College will seek to ensure that:

1.3.1 Funds are distributed fairly through a process which is transparent and easily understood.

1.3.2 Accurate information about the process for application and consideration is available from Adult Learning Team and Finance Team.

1.3.3 All applicants are assessed and allocated monies subject to the individual's need, taking into account the financial circumstances of the applicant and the intended use of the award. We reserve the right to re-visit all awards should it be deemed appropriate to increase an award at a later date.

1.3.4 Funds are used to widen access to, and participation in, College education.

2. Scope and legal definitions

There is a limited fund, which means that it will not be possible to support every application; therefore priority will be given to those students from families with the lowest household income and/or highest demonstrated need.

3. Policy Statement

3.1 Summary of 19+ Discretionary Learner Support Fund

Fund	Support	Who for?	Household income
20+ Childcare Fund	Support towards childcare costs for our learners.	All eligible 20+ students	£40,000
19+ Hardship Fund	Support towards costs such as course fees, equipment, trips, etc.	All eligible 19+ students	£40,000

3.2 20+ Childcare Fund

3.2.1 The 20+ Childcare Fund offers assistance in the form of a contribution to the costs associated with childcare whilst a student aged 20 or over attends a College course or, in some circumstances, where a student needs childcare whilst in a work placement associated with a College course.

3.2.1.1 Students accessing the 20+ Childcare Fund must adhere to the attendance and behaviour standards which can be found in the Student Handbook and align with that expected of all students attending the College.

3.2.1.2 The College has agreed eligibility criteria in line with local demographics, ability to pay and whether the household currently received two and/or three year old childcare/nursery funding. Some students will already be receiving state-funded childcare/nursery costs. The College will therefore give priority to those students with children aged under two years.

3.2.1.3 In exceptional circumstances, funds may be awarded to students who do not meet the specified criteria.

3.2.2 Application Process

3.2.2.1 Step 1: completed *Financial Assessment Forms* should be returned to Finance for confirmation of eligibility (DLS bursary request form). Students will also check availability of childcare in their local area with OFSTED registered childcare providers (including child minders) and also include costs on the assessment form.

Once confirmation of *financial eligibility is received:*

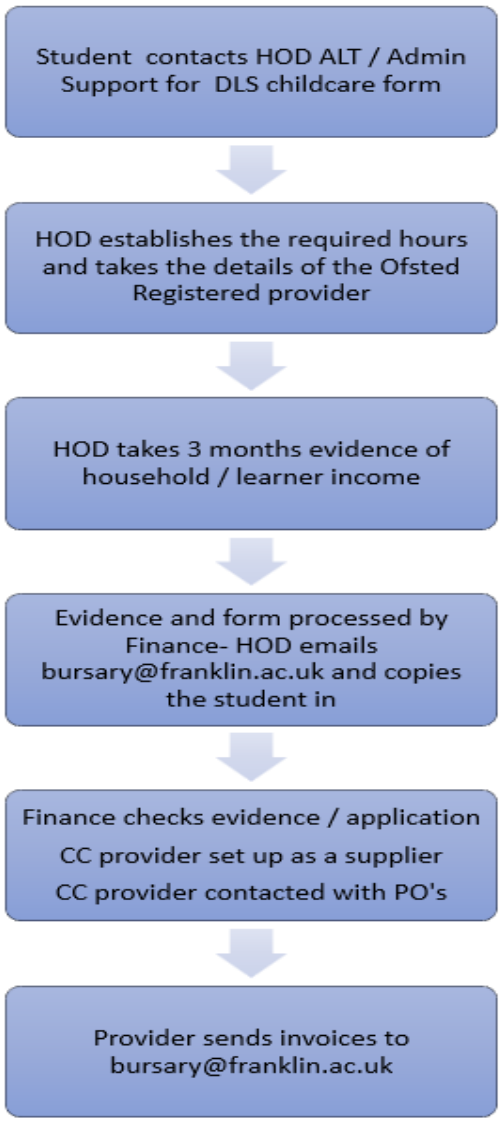
3.2.2.2 Step 2: applicants will be advised as to the outcome of their applications and Adult Learning will contact childcare provider to check details and arrange a payment scheme.

3.2.2.3 Step 3: applicants who have been assessed as eligible will have agreed payments paid directly to their chosen childcare provider on a monthly/quarterly basis.

3.2.2.4 Unsuccessful applicants will have the right of appeal.

3.2.2.5 All applications will be treated in the strictest confidence.

DLS- Childcare Funding



3.3 19+ Hardship Fund

The 19+ Hardship Fund offers financial assistance associated with course related costs such as course fees, travelling to College (living more than three miles from College), purchasing course equipment and other associated expenditure.

3.3.1 Students accessing the Hardship Fund must adhere to the attendance and behaviour standards which can be found in the Student Handbook and align with that expected of all students attending the College.

3.3.2 The College has agreed eligibility criteria in line with local demographics and the ability to pay.

3.3.3 In exceptional circumstances, funds may be awarded to students who do not meet the specified criteria.

3.3.4 Application Process

3.3.4.1 Step 1: completed *financial assessment forms* should be returned to Finance for confirmation of eligibility.

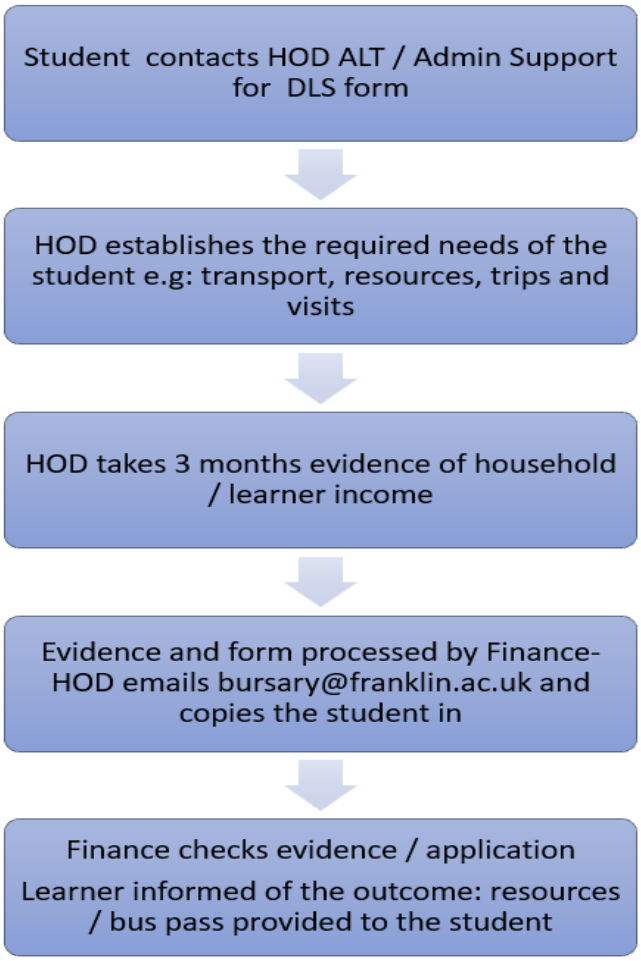
Once confirmation of *financial eligibility is received:*

3.3.4.2 Step 2: Applicants will be advised as to the outcome of their application and a payment schedule agreed. This may be through our Finance Department in order to offset course fees or to send a payment to a student for equipment, books, etc. that they have already paid for.

3.3.4.3 Unsuccessful applicants will have the right of appeal.

3.3.4.4 All applications will be treated in the strictest confidence.

DLS- Hardship Funding



3.4 19+ Advanced Learner Loans Support Fund

This is a separate fund for discretionary learner support provision for those who have funded their Level 3 course through a 19+ advanced learner loan. Unlike the DLS Fund, the Loans Support Fund **will not** provide support towards course fees as these will be funded via the loan. However, other course related costs such as additional equipment (not including that are needed to complete the course i.e. what should be provided within the cost of the course), travel costs and contributions towards childcare costs.

3.4.1 Childcare element

3.4.1.1 Students accessing the 19+ Advanced Learner Loans Support Fund must adhere to the attendance and behaviour standards which can be found in the Student Handbook and align with that expected of all students attending the College.

3.4.1.2 The College has agreed eligibility criteria in line with local demographics, ability to pay and whether the household currently received two and/or three-year-old childcare/nursery

funding. Some students will already be receiving state-funded childcare/nursery costs. The College will therefore give priority to those students with children aged under two years.

3.4.1.3 In exceptional circumstances, funds may be awarded to students who do not meet the specified criteria.

3.4.2 Application Process

3.4.2.1 Step 1: completed *financial assessment forms* should be returned to Finance for confirmation of eligibility. Students will also check availability of childcare in their local area with OFSTED registered childcare providers (including child minders) and also include costs on the assessment form.

Once confirmation of *financial eligibility* is received:

3.4.2.2 Step 2: applicants will be advised as to the outcome of their applications and Adult Learning will contact childcare provider to check details and arrange a payment scheme.

3.4.2.3 Step 3: applicants who have been assessed as eligible will have agreed payments paid directly to their chosen childcare provider on a monthly/quarterly basis.

3.4.2.4 Unsuccessful applicants will have the right of appeal.

3.4.2.5 All applications will be treated in the strictest confidence.

3.4.3 Hardship element

3.4.3.1 Students accessing the Hardship Fund must adhere to the attendance and behaviour standards which can be found in the Student Handbook and align with that expected of all students attending the College.

3.4.3.2 The College has agreed eligibility criteria in line with local demographics and the ability to pay.

3.4.3.3 In exceptional circumstances, funds may be awarded to students who do not meet the specified criteria.

3.4.4 Application Process

3.4.4.1 Step 1: completed *financial assessment forms* should be returned to the Finance Team for confirmation of eligibility.

Once confirmation of *financial eligibility* is received:

3.4.4.2 Step 2: applicants will be advised as to the outcome of their application and a payment schedule agreed. This will usually be through our Finance Department in order to off-set a payment to a student for equipment, books etc. that they have already paid for or to reimburse travel costs following production of evidence of the travel concerned.

3.4.4.3 Unsuccessful applicants will have the right of appeal.

3.4.4.4 All applications will be treated in the strictest confidence.

3.4.5 Additional Learning Support at the ESFA agreed amount for 19+ AEB funded learners of £150/month, and any excess costs, also comes out of the Advanced Learner Loans Support Fund.

3.5 Awards Process

3.5.1 DLS Fund payments are conditional upon a student meeting attendance and behaviour standards which are agreed in advance and set out in the Student Agreement.

3.5.2 Attendance and behaviour requirements align with the conduct standards expected of all students who are part of the College community and can be found in the full time Student Handbook. Where the learner does not meet the agreed attendance or behaviour standards, which will be monitored on a half-termly basis, the College will retain the right to reduce or adjust payments accordingly.

3.5.3 In line with current College attendance policy, students will have a two week deadline to ensure that any register errors are corrected.

3.5.4 It is the responsibility of the student to notify the College immediately of any change in personal circumstances, which affects their eligibility. Failure to do so will result in action being taken by the College to reclaim any overpayments.

3.6 Appeals and Complaints Process

3.6.1 Should learners disagree with the outcome of either their application for a DLS Fund award or, where a payment has been withheld or reduced due to attendance/behaviour, they should follow the College appeals procedure.

3.6.2 All appeals will be considered by the Chief Financial Officer. The letter of appeal should include student's name and the reasons for their

appeal. Any additional information they wish to provide that they feel is relevant to their application can be attached. Written confirmation of the outcome of the appeal will be sent out within ten days of the Appeal being considered.

4. Policy References

4.1 Access to the policy

The latest version of this policy can be found on the Franklin Sixth Form College Website.

4.2 Quality and Assurance Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed annually with final approval being given by the College Leadership Team.