

# 16-18 Residential Bursary Fund Guidance 2011/12

June 2011

► For guidance

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## Introduction

From 2011/12, the Education Maintenance Allowance and discretionary Learner Support fund have been replaced by the 16-19 Bursary Fund. The 16-18 Residential Bursary Fund (RBF) is to be administered separately in 2011/12.

This guidance provides information to all Learning Providers receiving RBF allocations. It sets out the requirements for the administration of the funding and describes how the YPLA will collect monitoring information and audit the scheme.

The RBF is intended to provide financial support towards the costs of accommodation for young people attending one of the 45 designated providers of specialist provision, where their course requires a residential element. The total available budget for 2011/12 is approx. £5m.

The Government is committed to ensuring that students continue to be supported to access specialist education. Support will be available from the Department for Education (DfE) and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) for those young people and adults who receive awards for residential support in 2011/12 and continue their learning in 2012/13.

DfE envisage that, from 2012/13, distinct 16-18 'residential bursary' and 'residential support' schemes will cease, to be replaced by a simpler means of providing residential support to enable young people to access provision with a residential element and specialist provision that is not available locally. Responsibility for post-19 student support remains with BIS, who is looking to develop a more coherent and simplified approach to learner support.

To inform the development of future support arrangements, DfE and BIS have commissioned the Skills Funding Agency to review how young people and adults are currently supported to access specialist provision with a residential element and specialist provision that is not available locally.

## 16-18 Learner Eligibility

The residency eligibility criteria for RBF are the same as those set out in the 2011/12 YPLA Learner Eligibility Guidance. This document will be available on the [YPLA website](#).

## 16-18 Residential Bursary Funding

RBF should be used to help young people with the costs of accommodation, whether owned or managed by the designated provider or private accommodation. Young people who are receiving transitional support under the arrangements for the new 16-19 Bursary Fund may still receive support from the RBF.

Providers may determine the eligibility criteria<sup>1</sup> and process for considering applications for RBF support within the requirements of this document. This must include a process for young people to appeal. The criteria and process should be clear and readily available to young people and to the YPLA. Priority must be given to young people who are unable to access relevant learning within daily travel from their home or where the costs of such travel are prohibitive. The scheme allows for a maximum payment of £4,079 within London and £3,458 outside London (pro rata).

Providers are allowed to use no more than 15% of their 2011/12 allocation, or £25,000, whichever is the greater, to support young people's travel costs where they are able to travel daily. Funding daily travel costs using RBF must only be considered as a last resort.

RBF should not routinely be used to fund meals, books and equipment, or other course costs. Support to meet such costs should be provided, where appropriate, by the 16-19 Bursary Fund.

Providers are responsible for making payments to eligible young people. Up to 5% of their total RBF allocation may be used towards administrative costs. Providers may not deduct their bank charges from RBF allocations.

**There can be no virement of funds between the 16-18 RBF and the 16-19 Bursary Fund, and no virement of funds between 16-18 RBF and 19+ RBF support funds.**

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<sup>1</sup> The RBF budget is finite; young people who may be eligible for support are not automatically entitled to it.

A timetable of key dates is given at Annex A.

## Unspent Funding

If during the course of the academic year a provider considers that it will be unable to spend any part of its RBF allocation, it should **immediately** contact the YPLA policy team and arrange to repay the unspent amount.

The YPLA policy team will aim to distribute any returned funds to other providers that can make use of further funding, and the YPLA may recover funds identified by providers as undistributed at the end of the academic year.

The YPLA will not reimburse overspends. **Providers are therefore advised not to overspend in the expectation that there will be a reallocation of funds later in the year, as this may not be the case.**

## Communications

Providers are asked to continue to use the web-based online portal;  
<http://dls.ypla.gov.uk>

This is a secure area which requires a user name and password for access. We will use this portal to share all information about the 16-18 RBF. Documentation will be available here including Guidance; FAQs; a section where you can ask questions about the fund and have your answers recorded; it will also be used to collect the annual MI return online.

You can also send any queries relating to the RBF to the policy team at [dlsenquiries@ypla.gov.uk](mailto:dlsenquiries@ypla.gov.uk)

## Audit and Management Information

### Financial and Data Monitoring

Providers must have administrative procedures that:

- record the details of learner applications for financial assistance (including the financial value of applications as well as the number of awards);
- account for the RBF distributed;
- identify unspent funds at the end of the academic year or likely underspend/pressures at key points in year.

Providers must also submit information detailing how RBF has been used. The data is used to demonstrate the efficacy of RBF and to demonstrate probity in the use of public funds. The data is collated by completion of the ILR. Where a learner has received support from RBF it is mandatory that the relevant fields of the ILR are completed. This is Field L34 for residential support.

In order to fulfil its duty to protect public funds, the YPLA may use the information it holds to prevent and detect fraud. The YPLA may also share such information, for the same purpose, with other organisations that handle public funds.

The definition of a young person for the purpose of completing monitoring forms and supplying management information is a learner aged 16, 17 or 18 on 31 August in the year in which they receive funding.

## **Audit Requirements for RBF 2011/12**

General arrangements for provider audit are set out in the YPLA Funding Guidance which will be available on the [YPLA website](#). For audit purposes, hard copies of all documentation for RBF should be kept for a period of at least six years.

There are various types of eligible funding and the audit would include eligibility, the application process, administration cost, evidence to confirm actual spend.

## Annex A Key Dates for 16-18 RBF

Key date	Action required	By whom
Early June 2011	Issue of final 16-18 RBF allocations to providers	YPLA
August 2011	Funding agreement schedule agreed, signed and received by YPLA	Principals or heads of providers and YPLA
August 2011	First payment of funds (50 per cent)	YPLA Finance
December 2011	Second payment of funds (25 per cent)	YPLA Finance
March 2012	Third payment of funds (25 per cent)	YPLA Finance
Sep-Oct 2012	Reconciliation of funds through annual MI return	YPLA Policy Team and Providers

Cheylesmore House  
Quinton Road  
Coventry  
CV1 2WT  
0845 337 2000  
[ypla.gov.uk](http://ypla.gov.uk)

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