

**Teitl:**  
**Title:** Financial Contingency Fund

**Dyddiad Cyhoeddi:**  
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Adolygu a Chymeradwyo / Review and Approval

<b>Cyfrifoldeb:</b> <b>Responsibility:</b>	Director of Finance
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This document is also available in Welsh.

## Scope

The purpose of this Financial Contingency Fund Policy is to raise awareness of the financial support that is available to eligible students studying at all Coleg Cambria sites through the Financial Contingency Fund.

## Introduction

Coleg Cambria recognises the importance of providing information, advice and guidance to students to help them make the right choice and to fulfil their potential.

The Student Services team offer a discrete, student centred approach tailored to suit the needs of the individual. Assistance is available to students that have questions relating to student fees or loans and those that require help with budgeting.

## Administration and Disbursement

The College will use Financial Contingency Fund (FCF) grants to provide financial help to students whose access to or completion of further education might be inhibited by financial considerations or who, for whatever reason, including physical or other disabilities, face financial difficulties.

Applications may be submitted in Welsh and will be treated no less favourably than an application submitted in English.

The College procedure will be followed for considering applications and making payments to eligible students. Support will generally be provided for:

- Childcare
- Transport
- Accommodation provided by Coleg Llysfasi
- Uniform and equipment costs
- Books, materials and stationery etc. in the form of vouchers
- Emergency payments
- DBS checks

The College shall take necessary steps to ensure that the systems of financial control and management are such as to ensure that the funds are used for the purposes for which such grant was given and comply with any terms and conditions attached to it.

The priorities for Financial Contingency Fund support and the disbursement of funds will be approved by the Financial Contingency Fund Monitoring Group and reviewed annually.

The members of the Financial Contingency Fund Monitoring Group are:

Director of Finance (**Chair**)  
Student Services Manager  
Nursery Manager  
Deputy Director of Curriculum (x2)  
Student Services Team Leader – Yale and Bersham Road

The group will meet termly to review status of the fund and its distribution and to consider improvement actions.

## **Priorities**

In determining which individual students, from amongst those eligible to support, priority groups will be taken from Guidelines issued by Welsh Government (The Financial Contingency Fund (Further Education) (Wales) Scheme)

- Students who need help with childcare costs, especially lone parents
- Students who will reach the age of 20 before they complete their A levels or other FE courses and who face particular financial difficulties because their families will cease to receive child benefit and dependency additions in Social Security benefits or tax credits for these students as of their 20<sup>th</sup> birthday.
- Students who have been in care, on probation or are otherwise considered to be at risk.
- Students on low income or from low income families, including young learners who do not qualify for income support, unemployed people receiving Job Seekers Allowance and those in receipt of means-tested state benefit such as Working Tax Credit and their unwaged dependants.
- Students from Super Output Area (SOA) with a level of educational deprivation above a specific threshold.
- Students who face particular financial difficulties because their families will cease to receive the children element of universal credit as of the 1<sup>st</sup> September following their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday.

However, if a student who is eligible falls within one or more of the priority groups then it is not, of itself, a basis for making an award from the funding allocation for the purposes of this Scheme.

## **Eligible Students**

Student Support Funds can only be paid to eligible students as defined in this policy, and in accordance with Welsh Government Guidance.

- All home students following courses by full-time attendance of further education who are aged 16 and over, including those in adult education.
- Students who hold UK/EU/EEA nationality with at least 3 years continued residency in UK/EU/EEA/Switzerland. Any students who hold Refugee, EU Temporary Protection or Humanitarian Protection Status.

Certain categories of students are unable to apply to the FCF for assistance. They are:

- International fee paying students
- EU students that have not lived in the UK / Wales for the last three years
- Higher Education students including Teacher Training
- Students on distance learning courses
- Students on Work Based Learning Programmes such as Foundation Modern
- Apprenticeship and Modern Apprenticeship
- Work Based Learning for Adults
- Skill Build / Skill Build Plus

Coleg Cambria retains the right to attribute additional conditions of eligibility to each FCF category in accordance with the national guidance and College strategic priorities.

### Criteria

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Income less Tax &amp; Ins</b>
<b>Full time students 500+ contact hours</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Age 16-18</b></li> <li>● <b>Age 19+ not in receipt of WG Learning Grant</b></li> <li>● <b>Age 19+ and in receipt of WG Learning Grant</b> (for Nursery and Accommodation fees only)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Less than £20,817</b></p> <p>(Evidence of Income Support, Pension Credit, Employment Benefit, Tax Credit Awards are required)</p>

When calculating entitlement, the following sources of income will be taken into account:

- Salaries and Wages
- Pension Income
- Self-Employment Income
- Working Tax Credit
- Taxable Social Security Benefits
- Income Support
- Unearned income such as income from property, investments, dividends or interest from capital

Students are expected to provide evidence of all income that contributes towards the household income. This includes parents, legal guardians, spouse or partner.

Students are expected to provide evidence of the household income by providing the relevant documentary evidence. This may include:

- 3 months most recent bank statements
- A current Income Support Benefits statement
- P45 or P60
- Employer's Certificate (form A) x Accountants Letter or SA302
- Tax Credit Award Notice / Universal Credit Award Letter
- EMA Award Letter
- WG Learning Grant (FE) Award Letter

### Uniform and Equipment

Students may apply for Financial Contingency Fund assistance for uniforms, books and equipment costs relating to their course, at any time during the academic year. Likewise discretionary funding for emergencies may be provided at any time during the academic year, as appropriate. Students are expected to pay the first £60 towards the cost of Hair, Beauty, Catering and Equine Uniforms. Individual specialist items of equipment will remain the property of the College and will be loaned to students as appropriate.

### Childcare

Students will be awarded Childcare support on a term by term basis with the following term's allocation release being determined by satisfactory attendance levels (minimum 80%). Without exception, students must apply to the Childcare Fund each year of study.

All applicants must demonstrate appropriate progression in the level of study. Assistance will not normally be provided if a student has not successfully completed a previous qualification at the College or is repeating the year to improve their overall grade.

Applications for childcare costs will be restricted to 1 child with funded places capped at 71 FTE.

Student non-attendance in class for a period greater than 4 weeks will result in the childcare place being withdrawn. Attendance is monitored each term. Financial support will be withdrawn if attendance is not satisfactory.

Applications from returning students will in addition to the normal finance assessment include a review of the previous year's attendance pattern.

### **Accommodation**

Eligible students may receive assistance of up to £1,400 towards their accommodation at Llysfasi. Students are responsible for the remaining £1,575 which will be payable to the College via monthly direct debit.

### **Additional Criteria for Emergency Food Vouchers**

Students may apply for assistance if they have suddenly become involuntarily homeless, e.g. estranged from parents/guardian, and meet standard fund eligibility criteria.

### **Emergency Payments**

Emergency payments can be made to those students who have formerly been means tested and in receipt of Financial Contingency funding or to any other student who can present a special case of financial need. For example, payment of excessive travel expenses if there is no college transport available or other 'travel difficulties', emergency accommodation, 'one-off' payments - such as course/exam fees.

The emergency fund is deployed at the discretion of the Student Services Manager, following agreement from a senior management member of the Financial Contingency Fund Monitoring Group.

### **Bulk Purchase Arrangements - Transport**

Bulk purchase contributions will be restricted to the balance of remaining funds once all other requests have been processed (See Appendix 1).

### **Publicity of Funds**

Financial Contingency Funds will be publicised through Student Services. Leaflets will be displayed in strategic locations, details will be included in student publications and information will be available on the college website and student intranet.

### **Appeal Procedure**

Coleg Cambria has an established Financial Contingency Fund Appeals Procedure. The purpose of this procedure is to ensure that any appeal made by a student is dealt with fairly, objectively and without discrimination.

Students wishing to appeal against a decision not to award them financial assistance must do so in writing and send for the attention of the Director of Finance. The Director of Finance will oversee the FCF appeals panel which will include a panel not involved in the original decision.

The decision of the appeal panel is final.

## Appendix 1

**Funding for requested support costs capped at the following levels:**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Childcare	£588,000
Equipment and Uniforms	£20,000
Accommodation	£15,000
Field Trips	£3,000
DBS Checks	£2,000
Transport	£70,000
Emergency Payments / Lunch Vouchers	£2,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£700,000</b>

Subject to annual fund distribution from Welsh Government.