

## Contents

1. Summary.....	2
2. Statement of principles.....	2
3. Eligibility Criteria.....	3
4. Available Bursaries .....	3
5. Assessing Bursaries for students process .....	6
6. Typical available support through bursaries.....	7
7. Promotion of Bursaries.....	9
8. Applying for a Bursary.....	10
9. Household Income .....	11
10. Appeals .....	11
11. Exceptions from Standard Bursaries .....	11
12. Conditions for continued receipt of Bursary.....	12
Appendix A – Applicants not currently in receipt of bursary funding from Shrewsbury Colleges Group .....	13
Appendix B – Progressing Students (students already in receipt of bursary funding from Shrewsbury Colleges Group).....	14

## 1. Summary

- Shrewsbury Colleges Group recognises that the Student Bursary Fund has an important role to play in removing barriers for many students accessing and completing Further Education courses. It is the aim of the College to use funds that have the optimum impact in supporting eligible students to access education successfully.
- The fund will be distributed in a consistent and transparent way and in accordance with the guidance issued by the Education, Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).
- Bursaries are intended to help with the financial hardship needs of individual students studying a course at college. To this end our approach is to assess the level of need on an individual basis and support students to overcome barriers to education. Awards from the bursary will be used, in most cases to make payments in kind. These support essential course related costs such as travel, meals at college, equipment, kit/uniform, trips and other costs essential to learning.
- Discretionary awards will be made subject to sufficient funds being available.

## 2. Statement of principles

- This policy will be applied fairly and consistently in a way that reflects the individual circumstances and needs of the individual student.
- The process must be easily understood and accessible to everyone.
- Student Services will support understanding of the process and students and parents can request a meeting if required. The Student Bursary Fund will be promoted via Student Services information and the college website. Student Services are present at events throughout the year, such as open evenings and admissions interviews, in order to support access to bursaries and other financial support.
- All complete applications submitted by the end of July should be processed and an outcome communicated by the start of term in September. Completed applications received at other times should be processed and an outcome communicated within 4 weeks.
- There is a commitment to ensuring bursary funds allocated to the college are efficiently distributed in order to support as many students as possible.

### 3. Eligibility Criteria

In order to be eligible for bursary support students should:

- Be aged 16 or over on 31<sup>st</sup> August of the academic year of enrolment to the Further Education course and meet the other age criteria for the particular bursary being applied for.
- Have been a UK resident for 3 years prior to the course start date. There are particular arrangements in place for Accompanied and Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers which are outlined in the section on Vulnerable Bursaries.
- Have a household income below the thresholds set annually by the college if applying for a discretionary bursary
- If applying for a Vulnerable Bursary meet at least one of the criteria outlined in the relevant section below
- If resident in Wales apply to Student Finance Wales if they believe they are eligible for Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA) or Adult Learning Grant (ALG).

[Education Maintenance Allowance, funding for Further Education | Student Finance Wales](#)

Students who apply for EMA are also eligible to apply to the bursary fund. However, the support that they need in order to overcome barriers to education will take into account EMA monies received.

### 4. Available Bursaries

There are four separate bursaries available. Students are only eligible to apply for one type of bursary, even if they are enrolled on multiple courses. These are 16-19 Discretionary, 16-19 Vulnerable, 19+ Discretionary and 19+ Loan Bursary (ADL).

Student Services will decide on the most suitable bursary for the student in line with government guidance as applicants all use a common application form.

#### 4.1. 16-19 Discretionary Bursary

These bursaries can be awarded to any student over 16 and under 19 on 31<sup>st</sup> August of the year in which the course commences, or those who are 19-24 and hold an Education Health and Care Plan.

In order to be eligible the student must live in a household where household income is under £28,000. The support is designed to alleviate financial barriers to continuing education and training by helping with associated costs such as transport, meals at college and other essential course related items.

We ensure that all eligible students can access college by support with transport costs, a daily allowance of £3.60 for meals to spend in the college

on days where the student is timetabled and a 100% contribution for essential course materials such as uniform and kit. (Please refer to Page 12 for a full list of essential items that can be covered by the bursary)

Trips and visits are supported by the bursary fund only when they are linked explicitly to the completion of the study programme. This will be determined by Student Services in conjunction with the trip organiser. This process involves the provision of a comprehensive letter from the trip organiser illustrating how the trip supports completion of the course in a fundamental way. Please note, there is no expectation on the college to provide funds for every trip.

## 4.2. Vulnerable Bursary (VB)

Each student who qualifies for the VB will be entitled to, based on an individual assessment of the support required to access education, up to the value of £1,200 per academic year. The college will only claim the level of funding to ensure all educational needs are met. This may be below £1,200. Where the assessment of needs indicates that more than £1,200 is needed to ensure access to education this can also be supported through the Discretionary Bursary.

Student Services are responsible for determining eligibility. The funds will be used for educational purposes, for example, a travel pass, college meals or a contribution towards uniform and trips.

To be considered for a VB, students must meet the following criteria:

- Be aged 16 on 31<sup>st</sup> August of the same year their studies commence and at least one of the criteria below.
- Be under the age of 19 on 31<sup>st</sup> August of the year their studies commence or be aged 19-24 and have an Education, Health and Care Plan
- Be a young person in care. *\*(Must have been in care for 13 or more consecutive weeks)*
- A care leaver. *(Must have been in care for 13 or more consecutive weeks)*
- In receipt of Universal Credits and Personal Independence Payments in their own name.

Each student will receive detailed entitlement in a letter sent by email from Student Services once the application has been assessed. This will show the support that has been agreed to support access to education in their individual circumstances.

The release of cash payments will only be made in exceptional circumstances in order to meet specific costs associated with accessing education. Monies should not be used for anything other than it's intended

purpose and evidence of this is required by the provision of receipts that are collected and stored by Student Services.

*\* Unaccompanied asylum seekers do not receive cash support from the Home Office and are the responsibility of the local authority. They are treated as 'looked after children/young people' and are eligible for a bursary for vulnerable groups. Accompanied asylum seekers are not entitled to public funds but can apply to the Home Office for cash for essentials. As long as an asylum seeker has not had their application for asylum refused, the college can provide 'in kind' student support such as a travel pass or books. Under no circumstances will cash be given. This would be done through a discretionary route as accompanied asylum seekers are not eligible for a VB.*

### **4.3. 19+ Discretionary Bursary**

This bursary supports students aged 19 and over at the start of the academic year (who are not eligible to apply for a 19+ loan – see below) and who face genuine financial barriers to completing their course. The funding is provided to improve access to education, attendance, and achievement. Bursaries are assessed using individual circumstances and actual financial need and is available for students whose annual household income does not exceed £22,000.

General entitlement can consist of, but not guaranteed all transport costs, a daily allowance of £3.60 to spend in the college canteens on timetabled days in college and 100% contribution towards essential course materials, kit, and uniform, and other essential items. (Please refer to Page 12 for a full list of essential items)

Trips and visits are supported by the bursary fund only when they are judged as essential for the completion of the study programme. This will be determined by Student Services in conjunction with the trip organiser. This process involves the provision of a comprehensive letter from the trip organiser illustrating how the trip supports completion of the course in a fundamental way. Please note, there is no expectation on the college to provide funds for every trip.

### **4.4. 19+ Loan Bursary (ADL) Household income up to £22,000**

This bursary provides financial help towards childcare\* and travel for students aged 19 and over who are eligible to apply for an ADL to cover their tuition fees (i.e. those who are enrolling on an eligible level 3 or above qualification) and where household income is £22,000 per year or below. If there are no childcare costs required, other course related costs will be considered but there is no expectation on the college to provide additional financial support.

Travel will usually be in the form of travel passes for public transport. Only in exceptional circumstances will the funding of alternative methods of transport be considered. Where it has been agreed that it is appropriate to pay mileage expenses, these will be paid at a rate of 45p per mile. This rate will be

reviewed regularly. Bursary funds will not be released until confirmation has been received that the student has their learner loan in place. Students must live more than 2 miles away from their main campus of study to qualify for travel.

Students aged 20 and over can apply for help with childcare for up to 2 children who are being cared for in an Ofsted approved childcare setting. Normally 100% of the costs up to a maximum of £160 per week per child will be awarded from the Student Bursary and Hardship Fund. Student Services will liaise with childcare providers for payments and term dates. Costs are only payable for timetabled days, attendance at college and placements.

If a student is eligible to apply for a 19+ (ADL) loan but chooses not to (i.e. they fund their own tuition fees) they will **not** be eligible to apply for financial assistance from the 19+ Bursary Fund or the ADL bursary at college. The student must provide a letter from the Student Loans Company confirming that their loan is in place before their bursary can be approved.

Students who are on courses that are fully funded by the ESFA (and are therefore not eligible to apply for a 19+ loan) may apply to the 19+ Discretionary Bursary Fund for help with transport, free college meals and essential course materials.

*\*Childcare payments will be paid directly to an Ofsted approved childcare setting only.*

## 5. Assessing Bursaries for students process

There are separate processes for assessing bursaries for students who do not currently receive support, Applicants, and those who are currently in receipt of a bursary, 'Progressing Students.'

### 5.1. Applicants

Those making a new bursary application should do so online, or by making an appointment with a member of the Student Services team. Proof of household income should be provided within **two weeks** of application. Failure to provide the appropriate documents to this timescale will mean that the application cannot be processed at this time. A reapplication would, however, be welcomed. In order to guarantee receipt of support for a course that starts in September applications must be submitted by the end of July and the appropriate evidence provided. Students can apply for a bursary at any point in the year.

The provision of false or misleading information will result in the withdrawal of the bursary award and the college reserves the right to claim back funds already released.

## 5.2. Progressing students

Students who are continuing to study on a Further Education programme at the college and already receive a bursary are not required to complete the full application process. These students are required to sign a declaration about their household income and circumstances supporting that they continue to meet the criteria for eligibility for support. Students who continue to be eligible will continue to receive bursary support and will not need to provide evidence of household income.

Circumstances where a reassessment of an application becomes necessary include: where household income has fallen below the threshold for a student previously assessed as not meeting this criteria; or if household income has increased above the threshold for a student currently in receipt of bursary support.

**Student Services reserve the right to request household income documentation at any time throughout the year to determine eligibility for a bursary. Household income must be provided within two weeks of the request to ensure continued receipt of support.**

If progressing students do not return the signed declaration by the end of July, they may be required to follow the 'Applicants' procedure to continue to access bursary support.

## 6. Typical available support through bursaries

*Please note that funding towards these items will be costed as per the individual bursary entitlement. Student Services will not refund any items that a student has purchased independently without proof of purchase.*

### 6.1. Travel

Travel will usually be in the form of travel passes for public transport. Only in exceptional circumstances will the funding of alternative methods of transport be considered.

Students must live more than 2 miles away from their main campus of study to qualify for travel support.

Shrewsbury Colleges Group operates several buses covering different locations and students who qualify for a bursary will be awarded a college bus pass in the first instance. Where a student is not on a college bus route, other travel via Shropshire Council subsidised passes, Arriva Student Saver passes, TFW Trains and other local providers will be considered. Only in exceptional circumstances will consideration be given to funding other forms of travel in place of the college bus if a student lives on a dedicated college bus route.

Students who are eligible for a bursary and attend work placements as an essential part of their course are eligible for support with transport to access the placements.

Student Services will advise students to apply for a Shropshire Council Travel Pass if they believe students meet the criteria set by Shropshire Council for subsidised travel to college. In this instance, students are required to apply directly to Shropshire Council. [Post-16 | Shropshire Council](#) If students are not eligible for a Shropshire Council Travel Pass, the college bus will be awarded in the first instance, as above.

Please contact your local authority if you live outside of Shropshire for information regarding post 16 transport.

## 6.2. Free College Meals

College meals are valued at £3.60 per day and are provided for every timetabled day a student is in college. It is the students' responsibility to inform Student Services of any changes to their timetable. A free breakfast is available between 8am – 9am to all students.

## 6.3. Uniform and Kit

Below is a list of the uniform and kit that we typically provide through the bursary to allow students to access their study programme. If the items that you require do not appear below please contact Student Services to discuss.

- Hospitality & Catering (1 set of chef whites, one complete set of front of house uniform)
- Health & Social Care, Early Years & Performing Arts (1 polo shirt or tunic & 1 hoody or fleece jacket)
- Hair & beauty (1 tunic 1 pair of trousers & 1 fleece jacket)
- Uniformed Services (1 t-shirt 1 rugby shirt 1 pair of trousers 1 pair of shorts)
- All courses requiring steel toe capped boots

## 6.4. Kits for the courses outlined below

- Hairdressing- Level 1, level 2, & level 3
- Level 1 Hair & Beauty
- Level 2 Beauty Specialist
- Level 2 Nails & Makeup
- Level 3 Beauty Makeup
- Level 3 Cosmetics
- Football 'Core Kit Bundle' only



## 6.5. Materials

- Stationary-must be ordered through the college
- Art Supplies-must be ordered through the college and used towards an essential piece of work towards your qualification
- Textbooks-from the essential reading list
- Mandatory calculators will be funded as required

## 6.6. Careers/Higher Education

- 1 open day event at a university of your choice - transport costs will be funded
- 2 interviews at universities of your choice - transport costs will be covered if applicable.
- 1 UCAS application fee.

## 6.7. Trips

Day trips that are explicitly linked to the completion of the study programme will be supported by the bursary covering the total cost of the trip. Residential trips will receive a £100 contribution. Trips will be considered on a case-by-case basis and an endorsement application will be required from the trip organiser to demonstrate the benefits of attending the trip. Student Services Team Leader and Head of Student Progress are responsible for deciding if a trip can be supported by the bursary. Their decision will be final. There will not be an opportunity to appeal.

*Bursary funds cannot be used to support costs of overseas trips where the content can be found within the UK at a cheaper cost and/or to support the costs of field trips that are not explicitly linked to the completion of the study programme.*

All other course related items will be considered on an individual basis. Please note, if students purchase an item before speaking to Student Services and the item is not specified in this list, reimbursements will **not** be awarded.

## 7. Promotion of Bursaries

- Promotion of the funds will be carried out in a number of ways to ensure the maximum number of students who need financial support are identified.
- Student Services are available at college events for the promotion of the bursary. The team are available to assist with the applying of a bursary to students who have received a conditional offer of a place at college.
- Bursary application forms will be made available to applicants who have received a conditional offer.

- The College will publicise the availability of the funds during college events, enrolment and induction and also to students who start their courses later in the academic year.
- Staff will identify students who experience a change in circumstances during the year that has resulted in them experiencing financial hardship.
- 16 -19 Discretionary, 19+ Discretionary, and 19+ADL bursary awards will be subject to sufficient funds being available.

## 8. Applying for a Bursary

Students should make an application for a bursary before the end of July if their course is starting in September. If the form is completed correctly and the appropriate evidence is provided this will mean that we can guarantee that financial support will be in place for the start of the course. It is possible, though, to apply for a bursary at any time of year, though it will take up to 4 weeks for a correctly completed form to be processed and support put in place.

The form is accessible through the Financial Support page of the college website <https://www.scg.ac.uk/students/financial-support>

If you need support with making an application or need to use a different format please contact Student Services on [bursaryhelp@scg.ac.uk](mailto:bursaryhelp@scg.ac.uk)

With the exception of Vulnerable Bursary, awards will be determined based on annual household income levels and in all cases the amount of support required to overcome barriers to accessing education will inform the level of support provided. This will be in all cases based on an individual assessment of the support required.

The bursary application will be assessed by a trained member of the Student Services team. The assessment is recorded on each students' REMS profile, which is a secure electronic record. For paper applications, Student Services load the data onto REMS. If you apply by telephone, you are consenting to the storage of your personal details and agree to the terms and conditions of the Bursary & Hardship fund you are applying for.

All paper evidence is confidentially disposed of.

*\*You must request in writing if you would like your documents to be returned to you.*

Students will be notified of the outcome of their application by email. Students/parents & carers are responsible for checking emails and no reimbursements will be made due to unread emails. You must inform the college of any contact detail changes.

*\*Applicants and Progressing Students may appeal against the decision.*

## 9. Household Income

Student Services require specific documents of household income to assess bursary applications fairly and consistently. All evidence is uploaded to a secure location and paper copies of documents are destroyed.

- Payslips
- Child Tax & Working Tax Credits. *((Please inform Student Services as this may affect your entitlement))*
- Universal Credits statements
- Pensions
- Carers Allowance
- Employment Support Allowance
- Self Employment assessment
- Bank statements (if unable to provide award letters/payslips)
- Letter from Social Worker (VB only)
- Any other income (excludes DLA, PIP, Child Benefit & Savings)

## 10. Appeals

If the applicant/student does not agree with the bursary decision, and wishes to appeal, they must do so in writing within 10 working days from the date of the outcome. This must be addressed to Student Services. The applicant/student will be asked to state the reasons in detail for disagreeing with the decision and this must be provided to Student Services within 5 working days of the request for more information. The bursary application will be reassessed by two members of the Student Services team independently of each other. If the matter is not resolved, applicants may escalate their appeal to the Student Services Team Leader in the first instance. If the appeal goes to panel, the decision of the panel will be final.

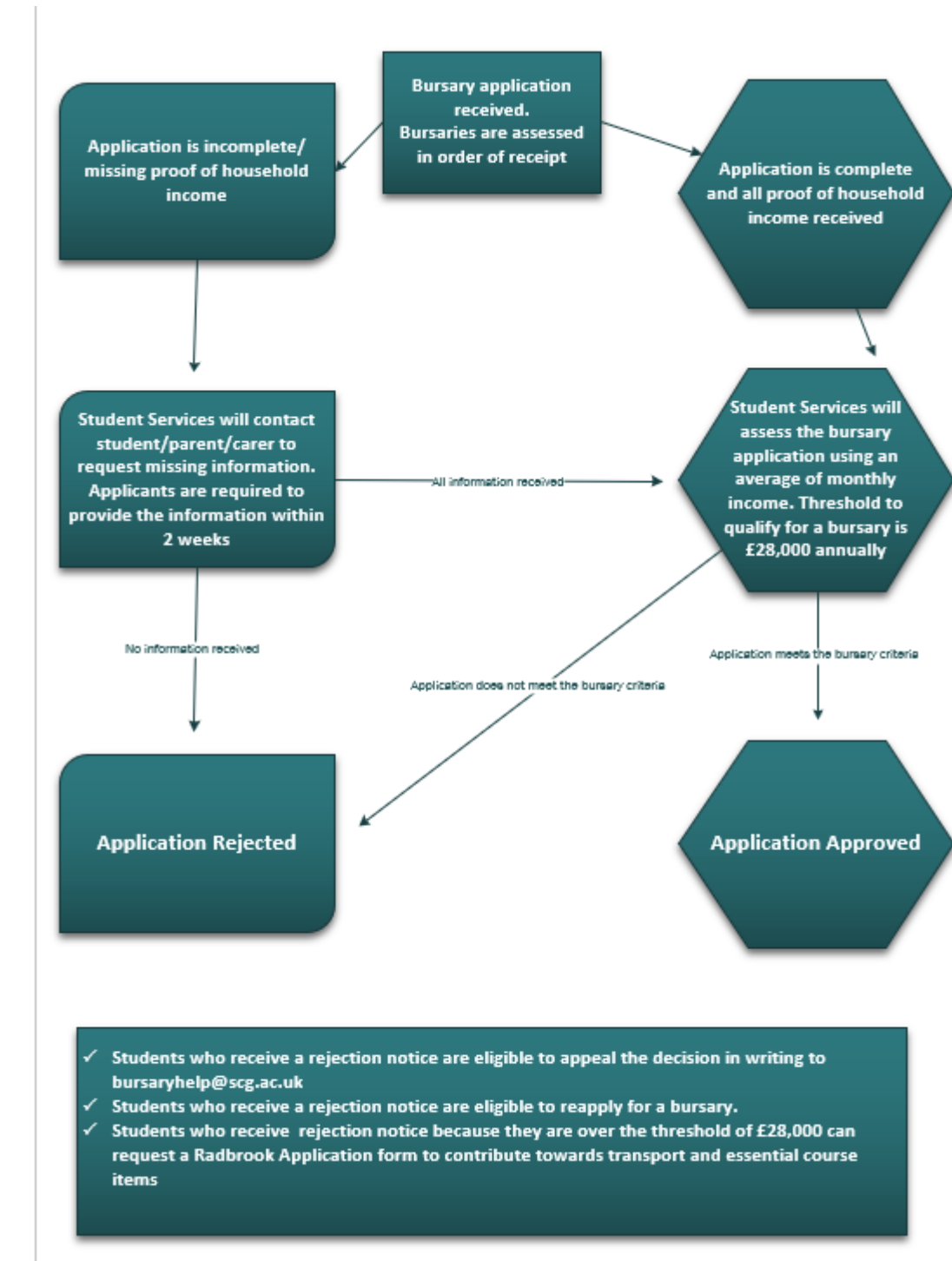
## 11. Exceptions from Standard Bursaries

Exceptions from standard levels of support can apply when personal circumstances or academic needs suggest that a higher level of support is required. Additional financial assistance will be determined at the discretion of the student services team and approved by the Student Services Team Leader and Head of Student Progress.

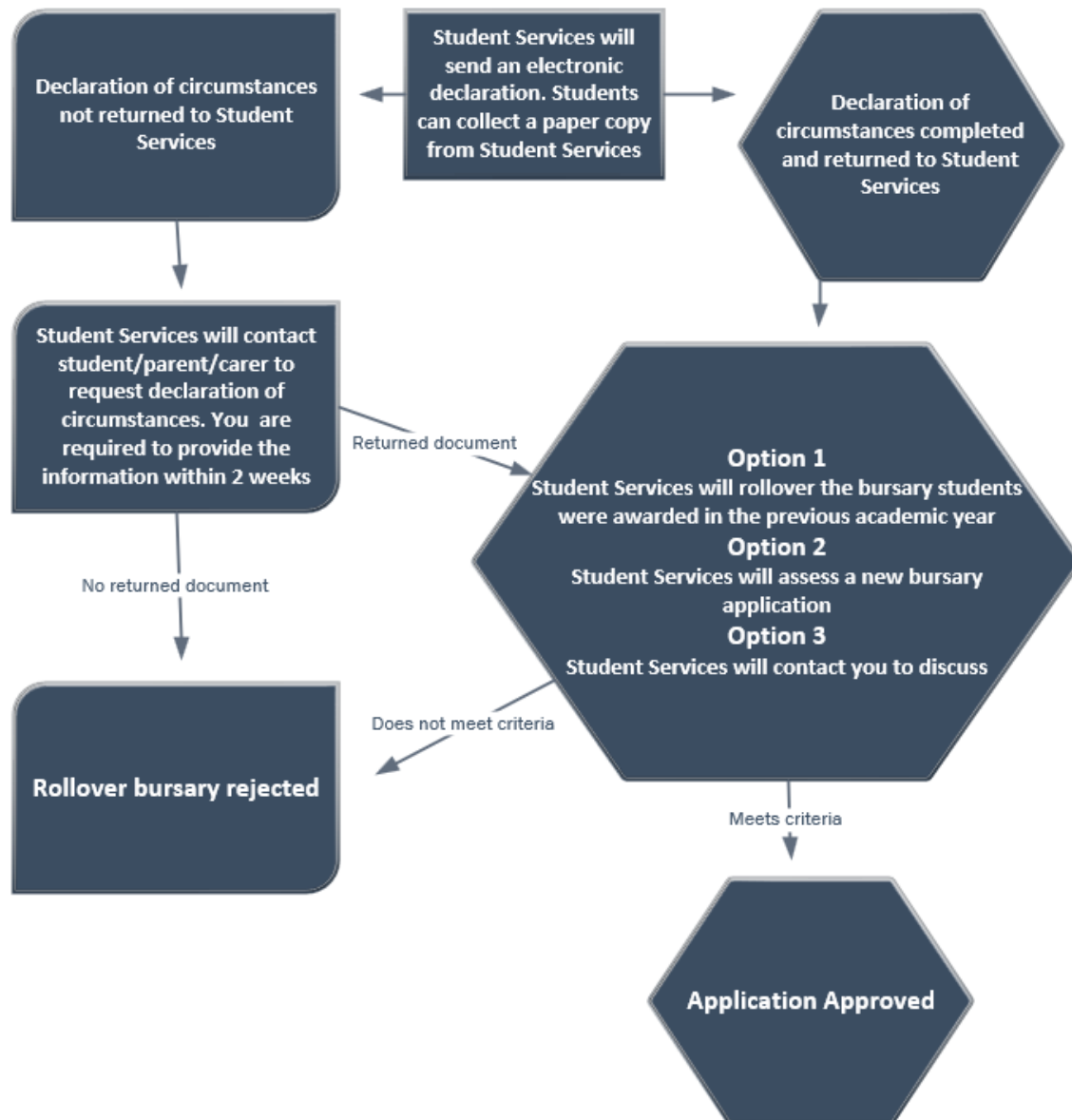
## **12. Conditions for continued receipt of Bursary**

To receive continued access to support from a bursary, a student's attendance should normally be at a minimum of 85%. Extenuating circumstances that are affecting attendance will, however, be taken into consideration, such as medical conditions or safeguarding concerns. Student Services work with curriculum and support teams to consider whether a student's bursary should be affected by persistently poor attendance or behaviour, where a sanction has been put in place following the college Student Conduct Policy.

## Appendix A – Applicants not currently in receipt of bursary funding from Shrewsbury Colleges Group



## Appendix B – Progressing Students (students already in receipt of bursary funding from Shrewsbury Colleges Group)



- ✓ Students who receive a rejection notice are eligible to appeal the decision in writing to [bursaryhelp@scg.ac.uk](mailto:bursaryhelp@scg.ac.uk)
- ✓ Students who receive a rejection notice are eligible to reapply for a bursary.
- ✓ Students who receive rejection notice because they are over the threshold of £28,000 can request a Radbrook Application form to contribute towards transport and essential course items