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# Leicester Adult Skills and Learning Service

Learning for: Work | Life | Leisure | Family

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[www.leicester.gov.uk/adulteducation](http://www.leicester.gov.uk/adulteducation)

## Discretionary Learner Support Fund (DLSF)

**The Learner Support Fund** is a limited amount of funding allocated to the service by the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) each year for **Adult Skills courses only** (not Community Learning courses).

The purpose of the funding is to provide exceptional support to learners who are experiencing financial difficulty with meeting costs associated with learning.

The service aims to manage the allocations process to ensure there is sufficient funding for prioritised needs throughout the year. However, as this is a limited funding stream there is **NO ENTITLEMENT** to Learner Support Funds. When the allocation is used up in the Academic Year the service will not be able to support learners under this fund.

### Learners must be eligible for funding

The residency eligibility for Learner Support Funding is the same as overall ESFA funding eligibility (see Adult education budget funding rules). Learners must be fully funded, or on an English or Maths course and earning less than £16009.50 annual gross salary. For Asylum Seekers on an English and Maths course and not allowed to work, evidence of their weekly payments will be required.

### Learners must be 20+ to receive support for childcare

(ESFA's Care 2 Learn is available for those 19 and under)

### Priorities 16-18 year olds

The very limited funds for 16-18 year olds are only available to support learners who are **in danger of dropping out of learning due to financial hardship** if no alternative scheme is available to provide support.

## What can Learner Support Funding be used for?

The funding is provided to increase access, retention and achievement for learners in exceptional financial circumstances.

- 20+ Childcare (with an Ofsted registered provider) up to £14 per session, with a total limit of £1850.
- Associated Learning Costs (course trips, books or equipment identified as essential in the course information sheet).
- Other Costs. Transport cost but only in exceptional circumstances, and not as a block contribution.

## How do learners apply for Learner Support funds?

- Learners complete and sign the Learner Support Funds Application Form indicating the support they are applying for and the priority group they are in.
- Any Appeals to be addressed to the Learner Services Manager, LAEC, 54 Belvoir Street, Leicester, LE1 6QL.

## How do we administrate and distribute Learner Support Funds?

- **LASALS staff**
- For fully funded learners. Enrolment Advisers to ensure that details of other costs, and all childcare details are completed. Eligibility has already been established when the learner enrolled.
- For Maths and English courses Enrolment Advisers needs to see evidence of annual gross salary. Evidence required: wage slip within 3 months of learning start date or current employment contract which states gross/monthly/weekly salary. Asylum Seekers need to provide evidence of the weekly payment they receive. This could be their letter with the payment amount stated or Post Office receipt.
- Applications are then submitted to the Finance Team, LAEC for authorisation and processing. Finance Team write to each learner individually with result of their application. In addition, when approved, Finance Team also contact each Childcare Provider to arrange direct payments. The payments awarded will be added to the spreadsheet on the shared drive.
- The Finance Team will alert staff when the LSF funding is running low and when no more applications can be funded

- Learner Support Fund Applications must be **submitted within 10 working days** of the start of the course to ensure there is funding available.
- The Additional Information section must indicate why the learner has been recommended for DLSF.
- Applications must not be authorised for friends or family. If the Application is for a friend or a family member, then authorisation must be given by a colleague.

For further details please see:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/adult-education-budget-aeb-funding-rules-2019-to-2020>