


Quick Reference Guide Learner Support

Discretionary Learner Support	
What does it do?	<p>The purpose of dLS is to provide exceptional support to learners aged 16 and above, who are experiencing financial difficulty with meeting costs associated with learning. The hardship funds are designed to help with costs associated with learning, e.g. books and equipment, additional course costs, transport (19+ only) and some course fees.</p> <p>Note: as dLS is managed on a local basis there will be variations in the eligibility, how much will be paid, and how to apply. However providers must operate within the YPLA Discretionary Funding Guidance and Requirements, which sets certain parameters on how funding can be spent.</p>
Who is eligible?	<p>dLS is available to support learners studying Learner Responsive funded provision in Further Education (FE) Colleges, External Institutions (EIs), Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), School Sixth Forms and Sixth Form Colleges, and some Private Training Providers (16-18 only).</p>
What type of learning is applicable?	<p>The course taken must be Learner Responsive funded provision.</p>
How much could the learner receive?	<p>Learning providers set their own criteria and manage their own procedures. This means that the amount of funds available to individuals, and the way the funds are allocated may differ between institutions.</p>
What can/can't the funding be used for?	<p>Learners should exercise their entitlement to other forms of financial support before eligibility for dLS is considered. In summary they comprise: Education Maintenance Allowance, Adult Learning Grant, Care to Learn, Residential Support Scheme, Dance and Drama Awards, Sixth Form College Childcare, and Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Hardship can be used for books, equipment, additional course costs, transport (19+ only) and some course fees (16-18 resits and 19+). ✗ Prisoners on day release are not eligible for dLS ✗ Learners on courses that are wholly funded from other sources are NOT eligible. Any learner on one of the following courses: Learndirect, New Deal programme, Apprenticeship training programme, Work Based Learning course, Adult and Community learning course.
<p>How does the learner apply?</p>	<p>The learner should speak to their Welfare Officer or Student Support Officer.</p>
<p>What are the effects on other sources of funding and benefits?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Learners can claim if they also receive grants and funds including: EMA, ALG, PCDL, C2L and Disability Living Allowance ✗ Prisoners on day release are not eligible for dLS ✗ Learners on courses that are wholly funded from other sources are NOT eligible ✗ Any learner on one of the following courses: Learndirect, New Deal programme, Apprenticeship training programme, Work Based Learning course, Adult and Community learning course
<p>How are the funds administered?</p>	<p>YPLA National office allocates funding for discretionary to learning providers and Local Authorities.</p> <p>Learners should apply for support directly to their learning providers, who provide support at their discretion and in accordance with the YPLA published guidance.</p> <p>Payments can be made in cash directly to the learner or via a third party, or alternatively they can be used to pay for goods and services. These payments can take the form of a loan which has to be</p>

	repaid, or a grant which does not.
What is the aim?	The aim of discretionary Learner Support is to increase participation and retention in post 16 education by helping to overcome the financial barriers associated with learning.
What are the key achievements of the funding?	During 2008/09 around 294,000 awards of discretionary Learner Support were made to learners aged 16-18, and over 335,000 to learners aged 19+.
Further Information and Contact Details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Learner Support - Information for Providers and Advisers (YPLA website) ▪ Information for 14-19 Applicants (Direct.gov website) ▪ Information for Adult Applicants (Direct.gov website)