

Care Leaver Bursary (for apprentices) Policy

Policy introduced: August 2025

Review date: August 2026

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The aim of this policy is to ensure that North Lancs Training Group CIC (NLTG) administer the £3,000 Care Leaver Bursary according to the Department for Education (DfE) guidelines as set out in the DfE Apprenticeship funding rules for training providers August 2025 to July 2026.

1.2 The £3,000 bursary will be paid once to each care leaver in the eligible age range (see section 2), when they start an apprenticeship. This is in addition to the £1,000 the Department for Education provided to both employers and training providers when they take on 16 to 18 year olds (or 15 years of age if the apprentice's 16th birthday is between the last Friday of June and 31st August) or 19 to 24 year olds who has either an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan provided by their local authority and / or has been, or are, in the care of their local authority as defined in paragraph 2.1 below.

1.3 The care leaver bursary is tax free and not treated as income for Universal Credit calculations.

1.4 NLTG are responsible for administering the care leaver bursary within the above funding rules.

1.5 NLTG aim to have a clear and transparent process. All recording along with evidence of eligibility will in addition follow NLTG's procedures/ guidelines.

2. ELIGIBILITY

2.1 To be eligible for the £3,000 care leaver bursary an individual must be enrolled on an Apprenticeship programme with NLTG funded via the Department for Education and have been in the care of the local authority. A child in care is defined as:

- an eligible child - a young person who is 16 or 17 and who has been looked after by a UK local authority/health and social care trust for at least a period of 13 weeks since the age of 14, and who is still looked after;
- a relevant child - a young person who is 16 or 17 who has left care within the UK after their 16th birthday and before leaving care was an eligible child; or
- a former relevant child - a young person who is under the age of 25 who, before turning 18 was either an eligible or a relevant child (see above)

3. VERIFICATION OF APPRENTICE ELIGIBILITY

3.1 NLTG must evidence that the apprentice is eligible for payment before we claim or are funded for any associated additional payments for NLTG or the apprentice's employer. This must be a signed letter or email confirmation from a local authority confirming the individual's care leaver status; or evidence of an education, health and care (EHC) plan where the apprentice is aged between 19 and 24 years old. Local Authority confirmation does not require a particular format; NLTG should assist the apprentice in obtaining confirmation where necessary.

4. APPLYING FOR CARE LEAVERS BURSARY

4.1 NLTG must tell the apprentice that they are eligible for the bursary as a care leaver and give them the opportunity to declare that they would like to access the funding. This signed declaration must allow the apprentice to confirm that they:

- Understand that they are eligible for and would like to receive a bursary as a care leaver.
- Have not previously received the care leaver bursary before (noting paragraph 4.3 below). This only includes the care leavers bursary paid by the Department for Education; other local incentives do not apply.

4.2 This payment is made in 3 instalments, the first £1000 becoming eligible after 60 days from the start of the apprenticeship, the second instalment of £1000 becomes eligible after 120 days from the start of the apprenticeship and the final instalment becomes eligible after *300 days on the apprenticeship. Where the apprentice is on a shorter apprenticeship (i.e. where the published typical duration of the apprenticeship standard is less than 12 months), or on a foundation apprenticeship, this payment will be generated 242 days after the apprentice's start date.

The care leaver bursary is a one-off claim; therefore, an individual must not receive this funding again if they progress or start another apprenticeship. It is NLTG's responsibility to ensure that the apprentice has not received this payment previously before we pass it on.

4.3 Where an apprentice, who is eligible to receive a bursary of £3,000, leaves or completes, their apprenticeship before receiving the full bursary, they will still be entitled to further payments on a new apprenticeship until they have received £3,000 in total.

5. ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

5.1 NLTG must gather signed consent from an apprentice to inform their employer that they have been in the care of their local authority. The apprentice will then be advised that their declaration will be used to generate additional payments to NLTG and their employer to support their transition into work.

5.2 Where a 19 to 24 year-old apprentice does not want to inform their employer that they were previously in care, NLTG must report the appropriate code in the ILR. This will generate the funding for NLTG and the apprentice but not the employer.

6. PAYMENT OF CARE LEAVER BURSARY

6.1 The bursary payments, due to the apprentice, will be generated at various points during the apprenticeship namely 60, 120 and *300 days after they start. Where the apprentice is on a shorter apprenticeship (i.e. where the published typical duration of the apprenticeship standard is less than 12 months), or on a foundation apprenticeship, this payment will be generated 242 days after the apprentice's start date

6.2 NLTG will pass payments on in full to the apprentice within 30 days of receiving funding from the Department for Education.

6.3 NLTG must have evidence that the apprentice has received each of the bursary payments. This must be a signed confirmation from the apprentice and not only a receipt of transaction.

7. MANAGEMENT INFORMATION AND AUDIT REQUIREMENTS

7.1 NLTG are required to record data to provide information to The Department for Education of the take up of the care leaver bursary. Accurate recording also ensures timely receipt of payments from the Department to NLTG.

7.2 Apprentices aged 19-24 who do not wish their employers to know they were previously in care need to have code LDM 362 recorded in YETI. This will still trigger the payment for the Apprentice and NLTG.

7.3 NLTG must receive signed confirmation from the Apprentice to evidence that the apprentice has received the bursary. Receipt of transaction will be insufficient.

Eligibility for Care Leaver Bursary Payment

Learner Name:

Employer name:

Section1: For completion by the Apprentice Care Leaver		For NLTG use only
Tick relevant box to confirm the following:		
☐	I understand that for NLTG to proceed with applying for a bursary payment that I first must provide an email/letter from the Local Authority appointed personal advisor	<i>If all are ticked enter EEF and Code 4 on the ILR</i>
☐	I am eligible to apply for the Care Leaver Bursary payment of £3000	
☐	I understand that this payment of £3000 is split into 3 £1000 payments that will become eligible 60, 120 and *300 days after the start of the apprenticeship (NLTG will only be able to issue such monies upon receipt of payment from the Department for Education (DfE) and will do so within (maximum) 30 days of such receipt). * Where the apprentice is on a shorter apprenticeship (i.e. where the published typical duration of the apprenticeship standard is less than 12 months), or on a foundation apprenticeship, this payment will be generated 242 days after the apprentice's start date.	
☐	I confirm that I have not already received a previous Care Leaver payment from the Department for Education (DfE) or its predecessor organisation the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and understand that if falsely declared I will have to repay the bursary	
☐	FOR LEARNERS AGED 19-24 ONLY -I give consent for NLTG to inform my employer that I am an eligible care leaver	<i>If left blank additionally enter LDM code 362</i>
For NLTG to make payment of the bursary the following Apprentices' bank details are required		
Name of Bank		
Account No	Sort Code	
Apprentice signature	Date	
NLTG Tutor signature	Date	

Section 2 For completion by NLTG Central Support Services Team	
Apprentice ID No	Apprenticeship start date
☐	Tick when evidence is received of the letter /email from the Local Authority appointed personal advisor
Date DfE bursary payment received.	

Central Support Services Team (CSST) to complete NL and pass to relevant NLTG tutor upon BACS transaction for completion at next visit