



Transition to Adulthood (Leaving care) Financial Policy and Guidance

Children's Social Care

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Policy Governance

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Lead author & contact details	Marie Hatton Children in Care and Leaving Care team
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Approver	Darren Knibbs

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Background and Context:

Telford & Wrekin Council has a number of responsibilities to care leavers which include the provision of maintenance and accommodation for 16 and 17 year olds and financial support to enable young people to make a successful transition to adulthood; these responsibilities depend upon age and circumstances. In addition, there is a requirement to support young people to develop financial capability and money management skills and gradually help them to take more responsibility for their personal finances.

This policy outlines the arrangements that Telford & Wrekin Council has in place to meet these duties and responsibilities and how it supports young people to make a positive financial transition from care to independence.

Notes and Implementation Considerations:

1. All allowances should be based upon an assessment of need and the young person's social worker (up to age 18) and personal adviser (over 18) should ensure that any allowances are detailed and be set out in the young person's Pathway Plan. The Plan must also highlight any attached conditions, how payments will be made, the frequency of payments, when they will be reviewed and when they will cease. Allowances are conditional on reasonable engagement in the Pathway Plan.
2. By the age of 16, all young people (with some exceptions for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) should have a National Insurance Number and relevant identity documents, including photographic evidence to ensure they can register for housing, set up a bank account and prepare for a welfare benefit claim. The personal adviser must ensure these forms of documentation are in place.
3. All young people should, where possible, have a savings/bank account by the age of 14 at the latest, and where appropriate all allowances should be paid to young people through their account. The social worker should ensure a savings/bank account is in place.
4. The allowances contained in section 1 of this Leaving Care Finance Policy apply to a) young people aged 16 & 17 who are looked after, b) young people deemed Eligible, c) young people who are deemed Relevant and who are living in semi-independent placements or independent accommodation which is not registered under the Care Standards Act 2000 and therefore not inspected by Ofsted. The allowances contained in section 2 and 3 apply to all Former Relevant Children and the allowances in section four apply to all Eligible, Relevant and Former Relevant Children (See Appendix One for definitions of the different categories of care leavers).
5. Subject to, and depending upon an assessment of need, Qualifying Children may be entitled to the same level of support as Eligible, Relevant and Former Relevant Children, this will be dependent on their individual circumstances.
6. This policy does not apply to young people (aged 16 & 17) living in fostering or residential placements. There is a separate policy that applies to such young people; please refer

to a) the policy covering foster care allowances for children/young people or b) the policy covering residential allowances for children/young people for further information.

7. It is a requirement that allowances in this financial policy are reviewed annually by the Leaving Care Team Manager and are aligned with current welfare benefit rates for young people under the age of 25.
8. Certain groups of looked after children (LAC) and care leavers aged 16 & 17 are eligible to claim welfare benefits (lone parents and sick and disabled young people). Where young people are eligible to claim benefits, support from the social worker or personal adviser should be provided to maximise their benefit income (currently, Universal Credit). Where young people aged 16 & 17 are in receipt of welfare benefits, a number of the leaving care allowances cease. More information on this is available at page 13 & 14 which covers young people who are eligible for, and in receipt of welfare benefits/Universal Credit.
9. Looked after children and care leavers who are UASC are entitled to the same allowances as any other looked after child or care leaver until the age of 18. However, after the age of 18, allowances and benefits for this group of young people may be affected and limited because of their immigration status.
10. The allowances set out in the following sections apply to all young people who are deemed Eligible, Relevant and Former Relevant and are dependent on an assessment of need and their legal and immigration status. All allowances can also be applied to Qualifying Children, subject to a full assessment of their circumstances and needs.
11. Wherever possible (particularly when obtaining Setting Up Home Allowances), VAT should be reclaimed on all purchases (that are VAT rated). A VAT receipt is required for all purchases made with a purchase card. When purchasing with all other payment methods a receipt with a VAT number is required for items up to £250.00 and a full VAT receipt is required for items over £250.00. If there is any doubt about the VAT treatment for any item or the documents required to satisfy the Council's financial requirements, advice should be sought from the Council's finance team. The responsibility for obtaining VAT receipts rests with the designated case holding worker.

Legislation:

12. This policy has been prepared in compliance with the Children Act 1989 and supplementary covering young people who are also deemed care leavers. This includes the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 and the Planning Transition to Adulthood for Care Leavers 2010 (Revised 2015 and 2022) regulations and guidance volume 3.
13. The headings used within the policy are taken from the legislation and guidance listed above.

14. Document Structure:

- Section 1 – Children Looked After – Eligible and Relevant (and Qualifying) Children aged 16 & 17.
- Section 2 (A & B) – Former Relevant (and Qualifying) Children aged 18 to 21/25.

- Section 3 – Eligible, Relevant and Former Relevant (and Qualifying) Children aged 16 to 21/25.
- Section 4 – Appendices - Categories of Care Leavers, Asylum Seeking Children & Young People, National Insurance Numbers and Leaving Care Finance Chart.

Assessing the Provision of Allowances for 16 & 17 Year Olds

- **Eligible and Relevant Children aged 16 & 17**
- **Children Looked After aged 16 & 17 who have not been looked after for the pre-requisite 13 weeks which is required for a child to be deemed an Eligible or Relevant Children.**

Young people looked after and leaving care aged 16 & 17 (except for Qualifying Children – identified in section 24 of the Children Act 1989) are entitled to a weekly Leaving Care Personal Allowance, which is paid at three different rates depending on the type of semi-independent placement and whether utility and/or food is provided within the placement.

All other allowances are based on an assessment of need and will vary between young people. For example, travel allowances associated with family contact will vary, depending on the location of family/parents and the cost of travel to the specific location.

Birthday, Christmas/festival and other allowances should not be provided to children placed/living at home and with parents. (See Appendix D).

The payments for young people noted in the policy may be available to all 16 or 17-year olds subject to an assessment of need. Where young people are eligible to claim a means tested benefit (currently, Universal Credit) certain allowances should cease.

The Care/Pathway Plan **must** be used to evidence which allowances will/will not be provided (and any reductions for a young person who is working), the level of the allowances and the reasoning behind granting/not granting the allowance.

Assessing the Provision of Allowances for 18 to 21/25 Year Olds

- **Former Relevant Children Section 23C (Children Act 1989) aged 18 to 21, or until the education or training course being undertaken on their 21st birthday is completed.**

The majority of young people leaving care aged 18 should be financing themselves through the following:

- a) Employment;
- b) Education allowances;
- c) Welfare benefits (currently, Universal Credit).

Following an assessment of need and depending on a young person being engaged in education or training some of the allowances set out in the policy may be provided. The Pathway Plan **must** be used to evidence which allowances will/will not be provided, the level and the reasoning behind granting/not granting the allowance: -

- **Former Relevant Children – Section 23CA and Section 23CZB - Care Leavers aged 21 to 25 (Section 23CA and Section 23CZB) – Children Act 1989**
 1. Young people returning to the responsible authority (Telford & Wrekin Council) to resume education or training and requesting financial support will have an assessment of need undertaken by a member of the Leaving Care Team;
 2. Young people returning to the responsible authority to request a more general leaving care service will be provided with practical support to assist them to address specific needs or requirements, access universal services and become self-sustaining, rather than being provided with financial support.

Assessing the Provision of Allowances covering Eligible, Relevant and Former Relevant Children Section 23C, 23CA, 23CZB (Children Act 1989) - Aged 16 to 21/25

Setting Up Home Grant - Section 23C, 23CA & 23CZB

Young people can access the Setting Up Home Grant between the ages of 16 and 21/25 when they move to semi-independent or independent accommodation. Where a young person moves to semi-independent accommodation it is recommended that a proportion of the allowance is used and when they move to independent accommodation the remainder can be used. The Pathway Plan **must** be used to set out what items a young person needs in the semi-independent or independent accommodation that they are moving to, based on the items already contained in the accommodation and the items the young person may already have.

The Setting Up Home Grant is divided into several components.

- **Setting Up Home Grant;**
 - TV licence – provided once;
 - Household Items provided over a period of time;
 - Contents insurance provided once;
 - Cooker fitting, by an approved installer - provided once;
 - Removal costs - provided once;
 - Health and Safety Pack – provided once;
 - Setting Up Home Starter Pack – provided once.

Section 1

This section applies to Children Looked After and those deemed Eligible and Relevant (Aged 16 and 17) who are living in semi-independent and independent placements.

i.e.

- Section 31 'Care Orders' – Eligible children (and those who have not been looked after for 13 weeks)
- Section 20 'Accommodated' – Eligible children (and those who have not been looked after for 13 weeks)
- Young people previously looked after – Relevant children - Section 23A

Commentary, Basis & Amount	Conditions, Comments and Amounts
<p>Accommodation and Placements.</p> <p>Where young people are moving into private sector accommodation the rent level must be within the Local Housing Allowance rate for the given area.</p>	<p>Placement and accommodation costs to be met in full for young people up to the age of 18. Where young people are moving into private sector accommodation the rent level should (wherever possible) be within the Local Housing Allowance for that area. Any requirement to provide a deposit and rent in advance must be clarified prior to the tenancy agreement being authorised by the Service Delivery Manager.</p> <p>Housing Benefit / Universal Credit Housing Element for private sector tenants who rent from a private landlord is calculated using the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates. The Valuation Officer sets the level of the LHA for the different types of property in each LHA designated area; these are known as Broad Rental Market Areas. This is determined by post-code, not council boundaries, as some councils might have 2 or 3 BRMA's. The same process and figures are used for Universal Credit housing costs.</p> <p>Under LHA, payments will generally be made directly to the tenant unless they are particularly 'vulnerable'. Care leaver status would, in principle, enable a young person to qualify for having his or her LHA paid directly to the landlord. However, the intention of paying LHA directly to tenants is to encourage responsibility for paying the rent themselves.</p>

<p>Accommodation and Placements. <i>Continued</i></p>	<p>The maximum weekly LHA rates in Telford & Wrekin from 1st April 2024 are:</p> <p>Telford & Wrekin:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shared accommodation £85.00 • one-bedroom accommodation £109.32 <p>Please note:</p> <p>The postcode of the actual property address should be used to check which 'Broad Rental Market Area' rate covers that area and address. For example, some parts of one local authority area may come within neighbouring BRMA's.</p> <p>Current rates for all LHA areas can be checked via the Valuation Office Agency website: Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates applicable from April 2024 to March 2025 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) or via http://lha-direct.voa.gov.uk/search.aspx</p> <p>There is also an absolute cap on Local Housing Allowance for each property size within the private sector.</p> <p>For general information about care leavers and the Local Housing Allowance visit: https://lha-direct.thereentservice.gov.uk/Secure/pdfs/TRSHB(LHA)2CL.pdf</p> <p>Young people leaving care living in the private rented accommodation are exempt from the Shared Accommodation Rate (SAR) up to their 25th birthday (from 1st June 2021); therefore, they are eligible to rent private sector accommodation up to the 1-bedroom Local Housing Allowance rate. From their 25th birthday, care leavers will only be eligible for housing benefit (or UC housing element costs) up to the shared room rate but may be eligible for discretionary housing payments (DHP's) in some circumstance. Some care-leavers (those who have lived in certain hostel accommodation) may be entitled to a one-bedroom rate or higher e.g., if severely disabled or if they have a child or a partner up to age 35.</p> <p>In the majority of social housing (council and housing association) the full rent will be covered by the Housing Element of Universal Credit.</p> <p>In exceptional circumstances Children's Services will act as a trustee or guarantor for young people following an assessment of need and all other</p>
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<p>Accommodation and Placements. <i>Continued</i></p>	<p>possible trustee/guarantors being explored and ruled out. Prior to agreeing to act as a trustee/guarantor, the scope of what is being covered by the trustee/guarantor needs to be fully identified and authorised, i.e. a) rent b) damages etc, and what are the limits to any liability. In principle, Children’s Services would be acting as a trustee/guarantor for the rent. In situations where Children’s Services has acted as a trustee/guarantor for 16 and 17 year olds, a new tenancy agreement should be produced when the young person reaches their 18th birthday. This is particularly important where young people are living in private accommodation. The liability and responsibility for the condition and the cost of the accommodation should be transferred to the young person at 18 (apart from NRPF cases). Where necessary Children’s Services will pay for the new tenancy agreement. In all cases, either the landlord’s guarantor agreement, or an agreement produced by the legal services team should be used and checked and authorised by the legal services team.</p> <p>When young people move into privately rented accommodation their social worker or personal adviser should take pictures on their phone or portable device that show the condition of the property and any items that are included in the rent/inventory. In principle, the letting agent will expect their inventory to be completed; a note should be made of any damaged or missing items which should then be registered with the letting agent. The pictures should be sent to the young person and landlord and stored in their case records. This will assist with negotiating with the landlord if there are problems regarding the condition of the property and the return of the deposit when the young person leaves the property.</p>
<p>Deposit and Rent in Advance.</p>	<p>Where a young person has access to housing authority or housing association independent accommodation a deposit and rent in advance should not be provided.</p> <p>In exceptional circumstances and depending on an assessment of need a deposit and rent in advance may be considered if a young person would be at risk in housing authority or housing association independent accommodation or where it can be demonstrated that a private sector option is preferable and appropriate.</p> <p>Where young people are moving into independent accommodation, workers should check if homeless prevention or DHP funding can be applied. Where needed, a deposit and rent in advance will be provided if the rent level falls within the given Local Housing Allowance rate for that area. If the rent is above the LHA rate, a risk assessment must be</p>

<p>Deposit and Rent in Advance. <i>Continued</i></p>	<p>completed, and authorisation must be sought from the Service Delivery Manager.</p> <p>Personal Advisers should check if a 'Rent Deposit Scheme' or 'Bond Scheme' exists in the area the young person is aiming to live and/or what 'Rent Deposit Protect Scheme' the letting agent/landlord uses.</p> <p>In circumstances where Children's Services is providing the deposit, or is providing a bond guarantee, the deposit/bond guarantee should be in the name of Telford & Wrekin Council. Many local authority housing departments operate Deposit Guarantee Schemes that offers landlords a legally binding deposit bond in place of a cash deposit.</p> <p>From April 2007, landlords and agents have, by law, had to sign up to one of three Government-approved schemes when they take a deposit. These schemes aim to ensure that letting agents, landlords and tenants have access to independent deposit protection. Personal advisors and/or social workers must ensure that the deposit is protected.</p> <p>The Tenant Fees Act 2019 came into force on the 1st June 2019 and as result tenancy deposits are capped, and most fees charged in connection with a tenancy are banned. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tenant-fees-act-2019-guidance</p> <p>Private sector landlords are required to provide a copy of the 'How to Rent' Leaflet to all tenants. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/how-to-rent</p>
<p>Leaving Care Personal Allowance (LCPA) £71.70 per week.</p>	<p>This is provided to young people who are studying, undertaking unpaid training, looking for employment, or taking part in voluntary work. Young people who are undertaking paid training will get the equivalent or a higher allowance from their training provider. In situations where young people are not involved in any education, training, employment or voluntary activity, where possible, the allowance should be paid at, or in association with meeting their leaving care personal adviser or an accommodation worker. Paying the Leaving Care Personal Allowance directly to the young person may be beneficial in situations where they are reluctant to engage, are at risk and/or where meeting them directly on a regular basis would be beneficial.</p>

Where a young person is not engaging with the leaving care service, the method of payment should be reviewed, and a method of payment established following a meeting involving the leaving care personal adviser and young person.

Young people who are undertaking low paid employment will continue to receive the Leaving Care Personal Allowance until they earn a given threshold.

This allowance is provided for up to 5 weeks after the young person has attained the age of 18 (whilst Universal Credit is claimed). The allowance can be paid via BACS, a card payment or in vouchers, depending on an assessment of need and the requirements and circumstances of the individual young person.

Sick and disabled young people and lone parents (aged 16 & 17) are able to claim means tested benefits/universal credit and therefore do not receive the majority of the leaving care allowances as their welfare benefits are provided to cover these areas. The Leaving Care Personal Allowance, Clothing Allowance and Leisure Allowance cease for these groups.

Where young people are living in semi-independent placements the following LCPA weekly rates will apply depending on the type and level of support/services provided.

Leaving Care
Personal
Allowance
Continued

Supported
Accommodation
Adjustments

All young people residing in semi-independent age 16 will have utility and food costs provided by the local authority	£71.70
Young person is 17 and responsible for all utility and food costs	£71.70
Young person is 17 and provided with utilities but is responsible for food costs - semi-independent accommodation	£61.70

Supported Lodgings	Young person age 17 is provided with utilities and food	£51.70
	Young person placed in Emergency Accommodation - no cooking facilities – Breakfast only	£71.70
	Young person placed in Emergency Accommodation with half board – Bed, Breakfast and Evening Meal	£51.70

	Young person is age 16 is responsible for contribution towards food/ utilities	£61.70
	Young person is age 17 is responsible for contribution to food/ utilities	£51.70
<p>The utilities/food deduction is made based on assisting young people to plan and budget for utilities/food for when they become responsible for budgeting for these items themselves at the age of 18.</p> <p>The utilities/food deduction is usually made prior to the allowance being paid to the young person but can be paid to the young person, with a view to them paying it to the semi-independent provider (subject to an assessment of need).</p>		
Clothing Allowance £5.00 per week	<p>£5.00 per week clothing allowance.</p> <p>The arrangements for providing and spending the clothing allowance should be set out in the young person’s pathway plan. This could be paid to the young person, weekly, monthly, quarterly and/or can be provided via a supervised/supportive shop.</p> <p>If 16/17 young person requires maternity clothing the allowance is an additional one off payment of £50</p>	

<p>Savings Allowance</p>	<p>£3.00 per week added to young people’s Junior ISA.</p> <p>Where the young person resides in semi independent living, the social worker will complete a payment request for £3 per week to be paid into the young persons junior ISA, up to the age of 18 by safeguarding Finance.</p> <p>If there is a change in placement type out of semi independent living then it is the social workers responsibility to cancel this payment request.</p> <p>If the young person does not have a junior ISA then a calculation will need to be made at 18 by the social worker and paid into the young persons bank account.</p>
<p>Lone Parents Entitled to Welfare Benefits</p>	<p>Transfer to welfare benefits from the Birth of the Baby.</p> <p>Due to having an entitlement to welfare benefits, and when the lone parent is in receipt of benefits (Child Benefit and Universal Credit), the Leaving Care Personal Allowance, and Clothing Allowance will cease. All other allowances continue to be paid.</p> <p>It should be noted that a claim for a means-tested benefit will entitle the young person to submit a claim for ‘Sure Start’ Maternity Grant’, this is paid for the first/oldest child and provides £500.00 for essential items associated with having a new child.</p>
<p>Sick or Disabled Young People Entitled to Welfare Benefits</p>	<p>Transfer to welfare benefits at age 16 or when entitlement to Employment and Support Allowance/Universal Credit commences.</p> <p>Due to having an entitlement to welfare benefits, and when the young person is in receipt of benefits, the Leaving Care Personal Allowance and Clothing Allowance will cease. All other allowances continue to be paid.</p>
<p>Young People Detained in YOI, STC, SCH or in Hospital</p>	<p>Young people who are remanded, sentenced and/or detained in prison, a young offender’s institution, a secure hospital or on juvenile detention (16 & 17 Year Olds) will be provided with up to £10.00 per week pocket money allowance and up to £5.00 per week clothing allowance subject to an assessment of need (and only where there is no remuneration/clothing provision at the individual institution).</p> <p>Different types of Secure Estate (YOI) provision have pocket money and clothing allowance remuneration schemes linked to engagement in education, training or positive activities. The provision of a Leaving Care Personal Allowances should not create a disincentive for a young person to engage in such activities. At the point of remand or sentence (custody) the placement planning meeting/planning meeting/review should set out</p>

	<p>what allowances will be provided by the institution and if these will be topped up by Telford & Wrekin to the levels above.</p> <p>Upon release, young people will be able to access the initial clothing grant (subject to an assessment of need and the young person requiring clothing).</p> <p>Where no remuneration scheme exists for those who are in custody, the allowances will be provided by Telford & Wrekin. How the allowances are provided and in what form, should be based on an assessment of need, the rules of the institution and a risk assessment of the young person's situation.</p> <p>Upon being sentenced, allowances continue for Eligible and Relevant Children subject to the remuneration provided by the establishment as mentioned above. Upon being sentenced, allowances only continue for Qualifying Children subject to an assessment of need, their parental situation, as well as the remuneration provided by the establishment as set out above.</p> <p>Young people who are detained in an NHS provision or contracted out NHS service provision will be provided with the above allowances based on an assessment of need and risk (until Universal Credit is in Payment [5 weeks]), how these are provided should be set out in the individual placement plan and pathway plan.</p> <p>Where family members are in receipt of welfare benefits, prison visits and contact can be facilitated by the 'Assisted Prison Visits Scheme' allowances provided by the DWP. Travel costs for family members not in receipt of welfare benefits may be provided following an assessment of need and an assessment of the frequency.</p>
<p>Young People Placed with Parents / Living with Parents</p>	<p>Looked after children (Eligible) placed at home under placement with parent regulations and care leavers (Relevant) living at home: -</p> <p>If the young person is engaged in education or training and was living with the parent prior to the age of 16, the parent may be eligible to claim Child Benefit and Tax Credits or Universal Credit.</p> <p>If the young person returned to a parent after the age of 16, remains looked after or is a relevant care leaver, is not engaged in education or training, the parent is unlikely to be able to claim Child Benefit or Tax Credits/Universal Credit and the young person is unlikely to be eligible to claim benefits in their own right, in which case, the leaving care financial funding policy will apply.</p>

	For detailed guidance please see Appendix D.		
Qualifying Children	<p>Dependent on an assessment of need, which includes an evaluation of all income, Qualifying Children may be entitled to all allowances.</p> <p>For detailed guidance please see Appendix B</p>		
<p>Leaving Care Personal Allowance -</p> <p>Reductions Where Young People are Earning</p>	<p>Earnings and Income Reductions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When a young person has a weekly net income of £135.00 or more per week, his/her personal allowance will be reduced by 50%. • When a young person has a weekly net income of £155.00 or more per week, his/her personal allowance and clothing and leisure allowance will cease. <p>Reductions are undertaken from the principle of assisting with the development of money management and budgeting skills.</p> <p>Leaving Care Personal Allowance, Wages & Earnings, Traineeship Allowances, Apprenticeship Allowances and the 16 - 19 Bursary count as income.</p> <p>Young people should be issued with a Reductions Notice by their social worker or personal adviser setting out the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The level of reduction (of their allowance/s); 2. When the reduction will commence; 3. What the young person can do if their circumstances change; 4. What the young person can do if they do not agree with the assessed reduction. <p>The Reduction Notice should be issued in writing and signed by the young person.</p> <p><u>Reduction equation:</u></p>		
<p>Reductions Where Young People are Earning</p> <p><i>Continued</i></p>	<p>Total income minus fares, work costs and the cost of lunches. See examples below</p> <p>Example 1 – No reduction required</p> <table> <tr> <td>Leaving Care Personal Allowance</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£71.70</td> </tr> </table>	Leaving Care Personal Allowance	£71.70
Leaving Care Personal Allowance	£71.70		

16 – 19 Bursary	£40.00
Wages from part time job	£28.00
Total Income	£139.70
minus costs (lunches X 2)	£10.00-
	£129.70

Example 2 – Reduction required

Leaving Care Personal Allowance	£71.70
Wages from part time job	£93.00
Total Income	£164.70
Minus costs (lunches X 4)	£20.00-
	£144.70

Leaving Care Personal Allowance reduced by 50%.

LCPA reduced by 50% - net income becomes = £128.85.

In order to monitor payments/reductions and other education, training and employment related payments, social workers and personal advisers will need to maintain close liaison with a young person's education, training and employment provider.

Additionally, this liaison will ensure a young person receives practical assistance, if, and when required. To facilitate this process young people must sign the 'Agreement to Share Information Form' so that social workers/personal advisers can liaise with the above.

To assist a young person with making a successful transition to employment and managing their wages a reduction will not be applied until they have completed six weeks of employment irrespective of income.

A young person will need to provide proof of income in order that his/her social worker/personal adviser can calculate any reductions. If proof is not forthcoming it will be assumed that earnings are exceeding £135.00 / £155.00 net per week. In these circumstances the allowance of £71.70 will cease on a temporary basis until proof of income is provided.

In exceptional circumstances and subject to an assessment of need, food parcels/vouchers can be provided where the young person is working and is unable to provide proof of income, support should be provided to the young person to help them to obtain evidence of income. Additionally, all other allowances can be suspended.

<p>Initial Clothing Allowance</p> <p>Up-to £100.00 Depending on an Assessment of Need</p>	<p>In circumstances where young people become looked after and are placed in semi-independent or independent accommodation, they will be provided with an initial Clothing Allowance subject to an assessment of need.</p> <p>The Initial Clothing Allowance is paid in situations where young people become looked after with insufficient clothing for everyday needs. When a young person is first looked after the social worker/personal adviser should make a list of the clothing that the young person has and another list setting out what clothing is required and the cost. The list and costing should be submitted to the Leaving Care Team Manager or Service Delivery Manager for approval.</p>
<p>Birthday Allowance 17th and 18th Birthday</p> <p>£236.87 for Gift/s and celebration activity (not transferable)</p> <p>Total - £236.87 in line with the fostering rate for Birthdays</p>	<p>A Birthday gift allowance up to the total value of £236.87. The allowance is to be used to purchase a gift or gifts, it can be provided in the form of a gift card, gift voucher. Once the gift is purchased the remaining amount can be used as a contribution to a celebration meal/party/activity. Social workers/personal advisers should book and cover the cost of the celebration and/or provide meal/food vouchers, activity vouchers; the celebration element should not be provided as a cash payment. This allowance is not transferable.</p> <p>The birthday allowance will only be paid to young people who remain in active contact with their social worker and leaving care personal adviser and are engaged in the pathway planning process. Where there may be risks associated with providing the birthday allowance (finances), the pathway plan should set out how any risks will be managed and mitigated. This is provided to young people living in a semi-independent or independent setting. Young people living in Foster Care or a Children's Residential Unit will receive the same birthday allowance from that setting.</p>
<p>Christmas/ Festivals</p> <p>£236.87 for Gift/s and Celebration activity (not transferable)</p> <p>Total - £236.87 – In-Line with the Fostering Rate</p>	<p>A gift, or gifts, up to the value of £236.87. The allowance is used to purchase a gift or gifts, it can be provided in the form of a gift card, gift voucher. Once the gift is purchased the remaining amount can be used as a contribution to a celebration meal or activity. Social workers/personal advisers should book and cover the cost of the celebration and/or provide meal/food vouchers, activity vouchers; the celebration element should not be provided as a cash payment. This allowance is not transferable.</p> <p>The Christmas/festival allowance will only be paid to young people who remain in active contact with their social worker and leaving care personal adviser and are engaged in the pathway planning process. Where there</p>

<p>Social Activities and Leisure</p> <p>Any One-off cost of the Pass</p> <p>Local Council Passport to Leisure (or actual cost).</p> <p><i>Continued</i></p> <p>Plus up to £10.00 per week. – Verified Activity.</p>	<p>Where appropriate and dependent on an assessment of need, Children's Services will pay for the membership of a hobby or leisure club and contribute towards the cost of equipment or special clothing/fees or contribute towards the cost of a social activity. This could include the cost of trial sessions and a contribution to travel costs.</p> <p>Children's Services will assist young people to obtain a local council Passport to Leisure Pass (Telford Loyalty Card (TLC)). Young people should be encouraged and assisted (via their Pathway Plan) to explore the leisure facilities that accept the TLC, or relevant scheme if placed outside of Telford and Wrekin.</p> <p>https://www.telfordandwrekinleisure.co.uk</p> <p>Financial assistance provided to pursue hobbies, leisure interests and social activities should be governed by the principle that these activities can be afforded by the young person at the age of eighteen, when they take over financial responsibility for their own affairs.</p> <p>Young people should have access to at least one leisure/hobby/sports activity per week to ensure social inclusion.</p> <p>The allowance is only provided where young people are undertaking a named and verified leisure activity.</p>
<p>Key Documents £130.00</p> <p>Up To £280.00</p>	<p>Children's Services will purchase either a passport or pay for a passport renewal (including paying for the check and send facility) for each young person up to the age of 21.</p> <p>In addition, Children's Services will purchase a birth certificate for each young person (if they do not have one) up to the age of 21.</p> <p>In circumstances where an Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking young Person loses their Biometric Card, Children's Services will pay for one replacement (£75.20), subject to an assessment of need.</p> <p>Children's Services will purchase a travel document for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (Young People) dependent on an assessment of need (£72.00 to £280.00).</p>
<p>Education, Training, Voluntary Work and Employment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people who are undertaking full time education courses or unpaid training courses receive the Leaving Care Personal Allowance. • Young people who are undertaking a paid traineeship or Apprenticeship will not receive the Leaving Care Personal Allowance but will receive the equivalent or a higher allowance from their training provider.

<p>Learner Agreements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people who are working or undertaking voluntary work will continue to receive the Leaving Care Personal Allowance until their wage reaches a given threshold.
<p>Education, Training, Voluntary Work, Employment. <i>Continued</i></p>	<p>All education, training and employment support (practical and financial) will be based on an individual learner agreement developed between the young person and their social worker/personal adviser and including input from the virtual school and the young person's education/training tutor/mentor. The agreement will set out the level of practical and financial support to be provided by all parties and will include learning goals and targets and attendance/academic requirements. Failure to comply with the learner agreement may result in financial and practical support ceasing and a requirement to leave the course or activity.</p> <p>Education and Training</p> <p>Young people who are undertaking an education course or training activity will receive the Leaving Care Personal Allowance. Additionally, young people who are undertaking full time education courses or unpaid training courses (minimum 12 hours study/training and contact time) are eligible for the 16-19 bursary (£1,200.00 per year, usually paid for 30 weeks at £40.00 per week) scheme (administered by individual schools and colleges).</p>
<p>£10.00 Per Week - Incentive.</p>	<p>Young people are expected to attend the nearest college for the given course they wish to undertake. In exceptional circumstances, and following an assessment of need, the nearest college rule can be waived, where it can be demonstrated that it is not in the best interest of the young person to attend the nearest college.</p>
<p>Minimum Income.</p>	<p>Where a young person is involved in a full-time education or training activity that does not attract a 16 to 19 Bursary, Telford & Wrekin Children's Services will provide a £10.00 per week incentive.</p> <p>Paid Training</p> <p>Young people who are undertaking a paid traineeship will not receive the Leaving Care Personal Allowance but will receive the equivalent or a higher allowance from their training provider. If the traineeship allowance is paid at a rate less than £111.70 per week (£71.70 plus £40.00) the allowance is topped up to £111.70. The £111.70 may then be subject to a £10.00 or £20.00 deduction dependent on the type of placement and whether a) utilities or b) utilities and food are provided by the placement (semi-independent accommodation or supported lodgings).</p>

<p>Education, Training, Voluntary Work, Employment. <i>Continued</i></p>	<p>Apprenticeships Young people who are undertaking an apprenticeship will not receive the Leaving Care Personal Allowance but will be given the equivalent or a higher allowance from their training provider (see Paid Training section).</p> <p>The National Minimum Wage of £6.40 per hour applies to apprentices from April 2024. The wage applies to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all apprentices aged under 19 • apprentices aged 19 or over in the first year of their Apprenticeship <p>This should mean that apprentices get a weekly wage of at least £243.20 (38 hours per week).</p> <p>National Minimum Wage 2024-2025:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>21 Plus</td> <td>18 to 20</td> <td>Under 18</td> <td>Apprentice</td> </tr> <tr> <td>£11.44</td> <td>£8.60</td> <td>£6.40</td> <td>£6.40</td> </tr> </table> <p>Young people (children looked after and care leavers up to age 25) who are undertaking an apprenticeship are eligible for a one-off £3000.00 Apprenticeship Bursary (paid via the Apprenticeship Provider), in addition, the Apprenticeship Provider also receives £1000.00 to support the apprentice; this is provided once and usually within the first three months.</p>	21 Plus	18 to 20	Under 18	Apprentice	£11.44	£8.60	£6.40	£6.40
21 Plus	18 to 20	Under 18	Apprentice						
£11.44	£8.60	£6.40	£6.40						
<p>Education, Training and Employment Related Support</p> <p>FE Grant -</p>	<p>Children’s Services may provide equipment and travel costs for education or training courses and employment opportunities of the young person’s choice depending on an assessment of need. Where appropriate, Children’s Services will consider funding extra tuition.</p> <p>Funding may be provided for subsequent education or training courses and/or for changed courses depending on an assessment of need and the young person demonstrating a commitment to continuing education or training and consistent attendance (minimum 85%).</p> <p>If special equipment is required for a traineeship/apprenticeship the provider should be approached in the first instance. If equipment is not provided, and depending on an assessment of need, it will be provided by Telford & Wrekin Children’s Services.</p>								

<p>Stationery, Educational Visits, Books and Equipment</p> <p>Commencing Work Grant £100.00</p> <p>Prom Activity Up – To £200.00</p> <p>Child Care</p> <p>F.E. & H E Computer Grant Up-To £350.00 – One-Off</p> <p><i>Continued</i></p>	<p>Young people who are undertaking full time (at least 12 hours of attendance/contact time) further education courses are entitled to a grant to assist with:</p> <p>Stationery, educational visits, books and equipment, computer and I.T. equipment based on evidenced need.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stationery, Educational Visits Grant, Books and Equipment Grant and I.T. Grant Equipment of up to £225.00 per academic year. <p>The Grant is per academic year, is not transferable and is only available for stationery, educational visits, books, general equipment and computer and I.T. equipment.</p> <p>Children’s Services will purchase equipment and/or clothing to assist the young person with their chosen employment e.g., interview clothes, overalls, protective clothing, depending on an assessment of need. Maximum Commencing Work Grant £100.00. This is provided as a one off.</p> <p>Children’s Services will support young people to participate in a ‘Prom Activity’, costs can include dress/suit hire or purchase, transport, prom tickets and associated costs. Social workers or personal advisers should ascertain the costs and seek approval from the Leaving Care Team Manager.</p> <p>Childcare costs should be accessed through the Care to Learn Fund https://www.gov.uk/care-to-learn</p> <p>All young people entering further education (level 2 or above) or higher education will be assisted to access/purchase a tablet, lap-top or computer by way of a one-off grant of £350.00 to young people age 16 to 21/25).</p> <p>Young people should submit a list of requirements regarding equipment, course books etc., to their social worker or leaving care personal adviser for approval.</p>
<p>Digital Connectivity</p>	<p>Young people who are seeking employment and claiming Universal Credit may be eligible for six months of free broadband internet access. Several broadband and mobile providers also have reduced rate tariffs (£10.00 per month) for those claiming Universal Credit (Talk Talk, BT, Virgin Money).</p>

<p>Winter Utilities and Heating Allowance</p> <p>£10.00 per Week</p> <p>1st year of Independent Living</p>	<p>Young people living in semi-independent or independent accommodation who are responsible for, and pay, variable utility/service and heating costs will be provided with a £10.00 per week (£260.00) winter utilities and heating allowance during their 1st year (winter) of independent living. The allowance is available from the 1st October to the 31st March of the first winter they are living independently</p> <p>Depending on an assessment of need the allowance can be provided on a weekly, monthly or quarterly basis. The allowance should be paid directly to the young person's utility provider or credited to his or her electricity/gas payment key/card.</p> <p>Total payment £260.00 during the first year of independent living. For most young people this allowance will be provided between their 18th and 19th birthday.</p>
<p>Counselling and Therapeutic Needs</p>	<p>Telford & Wrekin Children's Services will assist young people to access counselling and/or therapeutic services via universal health services and the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).</p> <p>Young people living in Telford & Wrekin can use the 0-25 Emotional Health and Wellbeing Service for Shropshire (called Bee U). Young people up to 25 can also use the Beam Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin which provides a free drop-in counselling service.</p> <p>Personal advisers will support young people to attend these services and the young person's GP in order to assist and support them to access counselling and therapeutic services.</p> <p>Where appropriate and dependent on an assessment of need, and where CAMHS services and universal services are not available, a request for additional support should be submitted to the team manager or service delivery manager for consideration and approval.</p>
<p>Health Needs</p> <p>Health Needs</p>	<p>Telford & Wrekin Children's Services will assist young people to access services to meet their health and developmental needs via the 'looked after' children health provision and via universal health services.</p> <p>Social workers and personal advisers should complete form HC1 (SC) for all 16 & 17 year olds. The HC1 (SC) form enables young people to obtain an NHS low income exemption certificate. This will provide free or reduced cost dental, optician and prescription services. In situations</p>

<p><i>Continued</i></p>	<p>where young people require specific health items these will be considered following an assessment of need.</p> <p>Where young people need regular medication/prescriptions and do not qualify for free prescriptions consideration should be given to purchasing a Prescription Prepayment Certificate. These cost £31.25 for 3 months and £111.60 for 12 months, thus capping the quarterly or yearly cost of prescriptions.</p> <p>NHS Prescription Prepayment Certificates (PPCs) NHSBSA</p> <p>Social Workers and Personal advisers will support young people to attend their GP's in order to assist them to access appropriate health related services.</p> <p>In exceptional circumstances and where appropriate, and dependent on an assessment of need, Telford & Wrekin Children's Services may provide funds to secure additional health services. This will require consideration and approval from the team manager or service delivery manager.</p>
<p>Special Needs Costs</p>	<p>Telford & Wrekin Children's Services will assist young people to access services aimed at addressing any additional/special needs and depending on an assessment of need, may assist in providing resources to address the identified need.</p>
<p>Cultural Needs</p>	<p>Telford & Wrekin Children's Services will assist young people to access services aimed at meeting their cultural needs. Where appropriate, and dependent on an assessment of need, Telford & Wrekin Children's Services will fund services aimed at meeting identified needs i.e. skin and hair care, dietary requirements. This will require consideration and approval from the team manager or service delivery manager.</p>
<p>Religious Needs</p>	<p>Telford & Wrekin Children's Services will assist young people to access services aimed at meeting their religious needs. Where appropriate, and dependent on an assessment of need, Telford & Wrekin Children's Services will fund services aimed at meeting identified religious needs. This will require consideration and approval from the team manager or Service Delivery Manager.</p>

<p>Personal Luggage £35.00</p>	<p>Luggage – all young people moving to independence or between placements must have appropriate personal luggage to help with the move. At least two items of appropriate personal luggage should be available to each young person.</p>
<p>Celebration Event at 18 £20.00 Per Person – Up To £80.00</p>	<p>To acknowledge that young people are moving from being a ‘cared for’ to ‘care experienced’ and to celebrate what they have achieved and to recognise the role of their social worker, Children’s Services will fund a celebratory meal/event (£20.00 per person) for the young person and their social worker, this can also include the personal adviser and carer if you wish.</p>
<p>Consultation with Young People Travel Expenses</p>	<p>Young people will receive a financial allowance of £6.40 per hour (the amount is linked to the prevailing minimum wage for the age of the young person) plus expenses when undertaking consultation exercises.</p> <p>Payments to young people who undertake consultation exercises can be paid in cash or vouchers.</p> <p>Expenses (travel/substance) related to enabling young people to participate in consultation exercise will be provided following an assessment of need (i.e., if public transport is available or taxis are required).</p>
<p>Subsistence</p>	<p>Depending on an assessment of need social workers/leaving care personal advisers can purchase refreshments to enable a keywork session to be inclusive.</p> <p>As a general principle, key-work session refreshments should be agreed in advance by the Leaving Care Team Manager and should not exceed £15.00 in total (up to £7.50 each) and occur relatively infrequently.</p> <p>Alternatively, social workers/leaving care personal advisers can purchase ingredients and prepare a meal with a young person as part of a key-work preparation for independence/life skills session.</p>

Emergency Payments	<p>Telford & Wrekin Children’s Services will provide a maximum of 3 emergency cash payments in any 6-month period. These payments will be dependent on an assessment of need and will not exceed £10.00 per payment.</p>
Payment Process 16 & 17 Year Olds	<p>Where a young person requests an emergency payment due to difficulties with budgeting, the social worker/leaving care personal adviser will explore with the young person how their £71.70 weekly leaving care personal allowance is provided.</p> <p>The second request for an emergency payment will result in the young person being given two choices on how their £71.70 will be provided:</p> <p>Option 1 Two payments of £15.00 and one payment of £41.70 per week.</p> <p>Option 2 Leaving care personal adviser accompanying the young person shopping, ensuring that £37.00 is spent on food, £17.00 is spent on utilities/bills and the remaining £17.70 is given in cash.</p> <p>Where a young person requests more than three emergency cash payments in any 6-month period, they can be assisted with a maximum of two food parcels each of which will have a utilities component. Each food parcel and utility component should not exceed £20.00 in value, i.e., £7.50 utility top-up and £12.50 food.</p> <p>Emergency payments and food parcels are discretionary and will only be provided following an assessment of need. In situations where young people make regular requests for emergency payments their Leaving Care Personal Allowance will be provided as three weekly payments (see above); this will mean young people will have a maximum of three days between payments.</p> <p>Young people may apply for two emergency food parcels in any six-month period. Each food parcel and utility component should not exceed £20.00 in value, i.e., £7.50 utility top-up and £12.50 food. Emergency food parcels are discretionary and will only be provided following an assessment of need.</p> <p><i>Young people will be given a food parcel of £12.50 value or their social worker / personal adviser or duty worker will purchase food to the value of £12.50. The social worker / personal adviser or duty worker will ensure</i></p>

<p>Emergency Payments <i>Continued</i></p>	<p><i>£7.50 of credit is placed on the young person's utility key or card. Young people should not be provided with cash or vouchers.</i></p> <p>Food Parcel to the value of £12.50 (example/suggested options below)</p> <p>Pasta, Rice, Tinned Tomatoes, Tinned Baked Beans, (or culturally appropriate alternative) Tinned Baked Beans and Sausages, Tinned Mixed Vegetables Tinned Tuna, Packet Noodles, Long Life Milk Tea Bags - Small bag – split large box into bag Sugar - Small bag – split bag into small bag Packet of Cereals Tinned Fruit Salad Small Packet of Biscuits</p> <p>In situations where young people have lost or had money/items stolen they must obtain a crime reference number before an assessment of need and compensatory payment is considered.</p>
<p>Exceptional Needs Payment</p>	<p>Where appropriate, and dependent on an assessment of need, Telford & Wrekin Children's Services may provide funds for exceptional needs as a one-off payment.</p> <p>These payments can only be agreed by the team manager or service delivery manager.</p>

SECTION 2

This section applies to Former Relevant Children, i.e.

Group A

- Care Leavers Aged 18 to 21, or until the completion of the education course being undertaken on their 21st birthday - Former Relevant Children - Section 23 C (1)

Group B

- Care Leavers Aged 21 to 25 who return to the authority to resume or commence education or training - Former Relevant Children - Section 23 CA (1)
- Care Leavers Aged 21 to 25 who return to the authority to resume a service - Former Relevant Children - Section 23 CZB (1)

Basis and Amount	Conditions and Comments
Accommodation and Placements	<p>Accommodation costs for young people aged 18 and older will only be provided in exceptional circumstances. Placements and accommodation costs for exceptionally vulnerable young people aged 18 and older may be funded in part or full following an assessment of need and the case being considered by the Service Delivery Manager. Where possible all young people should claim the housing element of universal credit or housing benefit.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. See Staying Put policy – young people living in foster care who meet the Staying Put criteria can remain in their placement. 2. Supported Lodgings placements are available to all care leavers aged 18 to 21. 3. Failed Asylum Seekers (all rights exhausted) with no recourse to public funds will continue to be provided with accommodation subject to a human rights assessment. <p>In the majority of situations Children’s Services is not able to act as a trustee or guarantor for care leavers aged 18 and older. In exceptional circumstances and with agreement from the service delivery manager consideration will be given to Children’s Services acting as a trustee/guarantor, such as acting as a trustee/guarantor for university accommodation. The nature and scope of the trustee/guarantor must be clarified before any agreement is given, i.e., what is being covered, rent, damages and what liabilities the trustee/guarantor agreement establishes. In all cases, either the landlord’s guarantor agreement, or an agreement produced by the legal services team should be used and checked and authorised by the legal services team (see Trustee and Guarantor Policy).</p> <p>See Section One – Accommodation and Placements for LHA rates - pages 9, 10 & 11.</p>

Initial Benefit Claim	<p>Subject to the type of accommodation the young person is living in on their 18th birthday the following allowances - £71.70, or £61.70 or £51.70 (see table above) will continue for a maximum of 5 weeks whilst a claim for Universal Credit is being established. The allowance should only be paid after checking the progress of the young person's Universal Credit claim with the DWP and on the basis that the young person does not take up a Universal Credit Advance. Young people making their initial claim for Universal Credit will have to wait approximately 5 weeks for their first payment (a calendar month plus 7 days).</p>
Initial Benefit Claim <i>Continued</i>	<p>As a general rule, the Leaving Care Personal Allowance is always paid in advance and welfare benefits are always paid in arrears. Even where a benefit claim is submitted in advance of the young person's 18th birthday and verified on the young person's 18th birthday, they will have to wait at least 5 weeks for the first Universal Credit payment. As such, and where the young person does not take a Universal Credit Advance, Children's Services will extend the pre 18 allowance for up to five weeks whilst a young person's Universal Credit claim is established and in payment.</p> <p>Supporting information and identity documents should have been obtained by the social worker or personal adviser prior to a young person's 18th birthday, in preparation for a claim that should be started 4 weeks in advance of the 18th birthday and workers should contact the DWP one week after the young person's birthday to verify the completion of the claim and the first payment date. The rules that enable care leavers to submit a claim 28 days prior to their 18th birthday is contained in the DWP guidance covering ADM – A-2048.</p> <p>If the young person has not received their first benefit payment after five weeks, they should be supported to claim a Universal Credit Advance from the DWP by their personal adviser.</p> <p>If the young person applies for a Universal Credit Advance at the start of their claim, the 5-week benefit waiting allowance will not be provided. The aim of the 5-week benefit waiting allowance is to ensure young people do not need to use the Universal Credit Advance, and subsequently have a reduced benefit rate to repay the advance.</p> <p>For the first Universal Credit claim, the 5-week initial benefit claim waiting period allowance will apply, i.e., 5 weeks at the applicable LCPA rate.</p>

	<p>For the second and subsequent claims: If claiming Universal Credit, the young person can immediately ask for an advance payment from the DWP, of up to 100% of the likely Universal Credit award. This will then be recovered directly from their Universal Credit payment (by the DWP) in 12 equal parts over the next year.</p>
<p>Council Tax Exemption / Allowance</p>	<p>All care leavers aged 18 to 25 who are the responsibility of Telford and Wrekin Council and who are living within the Telford & Wrekin area, will be exempt from any Council Tax Liability. Where the care leaver is solely liable for council tax, they will be entitled to 100% discount after all statutory discounts, exemptions and before Council Tax Support have been applied. Where a care leaver is jointly liable for council tax, a proportionate award will be made, i.e.: if there are two occupiers, a 50% award will be made.</p> <p>Care leavers who are living outside of Telford & Wrekin will be assisted to claim any local council tax exemption or council tax support available.</p> <p>Where care leavers remain liable for all, or part of their council tax liability, Telford & Wrekin Children’s Service will pay the liability on their behalf, subject to the young person applying to the local council tax support scheme and agreeing to the personal adviser verify their application. Where the care leaver is solely liable for the council tax, a 100% payment will be made, where they are liable for 50% of the council tax, that percentage will be paid (after all exemptions & support payments have been made).</p>
<p>Council Tax Exemption / Allowance <i>Continued</i></p>	
<p>Travel</p>	<p>Where young people are undertaking an education or training activity the cost of travel may be provided by the education or training provider subject to the terms of the young person’s learner agreement. Young people who are in receipt of the 16 to 19 bursary should use the bursary award to cover travel costs.</p>
<p>Qualifying Young People</p>	<p>Dependent on an assessment of need which includes an evaluation of all income, Qualifying Young People may be entitled to all allowances.</p> <p>For detailed guidance please see Appendix B</p>

<p>Introduction to Driving Allowance</p> <p>Age 17 (to 21)</p>	<p>Subject to an assessment of need, Children’s Services will provide/pay the costs of obtaining the following ‘Introduction to Driving’ package to assist a young person’s employability and to provide an additional identity document:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. 1 provisional driving licence; B. 1 theory test, upon evidence of pass mark of practice tests; C. 1 theory test booklet/CD Rom/App; D. Support to apply to charities for driving lesson funding, i.e. Rees Foundation driving project = 12 x 2 hour driving lessons. Children’s Service would also consider paying for 5 x 1 hour driving lessons if the young person is assessed as pass ready and does not have any driving convictions; E. 1 practical driving test. <p>The Introduction to Driving package is available to young people aged 17 to 21 and is conditional on the individual young person having been engaged in education, training or employment (full time) for at least 6 months. The lessons must be provided by an approved instructor and should be used for motor car lessons.</p> <p>If the young person does not qualify for the Rees Foundation driving project, Children’s Services will apply the following approach. Children’s Services will fund 10 (1 hour) lessons on the basis that the young person also covers the cost of 10 (1 hour) lessons. The young person must provide their contribution (the cost of 10 (1 hours) lessons) prior to the personal adviser booking the overall package. Children’s Services will also provide A, B, C and E as set out above.</p> <p>Depending on circumstances and an assessment of need, lone parents and young people with SEND may be exempt from the requirement to be engaged in education, training or employment (and having completed at least 6 months). Consideration of eligibility and funding of lone parents and SEND young people should be presented to the Service Delivery Manager.</p>
<p>Personal Luggage £35.00</p>	<p>Luggage – all young people moving to independence or between placements must have appropriate personal luggage. At least two items of appropriate personal luggage.</p>

<p> Birthday: 19th & 20th Birthday £50.00 21st Birthday £75.00 </p>	<p> The Pathway Plan should specify whether the allowance is to be given to the young person directly as a gift or via a payment into their account (via BACS), or is used by the personal adviser, staying put carer or previous carer to purchase a gift. </p> <p> The birthday allowance covers the cost of a gift, wrapping and a card. </p> <p> The birthday allowance will only be paid to young people who remain in contact with their leaving care personal adviser and who are actively engaged in the pathway planning process. </p>
<p> Christmas and Festival Allowances Age 18 to 21 £75.00 £100.00 if the Young Person is a Parent. </p>	<p> The Pathway Plan should specify whether the allowance is to be given to the young person directly as a gift or via a payment into their account (via BACS), or is used by the personal adviser, staying put carer or previous carer to purchase a gift. </p> <p> The Christmas/Festival allowance covers the cost of a gift, wrapping and a card. </p> <p> The Christmas/Festival allowance will only be paid to young people who remain in contact with their leaving care personal adviser and who are actively engaged in the pathway planning process. The allowance can be spread over several festivals/events. </p>
<p>Digital Connectivity</p>	<p> Young people who are seeking employment and claiming Universal Credit may be eligible for six months of free broadband internet access. Several broadband and mobile providers also have reduced rate tariffs (£10.00 per month) for those claiming Universal Credit (Talk Talk, BT, Virgin Money). </p> <p> Where a young person is on a low wage or has a low income and doesn't qualify for a reduced rate tariff, Children's Service will provide six months of digital access. This may be provided via the Care Leavers Covenant Offer or directly by Children's Services. </p> <p> Subject to an assessment of need and where young people require a mobile phone to remain in contact with their personal adviser, and/or, make/sustain a Universal Credit claim they will be provided with a basic Smart Phone. This can be provided once and in an emergency. </p>

<p>Winter Utilities and Heating Allowance</p> <p>£10.00 per Week</p> <p>1st year of Independent Living</p>	<p>Young people living in semi-independent or independent accommodation who are responsible for, and pay, variable utility/service and heating costs will be provided with a £10.00 per week (£260.00) winter utilities and heating allowance during their 1st year (winter) of independent living. The allowance is available from the 1st October to the 31st March of the first winter they are living independently.</p> <p>Depending on an assessment of need the allowance can be provided on a weekly, monthly or quarterly basis. The allowance should be paid directly to the young person's utility provider or credited to his or her electricity/gas payment key/card.</p> <p>Total payment £260.00 during the first year of independent living.</p> <p>For most young people this allowance will be provided between their 18th and 19th birthday.</p> <p>Personal advisers will also support young people to access other forms of support to assist with bills, utility and service costs and charges. Through the care leavers covenant young people can access reduced rate water charges (Seven Trent Water [70% discount for 18 to 21 year olds and 50% discount for 21 to 25 year olds) and other types of support to help with bills (Bromford residents support). Personal advisers should assess what support may be available in the area that they young person lives and through any support provided by their landlord and/or via Telford Council.</p> <p>The Citizens Advice provides information about support available:</p> <p>https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/energy/energy-supply/get-help-paying-your-bills/grants-and-benefits-to-help-you-pay-your-energy-bills/</p>
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<p>Counselling and Therapeutic Needs</p>	<p>Telford & Wrekin Children’s Services will assist young people to access counselling and/or therapeutic services via universal health services and via Community Mental Health Services (CMHS).</p> <p>Young people living in Telford & Wrekin can use the 0-25 Emotional Health and Wellbeing Service for Shropshire (called Bee U). Young people up to 25 can also use the Beam Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin which provides a free drop-in counselling service.</p> <p>Personal advisers will support young people to attend these services and the young person’s GP in order to assist and support them to access counselling and therapeutic services.</p> <p>Where appropriate and dependent on an assessment of need and where CMHS services and universal services are not available a request for additional support should be submitted to the team manager or service delivery manager for consideration and approval.</p>
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<p>Health Needs</p>	<p>Telford & Wrekin Children’s Services will assist young people to access services to meet their health and developmental needs via the ‘looked after and care leaver’ health provision and via universal health services.</p> <p>Personal advisers should support young people to complete an NHS HC1 form for all 18 to 21 year olds who are not employed and/or not registered for welfare benefits. This is particularly important for care leavers who are maintained by Children’s Services (or undertaking higher education courses) and who need to demonstrate their level of income in order to access free, or reduced cost NHS services. The HC1 form enables young people to obtain an NHS low income exemption certificate. This will provide free or reduced cost dental, optician and prescription services.</p> <p>Where young people need regular medication/prescriptions and do not qualify for free prescriptions consideration should be given to purchasing a Prescription Prepayment Certificate. These cost £31.25 for 3 months and £111.60 for 12 months, thus capping the quarterly or yearly cost of prescriptions.</p> <p>NHS Prescription Prepayment Certificates (PPCs) NHSBSA</p> <p>Personal advisers will support young people to attend their GP in order to assist and support them to access counselling, therapeutic and health services.</p> <p>In exceptional circumstances, and where appropriate, and dependent on an assessment of need, Telford & Wrekin Children’s Services may provide funds to secure additional health services. This will require consideration and approval from the team manager or service delivery manager.</p>
<p>Special Needs Costs</p>	<p>Telford & Wrekin Children’s Services will assist young people to access services aimed at addressing any additional/special needs and, depending on an assessment of need, may assist in providing resources to address the identified need.</p>

<p>Cultural Needs</p>	<p>Telford & Wrekin Children’s Services will assist young people to access services aimed at meeting their cultural needs. Where appropriate, and dependent on an assessment of need, Telford & Wrekin Children’s Services will fund services aimed at meeting identified needs i.e., skin and hair care, dietary requirements. This will require consideration and approval from the team manager or service delivery manager.</p>
<p>Religious Needs</p>	<p>Telford & Wrekin Children’s Services will assist young people to access services aimed at meeting their religious needs. Where appropriate, and dependent on an assessment of need, Telford & Wrekin Children’s Services will fund services aimed at meeting identified religious needs. This will require consideration and approval from the team manager or service delivery manager.</p>
<p>Further and Higher Education - Overview</p>	<p>Financial Support for Further and Higher Education courses is available:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • up to the young person’s 21st birthday; • or until the completion of the course following the young person’s 21st birthday where the course commenced before their 21st birthday; • between the 21st and 25th birthday where a young person wishes to resume or commence education or training between those dates; • until the education or training course is completed following the 25th birthday where the course commenced prior to the 25th birthday. <p>All financial support is dependent on an individual assessment of need and on the young person complying with any conditionality attached to the financial support set out in the Pathway Plan.</p> <p>Courses should be full time and funding will only be available to repeat the same course in exceptional circumstances.</p> <p>Children’s Services will fund up to five visits to universities where young people are predicted to get grades that are sufficient to apply for university. The visits can be undertaken with social workers, personal advisers, foster carers or residential workers and are aimed at enabling young people to make a choice of university and course.</p> <p>For full details see pages 35 to 46.</p>

<p>Education, Training and Employment Related Support</p>	<p>Children’s Services may provide financial assistance for costs associated with education or training courses or employment opportunities of the young person’s choice, depending on an assessment of need which includes the course/activity suitability. Where appropriate, Children’s Services may consider funding for extra tuition.</p>
<p>Learner Agreements</p>	<p>All education, training and employment support (practical and financial) will be based on an individual learner agreement developed between the young person and their social worker/personal adviser and including input from the virtual school and the young person’s education/training tutor/mentor. The agreement will set out the level of practical and financial support to be provided by all parties and will include learning goals and targets and attendance/academic requirements. Failure to comply with the learner agreement may result in financial and practical support ceasing and a requirement to leave the course or activity.</p>
<p>FE Grant - Stationery, Educational Visits, Books and Equipment</p>	<p>Further Education Equipment Young people who are undertaking full time further education courses are entitled to a grant of up to: - £225.00 Stationery, Educational Visits, Books and IT Equipment Grant These Grants are per academic year, are none transferable and are only available for stationery, educational visits and books and equipment (assessed each year of the course).</p>
<p>F.E. & H E Computer Grant Up-To £350.00 – One-Off</p>	<p>All young people entering further education (level 2 or above) or higher education will be assisted to purchase or access a tablet or lap-top. The grant of up-to £350.00 will be provided once between the ages of 16 and 21/25.</p>
<p>Prom Activity Up – To £200.00</p>	<p>Children’s Services will support young people to participate in a ‘Prom Activity’, costs can include dress/suit hire or purchase, transport, prom tickets and associated costs. Social workers or personal advisers should ascertain the costs and seek approval from the Leaving Care Team Manager.</p>
<p>Child Care</p>	<p>Childcare costs should be accessed through the Care to Learn Fund.</p>
<p>Commencing Work Grant</p>	<p>Children’s Services will purchase equipment and/or clothing to assist the young person with their chosen employment e.g., interview clothes, overalls, protective clothing, depending on an assessment of need.</p>

<p>Education, Training and Employment Related Support <i>Continued</i></p>	<p>Maximum Commencing Work Grant £100.00. This is provided as a single one-off payment.</p> <p>Young people should submit a list of requirements regarding equipment, course books etc to their social worker, or leaving care personal adviser.</p> <p>Care leavers are a priority group for the Vulnerable Young Person's 16 to 19 Bursary, £1200.00 per year paid by the 6th form or college.</p> <p>Care leavers are eligible for a £3000.00 Apprenticeship Bursary, paid by the apprenticeship provider; in addition, the provider get £1000.00 to support the young person. The Bursary is paid once by the provider between 16 and up to 25.</p>
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Education & Training (16 & 17 year olds) Young People Aged 18 and Older

Further Education Courses

Children's Services is committed to assisting and supporting young people to maximise their potential through educational and training opportunities.

1. Eligible and Relevant young people (16 and 17 year olds) who are studying at sixth form college or further education colleges will be supported via their foster care placements or children's homes and, for those living in semi-independent and independent accommodation, via their leaving care personal allowance.
2. From the age of 18 to the end of the academic year following their 21st birthday, care leavers who are 'without parental support' (estranged from their families) and who are studying full time (12 hours or more of 'guided learning') can claim Universal Credit on the grounds of being in 'Relevant Education' and they do not have to be available for employment. Young people can start or change courses at any point up until their 21st birthday.
3. In situations where young people aged 21 to 25 wish to resume or commence education or training, the following guidelines in regard to financial support will apply (see page 37 & 45);
 - Young people returning to the service should initially contact the leaving care duty worker;
 - Funding will be considered by the team manager or service delivery manager following an assessment of need (including access to financial resources) and will be based on the motivation and commitment of the young person to undertake, sustain and complete the course in line with the following principles:
 - Full time courses – Following an assessment of need, young people may be provided with a maximum weekly maintenance grant of £71.70 per week, up to £3,728.40 per year and registration fees grant of up to £1000.00, full time and £500.00 part time. Young people will be expected to work part time in order to cover their accommodation/rental costs. These grants are subject to young people maintaining 85% attendance, having satisfactory reports from the college, and not having access to other financial resources. Personal advisers will liaise with colleges and/or training providers to ensure satisfactory attendance and progress. As young people will be on a low income, personal advisers should support their students to apply for reduced rate fees. As young people will not be receiving a means-tested benefit; will be in receipt of a low income and are a priority group for learner support funds, personal advisers and students should make timely applications for these funds. Personal advisers and young people should also check if they qualify for Universal Credit, some non-degree education courses may qualify the young person for Universal Credit where it is deemed that the course is improving their employability and it does not interfere with their commitment to look for work if they are getting Universal Credit on that basis. Lone parents with children under 3 and disabled young people can also undertake courses, as they should be receiving benefits without having to be available or looking for work.
 - Part time courses – One-off grants will be made following an evaluation of the course and an assessment of need of the young person and their financial circumstances. Grants may range from £20.00 to £1,000.00 to be used to assist with registration fees and equipment

costs. Grants will be based on need, motivation to gain educational qualifications and whether the candidate has any education qualifications.

- A key priority will be to ensure all young people hold a level 2 qualification.

Education & Training (21 to 25)

Access arrangements to Higher Education courses are the same as young people aged 18 to 21.

The following activities immediately prior to the start of a resumed or new course will be taken as evidence of motivation and commitment: -

1. Courses of study leading to a level 1 qualification or above;
2. Employment in the field relating to the requested education/training course;
3. Voluntary work relating to the requested education/training course;
4. Training courses relating to the requested education course.

Young people may also be required to demonstrate that they can contribute to the funding package (accommodation/rental costs/needs) via part time employment and/or by accessing Learner Support or Advanced Learner Loans available from Student Finance England (<https://www.gov.uk/further-education-courses/financial-help>). In such circumstances an assessment of financial need will be completed in order to assist the young person with their weekly maintenance.

Following the assessment of need, the request for financial support will be presented to a senior manager and each case will be allocated to a Leaving Care Personal Adviser who will develop a Pathway Plan a Learning Agreement and a payment transfer system (generally by regular BACS payments) and a system for monitoring the young person's education/training progress and attendance.

All young people attending further, and higher, education will be required to sign an authorisation to share information form and will need to agree to their personal adviser liaising with the educational establishment in order to support the course and monitor attendance and learning.

Financial Support - Traineeships and Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships

The majority of apprenticeships are classed as employment with a study component. These types of apprenticeships are generally secured by young people gaining employment with a company or organisation that is a registered apprenticeship provider. The young person is employed and also undertakes a study component towards a:

- National Vocational Qualification (NVQ)
- Technical Certificate
- Functional Skills (Mathematics, English)
- Personal Learning and Thinking Skills (PLTS)
- ERR (Employment Rights and Responsibilities) Workbook

From the 1st April 2024, the minimum wage rate is £6.40 per hour for apprentices aged 16 to 18 and those aged 19 or over who are in their first year. All other apprentices are entitled to the National Minimum Wage for their age and can be found on

www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-rates

As the apprenticeship is deemed employment, young people will be eligible for a range of benefits, including housing benefit and Universal Credit (housing element of Universal Credit) depending on their circumstances. If the apprenticeship is deemed employment, the young person would not be covered by the age 21-25 Education and Training Care Leaver entitlements.

Traineeships and Programme Led Apprenticeships

These types of traineeships and apprenticeships are provided by a training provider or college, with work experience provided at the establishment or off-site, and are therefore deemed education/training rather than employment. Young people may be eligible for benefits/Universal Credit depending on their age and circumstances. In general, young people aged 21 to 25 will not be able to access benefits (unless they are parents or have a disability). Young people undertaking these courses are eligible for the '21-25 Telford & Wrekin Education and Training' care leaver entitlements (subject to an assessment of need and the pre-requisite conditions above being met).

National Minimum Wage

The National Minimum Wage of £6.40 per hour applies to apprentices from April 2024. The wage applies to:

- all apprentices aged under 19
- apprentices aged 19 or over in the first year of their Apprenticeship

This should mean that apprentices get a weekly wage of at least £243.20 (38 hours per week).

National Minimum Wage 2024-2025:

21 Plus	18 to 20	Under 18	Apprentice
£11.44	£8.60	£6.40	£6.40

Financial Support

Access to financial support will always be dependent on an assessment of the young person's financial circumstances. Where appropriate; young people will be provided with practical support to help them access education, training or benefits funding, rather than with the provision of direct grants. The level of practical support and financial support should be set out within the young person's pathway plan and highlight any conditionality to the support being provided.

Higher Education

Student Finance

The level of fees, loans, grants, and bursaries for higher education student's change each academic year. The most accurate and up to date information is available via the following link:

<http://www.gov.uk/studentfinancesteps>

Tuition Fees and Tuition Fee Loans

From September 2023 the maximum tuition fees and tuition fee loan per year is:

- New full-time students £9,250.00
- New full-time students at private university or college £6,165.00

To qualify for a tuition fee loan the part time course needs to be at least 25% of an equivalent full-time course each year (e.g., four years instead of one year full time). The tuition fee loan is provided by Student Finance England and is paid directly to the university to cover the full cost of the course.

Maintenance Loans

The maintenance loan is provided by Student Finance England and is paid directly to the student, normally in three instalments and is provided to help with living costs such as rent, food, bills and equipment and books.

The maximum maintenance loan in 2024-2025 for students starting courses after the 1st August 2023 (per year) is set out below:

- Students studying in London £13,348.00
- Students studying outside of London £10,227.00
- Students living at home £8,610.00

➤ In the final year of the course the maximum loan rate is reduced by approximately 10%.

Loan Repayment

Graduates repay the combined tuition fee and maintenance loan when they have finished studying and are earning over a given threshold per year. The given threshold, how much is repaid, and the level of interest charged, depends on which 'Loan' Plan (four types) the student is on. This link provides detailed information – [types of student loan plan](#). The monthly repayments are linked to the person's income. After a certain amount of time (30 years for those starting courses in 2022 and earlier and 40 years for those starting courses in 2023), any outstanding loans will be written off if the money has not been repaid.

The threshold for repayment and the level of repayment also depends on which Plan applies and the prevailing interest rates – check below:

[Student Loans Interest Rates and Repayment Threshold Announcement - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk)
(www.gov.uk)

Higher Education Continued

Support from Individual Universities

In addition to the financial support provided by Student Finance England, most Higher Education Institutions will offer their own financial support. Each university will have its own eligibility criteria and any awards may only be available to a limited number of students:

- **Bursaries**
- **Scholarships**
- **Fee Waivers**

Bursaries and Scholarships will generally not have to be repaid and Fee Waivers are applied to part, or all of the course costs.

Access to Learning Fund

Most universities also have an 'Access to Learning Fund' which is available to students who are experiencing financial hardship. Some universities offer care leavers priority access to Access to Learner Funds. Sometimes known as Fair Access Funds. 'Propel' is hosted by the 'Become' Charity and sets out or links to the support (including financial support) that each higher education institution provides and also includes a named contact at the majority of educational settings.

<https://propel.org.uk/Search/>

National Scholarship Programme (NSP)

The National Scholarship Programme is designed to offer support to students from low income backgrounds. The NSP is funded jointly between the government and individual universities. Individual universities can make their own decisions as to who receives a National Scholarship. Some universities may offer care leavers priority access to the NSP. Support may be offered in a variety of ways including cash grants, reduced cost accommodation or a fee waiver. Any funds received from the NSP are non-repayable.

The Care Leavers Higher Education Bursary

The Care Leavers Higher Education Bursary is provided by the student's local authority (Telford & Wrekin Children's Services) and is provided as a minimum grant of £2,000.00 throughout the length of the whole course.

Grants and Awards From Charitable Trusts

Trusts and charities provide financial grants and awards to students. Advice about what may be available is available through individual universities or through the Educational Grants Advisory Service (EGAS).

Public libraries should have directories of charitable trusts that provide grants and awards:

- The Educational Grants Directory;
- The Charities Digest;
- The Grants Register;
- The Directory of Grant Making Trusts.

Higher Education Continued

General Information

Care leavers considering attending university should check with the universities that they are thinking about applying to, for information about the support that each institution will provide. This information can then assist when making a final choice about which university to apply for as a first, second or third choice.

The students' support service should be able to provide information on both the practical and financial support that may be available.

Information about additional support to care leavers can be found on the Access and Participation Plans that each institution is required to have. Information can be found on the web site of each institution or via: <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/>

Welfare Benefits

The majority of young people who undertake higher education courses are ineligible for welfare benefits such as Universal Credit, tax credits, Income Support and Housing Benefit/Local Housing Allowance. Certain limited groups of young people who undertake higher education courses such as lone parents and sick and disabled young people may remain or be eligible for welfare benefits whilst studying. If a young person is entitled to welfare benefits (mostly likely Universal Credit for all new applicants) they are not eligible for the full Telford & Wrekin Higher Education Grant but continue to receive the HE Bursary element and the Computer element (if not already accessed).

Lone Parents and Sick and Disabled Students who are in receipt of Welfare Benefits should check with the Department for Work and Pensions regarding the rules about student finance. Being in receipt of student finances may cause disqualification and/or a reduced entitlement to welfare benefits. Generally, lone parents and sick and disabled young people will be assumed by the DWP to have taken out Student Loans including the Special Support Loan element for those on benefit-level income. Their level of welfare benefit will be calculated by taking into account the loans they receive but not the Special Support element.

Lone Parents (and certain couples with children) may be eligible for the Government's **Childcare Grant** (£192.62 per week for one child and up to £331.95 per week for more than one child) and/or **Parents' Learning Allowance** (up to £1,963.00). Disabled students may be eligible for the **Disabled Students' Allowance**. Students who have adult dependents may be eligible for an **Adult Dependents' Grant (ADG)** (up to £3,438.00 per year) (2024-2025). These grants do not affect welfare benefits.

Telford & Wrekin Children's Services - Higher Education Financial Support

The Telford & Wrekin Higher Education Grant which includes the Government's Higher Education Bursary can be accessed once (for 4 years) at any point between a young person's 18th and 25th birthday (the grant ceases when the young person leaves or completes the course).

All young people entering higher education are entitled to:-

- A one-off Computer Grant for a note-pad or lap-top depending on an assessment of need and if not previously accessed – up to £350.00.
- 1. A Higher Education Bursary of £2,000.00 which is provided over the period of a two, three or four year course. Depending on the length of the course the £2,000.00 per course will be constituted of £1,000.00 per year (2 year course) H.E. Bursary, £666.67 per year (3 year course) H. E. Bursary, £500.00 per year (4 year course) H. E. Bursary.
- 2. A deposit for university or private sector accommodation in the area where studying .
- 3. A Term Time and Vacation Accommodation Allowance - Up to the level of the LHA one-bedroom self-contained rate and/or the level of university accommodation. This is provided where there is a demonstrable liability for rent in the young person's name. Subject to approval by the leaving care team manager, where there is no liability for rent, but a contribution to living costs is required, a percentage of the contribution can be provided subject to an assessment of need. Where university accommodation has here the university accommodation has a rent liability for the whole of the academic year, (ie private rented accommodation) and the young person is returning to a staying put arrangement during vacation times, the local authority will fund the university accommodation for the vacation time and the young person will be responsible for paying the staying put rent contribution.
- Young people applying to and undertaking higher education courses will be required to apply for all available universal student funding i.e., maintenance loans, tuition fee loans, as well as individual establishment bursaries. These loans and grants and the H.E. Bursary should be used by students as their main source of income through-out their term time course of study. This will fund their higher education accommodation, living expenses, travel, equipment and book needs.
- This amounts to a payment of approximately £5,600.00 per year – depending on location, the need for a deposit, type of accommodation (rent) and the nature of the course.

How the H. E. Bursary and Accommodation Allowance is provided should be set out in the young person's pathway plan.

- Higher National Certificate and Higher National Diploma courses are defined as Higher Education Courses. Both HNC and HND courses often attract a bursary and/or a grant from the individual university.

Young people who remain eligible for means tested welfare benefits are provided with the:

- Computer Grant (one-off);
- H. E. Bursary (per course).

Higher Education – Requirements and Payment Process

Telford & Wrekin Children's Services as corporate parents, wants to ensure all care leavers have the best possible chance of success when undertaking a higher education and university course. The following guidance has been developed to provide clarity about the higher education payments process and the eligibility requirements that young people are expected to follow.

The frequency and amount of each payment as well as the method of paying the higher education bursary and allowance should be set out in the young person's Pathway Plan.

All payments are dependent on, and subject to, a young person agreeing to the following requirements:

- Maintaining regular and ongoing contact with their leaving care personal adviser;
- Attending all pre-arranged meetings with their leaving care personal adviser;
- Completing all actions and agreed tasks within the Learning Agreement and education section of the pathway plan;
- Identification of a suitable contact within the university staff/support service to take part in joint meetings in order to ensure educational goals and targets are met and appropriate practical, educational, pastoral and financial support is being provided;
- To agree to regular liaison between the university and leaving care personal adviser, in order to monitor progress, attendance and attainment;
- To inform their leaving care personal adviser and local authority of any change of circumstances (for example contact details, course details) as soon as possible;
- Student Finance England have confirmed that they will fund the course and the young person is deemed a 'Home Student' for the Tuition Fee Loan;
- Having an asylum status that enables them to receive Student Finance England loans and that they are deemed a 'Home Student';
- To focus on educational activities by not undertaking more than twenty hours of employment per week during term time. To understand that in circumstances where more than twenty hours per week of employment is undertaken, this income will be considered when calculating the level of financial support.

All young people attending further, and higher education will be required to sign a consent to share/disclose information form and will need to agree to their leaving care personal adviser liaising with the educational establishment in order to support the program of study and monitor attendance and learning.

See Appendix H for Consent to Share/Disclose Information Form.

Asylum Seeking Young People

Young people should only be supported to progress to university/higher education if they have a form of status that gives them access to 'Home Student Status and Fees' and Student England Finances and have a positive status that continues until the course is completed. All support from Children's Services and any other source should be clearly set

out in the Pathway Plan. Where young people do not have a status that gives them access to the above forms of financial support, personal advisers will support young people to apply for scholarships, grants and bursaries from voluntary organisations.

Post Graduate Courses

Children's Services will assist young people to identify financial support and resources to undertake post graduate courses. Generally, vocational post graduate courses are funded by secondment from an employer, or by individual universities providing a bursary to cover course/tuition fees. Children's Services may consider a contribution to post graduate courses following a needs assessment and all avenues of funding being explored. All requests for post graduate funding will be considered by the leaving care team manager and service delivery manager following an assessment of need, which includes checking the start and end dates, whether the course represents a progression from a previous course and the likely outcome at the end of the course.

Young People
Returning to the
Local Authority
Aged 21 to 25

Young people are entitled to resume, or continue, a leaving care service from the age of 21 to 25 on request – 1) for education and training, 2) for general support.

The primary purpose of the entitlement to 'general support' for young people aged 21 to 25 is to provide continuity and on-going practical advice and guidance. Where young people require financial support, personal advisers will assist the young person to identify universal sources of financial support to enable young people to be self-sustaining. In very exceptional circumstances and following an assessment of need, a request for financial support (usually provided in kind) will be considered. The assessment and request will be considered by the team manager and the service delivery manager.

Consultation with
Young People

Travel Expenses

Young people will receive a financial allowance of £8.60 (18 to 20), £11.44 (21 to 25) per hour, (the amount is linked to the prevailing minimum wage for the age of the young person) plus expenses when undertaking consultation exercises.

Payments to young people who undertake consultation exercises can be paid in cash or vouchers.

Expenses (travel/substance) related to enabling young people to participate in consultation exercise will be provided following an assessment of need (i.e., if public transport is available or taxis are required).

<p>Subsistence</p>	<p>Depending on an assessment of need leaving care personal advisers can purchase refreshments to enable a keywork session to be inclusive.</p> <p>As a general principle, keyworker session refreshments should be agreed in advance by the Leaving Care Team Manager and should not exceed £15.00 in total (up to £7.50 each) and occur relatively infrequently.</p> <p>Alternatively, leaving care personal advisers can purchase ingredients and prepare a meal with a young person as part of a keywork preparation for independence/life skills session.</p>
<p>Exit Interview - Service Evaluation / Questionnaire</p>	<p>Young people will receive a £10.50 reward for taking part in a leaving care exit interview/questionnaire/evaluation. The evaluation will be undertaken between the ages of 21/25 when a young person is ceasing their involvement with the leaving care service.</p>
<p>Emergency Payments</p>	<p>Telford Crisis Support operates a Foodbank in Telford and Wrekin to provide emergency food, toiletries, and clothing to those most in need. Personal advisers will support young people to access the foodbank in situations where the young person requires emergency food, clothing, or support with utility payments.</p> <p>http://telfordcrisissupport.org.uk/about/telford-foodbank</p> <p>In addition, Telford Council provide emergency welfare crisis assistance for residents who are in need.</p> <p>Emergency Welfare Assistance Live Well Telford</p> <p>Subject to an assessment of need, young people may be provided with additional support by the leaving care team in exceptional situations and circumstances.</p>
<p>Exceptional Needs Payment</p>	<p>Where appropriate, and dependent on an assessment of need, Telford & Wrekin Children’s Services may provide funds for exceptional needs as a one-off payment.</p> <p>This will require approval from a service delivery manager.</p>

Section 3

This section applies to Eligible, Relevant and Former Relevant Children Aged 16 to 21/25 or until completion of an agreed programme of education or training being undertaken on the young person's 25th birthday

Setting Up Home Grant	
	Children Services will cover the initial costs of the following:
£169.50 Not Transferable	For TV licence. (First licence paid for by Telford & Wrekin Children's Services and subsequent ones paid for by young person).
Up to £50.00 Not Transferable	Health and safety pack <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two smoke detectors, one carbon monoxide detector, door security chain, chub lock, fire blanket and first aid kit.
Up to £50.00 Not Transferable	Setting up home starter pack. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coffee, tea, washing-up liquid, light bulbs, laundry and cleaning equipment utility key/card top-up, etc.
Up to £100.00 Not Transferable	Fitting of a gas/electric cooker by an approved fitter <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided once
Up to £100.00 Not Transferable	Contents insurance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided once for the first year living independently
Up to £100.00 Not Transferable	Removal costs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided once for a move to independent accommodation
£3000.00	Accommodation and Decorating Items
Up To £3569.50	Total Amount
<p>As a general principle up to £500.00 can be used prior to the young person's 18th birthday whilst they are living in semi-independent accommodation (furnished) and the remainder can be used after the age of 18 when they move to independent accommodation (unfurnished).</p> <p>In situations where social workers for 16 & 17 year olds are working with young people moving to semi-independent living and are planning on purchasing setting up home items they must liaise with personal advisers regarding the use of the allowance. Authorisation for expenditure must be sought from the leaving care team manager.</p>	

The Setting Up Home Grant is available up to the age of 25 or, until the completion of an education or training programme extending beyond 25, where young people are attending further education/training or higher education courses on their 25th birthday.

The Setting Up Home Grant is provided to ensure that the accommodation the young person is living in is homely and furnished and should always be used to purchase household items. The Setting Up Home Grant is based on an assessment of need, taking account of any items provided with the accommodation.

The entitlement to the Setting Up Home Grant extends to the age of 25, or until the end of the agreed program of education/training being undertaken on the 25th birthday. The entitlement is to household items/furnishings not necessarily to a cash payment. The purpose of the Setting Up Home Grant is to ensure that young people have the household items that they need to furnish their home rather than an entitlement to a cash amount.

Young people will have a choice of how the Setting Up Home Grant is used; a) supported shop, b) items purchased by Children's Services that have been identified/chosen by the young person, c) where assessed as appropriate, young people will be provided with a cash grant to purchase items, this will be undertaken where the young person has been able to evidence financial capability and robust money management skills.

VAT may be reclaimed on all purchases, where items are VAT rated and where Children's Services has purchased the goods. Original receipts must be kept by Children's Services.

Where young people have No Recourse to Public Funds, a temporary asylum status, or are 'All Rights Exhausted', they are likely to be living in temporary and/or semi-independent accommodation and therefore will only need to use part of their Setting Up Home Grant until they obtain permanent status as the accommodation provided will usually contain the majority of household items.

Where young people have had several moves and may have lost, misplaced, or had items damaged, additional resources/items may be made available subject to an assessment of need.

Where young people are living in unsettled or temporary accommodation, the Setting Up Home Grant should be used to purchase essential items, with the majority of the Grant being held back until more settled/permanent accommodation is available.

Young people are entitled to one set of removal costs, cooker fitting costs, insurance costs, health and safety equipment costs and one setting up home starter pack. Where a young person requires a second set of one-off costs, these will only be provided subject

to an assessment of need and approval of the leaving care team manager and service delivery manager.

Where young people have additional needs and are being supported by an Adult Service under the Care Act 2014 the Setting Up Home Grant will continue to be available if it is required. Where a young person is placed into residential care and all items are provided through the placement the Setting Up Home Grant will not be needed. Where young people move to supported living, an assessment of need will be undertaken, and the Setting Up Home Grant will be provided if the accommodation requires additional furnishings.

The final Pathway Plan at age 21/25 should also set out a timescale and process for obtaining the final items. Where young people are being discharged from hospital or being released from custody immediately prior to, or immediately after their 25th birthday, the final pathway plan should set out when and how the Setting Up Home Grant will be accessed and used, if the young person does not have a discharge or release date by their 25th birthday, the service and the provision of the Grant will cease, the use of the Setting Up Home Grant should be completed by 25½.

£3000.00 for Setting Up Home Equipment (Accommodation and Decorating Items): This Grant should be spent in stages; initially on semi-independent setting needs and subsequently, on independent accommodation needs. The grant will always be spent collaboratively between the leaving care personal adviser (or foster carer / staying put carer / residential keyworker / supported accommodation support worker) and young person. Original receipts should be retained by social workers/personal advisers for audit purposes, reclaiming VAT and in case defective items need to be returned.

*See below for essential items guide price list – this is not an exhaustive list. Young people may have acquired some items gifted or through savings etc. and therefore are able to spend more on individual items if in agreement with their social worker or personal adviser. Young people may also choose to put additional money towards items above the guide price.

Storage

In circumstances where young people have to leave accommodation and require storage, they should seek to arrange this via family, friends and former carers. In exceptional circumstances Children's Services will organise the storage of up to three boxes of important personal items (photographs, important documents, certificates etc). Prior to storing the items, they should be catalogued to ensure there is a full inventory of all items being stored.

***Essential Items Price Guide:**

Kitchen	
Starter pack	£40*
Kitchen Sink Set	£15**
Crockery & Mugs	£23
Cooker & fitting	£260
Fridge Freezer	£130
Glasses	£3
Mop/Bucket	£15
Broom/Dustpan Brush	£15
Vacuum Cleaner	£50
Microwave	£45
Kettle	£10
Table & Chairs	£100
Broom/Dustpan Brush	£15
Vacuum Cleaner	£50
Washing Machine	£200
Airer	£15
Tea Towels	£5
Iron/Ironing Board	£20
Toaster	£15

Living Room	
Sofa	£200
TV	£170
TV Stand	£25
Study Desk	£70
Coffee Table	£20
Clock	£15
Mirror	£30
CD Radio	£30
Soft Furnishing	£20
Ornaments/Pictures	£40
Rug	£15

Bathroom	
Towels	£20
Toilet Brush/Bin	£12
Bathmat	£8
Mirror	£20

Bedroom	
Single Bed	£80
Double Bed	£100
Headboard	£50
Single Mattress	£80
Double Mattress	£120
Wardrobe	£90
Chest of Drawers	£50
Bedside Table	£30
Laundry Basket	£10
Bedside Lamp	£5
Clock	£10
Mattress Protector	£6
Single Sheets x2	£10
Double Sheets x2	£12
Single Duvet	£10
Double Duvet	£15
Single Duvet Cover	£16
Double Duvet Cover	£20
Pillows	£10

Miscellaneous	

In addition to the above items identified, The Setting Up Home Grant may also be used

Section 4

Appendices

Appendix A

Categories of Care Leavers

Categories of Young People Eligible for Leaving Care Services and Support

Eligible children: [paragraph 19(2)(b) of Schedule 2 to the Children Act 1989 and Regulation 40 of the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010]

- An eligible child is a young person aged 16 or 17 who is looked after and has been looked after for at least 13 weeks after the age of 14. [Can become an eligible child at any point from their 16th to 18th birthday as long as they have completed 13 weeks] [must complete 24 hours looked after age 16/17]
- The 13 weeks can be a continuous period or a series of episodes.
- In calculating the 13 weeks no account is taken of pre-planned short breaks amounting to no more than 4 weeks and where a child returns to their parent, or someone with parental responsibility.
- Young people who are remanded into custody become looked after at the point of remand. This group may then become an eligible children or relevant children if they complete 13 weeks of being looked after.

Relevant children: [Section 23A(2)]

- A relevant child is a young person aged 16 or 17 who was an 'eligible' child' but is no longer looked after.
- Additional relevant children:
 - Detained (sentenced), or in hospital prior to 16th birthday, and
 - Looked after for at least 13 weeks after age 14 and looked after at point of being detained (sentenced) or entering hospital (and still in custody/detention/hospital).
- In calculating the 13 weeks no account is taken of pre-planned short breaks amounting to no more than 4 weeks and where a child returns to their parent, or someone with parental responsibility.
- A child who has lived with someone who has parental responsibility or a residence order for a continuous period of 6 months or more, and has ceased to be looked after (whether that period commenced before or after they ceased to be looked after) is not deemed a Relevant child (but is deemed a Qualifying child).
 - If the above arrangement breaks down and the child ceases to live with the person concerned, the child becomes a relevant child.

Former Relevant children (age 18 to 21, or, until the education or training programme being undertaken on their 21st birthday is completed): [Section 23C (1)]

- A young person who was previously an 'Eligible' child or a 'Relevant' child

Former Relevant children (age 21, and under 25) [Section 23CA (1)]

- Young people who inform the local authority that they want to pursue education or training between the age of 21 and 25 and where previously a former 'Relevant' child.

Former Relevant children (age 21, and under 25) [Section 23CZB (1)]

- Young people who inform the local authority that they want to continue or resume a leaving care service between the age of 21 and 25 and where previously a former 'Relevant' child.

Persons Qualifying for Advice and Assistance (aged 16 to 21, and under certain circumstances aged under 25) [Section 24]

- Young people aged at least 16, and under 21/25, who were subject to a special guardianship order and were looked after before the making of that order.
- Young people who were previously subject to a private fostering arrangement
- Young people who successfully returned home for six months (aged 16/17) and were previously 'Eligible' and/or 'Relevant'.
- Young people who were looked after for less than 13 weeks between the age of 14 to 18 and were looked after for at least 24 hours aged 16 and 17.
- Young people aged 16, and under 21/25, who were looked after in a series of pre-planned short breaks.
- Young people aged 16 and under 21/25 who spent at least 3 months in a special school with residential provision (with an EHCP), between the ages of 16 and 18.

Appendix B

Qualifying Children and Young People over 16

Section 24 (advice and assistance) of the Children Act 1989 [as amended by the Planning Transitions to Adulthood for Care Leavers 2010 Guidance and the Care Leavers (England) Regulations 2010] covers 'Qualifying Children and Young People'.

Depending on an assessment of need, Telford & Wrekin Children's Services has a responsibility to provide practical and financial support and assistance to Qualifying Children and Young People over 16. Individual young people may be given practical support and financial assistance (Children Act 1989 (Section 24A (5)) and Section 24B) with priority being given to support relating to education, training and employment opportunities. Leaving care personal advisers should assist young people to maximise financial support available from employment, benefits and education allowances and opportunities.

Telford & Wrekin Children's Services has a duty to provide vacation accommodation, or the means to secure it, to any care leaver qualifying for advice and assistance, who is between the ages of 16 and 25, who is in higher education or in residential further education and who needs accommodation.

Depending on an assessment of need Qualifying Children and Young People may require and may be provided with the same level of service as Eligible, Relevant or Former Relevant young people.

See Volume 3 Planning Transition to Adulthood for Care Leavers Guidance – Care Leavers (England) Regulations 2010 (revised 2015). – Para 2.6 to 2.11 Page 15 & 16. Para 8.43 to 8.51 Page 84 & 85.

Appendix C

Young People Who are Detained

Eligible and Relevant Children who are 'detained'

The Care Leavers (England) Regulations Section 23A (3) paragraph (2) (3)

- Children and young people who are detained and are subject to a Section 31 Care Order remain looked after on entering custody (on being remanded and being sentenced) and on reaching age 16 they become 'Eligible' care leavers.
- Young people who are Accommodated under Section 20, remain looked after when 'remanded' and cease to be looked after if they receive a custodial sentence.
- Young people who are remanded become looked after on being remanded and cease to be looked after on being sentenced.
- Young people who have been looked after for 13 weeks from the age of 14 (remand and non-remand) and receive a custodial sentence (or are still on remand) before their 16th birthday become 'Relevant' care leavers on reaching their 16th birthday.
 - Young Offender Institution (YOI).
 - Secure Training Centre (STC).
 - Secure Children's Home (SCH).

Young Offender Detentions (16 & 17 Year Olds)

Where a young person is 'detained' as a result of a 'remand' or 'sentence', the majority of their financial allowances will be suspended. Financial support for young people who are detained (remand/sentence) in Young Offenders Institutes is governed by the rules of the particular establishment they are detained in. In general, young people are expected to undertake education or training and are provided with pocket money for engaging in these activities. Additionally, they will often be provided with clothing, or are able to bring clothing with them. As such, they will not be provided with any allowances while detained. In exceptional situations where education, training or work opportunities are not available and no pocket money or remuneration scheme exists, young people will be provided with a £10.00 per week pocket money allowance. This will be provided in-line with any recommendations of the establishment and should be set out in the young person's pathway plan.

Additionally, and in exceptional circumstances, a clothing allowance commensurate with the leaving care clothing allowance of £5.00 per week may be provided.

Where appropriate, and dependent on an assessment of need, Birthday and Christmas/festival allowances will continue to be provided and depending on the rules of the institution, will be provided to the young person, or retained until their release.

On release, young people aged 16 & 17 may have access to the £100.00 initial clothing allowance subject to an assessment of need.

Hospital Detentions (16 & 17 Year Olds)

Young people who are detained in an NHS provision or contracted out NHS provision will be provided with an allowance of £10.00 per week and the standard leaving care clothing allowance of £5.00 per week (if they are not in receipt of ESA/UC).

The allowances are based on an assessment of need and risk, how these are provided should be set out in the individual placement plan and pathway plan. Where benefits can be claimed (ESA/UC) the allowances will not be provided once benefits are in payment (those detained in hospital). See page 13 & 14. In addition, those detailed in hospitals will be provided with the birthday and Christmas/festival allowances.

On discharge, young people aged 16 & 17 may have access to the £100.00 initial clothing allowance subject to an assessment of need.

Former Relevant Children who are 'detained'

The Care Leavers (England) Regulations Section 23C (1)

Where appropriate, and dependent on an assessment of need, Birthday and Christmas/Festival allowances will continue to be paid and, depending on the rules of the institution, will be given to the young person or retained until their release. On release young people will have access to their 'Setting Up Home Grant' and if they are claiming Universal Credit, they can apply for a Universal Credit Advance. Young people who are being released from custody can submit a claim for Universal Credit 28 days in advance of their release date.

Where young people are being discharged from hospital or being released from custody immediately prior to, or immediately after their 25th birthday, the final pathway plan should set out when and how the Setting Up Home Grant will be accessed and used, if the young person does not have a discharge or release date by their 25th birthday, the service and the provision of the Grant will cease, the use of the Setting Up Home Grant should be completed by 25½.

On release/discharge (from custody/hospital), young people aged 18 to 21 may have access to the £100.00 release/discharge clothing allowance subject to an assessment of need and where they have been detained for over a year.

Where family members are in receipt of welfare benefits, prison visits and contact can be facilitated by the 'Assisted Prison Visits Scheme' allowances provided by the DWP. Travel costs for family members not in receipt of welfare benefits may be provided following an assessment of need.

Appendix D

Guidance on the Provision of Financial Support to Children aged 16 or 17 who are A) Placed with Parents, or B) Return to Live with Parents in a Planned, or Unplanned Manner

Principles:

- Wherever possible, parents should be financially responsible for their own children and should not be funded by the local authority to support their own children.
- Where financial allowances are provided to parents, these should not create inequalities with other siblings and children within the family/household who have not been looked after.
- Subject to an assessment of need, a one-off payment, or the purchase of an item will be considered where it is deemed it would assist with a positive transition home.
- The rules on a parent's eligibility for benefits for a child placed at home or returning home after the age of 16 is complex and is dependent on whether they are an eligible, relevant or qualifying care leaver, being resident with the parent and whether the child is undertaking education or training.

Section 1

Placement with Parents – Children Reaching the Age of 16 Subject to a Care Order or Interim Care Order (Living with a Parent)

The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review, Regulations 2010 (revised 2015) and associated Guidance sets out that the Responsible Local Authority is required to assess and meet the needs, including the financial needs of an 'Eligible' (and 'Relevant') child.

Children Under 16:

Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) Guidance sets out that where a child aged is aged under 16 and is resident with a parent and is undertaking full-time education or training,

the parent will normally be eligible for child benefit. As a result of being eligible for child benefit, the parent should also be eligible for either child tax credit and/or working tax credit (depending on income) or Universal Credit (UC), and any benefits arising from a child's disability such as DLA/PIP. Where a child is placed with a parent, a transitional payment equivalent to the indicative level of child benefit and either child tax credit/working tax credit or UC that a parent would be entitled to will be provided for a period of up to six weeks. On average it takes five to six weeks to establish a child benefit and either a child tax credit / working tax credit claim or Universal Credit claim.

The rules of benefit entitlement where children return to parents after their 16th birthday are complex and entitlement should be checked with the DWP and HMRC. Transitional payment example (the amounts set out below are based on Child Benefit and Child Tax Credit indicative amounts (Table One) and Universal Credit (Table Two) rates:

For a parent to be eligible for child benefit and either tax credits or Universal Credit no part of the child's accommodation or maintenance costs should be met by the local authority, as such, Telford & Wrekin Children's Services should set a date to cease any transitional payments. The date to cease financial support should be set at a point between five and six weeks after a 'placement with a parent' or a return home.

Child benefit can continue or be reinstated if a child is residing with a parent on a regular basis, generally on at least 2 nights per week from Monday to Sunday or is home for a complete week. – HMRC Guidance.

Table One

Parent/s Eligible For:	First Child/Oldest Child	Second Child
Child Tax Credits	£66.44 per week	£66.44 per week
Child Benefit	£25.60 per week	£16.95 per week
Total	£92.04 per week	£83.39 per week

Table Two

Parent/s Eligible For:	First Child/Oldest Child	First/Second Child
Universal Credit	£76.92 (born before 6 th April 2017) per week	£66.44 per week
Child Benefit	£25.60 per week	£16.95 per week
Total	£102.52 per week	£83.39 per week

- Where a child was placed with a parent/s prior to their 16th birthday a review of the financial support for the child and parent/s must take place when the child becomes an **'Eligible'** child. The review must be undertaken within the framework of the Regulation 42 - Assessment of Need (Pathway Part One).
- If the child/young person is engaged in education or training the child benefit and tax credits/Universal Credit will continue once the child reaches the age of 16.

The majority of 'Eligible' children will be living in foster care, residential care or, in a placement deemed 'Other Arrangements'. The financial support provided to the child will be set out in the fostering financial policy, residential financial policy and leaving care financial policy.

Young people returning home after their 16th birthday:

The DWP rules on benefit entitlement for children looked after and care leavers aged 16 & 17 living with parents and the entitlement for parents is complex and will depend on a range of variables.

1. In situations where a child aged 16 or 17 is placed with a parent or returns home to live with a parent and is not engaged in any education or training, the leaving care financial policy provides guidance on the provision of any allowances (benefit entitlement for young person or parents unlikely).
2. In situations where a child aged 16 or 17 is placed with a parent or returns home to live with a parent and is engaged in education or training, the leaving care financial policy provides guidance on the provision of any allowances, if the young person remains an eligible care leavers (due to the child being on a care order), the parent is likely to be become entitled to claim benefits after, a) the care order is revoked, and b) the young person has been living with the parent for 6 months (parent is unlikely to qualify for benefits for the first 6 months of the return home), thereafter the parent is likely to be able to apply for child benefit and tax credits/Universal Credit. If the young person (section 20) returns home and becomes a relevant care leaver, the parent is unlikely to be able to apply for benefits until the young person has been at home for 6 months and become qualifying (and is engaged in education/training).
3. In situations where a child aged 16 or 17 is placed at home or returns home and is not engaged in education or training a parent will not be eligible to claim child benefit or benefits. Therefore, the local authority will need to provide an allowance.

In circumstances where the child is living with a parent/s and the Care/Pathway Plan is focused on revoking the Care Order, or Interim Care Order, both the assessment of, and financial support should be based on assisting the transition to parental financial support (generally 6 months) as set out in the placement with parents support plan and for the child to enter/resume or continue education or training.

The primary aim of leaving care financial support for 16 & 17 year olds is to enable young people to prepare for independent living and develop money management skills; as such, each young person should have an assessment of their individual leaving care financial needs and any subsequent allowance provided to those not in education or training should be provided to the young person in a manner that assists with the development of these skills and a return to education or training.

Young people aged 16 & 17 placed with parents who are not engaged in education or training should therefore be provided with the standard Leaving Care Personal Allowance of £71.70 per week (2024-2025).

To avoid any inequalities within the family, by the provision of leaving care support, an assessment must be undertaken regarding the need for supplementary allowances, i.e., those in addition to the Leaving Care Personal Allowance. For example, where there are children in the family who have not been looked after, it may be inappropriate to provide any allowances other than the Leaving Care Personal Allowance if these allowances create disparities, inequalities and potentially undermine parenting responsibilities.

The provision of a leaving care birthday allowance for one child would potentially create an inequality if other family members do not receive a similar allowance, as such, the leaving care birthday allowance should not be provided, and parents therefore take responsibility for the level of all birthday allowances to their children. The assessment of, and the reason behind this decision should be made using the guidance contained at the start of this document in the section 'Assessing the Provision of Allowances for 16 & 17 Year Olds' and should be set out in the young person's Care/Pathway Plan.

When developing a Care/Pathway Plan for a young person placed with parent/s or living with a parent/s who is not engaged in education or training, consideration should be given to whether the young person should provide a percentage of their Leaving Care Personal Allowance to their parent/s as a contribution to living costs. The level of the contribution should be set out in the young person's Care/Pathway Plan. For example, it may be appropriate that the young person retains an amount for pocket money and clothing i.e. (pocket money £12.00 and clothing allowance £20.00) and provide a contribution to the parent of £39.70 per week – Total £71.70.

In circumstances where a contribution has been set and the young person does not make the necessary contribution, the amount set can be deducted from the young person's Leaving Care Personal Allowance and paid directly to the parent/s.

As noted above, there is an obligation on the local authority to provide financial assistance to young people leaving care that would normally fall on parents, and/or on the welfare benefit system. Being an Eligible or Relevant child not engaged in education or training (regardless of them being placed at home) disqualifies parents from welfare benefits/tax credits/universal

credit (or recently returned – within the last 6 months). In situations where the child is not engaged in education or training, or has returned within the last 6 months, the leaving care finance policy framework should be used as the framework for the provision of allowances to the child and/or parent).

The majority of Eligible or Relevant children (living outside of the parental home), regardless of being engaged in education or training are disqualified from welfare benefits/tax credits/universal credit, with the exception of sick and disabled children and children who are also lone parents.

In circumstances where a care leaver aged 16 or 17 is placed/living with a parent who is in receipt of a welfare benefit/tax credit/universal credit, the difference between the young person's Leaving Care Personal Allowance and the level of the welfare benefit/tax credits/universal credit that the parent would be entitled to in respect of that child, (if they were not an Eligible or Relevant child) can be provided directly to the parent/s. This would only apply to a child not engaged in education or training, or initially returning home.

Care Order Revocations and Ceasing Financial Allowances

Where an 'Eligible' child has lived with a person with parental responsibility for at least 6 months and they cease to be looked after, due to the revocation of the Care Order, or Interim Care Order they become a 'Qualifying' child (a Qualifying child is a 16 to 21/25 year old subject to Section 24 of the Children Act 1989). The 6-month period living with parents that is required to be deemed a Qualifying child, can include time both prior to and after the revocation of the Care Order.

Welfare benefit legislation relating to 'Qualifying' children sets out that both parents and children are entitled to welfare benefits/tax credits/universal credit in their own right.

'Qualifying' child status does not have any impact on either the child, or parents benefit or tax credit (Universal Credit) entitlements. Once a child is deemed a 'Qualifying' child and following a financial re-assessment of their financial needs, the majority, if not all, of the leaving care financial support being provided should cease. The primary responsibility for meeting a 'Qualifying' child's financial needs rests with the parent/s.

The detailed financial and practical arrangements to support the child and parent should be set out in the Care/Pathway Plan and Placement Plan. The level of the leaving care financial support should be based on an assessment of need and set out in the Care/Pathway Plan.

Placement with Parents – Children aged 16 or 17 Subject to Care Order or Interim Care Order Being Placed with Parent/s

In circumstances where, following an assessment of suitability, it is deemed appropriate to place a child with a parent/s at the age of 16 or 17, the assessment of financial support to the

child and parent should be completed prior to the placement being made and should be set out in the Care/Pathway Plan and Placement Plan.

The principles and financial approach set out above in section 1, i.e. the Leaving Care Personal Allowance being provided to the young person (if not engaged in education or training (and for the initial 6 months)), and, an assessment of the need for any additional allowances being undertaken to consider the types and level of financial support to be provided should be followed. The Care/Pathway Plan should be used to evidence and explain the level of, and the types of financial support to be provided.

Section 2

Children aged 16 & 17 Accommodated under Section 20 Returning to Live with a Parent/s in a Planned Manner who Cease to be Looked After and Become ‘Relevant’ children

In circumstances where it is deemed appropriate for a child to return to a parent/s at the age of 16 or 17, following an assessment of suitability, the evaluation of financial support to the child and/or parent should be completed prior to the child returning to the parent/s. On the child returning to the parent/s the child becomes a ‘Relevant’ child. Where the young person is undertaking an education or training activity, financial responsibility should transfer to the parent as set out in section 1 (after 6 months). Transitional financial support will be provided for a period of four to six weeks once the parent becomes eligible for a means tested benefit.

In circumstances where a young person (subject to section 20) aged 16 & 17 returns to live with a parent, agreement to, and approval of the ceasing to be looked after must be sought from the Director of Children’s Services – Regulation 39.

In circumstances where the ‘Relevant’ child is living with a parent/s as part of planned return to a parent/s, both the assessment of, and financial support should focus on assisting the transition to parental financial support. The principles set out above in section 1 should be used to assess the type and level of financial support. The Pathway Plan should be used to evidence and explain the level of, and the types of financial support to be provided (for those not engaged in education or training).

Where a child remains living with a parent/s for six months (after a planned return) the child’s status changes from a ‘Relevant’ child to that of ‘Qualifying’ child. Once a child becomes a ‘Qualifying’ child, both parent/s and child are entitled to claim welfare benefits/tax credits like other parents/children. See above section 1.

Once a child is deemed a ‘Qualifying’ child and following a financial re-assessment of their financial needs, the majority, if not all of the leaving care financial support being provided should cease. The primary responsibility for meeting a ‘Qualifying’ child’s financial needs rests with the parent/s.

Section 3

Children Subject to a Care Order or Interim Care Order Returning to a Parent/s Against the Assessment of the Child's Needs and the Wishes of the Local Authority

Social workers and personal advisers will need to undertake an assessment and risk assessment of the appropriateness of the child remaining with the parent/s where the child has returned to a parent/s against the wishes of the authority and follow due procedure.

Financial support should only be provided to the child in line with the Leaving Care Finance policy. No payment or any percentage of the Leaving Care Personal Allowance should be made to the parent/s until it is deemed an authorised placement with parent/s.

The Pathway Plan and the provision of financial support should focus on positive engagement or re-engagement with the child.

Section 4

Children Accommodated Section 20 Returning to a Parent/s Against the Assessment of the Child's Needs and the Wishes of the Local Authority

Social workers will need to undertake an assessment and risk assessment of the appropriateness of the child remaining with the parent/s where the child has returned to a parent/s against the wishes of the authority and follow due process. A statutory review should take place to approve the decision to cease the child's Section 20 status. In circumstances where a young person (subject to section 20) aged 16 & 17 returns to live with a parent, agreement to, and approval of the ceasing to be looked after must be sought from the Director of Children's Services – Regulation 39.

Financial support should only be provided to the child in line with the Leaving Care Finance policy (where the young person is not engaged in education or training). No payment or any percentage of the Leaving Care Personal Allowance should be made to the parents until it is deemed appropriate for the 'Relevant' child to remain living with the parent/s.

The Pathway Plan and the provision of financial support should focus on positive parental engagement or re-engagement with the child/young person and should support the child/young person to continue/resume education or training.

Summary

In essence, financial support to 16 & 17 year olds living at home should be provided by parents:

- where a child/young person is engaged in an education or training activity, the parent/parents are entitled to claim child benefit/child tax credits (after 6 months with the parent/ceasing to be looked after or on reaching age 16 if placed prior to age 16);
- where children/young people are not engaged in education or training the guidance above and the leaving care finance policy provides the framework for the provision of allowances.

Eligibility Chart

1	Child – Placed with P – Section 31 prior to the age of 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent able to claim child benefit and tax credits/universal credit when child placed.
2	Child – Placed with P – Section 31 prior to the age of 16, reaching age 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent able to claim child benefit and tax credits/universal credit when child placed, these will continue into school year 12 if the child is undertaking education or training. • If the child is not undertaking education or training – parent is not eligible to claim.
3	Child – Placed with P – Section 31 after the age of 16.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent may be eligible to claim child benefit and tax credits/universal credit when child placed, these will continue into school year 12 if the child is undertaking education or training. • If the child is not undertaking education or training – parent is not eligible to claim.
4	Child – Placed with P – Section 31 – care order revoked when the child is aged 16/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent unlikely to be able to claim child benefit and tax credits/universal credit even if the child is undertaking an education or training activity for 6 months after the order is revoked. • If the child is not undertaking education or training – parent is not eligible to claim.
5	Child – returning to live with a parent, person with PR (section 20 ending)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent unlikely to be able to claim child benefit and tax credits/universal credit even if the child is undertaking education or training for 6 months after the return. • If the child is undertaking education or training – parent is eligible to claim benefits after the child has been at home for 6 months. • If the child is not undertaking education or training – parent is not eligible to claim.

Appendix E

Criminal Injuries Compensation Award Payments

The rules on Criminal Injuries Compensation Award (C.I.C.A.) payments allow a young person a 52 week 'grace period' regarding eligibility for means tested benefits after receipt of the award. The following guidance should still be followed.

Housing Benefit, Income Support, Jobseekers Allowance, Employment and Support Allowance and Universal Credit legislation sets out that a C.I.C.A. payment is disregarded

in terms of calculating benefit entitlement for the first 52 weeks after receipt of the award as it is deemed a personal injury payment.

Young people who receive a C.I.C.A. payment should be assisted to seek independent financial advice regarding establishing a Discretionary Trust Fund. Additionally, young people should be made aware of the implications of the C.I.C.A. payment for any benefit claim they may make or have after the 52 week disregard period. Young people should visit the Citizen's Advice Bureau and choose an independent solicitor and financial adviser to explore opportunities to use their award in a positive manner.

Generally, young people will receive their C.I.C.A. payment on their eighteenth birthday. If a young person establishes a 'Discretionary Trust Fund' prior to, or within 52 weeks of receiving their payment they continue to be eligible for benefits. Establishing a 'Discretionary Trust Fund' results in their award payment being 'tied up' until they reach the age of 21 or older. Children's Services will provide financial support to assist young people to establish a Discretionary Trust Fund where the CICA Award is over £6000.00. In addition, Children's Services will nominate two Trustees to help manage the Discretionary Trust Fund (Children's Services will provide an indemnity insurance policy for the two Trustees).

If a C.I.C.A. award has not been placed in a Trust Fund or used after 52 weeks the following will apply; if the award was less than £6000.00 it will not affect a claim for benefit. If the award is between £6000.00 and £16,000.00, it will result in a reduced benefit payment and an award of over £16,000.00 will disqualify a young person from benefit. Strict benefit rules apply in regard to spending the award after the 52-week disregard period, consideration should be given to the DWP rules on the inappropriate disposal of 'capital'. It is important that young people are given independent advice regarding C.I.C.A. payments and that social workers/personal advisers are not responsible for choosing who gives advice.

"Where a young person has been awarded a sum in compensation for a criminal injury, Children, Schools and Families [*Children's Services*] is required to disregard that capital entirely." See page 62 para 4 - Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 Guidance.

See Separate Policy on Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority Awards and Trust Funds

Appendix F

Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC)

Eligible and Relevant Children (UASC)

Key Guidance

Social Workers and Personal Advisers must ensure that an UASC has applied to extend their leave to remain, and the application is submitted to the Home Office before their leave status expires. In the majority of UASC cases their leave status expires at the age of 17½, or on their 18th birthday. If this task is completed and submitted within time, the young person is eligible to claim means tested benefits on their 18th birthday. See section on - Access to Public Funds and Welfare Benefits at the end of this appendix.

Consideration should also be given to appealing an initial asylum decision where a young person is granted limited leave to remain.

Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) are covered by the Children Act 1989 and the provisions of the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Guidance and Regulations 2010 [16 & 17 year olds] and the Planning Transition to Adulthood for Care Leavers Guidance 2010 (revised 2015 and 2021) and the Care Leavers (England) Regulations 2010 (revised 2015 and 2022) [16 to 21/25 year olds] in exactly the same way as other children in this country.

However, they will also have an immigration status:

1. Applying for Asylum;
2. Accepted as a Refugee;
3. Granted Exceptional Leave to Remain [divided into:
 - a. Humanitarian Protection, or
 - b. Discretionary Leave],
4. Indefinite Leave to Remain;
5. Refused Leave to Remain,

all of which will need to be taken into account when undertaking their Leaving Care Assessment of Need and developing their subsequent Pathway Plan.

It should be noted that applicants who are granted refugee status may not automatically receive indefinite leave to remain. Applicants granted refugee status may be given limited leave to remain for five-year periods. At the end of each five-year period their circumstances will be reviewed and if the conditions in their home country have improved, they will be expected to return.

Most Eligible and Relevant (16 & 17 year olds) unaccompanied asylum-seeking children will receive the same entitlements as any other young person. However, there may be some differences in entitlement, which will need to be acknowledged in their Pathway Plan. For example, unaccompanied asylum-seeking children who are applying for asylum and are awaiting an initial decision or have been granted exceptional leave to remain are not automatically entitled to the 16 - 19 Bursary.

When developing Pathway Plans with Eligible and Relevant (UASC) particular attention must be paid to their immigration status and contingency plans developed which take account of their possible status options at the of age eighteen.

Department for Education guidance highlights that pathway planning for the majority of UASC who do not have, a permanent immigration status, should initially take a dual or triple planning perspective, which, over time should be refined as the young person's immigration status is clarified.

Planning may be based on:

- a transitional plan during the period of uncertainty when the young person is in the United Kingdom without permanent immigration status;
- longer term perspective plan in the United Kingdom should the young person be granted long term permission to stay (for example through the grant of Refugee Status); or
- a return to their country of origin at any appropriate point or at the end of the immigration consideration process, should that be necessary because the young person decides to leave the UK or is required to do so.

Failed Asylum Seekers aged 18 to 21/25

Former Relevant Children

Where young people have an immigration status that means they have permission to work and/or have recourse to public funds they will be expected to be working or claiming benefits like other Former Relevant Children. Additionally, Telford & Wrekin Children's Services will apply all of the aspects of the Former Relevant Children section of the leaving care financial policy with some exceptions to the Higher Education and Further Education sub-section.

Where young people have:

- limited leave to remain;
- exceptional leave to remain;
- (are) appealed an adverse decision;

they are only eligible for a Telford & Wrekin Children's Services Higher Education Grant for higher education courses that finish in the academic year prior to their status expiring.

Telford & Wrekin Children's Services will provide a Higher Education Grant to unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people only if all of the following circumstances are met:

- a) they have been offered a higher education place;
- b) Student Finance England have award them a student loan;
- c) they are classified as a home student.

Telford & Wrekin Children's Services will work with education establishments and training providers to ensure that young people who have limited leave to remain have access to purposeful activities such as short education courses, training opportunities and courses and voluntary activities.

Telford & Wrekin Children's Services will support young people to apply for discretionary grants and bursaries to support attendance in education.

Where asylum seeking young people:

- have lodged an asylum application, but do not have an initial decision;
- have no recourse to public funds;
- are all rights exhausted;

they will not be eligible for higher education funding.

Telford & Wrekin Children's Services will fund one ESOL course and will only consider funding a second course under exceptional circumstances.

Consideration will be given to supporting young people with short term universal access courses that provide enhanced education and training skills.

Young people who have exhausted all 'avenues and rights' regarding appealing an adverse asylum decision, and/or are unable to extend their exceptional leave to remain, and/or lose access to public funds/the right to work are deemed 'end of line cases' or 'all appeal rights exhausted' cases (at this point the young person will usually receive a removal directions notice).

Where young people lose access to welfare benefits and are deemed 'end of line cases' or 'all appeal rights exhausted' cases, Telford & Wrekin Children's Services will provide an allowance commensurate with benefits following the completion of a Human Rights Assessment. Support will consist of accommodation and £61.70 as the accommodation will include the provision of utilities and services.

This allowance can continue to be paid until the removal date or the young person's 21st/25th birthday, whichever comes first [in principle funding for education or training courses should cease as soon as a young person receives a NRPF or ARE status]. In addition, the provision of an allowance and accommodation is dependent on the young person remaining in contact with their personal adviser and actively engaging in the pathway planning process.

(See London Borough of Barking and Dagenham [2010] EWCA Civ 1101 - Case Law)

Pathway Planning Guidance

When undertaking the Leaving Care Assessment of Need with unaccompanied asylum-seeking children at age fifteen and a half and subsequently developing their Pathway Plans, personal advisers must take account of young people's immigration status and how this may limit access to public funds and services at the age of eighteen. Every effort must be made to clarify a young people's immigration status as soon as possible in order to develop clear plans for their future e.g., ensure that extensions to Discretionary Leave and Humanitarian Protection are applied for within timescale i.e., six to eight weeks before expiry.

Pathway Plans should explore how an unaccompanied asylum-seeking child's immigration status may limit future support and financial opportunities. Pathway Plans for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children should always incorporate a dual or triple plan approach. For example, Pathway Plans should highlight what support would be given if the young person gains indefinite leave to remain, and an alternative Pathway Plan should highlight what support would be available should they be granted limited leave to remain and/or receive removal directions.

Appealing an Initial Asylum Decision

When young people receive their initial asylum decision consideration should be given to lodging an appeal against the decision if they receive a status other than Indefinite Leave to Remain/Refugee Status. In effect, Limited Leave to Remain is a failed asylum decision. Young people are more likely to obtain a positive decision if they appeal at the first decision stage rather than wait until their limited leave status expires. Social workers and personal advisers should liaise with the young person's solicitor to support/consider an appeal. Young people must lodge an appeal within a very limited time (usually 14 days of the initial decision). Evidence highlights that a high percentage of initial decision appeals are successful.

Young people who receive an initial decision giving them Limited Leave to Remain for a year or less may not be able to appeal the initial decision.

Summary

Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) making the transition from care to adulthood have both a leaving care status and an asylum and immigration status in addition to their placement and accommodation, education, health, financial and religious and cultural needs.

Planning transition to adulthood for UASC is a particularly complex process that needs to address young people's care needs in the context of wider asylum and immigration legislation and how these change over time. Pathway planning to support a UASC's transition to adulthood should cover all areas that would be addressed within all young people's plans as well as any additional needs arising from their specific refugee and immigration status and issues.

The majority of young people making the transition from care to independence, will, with support and assistance develop a settled life in the U.K. Whilst this may be the case for some UASC this may not always apply due to the outcome of their asylum claim. Planning for many UASC may have to be based around short term achievable goals whilst entitlement to remain in the UK is being determined.

Planning for a return home may be difficult (for both young people and staff working with them), but care and pathway plans should include contingencies for durable and best interest plans for UASC who are likely to have to return to their country of origin (and/or may be waiting long term for a decision). It will be essential that arrangements for return to a home country should be managed in a sensitive and consistent way.

Transition to adulthood planning and pathway planning for the majority of UASC who do not have, a permanent immigration status; should initially take a dual or triple planning perspective which overtime should be refined as the final asylum outcome becomes known:

- Longer term perspective plan in the United Kingdom should the young person be granted Refugee Status;
- A transitional plan during the period of uncertainty when they are in the United Kingdom without permanent immigration status;
- A return to their country of origin at an appropriate point or at the end of the process should that be necessary due to their immigration status.

Claiming asylum can be a complex process and social workers/personal advisers should work with the young person's legal representative and the dedicated case owner at the Home Office to ensure that the young person understands the process of claiming asylum, the possible outcomes and to provide them with necessary support.

Pathway plans should always consider the implications for the young person if their application to extend their leave to remain or their appeal against refusal of that application is dismissed. In such circumstances the person will become unlawfully present in the United Kingdom and be expected to make plans for return to the country of origin. Pathway plans should highlight the risks associated with young people disappearing ('going underground') to avoid returning and the difficulties associated with returns that occur quickly with little or no planning. Liaison with the Home Office case owner may be necessary to manage these risks.

Schedule 3 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002

It is important that Personal Advisers and others working with the young people understand that their immigration status may affect their eligibility to leaving care support after they turn 18, in part because of the provisions of Schedule 3 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 (and Immigration Act 2016 if and when the guidance is applied – this may also be superseded by the Nationality and Borders Act 2022 and the Illegal Migration Act 2023).

This is especially the case for any of the young people who are "unlawfully present in the UK" – which includes those who have been refused asylum and have either not applied for an extension of further Discretionary Leave to remain or have applied for an extension, but that application and any appeal has been rejected.

Liaison with the legal adviser may be required to establish whether Schedule 3 applies in a particular case, as refusal of asylum does not necessarily indicate that a young person is 'unlawfully present in the UK' (but may do).

In these cases, the young person can generally only be supported to the extent necessary to avoid a breach of their human rights (under the European Convention of Human Rights).

For example, if an adult is unlawfully present in the UK, i.e., they have no form of leave to be in the UK and are not an asylum seeker (as they are failed), a local authority is prohibited from providing them with support under the leaving care provisions (and other statutes) unless this is necessary in order to avoid a breach of their human rights, whether in their home country or in the UK.

Note:

The section above will be updated when the Immigration Act 2016 Guidance has been issued and/or the Nationality and Borders Act 2022 and Illegal Migration Act 2023 and the full timescales for implementation are issued.

Access to Public Funds and Welfare Benefits

Young people must apply to extend their leave to remain at least two months before their immigration leave status expires. If this task is completed by a young person's eighteenth birthday and they have proof that the Home Office has received their application, the young person is then eligible to apply for benefits. Personal Advisers should obtain a letter from the young person's solicitor that includes details of the young person's immigration status; the date of the application to extend the leave to remain was submitted. The solicitor submits the renewal/extension by recorded post. The recorded post item will have a tracking number that can be used to verify that the Home Office received the application. The letter from the solicitor and a printout of the Post Office tracking statement should be submitted with the young person's benefit claim. Given the number of asylum applications over the last few years, many young people will not have received an initial decision by their 18th birthday.

Failed Asylum Seekers (18 to 21), No Recourse to Public Funds, All Rights Exhausted and Human Rights Assessments (Telford & Wrekin Approach)

Young people reaching the age of 18 who: 1) do not have an immigration status and/or 2) young people who are failed asylum seekers and/or 3) young people who have No Recourse to Public Funds or Services and/or 4) young people who are deemed All Rights Exhausted will only be provided with practical and financial support following a Human Rights Assessment and the outcome of the assessment being that the ceasing of support would breach their human rights. Personal Advisers (and those undertaking human rights assessments) will always support young people to explore options of living with family and

friends, identifying charitable sources of funding and options for returning to a country of originate.

In all situations where support has been extended because of a Human Rights Assessment, the assessment will be reviewed whenever there is a change of circumstances and on a three-monthly basis. Where a young person is detained and subject to a Deportation Order or is subject to the Administrative Removal process financial support will cease. Where support is provided because of a Human Rights Assessment, the support will cease on the young person reaching age 21.

Note:

This section will be updated when the guidance associated with the Immigration Act 2016 has been issued and/or the Nationality and Borders Act 2022 and Illegal Migration Act 2023 guidance is issued and the full timescales for implementation are issued.

is issued/applied. It is likely the Nationality and Borders Act 2022 will supersede and replace the Immigration Act 2016.

Former Relevant Care Leavers – All Rights Exhausted Reaching Age 21 – Practice Guidance

Young people reaching age 21 (Former Relevant Care Leavers who are All Rights Exhausted (ARE)) will be referred to and supported to attend a meeting with the Home Office to apply for schedule 3 support under the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002. Subject to the decision of the Home Office young people aged 21 to 25 (Former Relevant Care Leavers who are All Rights Exhausted (ARE)) may be provided with practical support following a Human Rights Assessment and liaison with the Home Office.

Appendix G

Financial Assessment Form and Leaving Care Personal Allowance Reduction Notice

Income:

Calculation Date:

Item	Amount (£)
Leaving Care Personal Allowance	
16-19 Bursary	
Traineeship Allowance	
Apprenticeship Allowance	
Earnings (Part and Full Time)	
Other	
Total Income (Subtotal 1)	

Less fares related to work/training/study	
Total Costs (Subtotal 2)	

Deduct Subtotal 2 from Subtotal 1 to produce Subtotal 3

Net Income (Subtotal 3)	
-------------------------	--

If subtotal 3 is over £135.00, the Leaving Care Personal Allowance is reduced by 50%. If subtotal 3 is over £155.00 the Leaving Care Personal Allowance and Clothing and Leisure Allowance cease.

This form should be completed by the young person and their social worker/personal adviser and/or their semi-independent support worker.

Date LCPA (Clothing Allowance / Leisure Allowance) Reduction to Commence.	
The Leaving Care Personal Allowance is reduced by 50%.	
The Leaving Care Personal Allowance and Clothing and Leisure Allowance cease.	
Income Retained.	

Appendix H

ADD TELFORD & WREKIN LOGO

Consent to Share / Disclose Information under the Data Protection Act 2018 & GDPR.

Name of Student:	
Name of University:	
Student ID Number:	
Title of Course:	

Please read the following statement carefully:

I, the above-named Student, consent to Telford & Wrekin Children's Services, Leaving Care Team sharing information and liaising with the above-named University in order to co-ordinate and maximise the support that I receive. I agree to the above-named university releasing and sharing information with my leaving care personal adviser regarding the following areas:

- My general participation at University
- My attendance
- My grades (by term or semester)
- Any other information that is deemed necessary

Obtaining this information will enable Telford & Wrekin Council to ensure you have the right level of support and financial assistance for the duration of your degree course.

Date From:	<i>The Information Sharing Agreement should have a start and end date.</i>
Date To:	<i>The Information Sharing Agreement should have a start and end date.</i>
Name:	
Signed:	
Date:	

Appendix I

National Insurance Numbers

All young people should automatically receive a National Insurance Number at the age of 15 and 9 months. The National Insurance Number is sent to the address where Child Benefit is being claimed for the young person. As the majority of children looked after do not have a Child Benefit claim, National Insurance Numbers do not automatically get issued. At the age of 15 and 9 months the social worker for the young person needs to contact the New Registrations Section of the National Insurance Number Office – HMRC.

Children who are in receipt of Disability Living Allowance will have their National Insurance Number issued linked to their DLA claim.

Where a young person does not have a National Insurance Number by the age of 17, social workers/personal advisers should contact the Income Maximisation Team who will liaise with the Department for Work and Pensions to try to obtain a Number in advance of the young person's 18th birthday.

For detailed guidance see: <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/manuals/nimmanual/NIM39310.htm>

Appendix J

Standard Benefit Claim Letter 2024 - 2025

ADD TELFORD & WREKIN LOGO

ADD ADDRESS

CLIENT NAME:
(Tenant)

D.O.B:

N.I. NUMBER:

CURRENT ADDRESS:

TYPE OF ACCOMMODATION AND TENANCY: (Licence Agreement/Assured Shorthold)

PLACEMENT TYPE

NAME OF LANDLORD

ADDRESS OF LANDLORD

Dear Sir/Madam,

This letter is provided to verify the identity of the above-named young person and to confirm and clarify **(his/her)** circumstances in support of their welfare benefit claim.

The above-named young person was previously placed in **(private accommodation /semi-independent accommodation/foster care/residential provision)** by Telford & Wrekin Children's Services at the above address. As the young person has now reached the age of eighteen and **(he/she)** is deemed 'independent in **(his/her)** own right' and is liable for accommodation costs of **(£00.00 per week)**, excluding utility and support charges **(he/she)** is submitting a claim for **(set out benefits being claimed)**. The information provided below sets out **(his/her)** legal status and financial circumstances

I can confirm that **(Add Full Name)** was previously an 'Eligible' child, or an 'Eligible' and/or 'Relevant' child and became a 'Former Relevant' child on **(Add Date)** as defined by the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations and Guidance 2010 (Revised 2015) and Care Leavers (England) Regulations 2010 (Revised 2015).

- A. I can also confirm that (**Add Full Name**) was previously 'Looked After' by Telford & Wrekin Children's Services and was 'Accommodated' under Section 20 of the Children Act 1989.
- B. I can also confirm that (**Add Full Name**) was previously 'Looked After' by Telford & Wrekin Children's Services and was subject to a Section 31 Care Order under the terms of the Children Act 1989.

(**Add Full Name**) ceased to be 'Looked After' on (**Add Date- 18th birthday or actual date if earlier**) and will continue to receive practical support and, in specific circumstances, financial help from Telford & Wrekin Children's Services under Section 24 of the Children Act 1989 or Section 23C of the Care Leavers (England) Regulations 2010.

Section 23C and Section 24 payments must be declared when claiming benefits but are not be counted as income for any welfare benefit purposes.

Whilst (**Add Full Name**) is establishing (**his/her**) welfare benefit claim (**he/she**) will be provided with a: (**Delete as Applicable**)

- **leaving care personal allowance of £71.70** (independent accommodation/ staying put)
- **semi-independence allowance of £61.70** (supported accommodation)
- **supported lodgings allowance £51.70** (supported lodgings)

Under these powers for 5 weeks.

1. As (**Add Full Name**) has now become a 'Former Relevant' child and ceased to be 'Looked After', I believe (**he/she**) will be entitled to claim Universal Credit at the rate of £311.68 (2024-2025) per month (if single without dependent children and not having limited capacity for work or work-related activity) and the relevant Housing Costs element. (**He/she**) will also be eligible to apply for Council Tax Support from the relevant local authority.
2. As (**Add Full Name**) has now become a 'Former Relevant' child, has ceased to be 'Looked After' and is engaged on a traineeship at the rate of (**ADD £ per week**), I believe (**he/she**) will be entitled to claim Universal Credit at the rate of £311.68 (2024-2025) per month (if single without dependent children and not having limited capacity for work or work-related activity) and the relevant Housing Costs element, minus any income received from his training allowance, apart from the payment of travel and childcare expenses. (**He/she**) will also be eligible to apply for Council Tax Support from the relevant local authority.
3. As (**Add Full Name**) has now become a 'Former Relevant' child, has ceased to be 'Looked After', is without parental support and is entitled to claim whilst receiving non-advanced education, I believe (**he/she**) should receive Universal Credit at the rate of £311.68 (2024-2025) per month (if single without dependent children and not having limited capacity for work or work-related activity) and the relevant Housing Costs element. He/she will also be eligible to apply for Council Tax Support from the relevant local authority.
4. As (**Add Full Name**) has now become a 'Former Relevant' child, has ceased to be 'Looked After', and has been given a 'Fit Note' by (**his/her**) Doctor, I believe (**he/she**)

will be entitled to claim Universal Credit at the rate of £311.68 (2024-2025) per month (if single without dependent children) and the relevant Housing Costs element. **(He/She)** should also be assessed for Limited Capacity for Work and Limited Capacity for Work-Related Activity. **(He/she)** will also be eligible to apply for Council Tax Support from the relevant local authority.

5. As **(Add Full Name)** has now become a 'Former Relevant' child, has ceased to be 'Looked After' and is earning a low income, I believe **(he/she)** will be entitled to claim Universal Credit at the rate of £311.68 (2024-2025) per month (if single without dependent children and not having limited capacity for work or work-related activity) and the relevant Housing Costs element. **(He/she)** will also be eligible to apply for Council Tax Support from the relevant local authority. Please find attached relevant wage slips/prove of income.

As **(Add Full Name)** was 'Looked After' on/or after **(his/her)** sixteenth birthday **(he/she)** and is under 25 years of age, **(he/she)** is currently exempt from the shared accommodation rate of local housing allowance, and therefore should receive the one-bedroom rate as **(his/her)** housing cost element.

As **(Add Full Name)** is a care leaver and is also within 28 days of **(his/her)** eighteenth birthday, I understand they can commence and submit a claim for Universal Credit as set out in ADM – A-2048.

- A As **(Add Full Name)** was previously 'Looked After' and remains vulnerable, I would request that the 'Housing Costs' element of Universal Credit' is paid under a 'Tier 1 Vulnerability - Alternative Payment Arrangement' directly to Children's Service as an agent of the landlord.
- B As **(Add Full Name)** was previously 'Looked After' and remains vulnerable, I would request that the 'Housing Costs' element of Universal Credit' is paid under a 'Tier 1 Vulnerability - Alternative Payment Arrangement' directly to their landlord.

(Add specific information)

If you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully

Approved Signatures

Service Manager

Team Manager

Assistant Team Manager

* Please complete, or delete, either section A or B, the subsequent three bullet points and complete the bold text sections and the relevant sections 1 to 6. All other sections must be completed.

Information about disregarding Social Services payments to care leavers.

Welfare Benefits and Tax Credits Handbook; Child Poverty Action Group: 2018/19 edition

Chapter 7 Universal Credit – What Counts as Income

Page 122

Payments by Social Services

Universal Credit operates differently to other means-tested benefits, where all income is counted unless specifically disregarded. Under universal credit, only income that is specifically mentioned in the regulations counts as income. There is no mention of payments under the Children Act, and therefore any payments made under that legislation will be disregarded as income.

Appendix K

TELFORD & WREKIN - LEAVING CARE FINANCIAL SUPPORT CHART

- If you have left Foster Care or a Children’s Home, and you are an Eligible, Relevant, or a Former Relevant young person, this chart provides information about the financial support that Children Services can offer you. It is important to talk to your Social Worker/Leaving Care Personal Adviser about the allowances that may be available to you and what your responsibilities are when receiving them.
- With your Social Worker/Leaving Care Personal Adviser, explore what you may be entitled to and complete the chart.

Entitlements	Comments
Leaving Care Personal Allowance	
Accommodation or Placement Support	
Education/Training/Employment Costs	
Clothing	
Birthday/Christmas and Festival Allowances	
Health	
Key & Identity Documents	
Travel & Contact Costs	
Exceptional Needs Costs	
Setting Up Home Grant Costs	
Other Payments and Allowances	
	Your Weekly Total Your Monthly Total Your Yearly Total