



Crossdykes Community Benefit Fund **Education and Training Bursaries Scheme** **Guidance for Applicants**

The aim of the Crossdykes Education and Training Bursaries Scheme is to improve the opportunities and livelihoods of people living in Langholm, Ewes and Westerkirk, Lockerbie and District, Middlebie & Waterbeck, Eskdalemuir, and North Milk, geographically defined by community council boundaries. It will provide bursaries to local people to access training and education opportunities that better equip them with the range of skills required to enter or retain employment.

What sorts of courses are eligible?

Courses leading to formal or recognised qualifications will be favoured, however other courses will also be considered where you can demonstrate how the skills and knowledge gained will realistically support you in securing or retaining a job. Apprentices can also apply, provided it is for a cost you cannot claim back from your employer or another agency.

Courses might be: * Apprenticeships * Modern Apprenticeships * Foundation Apprenticeships * SVQ * NC * HNC * HND * undergraduate degrees * post-graduate qualifications (though not PhDs) * short vocational courses * full time * part time * many other courses.

Where can I study?

We recognise that the fund area has limited further education opportunities however any course being undertaken locally will be looked upon more favourably than a course that requires you to leave the area. By local we would generally mean south and central Scotland.

If you are applying for costs linked with an apprenticeship arrangement, then you must be employed within the Crossdykes Community Benefit Fund area of benefit.

Examples of eligible expense:

The following costs directly related to attending your course or apprenticeship are eligible:

- Course fees where these costs cannot be funded through any other means
- Study aids and equipment, (e.g., laptops, software, stationery)
- Travel costs, (e.g., bus, train or petrol/diesel)
- Childcare costs to allow you to study
- Subsistence (meals, etc.)
- Driving lessons and driving theory test (where an education or training opportunity is distant from the individual's residence and public transport not viable)
- Technical aids / equipment (e.g., specialist clothing related to the course, tools, other specialist equipment)
- Accommodation costs.

How much can I apply for?

Grants are normally awarded on a one-off basis but, at the discretion of your community council, repeat grants could be considered, or a single grant could be split into several years.

In most cases grants (either one-off or multi-year total) should be limited to £1,000, but this is at the discretion of your community council. Depending on demand, the grants awarded may be higher or lower than this limit.

You must be able to evidence the full costs, for example a first-time applicant undertaking a week-long course which costs £400, will only be able to apply for £400 plus related travel & subsistence.

What evidence do I need?

This will vary depending on the course. Some evidence may be provided along with your application, some may be submitted periodically through the term of your award and some upon your course completion. Examples include:

- Your offer letter or confirmation of a place on your course.
- A copy of your attendance record or statement by someone from the educational institution or training provider confirming you have been attending regularly.
- A copy of your qualification certificate.

You may not have most of these documents at the time of application but will need to provide them when you can. Evidence of expenditure (receipts or invoices) will not be required as a matter of course but may be requested in specific circumstances e.g., for the purchase of a laptop. Please keep your receipts for up to 12 months.

When should I apply?

The fund operates on a rolling basis, which means that you can apply as soon as you are sure that you are going to do the course.

How should I apply?

Contact your local community council for details of how to apply.

Exclusions

Age: you must be 16 or over.

Residence: you must live within the Langholm, Ewes and Westerkirk, Lockerbie and District, Middlebie & Waterbeck, Eskdalemuir, and North Milk Community Council areas

Retrospective funding: you cannot apply for funding for any costs incurred before a decision can be made.

Employer responsibilities: the scheme cannot not fund training or equipment that your employer should be providing for you or is necessary for you to carry out your current job.

What happens next?

The community council will inform applicants by letter of the outcome as soon as possible, but the timescale will depend on when community council meetings are held.

Responsibilities

Within the terms of your grant acceptance, you will have to spend the award as described in your application form. If your plans change you will need to let your community council know as soon as possible. It may be possible for you to retain your award, for example, if you intend to switch

courses, or if you locate another supplier offering a better deal. But you must inform your community council if circumstances have changed in the first instance.

You will also be required to provide some feedback on your experiences to demonstrate the impact of the support received from the Crossdykes Education and Training Bursaries Scheme.

If you need further information on the Scheme or you wish to discuss your application, please contact *(Name)* on Tel: () Email: ()