

# **Tower Hamlets Transport Policy Statement Supporting young students in further education 2018/19**

## **Transport Policy summary statement**

The aim of the Transport Policy Statement is to increase participation and access to post 16 education and training for all Tower Hamlets students aged between 16-19 as well as students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who have been assessed as needing support with transport.

The Transport Policy Statement seeks to ensure that wherever possible no 16-19 year old student resident in Tower Hamlets will be prevented from continuing in education or from starting an apprenticeship because of the cost or availability of transport. The Statement seeks to do this by describing the ways in which young people can gain access to transport support to enable them to participate in further education, undertake Apprenticeships or progress from the NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) to EET group.

## **General Information**

### **Young people at school**

Are you at school and thinking about taking an apprenticeship or staying on in the sixth form? Are you planning to go to college or are you already there?

If you are aged 16-18 and want to do a further education course, or if you are 19 and are continuing with an existing course read on to find out what help is available towards transport costs.

This statement sets out the types of financial help that you can apply for, gives you information about fare concessions and introduces you to other types of support that can be sought by Tower Hamlets' students.

### **Travelling to sixth form, college or a work based learning provider**

When you make your decision on the school, college or work-based learning provider you want to study at after Year 11 you should consider the cost of travelling to and from your chosen site and the ease with which you can reach it by public transport. Remember that studying at a local school or college will save you time and money!

### **Meeting the cost**

You must think about how you will meet the cost of travel. There are three main types of financial support available to young students living in Tower Hamlets and taking further education courses. These are:

- 16-19 Bursary Fund
- Discretionary Learner Support Funds (dLS)
- Transport support from the Council's Children Services Directorate

You should also take into account Transport for London's (TfL) free bus travel for students up to and including the academic year in which they become 18 and the discounted travel scheme for students which will significantly reduce the cost of travel on TfL services (underground, DLR and Overground) and National Rail.

### **Apprenticeships**

Tower Hamlets aims to ensure that all young people who are eligible for an Apprenticeship should have access to one, young people can either access the Council's WorkPath or Young WorkPath service.

20 apprentices joined the local authority apprenticeship scheme, with 60 apprentices currently employed by the Council overall. They have started a 12-month programme with Tower Hamlets Council departments to get work experience and gain level 2 or 3 qualifications in Business Admin. WorkPath and Young WorkPath work with local businesses in Tower Hamlets to enable them to recruit apprentices

All apprentices are now employed and paid a salary. Much of their training is undertaken in the workplace and like all employees they would be expected to fund the cost of travel to work from their salaries, though in their first apprenticeship they can apply for a reduced price Oyster Card

The National Minimum Wage for apprentices is £3.40. Many employers prefer to pay more however, and research shows that the average salary is approximately £170 per week. The Council pays the London Living Wage to apprentices and encourages its partners and local employers to do so as well

Apprentices will need to undertake offsite training, which must be 20% of the working week, which is typically up to one day a week, or in periodic blocks. They may sometimes need to attend further education colleges in other parts of London.

### **Young people not in education employment or training (NEET)**

The NEET groups consists of those young people who will be NEET for a short time while testing out a variety of opportunities and those who have major and often multiple issues and are at long term risk of remaining disengaged. Tower Hamlets together with organisations such City Gateway aims to engage this group of young people through mentoring, support and training.

Free bus transport is available in London which allows young people to reach activities planned for them.

NEET young people with special educational needs may be eligible for transport provided by the local authority. This service will pick them up and return them to their homes.

### **Financial Support available**

#### **16-19 Bursary Fund**

Young people aged 16 to 19 can get a bursary to help with education-related costs if they are:

- studying at a publicly funded school or college in England - not a university
- on a training course, including unpaid work experience

The scheme is made up of two parts - a guaranteed payment to a small group of the most vulnerable, and a discretionary fund for schools and colleges to distribute:

- Some 16-19 year olds will be given guaranteed bursaries of £1,200 a year. This group is made up of children in care, care leavers and those on income support. Income support is paid to young people such as teenage parents, young people with severe disabilities, teenagers living away from their parents and young people whose parents have died.
- Schools and colleges can distribute the rest of the money to support any student who faces genuine financial barriers to participation such as costs of transport, food or equipment. They will have the freedom to decide the scale of the bursaries; to pay weekly, monthly, or annually; and link it to behaviour or attendance.

### **Discretionary Learner Support (dLS)**

Learner Support Funds are the money given by central government to Further Education colleges to help students and to local authorities to help school sixth formers. The information given below about college discretionary Learner Support is specifically about the way in which Tower Hamlets College uses its funds to support student travel, but other colleges use them in similar ways.

Tower Hamlets College provides financial support to students with travel costs primarily through the Learner Support Funds, taking into account such factors as household income, distance and any other funding students might have received from other sources such 16-19 Bursary.

The College will consider travel costs for students of any age dependant on their/parent's/guardian's income. Tower Hamlets College concentrates assistance from its Learner Support on disadvantaged students and those on low income. It therefore needs information about students' income before deciding applications for support. Students apply by stating their case on an application form, which is widely available throughout the College from the College's student contact points. Along with their application form students need to provide documentary evidence of their own income and that of their parents or guardian (including details of entitlement to welfare benefits).

Students can apply for support from Tower Hamlets College Learner Support once enrolled in the College on courses from September. Applications are considered for full and part-time courses. Termly deadlines are set and publicised for receipt of completed application forms. Students need to apply by the deadline date and only need to apply once during the academic year. Once assessments are completed applicants are notified in writing of the outcome.

The fund is limited and there is no guarantee that all applications will be successful.

The Local Authority uses its Learner Support funds to assist students who are not receiving a 16-19 Bursary, but come from a low income family. It also provides a hardship fund that any student can apply to where they are experiencing financial hardship such as meeting the cost of travelling to school or to a university entrance interview.

### **Concessionary fares**

Free or reduced rate bus and tram travel on Transport for London services are available to:

- 16 and 17 year olds who permanently reside within a London Borough and are in full-time education and

- 18 year olds who reside within a London Borough during term time, are in full-time education and apply before the end of the academic year in which they turn 18

Young people will need to apply for a 16+ Zip Oyster photocard to qualify for free travel.

All 16 and 17 year olds will continue to be able to apply for 7 Day, Monthly or longer period Travelcards and Bus & Tram Passes at child rate and pay half the adult rate on bus, Tube, tram, DLR, London Overground and some Pay as You go tariffs on national rail.

Students aged 18 or over, who are in full-time education, or on a mandatory work placement in London, may be eligible for an 18+ Student Oyster photocard. This Entitles the holder to buy student –rate travelcards and Bus and Tram Pass season tickets which cost 30% less than an adult rated season ticket.

Young people enrolled on an apprenticeship can also apply for an Apprenticeship Oyster photocard which would give them the same benefits as the 18+ Student Oyster photocard.

For further details of these schemes, please visit [www.tfl.gov.uk](http://www.tfl.gov.uk).

### **Transport support from the local authority**

From September 2018, travel support of a £300 grant (£100 paid every term) or a travel pass, whichever the Local Authority (LA) deems most appropriate will be considered for students meet the following criteria:

- are aged 16-18 or and a continuing learner who started their programme of learning before their 19th birthday
- come from a family whose taxable income was £30,810 or less in the period 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018,
- are taking a specialist course\* and have to pay fares of £10 or more per week to attend it,

AND

- live over three miles from the school or college to be attended.

\*A specialist course is one that ends with a nationally recognised vocational qualification. This does not include GCSE, AS, A2 or A level courses that cannot be taken locally.

More favourable conditions apply to students with special educational need (SEN). Applications are processed by the Pupil Services team in accordance with the Government's 'Home to School Travel and 'Post-16 Transport Guidance' (2014).

The LA can purchase both adult and student travel passes from Transport for

London for eligible students. Students do not incur a cost when a travel pass is issued. Travel passes issued by the LA can be used 24 hours per day, seven days per week for the valid term time period.

Students eligible for LA travel assistance will receive support throughout the academic year in which they become 19 under the LA's travel assistance. Students can apply for LA support from July onwards. Forms will be available on the Tower Hamlets website [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk)

There is no deadline for applications, but students are only funded from the term in which their application form is received by Pupil Services. A student who applies before the start of the course and is eligible for a grant will receive the grant in three termly payments. A student who applies in the second half of the spring term will only get 50% of the grant. Travel passes are issued each term.

### **Support for disabled students and students with special educational needs (SEN)**

Specific arrangements are in place to assist young people with special educational needs and/or learning difficulties. These include the application of a needs assessment, the provision of transport where considered necessary by the local authority and the provision of independent mobility training in certain cases.

The Tower Hamlets Careers Service drafts a careers guidance action plan for young people with a statement of special needs or a learning difficulty when moving from secondary to further education. The purpose of the plan is to identify positive learning opportunities and pathways for these young people and to ensure that they are not disadvantaged in accessing their entitlements to provision and support.

When the young person receives travel assistance they are assessed by a panel of experts to see if they could benefit from independent travel training. In 2017/18, 34 young people over the age of 16 started this training. With the annual cost of transporting a child being £6000 the total cost saving is likely to be in the region of £200,000. It is hoped to extend provision of training to encourage more independent travel for students with learning difficulties/disabilities in future years.

Where a previously statemented young person goes to college the Youth and Careers Service has a role to play in their transition to adulthood. Any case that is made for transport support is reviewed by a panel who take into account such factors as the availability of similar courses at closer colleges.

Where a young person remains in further education beyond the age of 18, they become the responsibility of Tower Hamlets Adult Health and Wellbeing Directorate.

## **Tower Hamlets Educational Maintenance Allowance (THEMA)**

The Tower Hamlets Educational Maintenance Allowance (THEMA), previously known as the Mayor's Education Award, is a grant scheme which was introduced in 2012 to support young, further education students after the Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA) scheme was scrapped by the coalition government. With the THEMA, students can receive £400 a year to help towards the costs of studying, for example, for books, a travel card or money to pay for field trips.

To receive the Tower Hamlets Educational Maintenance Allowance, students need to:

- complete the claim form
- be 16 to 19 years old on 1 September, 2018
- have been living in Tower Hamlets for at least three years
- be attending school or college
- come from a family with a household income of less than around £20,817 (excluding Child Benefit and Child Tax Credit)
- apply for an award as soon as possible - an application must be received within three months from date of enrolment and must be made before the end of the course year.

Students attending all their lessons will be paid two instalments of £200 (the first payments will be issued between February to March and the second payment between April to May). Payments are made after students have attended a term of sixth form/ college.

**Please check the Tower Hamlets website for further information on when applications are being accepted for the 2018/19 academic year or call the Benefits team on 020 7364 6171. Applications should be made online, or forms can be downloaded.**

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## Other sources of information, advice and/or financial support for young students

- **The Tower Hamlets & Canary Wharf Trust Fund** is a registered charity that was launched by Tower Hamlets Council and Canary Wharf Limited in 1990 to promote the advancement of further, higher and postgraduate education and vocational training among Tower Hamlets residents, with an emphasis on supporting vocational courses and apprenticeships that lead to employment.  
The Trust is now inviting applications for the 2018/2019 academic year from people who will be over 16 in September 2018, and want to apply for financial help to fund a course of education or training.  
While the Trust does not give grants specifically for transport, the maintenance grant can be used to help with any travel costs.  
In general the trust will not fund students who can obtain financial assistance from central or local government through schemes like Student Finance or the Mayor's Education Award  
Please see the Tower Hamlets website for further information on eligibility and how to apply.
- **Tower Hamlets College Student Advisers** can provide confidential advice regarding practical problems students enrolled at the College might face. Student Advisers can provide advice on entitlement to welfare benefits and can represent students if difficult issues arise between them and the Benefits Agencies/Employment Services.  
Students can also access the College's Counselling Service, while Youth & Community Workers are always on hand to provide support to students when needed. Through the Learner Support Fund the College is able to remit tuition fees for students on low income and can help with costs for books, materials and travel.
- **Independent travel training (ITT) for students who face difficulties with transport**  
Independent travel is a very important skill for life and ITT has shown to have positive effects on the lives of young people, as well as those around them.  
This service offers individual support to families where either the parent or child has special educational needs or mobility difficulties and would benefit from support to access public transport and therefore increase their self confidence and self-esteem. The training will improve these families' access to education, training and leisure activities and promote healthier

lifestyles by using public transport.

Referrals for ITT can only be made by a GP or other professional.

For further information, please contact Holly Barker on 020 7364 0818

- **Support for students who need to attend a course that is outside Tower Hamlets**

Tower Hamlets LA's transport support is not limited to a specific geographical area. Students who meet the distance and income criteria can receive the annual travel grant or travel pass, but must be taking the nearest practicable course.

Students in school sixth forms can apply for discretionary Learner Support regardless of whether they are studying in Tower Hamlets or in another local authority area.

All further education colleges can consider giving support to students from their Learner Support funds.

- **The Residential Support Scheme (RSS)**

The Residential Support Scheme is to help support students aged 16 to 18 with the costs of living away from home to participate in a study programme where the substantial Level 2 or Level 3 qualification that is part of the programme is not available locally to their home address. The programme must be directly 16 to 19 funded by EFA

RSS can provide annual support of up to £3,458 (up to £4,079 in the London area) towards accommodation costs. If the student is assessed as eligible, the amount of award they receive is based on their actual accommodation costs up to the maximum award thresholds.

Young people on waged apprenticeship programmes, or any education or training where a wage is being drawn, are not eligible to apply for support.

To be eligible for RSS support in the 2016 to 2017 academic year, a student must meet the eligibility criteria, which is available on [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) and should apply for RSS directly from the institution.

Contact the Learner Support Helpline on 0800 121 8989 for more information on this scheme, or go to [www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk) and search for Residential Support Scheme for an application form and other information.

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## Useful contacts

### **Tower Hamlets Pupil Services**

Mulberry Place, 5 Clove Crescent, E14 2BG

For travel grants and travel passes

Telephone 020 7364 5006

### **Tower Hamlets and Canary Wharf Trust Fund**

Mulberry Place, 5 Clove Crescent, E14 2BG

Telephone: 020 7364 5001

### **Tower Hamlets Independent Travel Training (ITT)**

Mobility and Travel Assistance,

Holly Barker

Tel: 020 7364 0818

Hollya.barker@towerhamlets.gov.uk

### **Tower Hamlets Transport Unit**

The Children, Schools and Families Directorate provide transport for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) to both day and residential schools in Tower Hamlets and elsewhere. For further information and advice:

Tel: 020 7364 1060 or visit,

[https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgn/education\\_and\\_learning/schools/Travelling\\_to\\_and\\_from\\_school/Transport\\_for\\_pupils\\_with\\_special\\_educational\\_needs.aspx](https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgn/education_and_learning/schools/Travelling_to_and_from_school/Transport_for_pupils_with_special_educational_needs.aspx)

### **Tower Hamlets Parking, Mobility and Transport services**

The team administers transport support for people of all ages. This includes taxicards, blind and disabled persons freedom passes and the Orange/Blue Badge scheme:

Parking services

PO Box 14790

E14 2WA

Tel: 020 7364 5003

### **Tower Hamlets Community Transport**

Tower Hamlets Community Transport is small charity based in Limehouse, set up to provide transport to voluntary and community groups in Tower Hamlets:

25-27 Newell Street  
Limehouse  
London  
E14 7HP  
Tel: 020 7987 6447  
[www.thct.org.uk](http://www.thct.org.uk)

### **Dial-a-Ride**

This is a free, door to door mini-bus service for anyone who has a permanent or long-term disability which means they are unable to use public transport some or all of the time. The service provides short, but essential, journeys such as to the doctor, dentist and local shops.

You are automatically eligible for membership if you are:

- A Taxicard member
- Getting the Higher Rate Mobility Component of Disability Living Allowance
- Getting the Standard or Enhanced Mobility Rate of the Personal Independence Payment (PIP)
- Registered blind or partially sighted
- Aged 85 or over
- Getting a Higher Rate Attendance Allowance
- Getting a War Pension Mobility Supplement

For further information on how to register, visit [www.tfl.gov.uk](http://www.tfl.gov.uk) or call 0343 222 7777 to request an application form.

### **Tower Hamlets College**

Poplar High Street  
E14 0AP

Telephone 020 7510 7777 for course advice.

Telephone 020 7510 7510 and ask to speak to a Student Adviser regarding practical support available to students once they have enrolled.

### **Tower Hamlets Careers Centre**

35 Bow Road,  
London E3 2AD

Tel. 020 7364 1401

Text phone: 020 8980 3235

E- mail: [careers.service@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:careers.service@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

**Other useful websites**

[www.towerhamlets.gov.uk](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk)

[www.tfl.gov.uk](http://www.tfl.gov.uk)

[www.tower.ac.uk](http://www.tower.ac.uk)

[www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning)

**Learner Support helpline**

Call the Learner Support Helpline on 0800 121 8989 (open from 9.00 am to 5.00 pm) for information and advice on:

- Discretionary Learner Support
- Care to Learn
- The Sixth Form College Childcare Scheme
- Dance and Drama Awards
- The Residential Support Scheme (RSS) for people studying away from home

**Complaints procedure**

We aim to provide the best possible service but we know that sometimes things can go wrong. If you're not happy with the way we have dealt with you, please tell us so that we can try to resolve the problem.

You can contact the Corporate Complaints team on:

Tel: 020 7364 4161 (in English or Sylheti/Bengali) Minicom: 020 7364 4853 Fax: 020 7364 4300

Email: [complaints@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:complaints@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

Alternatively you can complete the online complaints form available on the Tower Hamlets website ([www.towerhamlets.gov.uk](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk))

**In certain cases the transport arrangements set out in this document may be reconsidered and revised where a change in government policy impacts on Local Authority services and policies.**