



## The Policy and Process for the Award of a Bursary

### GENERAL

Eton College was founded by King Henry VI in 1440 with the specific purpose of educating 70 poor scholars. Today there are some 1,300 boys in the school of whom just over 270 receive some kind of financial assistance with school fees. At least 70 boys in the school pay no fees whatsoever.

The Provost and Fellows of Eton College are committed to broadening access to the school by offering eligible parents means-tested, financial assistance with the payment of school fees. Such financial assistance is known as a bursary. A bursary is a reduction of fees up to 100%. The level of bursary award depends on the financial, compassionate or other relevant circumstances of the applicants.

Bursaries are awarded at the discretion of the Bursaries Committee, who will calculate an initial award level in relation to a family's financial and other circumstances (e.g. their savings, investments and realisable assets, as well as their income, the size of their family, any other dependants and like factors). Bursaries are subject to an annual review of parental means and in subsequent years, awards may be varied upwards or downwards, depending on changes to a particular family's circumstances.

Although the school is fortunate to have significant bursary funds, designed to widen access to the school, it does not have sufficient funds to satisfy all the bursary applications received. The school's Admissions Process is deliberately "needs blind" at the point of assessment so that no family should feel they cannot consider the possibility of a place for their son at Eton. However, bursary applicants need to be aware that the offer of a conditional place at the school does not guarantee that bursary funding can or will be put in place. If your bursary application is turned down because the Bursaries Committee considers that fees cannot be afforded without financial assistance, your son's conditional place will be withdrawn.

Requests for a bursary usually fall into two categories:

- Applicants to the school where parents are unable to fund the school fees (in full or in part) and where:
  - either a conditional place has been offered; or
  - entrance to the school is contingent on success at scholarship auditions, assessment or examination.
- Existing pupils where a change in parents' circumstances **after the point of entry** has resulted in an inability to pay school fees in full or in part and would result in the boy being withdrawn part way through a stage of education.

## **NEW APPLICANTS TO THE SCHOOL**

### **Information about Bursaries**

Information for prospective parents' about the possibility of gaining means-tested financial support with the payment of schools fees is included in the school's Admissions Booklet and on the school's website. Further information may also be obtained from parent tours and from the Fees and Bursaries Team as follows:

Mrs Rachel Harris, Fees and Bursaries Accountant on 01753 370580 or at [r.harris@etoncollege.org.uk](mailto:r.harris@etoncollege.org.uk)

Mrs Carolyn Cox, Bursaries Administrator on 01753 370581 or at [c.cox@etoncollege.org.uk](mailto:c.cox@etoncollege.org.uk)

### **The Bursary Application Process**

Boys must either be:

- i. Registered and have received a conditional offer of a place at the school; or
- ii. Be applying to the school in respect of one of the following scholarship entry routes:
  - a. King's Scholarship (automatic financial assistance worth 10% of school fees)
  - b. Music Scholarship (automatic financial assistance worth 10% of school fees)
  - c. New Foundation Scholarship
  - d. Sixth Form Scholarship

The deadline for the submission of the bursary application can be found either in the conditional offer letter or the relevant scholarship prospectus. Late applications will reduce the likelihood of an award being made.

Bursaries are awarded at the discretion of the Bursaries Committee, which includes the Head Master, the Lower Master, the Tutor for Admissions, the Bursar, the Fees and Bursaries Accountant, and school masters involved with the admissions process. The Fees and Bursaries Accountant is responsible for the management and coordination of the process by which bursary applications are considered.

- **Step One:** Parents seeking a bursary are required to complete the Bursary Application Form. This form is intended to establish whether the household has sufficient means to pay all, some or none of the required school fees. The form, which requests details of assets and borrowings and income and expenditure, must be accompanied by full documentary evidence to support the application. The completed form, together with the necessary documentary evidence, must be submitted to the Fees and Bursaries Accountant.
- **Step Two:** All applications will be subject to a home visit completed by Bursary Administration Limited in order to ensure the information has been correctly interpreted.
- **Step Three:** The Fees and Bursaries Accountant collates all the information about an application. This includes financial details together with a junior school report and information gathered about the prospective pupil at the assessment and interview stage. An initial recommendation is prepared by the Fees and Bursaries Accountant for consideration by the Bursaries Committee but the application is discussed in full by the Committee and a final decision is reached.
- **Step Four:** Parents are notified in writing of the Bursaries Committee's decision.

- Step Five: Parents offered a bursary are then required to sign a letter accepting the offer and agreeing to any conditions relating to the bursary.

Prospective parents should not assume that an initial bursary award will continue throughout their son's time at Eton as parental means are subject to annual review. However, where there are no notable changes in financial circumstances, parents can assume that the level of award will not change from year to year.

### **The Case for Assistance**

The Bursaries Committee considers a number of factors when making the decision about whether to make a bursary award.

The level of the bursary required is not influenced by the academic ability of the boy but by the extent of financial need. Each case is assessed on its own merits and the Fees and Bursaries Accountant recommends the level of award required to enable the boy to come to the school. The school has a duty to ensure that its charitable monies are allocated appropriately. As well as current earnings and expenditure, other factors which will be considered in determining the level of award required will include:

- The ability to maximise the financial position or earning power of the family. For example, where there are two partners, we would expect both to be earning unless one is prevented from doing so through incapacity, the need to care for children under school age or other dependants, or the requirements of their partner's work.
- Opportunities to release any capital. Significant capital savings and investments would be expected to be used for the payment of school fees, as would significant equity values in properties.
- Contribution to household costs by other family members, or any adults (eg step-parents, godparents) unrelated to the boy or from any other source.
- Where fees are being paid to other schools (or universities) we will take these outgoings into account. There is an expectation that bursary applications, where possible, will have been made to other educational establishments in respect of siblings so that the burden of school fees is shared among institutions.
- Acknowledging that others might have a different view, the school considers that the following, for example, may not be consistent with the receipt of a bursary:
  - Frequent or expensive holidays;
  - Luxury cars;
  - Investment in significant home improvements;
  - Higher than average non-contractual pension contributions;
  - A second property/land holding; or
  - Failure to honour payments in respect of school fees payable to other educational establishments

Awards of financial assistance to one boy do not necessarily guarantee awards to siblings already in the school or subsequently admitted to the school. The Bursaries Committee is sympathetic to changes in family circumstances arising from illness or bereavement but any application submitted for these reasons is means-tested in the same way as any other award.

Having established financial need, the Committee then has to allocate the bursary funds available among the applicants. The Committee will make awards that enable boys to come to Eton, rather than dividing the funds available between the applicants and expecting parents to fund the shortfall.

In cases where demand on the school's bursary funds exceeds the availability of funds, the Bursaries Committee may refer applications back to the Admissions Committee. Attention will then be given to the assessment result of each boy; academic potential and potential in co-curricular areas will also be considered as well as actual achievement. Those judged likely to gain most from the educational provision at Eton will be awarded bursaries. Inevitably difficult decisions have to be made at this stage which may result in no award being given.

## **EXISTING PUPILS**

### **Change in Family/Financial Circumstances**

Parents with a boy at the school who experience an unexpected change in their family or financial circumstances after the point of entry may apply for a bursary explaining their situation. Parents will be required to complete a Bursary Application Form. All applications will be dealt with in exactly the same manner as set out in the Bursary Application Process notes above.

The Bursaries Committee is unlikely to take a sympathetic view of applications received in respect of a boy already at the school where it becomes apparent that fees could never have been afforded and no previous bursary application has been submitted.

## **ANNUAL REVIEW**

Bursary awards are reviewed in the Spring each year. Current bursary holders will be asked to provide an update on their financial circumstances. Awards may be varied upwards or downwards depending on parental circumstances. Parents can assume that an award will not change from year to year unless there has been a significant change in their finances.

The Bursaries Committee also has the discretion to withdraw an award not only where a boy's progress, attitude or behaviour has been unsatisfactory but also where the parents have failed to notify the school of a significant improvement in their financial circumstances.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

The school respects the confidentiality of bursary awards made to families; recipients are expected to do likewise.