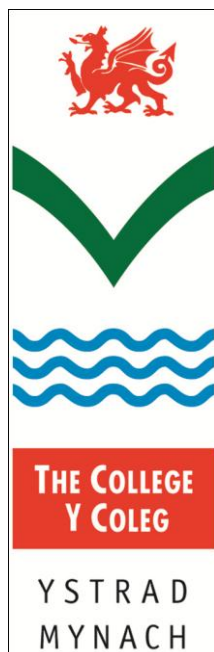


# The College Ystrad Mynach

## Financial Contingency Fund Policy



Version	July 2011
Last Reviewed	July 2011
Next Review Date	July 2012
Author	Joan Siddle
Source Path	Svr-file\student services\Policies\General\Financial Contingency Fund Policy.doc

## **1 PURPOSE**

1.1 The Welsh Assembly Government allocates the Financial Contingency Fund (FCF) to all Colleges for the purpose of providing additional financial support. Financial Contingency Funds are used to ensure that those learners with financial limitations are assisted in their need to purchase items that will assist in their academic/vocational studies. These funds are limited by the Welsh Assembly Government and the College prioritises its allocation. Each application is considered on an individual basis according to its priorities to ensure the funds are fairly and effectively distributed. The Welsh Assembly Government issues guidelines on the use and management of this fund.

The procedure for the allocation of funds will be as described in Section 2.

1.2 The FCF needs also to be considered alongside:

1.2.1 the Assembly Learning Grant (ALG) which is available for students aged 18 years and over who meet certain criteria, mainly financial; and

1.2.2 The Educational Maintenance allowance available to students aged 16,17 and 18.

## **2 APPLYING**

2.1 Application forms are available at interview. If these forms have not been forwarded by the Welsh Assembly Government, the College will distribute them as soon as they are received to those who are being interviewed at the College.

2.2 If you fail to apply at the commencement of your course you can do so at any time throughout the year of your study.

2.3 Student Finance Wales is the Agency processing the applications. The time-scale for processing these applications is approximately 4 – 6 weeks.

2.4 The Student Services section of the College is available to assist in the application with all its learners.

## **3 ELIGIBILITY**

3.1 To be eligible for support from the FCF you must fulfil the following criteria:

- (i) Full time/part time (normally residing in the UK for 3 years preceding the start of the course) student.
- (ii) Be an EU national with migrant worker status or be a refugee or
- (iii) Have been granted exceptional leave to remain and satisfied the 3 years residency requirements or
- (iv) Be an enrolled student at any of our centres.
- (v) Be a national of the European community; have been resident in the EU for 3 years preceding the start of the course

- (vi) Generally, be in receipt of one of the many kinds of benefits that will make them a worthy learner for the award of financial assistance.

#### **4 PAYMENTS**

- 4.1 Learners who qualify for a grant will receive payment in the form of a cheque. The learner will need a bank account, for it to be cleared.
- 4.2 Any queries regarding the actual payment of funds should be directed to the grant officer in Student Services.
- 4.3 Payments for goods and services for an individual may be made direct to the supplier.
- 4.4 A receipt will need to be provided to claim reimbursement of approved expenses.

#### **5 APPEALS**

- 5.1 Written appeals must be made within 14 days of the decision to reject financial assistance. All appeals should be made to the Vice Principal (Student Services) setting out the reason for your appeal with any additional supporting evidence.

#### **6 USE OF THE FUNDS**

- 6.1 The overall fund is subdivided into the following categories which have been prioritised to tackle areas where the need for financial support has been identified as an aid to overcoming barriers to study:

These are:

- Materials, kits etc
- Childcare
- Transport
- Free Meals
- Hardship Allowances
- Examination and Registration fees
- Educational Visits

#### **7 GUIDANCE NOTES FOR COMPLETING THE FINANCIAL CONTINGENCY FUND APPLICATION FORM**

- 7.1 Please complete all sections of the FCF form and return as soon as possible to Student Services. This is very important as the funds are allocated on a first come first served basis.
- 7.2. If the forms are not fully completed they will be returned and this could cause delay. If a student wants to discuss how to complete the form, they can obtain help from Student Services.

#### **8 FCF CRITERIA FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

- 6 8.1 All students are invited to apply for funds from the FCF Account. However, students who are able to obtain ALGs or EMA will only be considered for childcare, books and equipment and educational visits help unless there are other exceptional needs.

8.2 Priorities are to:

- **Students who have been/are in care**
- JSA/Income Support
- Working Families Tax Credit.
- Housing Benefit/Council Tax Benefit
- Incapacity, Disability Living Allowance
- Widows Pension

## **9 DECLARATION**

- 9.1 All applicants must sign the application.
- 9.2 Student Services must be informed of any change in circumstances.
- 9.3 The College reserves the right to investigate the accuracy of information declared on the FCF application form.
- 9.4 The learner must agree to repay the amount awarded if the information is subsequently based on inaccurate information
- 9.5 The learner must agree to repay the amount awarded if he/she leaves the course early
- 9.6 Proof must be supplied if the applicant is in receipt of, or dependent on someone in receipt of benefits.

## **10. Home to College Transport**

Transport cost is one of the main barriers to getting to work experience. In recognition of this the College uses the FCF to supplement the transport provided to meet this need.

## **11. Childcare**

An amount of fund is set aside to support parents with a need for childcare. Each case is assessed individually and the amount of support varies with the claimant's financial circumstances. Monies are paid directly to the childcare provider. The College will not pay Childcare in the absence of the learner from College.

## **12. Hardship**

To recognise that not all problems are covered by the above the college will have a fund which can be applied flexibly. Hardship funds will only be used after all other avenues are exhausted. Payment may be issued after considering a written application and/or by recommendation of the College Student Welfare Officer. The Vice Principal of Student Services will be presented with the evidence and decide on an appropriate payment.

## **13. Management of FCF**

The fund is managed by the college "Grants Officer" who is responsible for the monitoring, collating and recording of all entries relating to the FCF. In addition to this learners applying for a hardship allowance are interviewed on a one-to-one basis to establish whether they are a genuine case and to determine the extent of their need.

Failure to support students who are financially dependent on assistance will make it very difficult for them to afford the provision. Rigorous systems are in place to ensure that individuals are not given cheques which could be used elsewhere. In this case the provision is paid for at source.

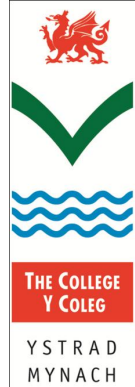
The forms used are attached.

14. Review of Policy

**This policy will be reviewed in July 2011 by the Vice Principal (Student Services).**

# FINANCIAL CONTINGENCY FUND 2010/2011

**PLEASE NOTE THAT IF YOU HAVE BEEN AWARDED AN ASSEMBLY LEARNING GRANT OR AN EDUCATIONAL MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCE YOU MAY BE UNABLE TO ACCESS THIS METHOD OF FUNDING.**



<b>Name</b>	(State Mr/Mrs/Ms or Miss)		<b>Date of Birth</b>	DD	MM	YY
<b>Address</b>						
<b>Post Code</b>		<b>Tel:</b>				
<b>If you know your Student ID Number, please write it here</b>						

<b>Which Course Are You On?</b>	
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**Please indicate which of the following categories best describes your domestic situation:**

<b>1</b>	Living at home and dependent on parent(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>2</b>	Living independently (not with parents)	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>3</b>	Living independently as a single parent	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>4</b>	Living with husband / wife / partner	<input type="checkbox"/>

Are you or the person(s) you are financially dependent upon in employment? YES  NO

Are you or the person(s) you are financially dependent upon in receipt of State Benefits? YES  NO

If you or the person(s) you are financially dependent upon are in receipt of any of the following benefits, please tick the one(s) that apply. Unless you have already provided Proof of entitlement to these benefits, you must bring proof with you when submitting this form.

<input type="checkbox"/> Job Seekers Allowance <input type="checkbox"/> Working Family Tax Credit		<b>For College Staff Use Only</b> <table border="1"> <tr> <td><i>Evidence Type</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Signed</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Date</i></td> </tr> </table>	<i>Evidence Type</i>	<i>Signed</i>	<i>Date</i>
<i>Evidence Type</i>					
<i>Signed</i>					
<i>Date</i>					
<input type="checkbox"/> Incapacity, Disability Living Allowance or Disabled Persons Tax Credit <input type="checkbox"/> Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit Credit					
<input type="checkbox"/> Income Support <input type="checkbox"/> Widows Pension					
<input type="checkbox"/> Other <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">Please specify</span>					

**PLEASE COMPLETE REVERSE SIDE OF FORM**

**Type of Assistance Required:**

**Please Tick Which Type of Assistance Applies**

Type of Assistance	4	Estimated Total Cost
Registered Childcare Fees	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Purchase of Equipment (Please indicate the type of equipment below).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Purchase of Books	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Home to College Travel	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Work Placement Travel	<input type="checkbox"/>	
College Subsistence Allowance (Meal Allowance)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Examination/Registration Fees	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Criminal Records Bureau check	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Other (Please Specify Below)	<input type="checkbox"/>	

**Please use the following space to further explain the type of assistance you require and how this will assist you in your studies at the College and details of your family income.**

**Declaration (To be completed by ALL Applicants)**

I declare that the information given in this form is true and accurate. I undertake to inform the College of any change in my circumstances. I understand that in the event of me withdrawing from my course of study I will have to reimburse the College for the full amount awarded. I understand that payment of the grant will be dependent upon my satisfactory attendance and progress on the course.					
<b>Signature</b>		<b>Date</b>	DD	MM	YY
Payment for certain types of assistance may be made by cheque. The cheque will normally be made payable to the applicant. If you would prefer the cheque to be made payable to another person, please write their name here.					