



University of Cumbria

**Policy and Procedure for allocating Cumbria Bursary and
Partnership Progression Scholarship awards**

Vision Statement

The bursary support package provided by the University of Cumbria offers financial support to students from disadvantaged backgrounds. The Cumbria Bursary award and Partnership Progression Scholarship is provided through a fixed number of bursaries and uses a scored prioritisation process to impartially rank all eligible applicants (with household incomes of less than £25,000 per annum) and award bursaries to those with the highest scores. The process prioritises those groups identified nationally and institutionally as experiencing more barriers to accessing and succeeding in higher education, such as students who have been in care or who have a disability.

The objectives of this policy and procedures document are to:

1. Provide students with cash payments, rather than fee waivers
2. To ensure students can access, participate and succeed on their course
3. Provide a fair and transparent process for awarding bursaries
4. Satisfy the requirements of the University of Cumbria Access and Participation Plan (previously known as the Access Agreement)

1.0 Policy

This policy covers the Cumbria Bursary award and Partnership Progression Scholarship for new applicants starting their course after 1 September 2021 and should be read in conjunction with the [Student Financial Regulations](#). Students, who do not receive a Cumbria Bursary in their first year, are not eligible to receive one in subsequent years. Progression Scholarships are paid in the first year only. The Progression Scholarship may be received alongside the Cumbria Bursary if a recipient is eligible and ranked to receive both awards.

The awards available are as follows:

- The 3 or 4 year Cumbria Bursaries are worth £1,000 per year of study (full time) or £500 per year of study (part time* for up to 5 years) for students entering onto full time or substantive part time undergraduate programmes.
**Part time students must be studying at least 50% of the time and registered on a minimum three-year course.*
- Progression Scholarships are worth £500, paid in the first year only.

A proportion of our Cumbria Bursaries will be allocated specifically to students who are aged 21 and over on the 1st September 2021, who also meet the eligibility criteria outlined below.

Returning students will continue to receive the Cumbria Bursary award in subsequent years of study up to the maximum allocation i.e. 3 or 4 years, providing they complete the online registration process and have no outstanding reassessments. Students who are required to repeat a year of study will receive the Cumbria Bursary during one repeat year only.

1.1 Eligibility and Prioritisation Criteria

Eligibility for the Cumbria Bursary

- Student is entering into year 1 (level four) or integrated foundation year (level 3) of a specified undergraduate degree at the University of Cumbria
- Student has a household income of £25,000 or less as assessed by Student Finance England, Student Finance Wales, Student Finance Northern Ireland or Student Awards Agency Scotland. Assessed by funding provider before 4 October 2021.

Cumbria Bursaries will not be available to students who are:

- Studying as an apprentice
- studying less than 50 credits per year
- transferring from another institution
- undertaking a postgraduate qualification, including PGCE courses
- entering on to a course already holding an HE qualification e.g. Cert HE, HND or Foundation Degree.

Prioritisation criteria for Cumbria Bursary

Where there are more students who meet the criteria than there are awards, they are allocated according to the following prioritisation criteria:

- Your household income
- You have declared Care Leaver status*
- You have declared a disability on your UCAS form
- You are from an area where not many people go into Higher Education. We use the participation of local areas (POLAR) classification to assess this, which is taken from <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/>

*as confirmed via the Student Finance application process or direct to the University

Eligibility for the Progression Scholarship

- Student has progressed to the University of Cumbria from one of the designated [Further Education Partner Colleges](#)

- entering year 1 or integrated foundation year of a specified full time undergraduate degree at the University of Cumbria
- Student has a household income of £0 as assessed by Student Finance England, Student Finance Wales, Student Finance Northern Ireland or Student Awards Agency Scotland. Assessed by funding provider before 4 October 2021.

Prioritisation Criteria for the Progression Scholarship

Where there are more students who meet the criteria than there are awards available, these are allocated according to the following prioritisation criteria:

- Your household income is nil and you have declared Care Leaver status*
- Your household income is nil and you have declared a disability to us

*as confirmed via the Student Finance application process or direct to the University

1.2 Course Transfers and withdrawals

If a student transfers between eligible courses (after completing the previous academic year) they will be entitled to the Cumbria Bursary award in the following academic year (subject to a maximum of 3 or 4 years). If a student withdraws from a course and has reapplied via UCAS for a new course, they can be considered for the Cumbria Bursary again, providing they do not hold an HE qualification.

1.3 Part time students

Part time students must be studying at least 50% of the time and registered on a minimum three-year course. For example, a part time student studying 50% of a full time three-year degree course would be entitled to receive £500 per year, for a maximum of three years.

1.4 Appeals Process

There are a limited number of Cumbria Bursary awards available, allocated at the beginning of the first year of an eligible three or four year degree course. Often students meet the criteria for the Cumbria Bursary award but do not receive an award as there are usually more eligible students than awards available.

New students are scored against the prioritisation criteria to determine who receives an award. To maximise the beneficial impact of awards, and to maintain consistency, each student will be scored once only. Bursaries are only awarded to students in Level 3 or Level 4 of their course, though the bursary is paid in each year of study. The decision on granting Cumbria Bursary Awards made by the panel is final.

If you do wish to appeal please email moneyadvice@cumbria.ac.uk with further details.

We aim to respond to an appeal within 10 working days of receipt.

1.5 Care Leavers

The following are the defined status that the University of Cumbria will use when applying prioritisation criteria.

Eligible child - A child aged 16 and 17 who has been looked after for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14 and who are still looked after.

Relevant child - A child aged 16 and 17 who have been looked after for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14 and who have already left care.

Former relevant child- A young person over 18 who was previously 'eligible' or 'relevant'. Local authorities support this group at least until age 21 or until 25 if in education or training.

Qualifying child- Any young person under 21 (or 24 if in education or training) who ceases to be looked after or accommodated in a variety of other settings, or privately fostered, after the age of 16. This also includes young people who are under a special guardianship order.

It is acknowledged that there are students who have experienced the care system, who do not fit the criteria above. Each case will be considered on an individual basis; any award made will be subject to receiving evidence of time spent in care.

We request evidence of time spent in care, this can be an email or letter from:

- Social Worker/Social Services
- Local Authority
- Pathway Team
- Previous Tutor at Sixth Form/College
- Local GP

Evidence can be sent to moneyadvice@cumbria.ac.uk

Alternatively, students can upload evidence via the online registration process. University of Cumbria will accept evidence of Care Leaver status, which has been flagged as 'Y' by the relevant funding body in the Higher Education Bursary and Scholarships System (HEBSS).

1.6 Evidence of income

Full-time students do not need to apply separately for the Cumbria Bursary. Simply applying for statutory funding through the relevant funding body will enable us to assess eligibility alongside the information provided on the UCAS application form. It is important that

students apply for income assessed student finance through their funding body (e.g. Student Finance England) as early as possible. In the application students and their sponsors must give consent to share financial information with the Higher Education Institution. The deadline to do this is **4 October 2021**.

We will use the household income provided in the HEBSS portal at the time of allocating Cumbria Bursary and Progression Scholarships. Students will not be reassessed following bursary allocation even if their financial situation changes.

1.7 Allocation and Payment of Awards

Cumbria Bursaries for 2021/22 will be allocated to eligible students after 4 October 2021. Successful candidates will be notified in writing during October and November. Letters are sent via the Student Loans Company; these will be forwarded to the correspondence address given on the Student Finance application.

Payments are made directly in to the student's bank account in two instalments as follows:

50% on 30th November 2020

50% on 15th February 2021

1.8 Registration and payment checks

The following checks will be made before awards are allocated on to the HEBSS system:

1. the student is fully registered on a qualifying course
2. qualifying course and highest qualification on entry
3. Verified residual income as assessed by SFE
4. For Progression Awards, student progressing from a partner college
5. Evidence of Care Leaver Status received (if applicable)

If an applicant fails the checks, the award cannot be paid and may be reallocated.

2.0 Changes post allocation

2.1 Changes to Mode of Study/attendance

Mode of study relates to the study intensity of your course e.g. full time or part time. A part-time student may become a full-time student and vice versa. If a student changes their mode of study, they will no longer be entitled to the Cumbria Bursary.

2.2 Intercalation

Students who qualify for a Cumbria Bursary will have their entitlements stopped on Intercalation and no further payments will be made until the student resumes study. Any amount of bursary paid in excess of the calculated amount, will be repayable in full to the University.

2.3 Transfers

As long as a student transfers to another qualifying course, they will continue to receive a bursary, for each year of the new course subject to the maximum award.

2.4 Topping Up

Topping-up describes the process of moving from a completed lower level course such as an HND or Foundation Degree to an honours degree. If a student moves from a Foundation Degree to an honours degree, with only the summer vacation in between this gap i.e. on to a top up course, they will be eligible for the Cumbria Bursary for their 'top-up' year.

2.5 Withdrawals

Students who qualify for a Cumbria Bursary will have their entitlements stopped on withdrawal and no further payments will be made. Any amounts that are paid after a student's last date of attendance will be repayable immediately. Any payments that have been made that relate to the period after a student's last date of attendance are also repayable.

2.6 Overpaid Bursaries

Any amount of bursary paid in excess of the calculated amount, will be repayable in full to the University and will be recovered in line with the **Student Financial Regulations**. If students receive funds and are aware that these should not have been paid under this policy, they should alert the University to this by emailing accountsreceivableteam@cumbria.ac.uk

2.7 Recovering Debt from the Bursary

If a student has overdue debt owed to the University, their bursary instalment may not be paid until the student discusses repayment with the Finance Department. With the student's permission, debt can be offset against a Bursary with any balance paid to the student.