

Financial Support Free College Meals Leaflet

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Financial Support for your Studies

Basingstoke College of Technology has a range of Financial Support to Support students, who are studying a Full time course at our college and we will do our best to help you achieve your full potential.

Free College Meal (FCM) scheme

The Free College Meal scheme is a Government initiative and is for learners who are:

- Aged between 16 and 18 years old (as at 31 August at the start of your course) – if you turn 19 during the academic year you remain eligible until the end of the academic year

To qualify for Free College Meals

The learner or their parents must be in receipt of one of the following benefits:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The Guaranteed element of the State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided they are not entitled to Working Tax Credit) and have an annual gross income of no more than **£16,190 pa**, as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs
- Universal Credit with net earnings not exceeding the equivalent of **£7,400 pa**

How do I apply?

This Financial year we are introducing a simple online application form for all your bursary application, <https://bcot.paymystudent.com/portal/> which we will use to assess those identified as being eligible for the Free College Meals.

Each applicant is written too detailing what assistance we can give them and this includes if they are entitled to the FCM.

What do they get?

A food allowance of £3.50 will be available to the learner on the days they are expected to attend their course. Money is allocated to the student identification badge automatically, which can be redeemed at the college's refectory (South site) and Café (North site).

The allowance does not cover snacks such as crisps, chocolates or drinks etc.

The allowance must be used on the day they are scheduled into classes and cannot be 'saved up', you should also note that if you have finished your scheduled lessons for the day, i.e. you are only scheduled for lessons up to 11 am, the system recognizes that you are no longer scheduled into lessons and you can no longer access the FCM for the rest of that day.

FCM will only commence once the application has been approved.

How do they access the FCM in College?

Again we have made it very simple. Once the learner has been accepted on the scheme their ID Badge will then allow them to gain the FCM.

The learner can go to the refectory, chose their meal up to a value of £3.50 and then swipe their ID Badge on the electronic pad at the till, (the refectory staff can input the ID number if the learner has a temporary day badge).

The system will then confirm if it is a day they are timetabled for and if accepted then the learner pays nothing (unless the value of the meal is over £3.50). Also if the learner tries to claim twice in one day the system will flag this to the refectory staff too and block the transaction.

If a student has difficulties accessing their Free College Meal at the college then please come to the Student Welfare Office (North Site).

Opening Hours

Monday 0830- 1600hrs

Tuesday to Friday 0830- 1430hrs

Free College Meal Agreement (FCM)

The FCM scheme is released by the Government to 16-18 year olds who meet certain criteria.

Basingstoke College of Technology agrees to:

- Check eligibility for the scheme and enter the details onto the college system.
- Provide you with a meal worth £3.50 for every day you are timetabled to be in College. You can take this as breakfast, lunch or dinner.
- The £3.50 can be used for cold food such as salads / sandwiches etc., hot food or fruit. Snacks and drinks are not part of the FCM scheme.
- Provide water fountains around the College enabling all learners and staff to have a free drink.
- Meals must be taken on the day you are scheduled into lessons, If you are not scheduled for lessons then the FCM is inactive, **this is a 'Use it or Lose it' scheme**

You will be assessed for eligibility when you apply for the bursary via the online portal <https://bcot.paymystudent.com>

In return, the learner is expected to:

- Provide all the necessary evidences to the college to ensure eligibility for the bursary.
- Give 100% attendance to your agreed programme of study. This includes any additional classes such as E&E, Functional Skills or GCSE/ A level.
- Not claim meals on days you do not attend classes.

- Not use the FCM scheme to purchase drinks or sweets.
- Keep your ID badge on you every day you are due in to college. Your ID badge allows you to claim the FCM. See below under 'How the scheme works'