

Financial Support at Sixth Form College 2025-26

The following financial support applies to this academic year only – you will need to re-apply for your support every year.

Travel Support

Bus Travel – Smart Pass

- You'll get a monthly transport payment in your bank account
- This is the account that you have added on your Financial Support application.
- Use this to buy a Smart Month bus pass:
 - **Under 19?** Buy a **Child Smart Ticket**.
 - **19 or over?** Buy an **Adult Smart Ticket**.
- It's your job to buy the correct ticket.
- Keep your receipts/tickets – you might be asked to show proof on the bus

Bus Travel – First Bus Pass

- Go to the **Financial Support Desk** at college..
- You will be issued a **First Month Pass**.
- It is your responsibility to go back to the desk before your current pass expires to be issued with a new pass.

Train Travel

- You must have chosen train travel on your bursary application form.
- You'll get a monthly transport payment to buy your train ticket.
- If you're eligible for a **16–17 Railcard**, the cost will be included in your first payment which you will need to buy before purchasing your train ticket.
- Keep your receipts – you might need to show proof on the train

When will I receive my payments for bus or train travel?

- These are received the following Monday after the due date listed on pay my student. However, there may be exceptions, particularly when we have half terms, Easter or Christmas break. If you would like confirmation for a specific month, then please contact financialsupport@sfc.potteries.ac.uk

- **Backdated payments for Bus and Train Travel**
- We will issue backdated payments to the start of the term, depending on when your application was approved and your personal circumstances.
- You will receive any backdated payments the Monday after the nearest calendar due date listed on pay my student unless there is an exception (as above).
- For more information please visit : <https://www.stokesfc.ac.uk/travel-information>

Free College Meals

- If you are eligible for Free College Meals - **£5.00** will be added to your college ID card every day at 7am. Your free meals will start the day after your application has been approved.
- Unused money is taken off at 4pm and does not carry over to the next day.
- Use it in the Food Hall or Costa Café.
- Swipe your college ID card at the till to purchase your food/drink
- Check your balance at the Financial Support Desk.
- Forgot your college ID card? Go to the Financial Support Desk.

DBS Checks

- If your course needs a DBS check for work placement/experience, we can pay for it.
- Talk to your teacher or Industrial Placement Officer if you require a DBS check
- we can refund you once you have paid for it
- Email or bring your receipt to the Financial Support Desk.

Music Tuition

- Speak to your music teacher.
- We can cover the cost of your music tuition for this academic year for one instrument only
- Payment is made directly by the college.

Sports Kit / Workwear/Uniform

Sports Kit

- If you're studying a Sports course or are part of the Performance Academy for Netball or Basketball and need to purchase a sports kit, your Financial Support will cover the cost.
- Simply complete an order form and bring it to the Financial Support Desk. We'll authorise the payment and place the order for your kit.

Workwear/Uniform

- If your teacher tells you that your course requires specific clothing, footwear, or a uniform for a placement or work experience, they will arrange the order for you.
- Your Financial Support will cover the cost.

Course Equipment (Books, Calculators, etc.)

- If your teacher asks you to buy a specific item. As a bursary student:
 - Your teacher will order it for you.
 - You can then collect it from them when it arrives.
 - Your Financial Support will cover the cost.
- You must return all books at the end of your course so others can use them.

Already Bought a Book?

- We will refund your payment for books deemed essential for your course.
- Email or bring your receipt to the Financial Support Desk.
- If your teacher confirms payment, we'll refund you.

For any other items related to your course please contact financialsupport@sfc.potteries.ac.uk before making any purchases.

Educational Visits/Trips

- If you are informed about a trip related to your study programme and would like to go on a trip:
 - Please e-mail us at financialsupport@sfc.potteries.ac.uk to confirm you would like to go on trip. Please be advised that expressing interest in the trip via email to the Financial Support Team does not secure a place.
 - We will email you to confirm if you need to pay anything – as not all trips are fully covered by financial support and may require a contribution.
 - Your parent/guardian will need to give consent for the trip on parent pay and any contribution would need to be paid at this point too. A place on the trip will only be confirmed once both the required 10% payment and parental/guardian consent have been successfully submitted through ParentPay. This is assuming your payment goes through and does not fail.
 - As places are limited and allocated on a first-come, first-served basis via Parent Pay, we strongly encourage you to complete this process as soon as possible to avoid disappointment.
 - If you receive free meals and it's a full-day trip, tell your teacher in advance so food can be arranged.

University Visits

- We can help with travel costs for:
 - **Open Days**
 - **Applicant Days**
 - **University Interviews**
 - **Travelling by Train**
- Advance tickets: We can book them for you – a minimum of 5 working days' notice is required
- Less than 5 working days, you will need to pay and claim a refund as detailed below.
- We can only book your train tickets, so if someone is going with you, they will need to book their own.
- Tickets will be emailed to your college email.
- Bought your own ticket? We can refund you (just your ticket) – email us at bursary@sfc.potteries.ac.uk a copy of your ticket showing the stations and university info.
- Check if the university offer free transport from the station – some universities offer transport to the campus from the station if not you will need to get a bus – save your ticket and we can refund this too.

Travelling by Car

- You can claim back mileage after the university event.
- We will need to know if you travelled by petrol/diesel or electric car.
- We will calculate the milage (45p per mile for petrol/diesel 9p per mile electric)
- Email proof of attendance and event details to the bursary email financialsupport@sfc.potteries.ac.uk
- Once the information has been checked we can make payment.

Work Experience

- You can use your financial support-funded bus/train pass for travel.
- If you do not receive transport through financial support (as you live closer than 1 mile from college) we can provide you with transport to get to your work placement.
- If you get free meals, speak to the Industrial Placement Team before your placement to arrange food payments.

UCAS Application Fees

- We'll pay for your UCAS application directly.

Exam Resits

- If your teacher approves an exam re-sit, we'll pay but you will need to contribute £10.00 towards the costs, payable via Parent Pay.
- Exam remark fees are not funded and will need to be paid by you directly.

Laptop Loans

- You can loan a laptop from the Lapsafe lockers around college – free of charge.
- You can also loan a laptop to for up to 72 hours (sometimes longer) if required from the green bays only.
- You're fully responsible for it – you'll sign a digital agreement when you borrow one.

Stationery

- We are currently reviewing our rules regarding stationery.

Bank Account Details

- If you haven't already done so, you will need to add your own bank account details to your application otherwise we will be unable to make any payments you are eligible for to you – for example payments for travel to college.

Printer Credits

- You will have unlimited printer credits to use for your subjects throughout the academic year.

If you have a question and the answer isn't covered above, then please contact us - financialsupport@sfc.potteries.ac.uk