

Travel Expense Support for Eligible Students Undertaking Work Experience

For England and Wales

14 - 16 years old - Pupil Premium funding

If you are eligible for Pupil Premium (usually because you've had Free School Meals in the last 6 years), your school receives roughly **£1,075 per year** specifically to support your education.

- **Subsidising Travel:** Many schools will use a portion of this to pay for your bus or train tickets during your work experience week.
- **Essential Gear:** It can also be used to buy "smart" clothes or safety equipment (like steel-toe boots) if you need them for your placement.
- **Case-by-Case Basis:** Unlike the 16–19 Bursary (which has a formal application), Pupil Premium spending is often at the discretion of the school. You usually have to ask for it specifically for your placement and if approved it's handled in one of two ways:
 1. **Vouchers/Tickets:** They buy the bus or train pass for you.
 2. **Reimbursement:** You provide receipts for your travel, and the school pays you back from the Pupil Premium pot.

Other "Premium" Funding

- **Pupil Premium Plus:** If you are a "Looked After Child" (in foster care or with a local authority), your school receives more funding (over £2,500). This is even more likely to be available for "bespoke" costs like travel to a high-quality work placement.
- **Service Pupil Premium:** If your parents are in the armed forces, your school gets a smaller "Service Premium" (£350–£360) which is mainly for pastoral support but can sometimes be used for enrichment activities like work experience.

The 16–19 Bursary Fund (England)

If you are aged 16, 17, or 18 and studying at a school or college in England, this is your primary source of support.

- **How it works:** Schools receive a pot of money from the government to support students from low-income backgrounds.
- **What it covers:** It explicitly covers **travel to and from your placement**, as well as essential equipment or professional clothing (like a suit or safety boots) required for the work.
- **Eligibility:** Usually based on whether you receive Free School Meals or if your household income is below a certain threshold (often around £25,000–£30,000).
- **Action:** Speak to your **Head of Year** or the **Student Services** office. Ask for the "16-19 Bursary Application Form."



Local Authority Travel Schemes

Most local councils offer "Scholars' Passes" or discounted travel for students from low-income families that extend to work experience weeks.

- **London:** The **Zip Oyster photocard** offers free or discounted travel. If you are 16–18 and in full-time education, you can get half-price bus and tram fares.
- **Other Regions:** Many councils (like Greater Manchester's **Our Pass**) offer free bus travel for 16–18 year olds, which removes the need for a specific "work experience" grant entirely.

For Scotland

The Under-22 Free Bus Travel Scheme

This is the most important resource for any student in Scotland.

- **What it is:** If you are under 22 and live in Scotland, you are entitled to **free bus travel** across the entire country.
- **How it helps:** Since most work experience involves local or regional commuting, this scheme removes the travel cost barrier entirely for buses.
- **Action:** You must have a **National Entitlement Card (NEC)** or a **Young Scot NEC** with the free travel product loaded onto it. If you don't have one, apply at getyournec.scot.

Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)

If you are 16–19 and from a low-income household (typically under £24,421 for one child or £26,884 for two+), you can receive EMA.

- **The Payment:** £30 per week, paid fortnightly.
- **Work Experience Use:** While EMA is usually for "staying in learning," it is paid based on your attendance. If your work experience is an approved part of your school or college "Learning Agreement," you will still receive your £30. This money can be used to cover lunch costs or train fares that the free bus pass doesn't cover.
- **Action:** Apply through your **Local Council** (if at school) or your **College Finance Office**.



Pupil Equity Funding (PEF)

This is the Scottish equivalent of "Pupil Premium." The money is given directly to headteachers to help students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

- **How to use it:** Schools often use PEF to pay for "extra" costs that stop students from taking part in opportunities. This includes **train tickets** (where buses aren't an option), **safety gear** (boots/PPE), or **office wear**.
- **Action:** Speak to your **Guidance Teacher** or the school's **Careers Advisor** (from Skills Development Scotland). Ask: *"Can the school use Pupil Equity Funding to help me with the costs of my work placement?"*

College Bursary "Travel & Study" Costs

If you are 16–19 and studying at a **College** (rather than a school), you can apply for a Further Education (FE) Bursary.

- **Travel Award:** If you live more than 2 miles from the college (or your placement) and cannot reasonably use the free bus scheme (e.g., you need to take a train or a ferry), the college can provide a specific travel award as part of your bursary package.
- **Action:** Visit your college's **Student Funding/Finance** office.

Skills Development Scotland (SDS) Support

SDS advisors work in every secondary school in Scotland. They often have knowledge of local "Employability Pipelines" or "Flexible Learning Pathways" which sometimes have small pots of money to help young people get to interviews or placements.