PINC COLLEGE
FREE COLLEGE MEALS POLICY

ACADEMIC YEAR 2026- 2027

Overview

The Department for Education provides funding for the provision of free meals for students who qualify for the assistance. For the 2026 to 2027 academic year the rate set is £2.66 per student per meal. The meal is provided for the days where a student attends College over the lunchtime period or is on an external work-placement.

Assessment

From the start of the 2026 to 2027 academic year, transitional protections for free meals will end. Households must meet the eligibility criteria from the start of the 2026 to 2027 academic year, to continue receiving provision.

Ongoing eligibility will be monitored through applications of free meals taking place each year.

All students who are applying for a free College meal for 2026-2027 must complete an application form. The application process requires students and/or parents and carers to provide evidence of benefits that they are receiving.

Eligible Benefits

Free meals are targeted at disadvantaged students. Free meals in FE defines disadvantage as students being in receipt of, or having parents who are in receipt of, one or more of the following benefits:

- Universal Credit
- support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guaranteed element of State Pension Credit

Households in receipt of Income-related Employment and Support Allowance or the guarantee element of Pension Credit may also be entitled to a meal.

Further information on eligibility is available in the DFE guidance:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/free-meals-in-further-education-guide/free-meals-in-further-education-funded-institutions-guide-academic-year-2026-to-2027

Provision

Following receipt of a successful application for Free Meals the College will provide a voucher for £2.66 per day for each day the student has attended college. Vouchers will be emailed to a nominated email address on a weekly basis.

Confidentiality

Please note that our policy is to maintain strict confidentiality in the review and storage of any information that is held. Pinc College will keep this data and the evidence provided, in line with the Data Protection Act 1998 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018.

Application Process

Please contact the College if you would like to discuss this guidance further or make an application. Application deadline is 31 October 2026, for students where your local authority has agreed funding for your study programme.

Please contact the College to discuss extended deadlines for students who commence their study programme after 31 October 2026.

Voucher Distribution

Following a successful application for Free School Meals and to ensure the support is provided within the spirit of supporting individuals. The student/parent will receive the first allocation of vouchers based on the planned timetable of the students first week.

Each subsequent Voucher will be provided based on the students attendance of the week term prior.

Email: connect@pinccollege.co.uk