



COLLYER'S

Founded in 1532

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Dear students, parents and carers

Changes to Free Meals from the 2026 to 2027 academic year

I wish to inform you of changes to free meals in further education from the start of the 2026 to 2027 academic year.

What is changing?

Expanded entitlement for families on Universal Credit

From the start of academic year 2026 to 2027 students in households receiving Universal Credit will be entitled to free meals in further education, regardless of earnings. A student must be aged 16 or over but under 19 on 31 August 2026 to be eligible to receive a free meal.

End of transitional protections

Since 2018, some children have continued to receive free school meals, even if their family circumstances changed during the rollout of Universal Credit. This is referred to as transitional protections. Now that entitlement is **being expanded to all families on Universal Credit**, these protections will end at the end of the 2025 to 2026 academic year.

This means:

Some students may no longer be eligible from the start of the 2026 to 2027 academic year if they or their parents do not receive Universal Credit or another qualifying benefit. Eligibility will now be based on current benefit status.

What you need to do

For full information regarding eligibility, please read the Collyer's Student Financial Support and Travel Guide: [Financial Support and Travel Guide 2026-2027](#)

If you think you are eligible for free meals at college you should apply using the link below:

[Apply for Financial Support](#)

If you require further assistance, please email financialsupport@collyers.ac.uk

Andrea John
Vice Principal (Pastoral)



Horsham

Learning Alliance

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