

Transport for Students in Further Education

Local Authorities are under no obligation to provide free home to school or college transport if a student is over 16 at the beginning of the academic year (1 September). Cornwall Council, like many other local authorities across England, operates a policy of subsidising travel to Further Education for students aged between 16–19 (21 for students with special educational needs) who attend the nearest establishment offering the course(s) or similar the student wishes to study and provided the student lives over 3 miles from the said establishment.

Students undertaking an A/AS level course would not automatically qualify for subsidised travel to an establishment which is not the nearest if their designated/nearest school does not offer a particular subject.

Please read these notes carefully. If, when you have read them you think that you qualify and would like Cornwall Council to arrange transport for you to attend a Cornish school sixth form or a college of further education, please fill in the application form and return it as soon as possible with payment to:

Cornwall College Students – all applications are to be made via The Transport Office of Cornwall College based at Cornwall College (St Austell). Please go to their website: www.cornwall.ac.uk or telephone on 01726 226404/ 01726 226618 for details.

Truro College Students – please contact Truro College in the first instance as they run their own transport scheme. Please go to their website: www.trurocollege.ac.uk or telephone on 01872 267003 for details.

All Other Students – all applications must be sent to the Transport Officer, Camel Building, County Hall, Truro, Cornwall, TR1 3AY by the 10 August 2012 in order for student's to receive their pass in time for the beginning of the Autumn 2012 term.

Your application must be submitted by the 10 August 2012. Following approval your bus pass will be sent to you from the 1 August 2012 onwards.

If your form is returned after the 10 August 2012 students will have to make their own way to and from the school sixth form or college of further education at their own expense until the application and payment are processed. Please note that this process can take up to 10 working days.

The following questions and answers provide further information on Cornwall Council's current policy.

Do I qualify?

To qualify for subsidised transport for the academic year 2012/2013 you must be:

- Under 19 years of age on 1 September 2012.
- A full time student attending a course for 450 hours per year and enrolled for the 3 terms of the 2012/2013 academic year.
- Living more than 3 miles away from the nearest school sixth form or college of further education that offers the course(s) or similar that you want to do (for A/AS Level study please refer to the policy).
- Willing to pay a contribution towards the cost of your transport.

Special educational needs students must be:

- Under 21 years of age on 1 September 2012.
- A full time student attending a course for 450 guided learning hours per year and enrolled at their nearest school/special school/college of further education for the 3 terms of the 2012/13 academic year.
- Willing to pay a contribution towards the cost of your transport.

How do I apply and what is the cost?

- You can download an application form at www.cornwall.gov.uk/collegetransport or request a form by contacting the Passenger Transport Unit, County Hall, Truro, TR1 3AY; Telephone number 0300 1234 222.
- The contribution towards 16-19 transport is £327 for the academic year. Payment can be by one payment or collected before the start of each term; £120 a term (£87 for the summer term). Please note that the average cost of providing transport for mainstream students is £599 per student which equates to the Local Authority subsidising each students transport in the sum of £272. For students with Disabilities/Learning Difficulties the average cost is £3592 per student which equates to the Local Authority subsidising each students transport in the sum of £3265.
- You can pay by cheque or postal order (made payable to Cornwall Council) - Please don't send cash.
- Alternatively, you can make a payment by credit/debit card.

What transport is provided?

The Council will seek to provide suitable transport using the most cost effective method utilising public transport (trains and buses), contract buses, taxis and volunteer drivers. If any of these are unavailable or prove unsuitable, a travel allowance may be offered to students to make their own way to school/college. The allowance is paid at 25 pence per mile. Transport support will only be provided for standard academic terms and at the official start and end of a standard college/sixth form day and will not include evening and weekend provision. The start and finish times are agreed between the Council and the learning establishment in advance and the transport is arranged to meet these times only. The times of the transport is not flexible as they are set timetables, transport will not be scheduled to accommodate each individual student's course timetable.

What transport is available for students with Special Educational Needs

Specialist transport such as by taxi or accessible minibus will only be provided where supporting evidence identifies the need to do so. Evidence may take the form of letters of support from a doctor, social worker, educational psychiatrist/psychologist or other professional bodies. Once this has been approved by the Commissioning Team, the Council's Passenger Transport Unit will usually decide the mode of transport to be provided and whether a passenger assistant needs to be deployed.

What happens if I lose my pass?

If you lose your pass, a replacement can be obtained from the Passenger Transport Unit. A charge of £10 will be made for a replacement pass to be issued with an increase of £5 for each additional lost pass requested.

Can I get any money back if I leave my course?

If you decide to leave your course, you may be entitled to a pro-rata refund the amount you receive will depend on the date the bus pass is received back by the Passenger Transport Unit. Please write to the Passenger Transport Unit, County Hall, Truro TR1 3AY.

What if I am not eligible for subsidised transport?

Contract vehicle capacity does not always match the number of passengers to be conveyed, there are sometimes spare places. A spare seat on a vehicle under contract to the Council may be allocated to a student ineligible for automatic placement on the assisted travel schemes on payment of the required fare. These students travel as Concessionary riders. The spare places are allocated on a 'first come, first served' basis. The scheme does not start until 1 October each year when bus loadings are settled. You must arrange and fund your own transport to school sixth form or college of further education until a Concessionary rider seat is allocated.

Note: The scheme only applies to vehicles under contract; it does not apply to public service buses or trains.

What is the cost of a Concessionary Scheme place and how do I apply?

- The contribution towards a Concessionary Scheme place is £327. Please use the Concessionary Scheme Application form which can be downloaded at www.cornwall.gov.uk/collegetransport or request a form by contacting the Passenger Transport Unit, County Hall, Truro, TR1 3AY; Telephone number 0300 1234 222.

What if the Council cannot help in any way with transport?

The school sixth form or college of further education that you are going to attend may be able to help.

Can my bus pass be withdrawn?

Yes. Undisciplined behaviour whilst travelling on subsidised transport or non co-operation with any employee of the contracting company or an officer of the Council will result in the withdrawal of your bus pass.

Also, your bus pass is not transferable; so giving your pass to another student to enable them to travel will result in your pass being withdrawn.

What can I do if I don't agree with the decision on my eligibility for transport?

If you do not agree with the decision which has been made about your eligibility you have the right to appeal. Appeal in writing to The Commissioning Manager (Access & Infrastructure Team, Children Schools and Families, Camel Building, County Hall, Truro TR1 3AY; who will arrange for the appeal to be taken to the next available meeting of the Appeals Panel. The panel's decision is final.