

Means-Tested Bursary Policy and Guidance for the MMI Training Centre

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Purpose of the Policy

The Maria Montessori Institute (MMI) Training Centre is committed to widening access to Montessori education by offering a limited number of means-tested bursaries to eligible adult learners. This includes those enrolled on Montessori teacher and trainer education programmes as well as participants undertaking short courses designed for parents and members of the wider community.

Bursaries are intended to support applicants who demonstrate genuine financial need and who would otherwise be unable to commence or continue their studies or learning activities.

Financial Assistance Framework

The Steering Committee of MMI is committed to broadening access to Montessori education through its Training Centre by offering means-tested financial support towards tuition fees for eligible adult students enrolled on MMI teacher and trainer programmes. The purpose of this support is to assist students who meet MMI's entry criteria and demonstrate genuine financial need, while ensuring responsible stewardship of MMI's financial resources and long-term sustainability.

Such support is known as a bursary. Bursaries are normally awarded as a partial reduction of tuition fees and, in exceptional cases of proven need, may extend to a higher level of fee remission. All bursary awards are discretionary, subject to the availability of funds, and are made following an assessment of the individual student's financial circumstances. Bursary funding is limited and cannot be guaranteed.

Applications are assessed holistically, taking into account the applicant's overall financial position. Factors considered may include, but are not limited to, earned income and self-employment income, state benefits, family or third-party financial support, savings, investments, realisable assets, essential living costs, dependants, and the applicant's capacity to contribute towards tuition fees. Where a student applicant resides in the family home, the financial circumstances of the household, including family income, may also be taken into account.

Applicants are expected to make a reasonable personal financial contribution towards the cost of their training wherever possible. The level of bursary support offered will reflect the extent of demonstrated financial need, balanced against MMI's responsibility to allocate limited funds fairly and sustainably.

A bursary may be withdrawn in its entirety in accordance with the terms on which the award is made or the Training Centre's Terms and Conditions. Withdrawal may also occur where, in the opinion of the Head of the Training Centre, a student's attendance, behaviour or conduct at MMI no longer merits the continuation of the award. Verbal or physical abuse will not be tolerated and includes, but is not limited to, raised voices, shouting, physical intimidation or threats. MMI reserves the right to amend the way in which awards are assessed.

Requests for financial support fall into two categories:

1. Existing Students

Where a student's financial position changes such that meeting tuition fees becomes difficult, the student may apply for financial support. This is intended to support continuation on the programme where there is a risk of withdrawal part-way through training.

Subject to the availability of funds, temporary or short-term hardship support may be provided. This may apply where local or national economic conditions have had a demonstrable impact on the student's income or financial stability.

2. New Applicants

Where an offer of a place has been made but a prospective student is unable to meet the tuition fees, an application for bursary support may be considered.

Funding for new applicants is limited and is considered on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the individual student's financial circumstances and demonstrated need.

Applications from new students must be submitted no later than two months prior to the published start date of the relevant course in order to be considered by the Steering Committee.

Application Process

Bursaries may be made available to adult students enrolling on any MMI Training Centre programme, subject to meeting the published entry criteria for the relevant course. Bursary awards are made at the discretion of the Steering Committee, and the Head of Finance and Administration is responsible for the management and coordination of the bursary application process.

Step One – Application

Students seeking a bursary are required to complete a Bursary Application Form, which is designed to assess the applicant's identity and financial circumstances. The application requires details of all relevant income, benefits, savings, investments, and other financial resources, and must be supported by full documentary evidence. Where a student relies on financial support from a family member(s) or partner, information relating to that support, including relevant household income, may be required as part of the assessment.

Applicants must sign a declaration confirming that the information provided is accurate and complete. Successful applicants are required to notify MMI promptly of any material change in financial circumstances during the period of study. Where information provided as part of the application or subsequent assessment is found to be false, misleading, or incomplete, MMI reserves the right to withdraw any bursary awarded with immediate effect and may seek reimbursement in accordance with MMI's terms and conditions.

Step Two – Assessment

The Head of Finance and Administration, or their nominee, assesses applications to determine the level of financial support that may be appropriate in order to enable the student to undertake the programme. Applicants may be required to provide additional information or attend a meeting as part of the assessment process.

Step Three – Recommendation

Following assessment, the Head of Finance and Administration, or their nominee, prepares a recommendation in line with MMI's bursary assessment framework. This recommendation is considered with the Executive Director before a joint recommendation is reached.

Step Four – Approval

The joint recommendation is submitted to the Steering Committee for approval. The Steering Committee may request further information to support its decision-making.

Step Five – Notification

Applicants are notified in writing of the outcome of their bursary application and, where applicable, the terms of any bursary award.

Step Six – Acceptance

Students who are offered a bursary are required to confirm acceptance in writing and to agree to any additional terms and conditions associated with the bursary award.

MMI may use an external organisation to assist with the processing of bursary applications, including verification and credit checks, and information provided by applicants may be shared with such organisations in confidence for these purposes. All personal data processed in connection with bursary applications will be handled in accordance with MMI's Data Protection Policy.

Policy Review

MMI reserves the right to amend this policy and its assessment criteria at any time to ensure fairness, sustainability, and alignment with organisational priorities.