Aylesbury UTC

Student Hardship Fund and Travel Support Scheme

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AUTC Local Governing Body

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1. Purpose

The Student Hardship Fund exists to support students where financial hardship creates a barrier to:

- Attendance
- Participation in education
- Access to essential equipment
- Access to uniform
- Educational visits and enrichment
- Welfare and safeguarding

The fund is intended to remove barriers to learning and improve participation in school life.

The fund does not represent an entitlement and all awards remain discretionary.

2. Annual Fund Value

The annual allocation for the Student Hardship Fund is:

£2,500

Once the annual allocation has been exhausted, no further awards will normally be made during that academic year.

3. Categories of Support

The UTC may provide support towards:

- Uniform and Clothing
- UTC uniform
- Footwear
- Specialist clothing
- Protective equipment
- Replacement uniform in exceptional circumstances

Donated or pre-owned uniform will be provided where appropriate.

Curriculum Resources

- Essential stationery

- Course equipment
- Books
- Specialist learning resources
- Protective equipment

Travel Support

- Bus passes
- Rail passes
- Public transport costs required to attend the UTC

Educational Activities

- Educational visits
- Employer activities
- University visits
- Curriculum enrichment

Exceptional Welfare Support

Where exceptional financial hardship creates a safeguarding, welfare or attendance concern.

4. General Eligibility

A student may be considered where they:

- The student is enrolled at Aylesbury UTC.
- The student requires financial support to remove a barrier to attendance, participation or learning.
- The household income is normally below **£30,810 per annum**; or
- The family can demonstrate exceptional financial hardship or a significant recent change in circumstances.
- Appropriate evidence has been provided.

Meeting eligibility criteria does not guarantee an award.

5. Priority Groups

Priority may be given to:

- Students eligible for Free School Meals.
- Students eligible for Pupil Premium.
- Students from households receiving means-tested benefits.
- Students known to safeguarding services.
- Students with SEND.
- Young carers.
- Students experiencing homelessness or housing instability.
- Students experiencing a recent and significant change in family circumstances.

6. Travel Support Eligibility

Travel assistance may be considered where a student:

- Is aged 14-18.
- Is enrolled full-time.
- Lives more than three miles from Aylesbury UTC.
- Meets the financial eligibility requirements set out in Section 4 of this policy.

Regular attendance is expected.

Attendance will be considered alongside individual circumstances, including illness, SEND and safeguarding factors.

7. Application Process

Applications may be made by:

- Parents or carers.
- Students aged 18 or over.
- Staff acting on behalf of families with agreement.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead in exceptional circumstances.

Applications must be made using the UTC Financial Support Application Form.

Applications may be submitted at any point during the year.

Awards will not normally be backdated.

8. Evidence Requirements

Applicants will normally provide:

- Completed application form.
- Evidence of household income.
- Evidence of benefits received.
- Supporting information explaining the need.
- Cost estimates where available.

Examples may include:

- Payslips.
- Universal Credit statements.
- Tax credit documentation.
- Benefit statements.
- Relevant quotations or invoices.

9. Assessment Criteria

Applications will be considered against:

- Financial hardship.
- Educational need.
- Attendance impact.
- Welfare considerations.
- Safeguarding considerations.
- Availability of other funding.
- Previous support received.
- Funds remaining within the budget.

10. Delegated Authority

Award Value	Approval Required
Up to £250	Principal or Deputy Principal/DSL
£251-£500	Principal and Trust Finance Manager
Over £500	Principal and Chair of Governors

Urgent safeguarding support may be approved by the Principal immediately where delay would place a student at risk.

11. Method of Support

Support will normally be provided through:

- Purchase of items.
- Provision of uniform.
- Payment of bus or train passes.
- Payment to suppliers.
- Reduction of approved charges.
- Cash payments will not normally be made.

12. Notification

Applicants will normally receive a decision within:

5-7 working days

The UTC may:

- Approve the application.
- Partially approve the application.
- Decline the application.
- Request further information.

13. Monitoring

A confidential register will record:

- Date of application.
- Nature of support.
- Amount awarded.
- Authorising officer.
- Brief rationale.

Governors will receive an annual anonymised report.

14. APPENDIX 1

REQUEST FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Student Details

Student Name:

Year Group:

Date of Birth:

Tutor Group:

Home Address:

Parent/Carer Details

Name:

Relationship to Student:

Telephone:

Email:

Household Circumstances

Number of adults in household:

Number of dependent children:

Is the student eligible for Free School Meals? Yes / No

Please indicate any benefits received:

☐ Universal Credit
☐ Child Tax Credit
☐ Working Tax Credit
☐ Housing Benefit
☐ Income Support
☐ Employment Support Allowance

☐ Job Seekers Allowance
☐ Other (please specify)

Support Requested

Please indicate what assistance you are requesting:

☐ Uniform

☐ Footwear

☐ Travel

☐ Educational Visit

☐ Equipment

☐ Curriculum Resources

☐ Other

Amount requested (if known): £_____

Supporting Information

Please explain:

Why support is required.

How the request will support attendance, education or wellbeing.

Any exceptional circumstances.

Declaration

I confirm that the information provided is accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Signed: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

15. APPENDIX 2A

APPROVED APPLICATION LETTER

Dear Parent/Carer,

Thank you for your application to the Aylesbury UTC Student Hardship Fund.

I am pleased to confirm that your application has been approved.

The UTC has agreed to provide support towards:

[insert details]

Total value of support:

£[amount]

The support will be provided through:

[uniform / travel pass / equipment / payment of activity]

We hope that this support helps remove barriers to your child's education and enables them to participate fully in school life.

Yours sincerely,

Joe Dunckley
Principal

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16. APPENDIX 2B

PARTIALLY APPROVED APPLICATION LETTER

Dear Parent/Carer,

Thank you for your application to the Aylesbury UTC Student Hardship Fund.

Following consideration of the information provided, the UTC has agreed to provide partial support for your request.

The UTC has approved support towards:

[details]

Value of support approved:

£[amount]

Unfortunately we have not been able to approve the full amount requested due to the limited nature of the fund and the need to ensure fair access for all eligible students.

If your circumstances change significantly, you are welcome to submit a further application.

Yours sincerely,

Joe Dunckley
Principal

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17. APPENDIX 2C

DECLINED APPLICATION LETTER

Dear Parent/Carer,

Thank you for your application to the Aylesbury UTC Student Hardship Fund.

Following consideration of the information provided, I regret that the UTC is unable to approve your application on this occasion.

This may be because:

The application does not meet the published eligibility criteria;

Insufficient evidence was available to support the request;

Alternative sources of assistance may be more appropriate; or

The annual hardship fund allocation has been fully committed.

If you believe relevant information has not been considered or there has been a significant change in circumstances, you may submit a further application for consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Joe Dunckley
Principal