

### **The Spectacle Makers' Charity Bursary Scheme 2024-25: Guidance Notes**

1. The bursary application form tells us about you and provides important information on which the Trustees will make their decisions. Please read the application form and this guidance carefully before you start.
2. Applications will be accepted from students in any year of a course in the UK (minimum Level 4 or above) which is intended to lead directly to an optical, optometric, orthoptic, ophthalmic nursing or ophthalmic imaging profession. This includes part time, day release and block release courses and government-approved apprenticeships at Level 4 or above. The scheme does not apply to students taking access courses or one year introductory or foundation courses. We do not offer bursaries for postgraduate research.
3. You can apply if this is not your first course of study - eg those progressing from a Level 4 diploma to a Level 6 dispensing course/ degree or Level 7 Master's degree in Optometry are eligible. Applicants who already hold a first degree in a subject other than optical dispensing or optometry may also apply but bursaries will not be awarded for separate postgraduate programmes, other than ophthalmic nursing. The Trustees will consider the educational record of each applicant and will expect more from those who already hold degree level qualifications.
4. Candidates of any nationality may apply but they must be registered to study within the United Kingdom, must be eligible to work in the UK and must hold a UK bank account.
5. All applications must be submitted via the online form on our website <https://www.spectaclemakers.com/charity/bursaries-and-travel-awards> **no later than midnight on Wednesday 11 December 2024**. Late applications, applications sent in other formats and emails asking for financial support will not be considered by the Trustees.
6. You must give the name and contact details of your personal tutor, course director or supervisor on the form.

### **Personal Details and Data Protection**

- A1. The Spectacle Makers' Charity and the Worshipful Company of Spectacle Makers (WCSM) will hold and process the details in your application form in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018.
- A2. By submitting an online application, you agree to your data being stored and shared with the WCSM and with the Trustees of the Charity individually and as a body, for the purposes of assessing, awarding, and monitoring the Bursary Scheme and informing you about the work of the WCSM and The Spectacle Makers' Charity.
- A3. By submitting the form, you also agree to the Charity Trustees or a representative of the Trustees contacting you, your tutor or other staff at your training institution, and any employer or organisation declared on the form if needed to check the information you have provided in your application.
- A4. We ask for your consent for possible use of your name in publicity relating to the scheme if you are successful in being awarded a bursary. This is entirely optional. Your application will be considered in the same way even if this consent is not given.



- A5. Data relating to unsuccessful applicants will be held for a maximum of one year following the announcement of the grant of awards. Under normal circumstances, unless further consent for contact has been given, data relating to bursary winners will be destroyed four years after the granting of an award.
- A6. We would like to keep in touch with you but if you do not want to be informed of WCSM events and activities in the future, this will not count against your application.
- A7. Applicants and award winners can update their contact details or change or withdraw consent for use of their personal data at any time by contacting the WCSM office on 020 7236 2932 or emailing [charity@spectaclemakers.com](mailto:charity@spectaclemakers.com).

### Section B – Application Details

- B1. The number of awards we can make is limited. **IMPORTANT: Not everyone who applies will receive a bursary.** Bursary awards are made at the discretion of the Trustees and may be for any amount **up to a maximum of £1,000.**
- B2. If you applied for a bursary in a previous year and were not successful, you can try again but past winners cannot re-apply. No person can receive more than one bursary.
- B3. The process is competitive, because we have many more applications than we can fund. The Trustees are not looking for people with the highest exam grades or the most impressive personal statements. They are looking to help people who would really benefit from a personal bursary, people who are committed to a career in eye health, have thought about what financial support they need to help them in that goal, and have shown that they can prepare sensible budgets and make cost-effective decisions.
- B4. A very important part of the form is the Motivation section. We want to know what sparked your interest in your course, including any individual experience that led you to apply for your chosen programme of study.
- B5. Your application will score higher if you can give full details of the amount you are applying for and how it will be used, and how that would help in budgeting for the costs of your studies.
- B6. Communication skills are very important so please check your entry carefully for spelling and grammatical errors, make sure you answer **all** the questions and **maximise each response within the set word count.** Skipping questions or failing to fully complete the application form will make your application invalid.

### Section C – Assessment and payment process

- C.1 In assessing the applications, no account will be taken of an applicant's age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, pregnancy, race, religion or marital status. Names will be removed from applications before they are assessed, being replaced by a unique number.
- C.2 Applications will be scored & independently reviewed by at least two Trustees. Awards will be made only after agreement by the Board of Trustees of the Charity.



- C.3 All assessors are members of the Worshipful Company of Spectacle Makers. All bursary applicants are warmly invited to take an interest in the Company and its programme for Journeymen and Freemen but connecting with the Company will not give any advantage in terms of the bursary scheme. Any connection an applicant may claim to have, directly, or through a tutor, family or Company member, will be disregarded in assessing applications.
- C.4 The Trustees expect a large number of applications. Neither they nor the admin support team will offer any individual advice about applications. Applicants are expected to think for themselves. All the guidance needed is given in this document and on the form itself.
- C.5 Awards will be confirmed by email and paid directly into the bank accounts of bursary winners before the **end of March 2025**. Applicants who have not heard from the Trustees by 31 March should assume that their application has not been successful. Individual feedback cannot be given. The Trustees will not enter into discussion about individual applications or about the assessment process. The judgment of the Trustee Board will be final. There is no right of appeal.
- C.6 Checks will be made before each bursary is awarded, to make sure that potential bursary winners are still enrolled on the course at the UK institution named on the application form and they are attending regularly and participating fully in their course.

#### **Section D. Use of funds**

- D1. The Trustees will expect bursary awards to be spent within 18 months of the award. You will be required to provide formal evidence of expenditure, in the form of receipts. Please be aware of this when applying. **You may have to repay funds if you do not use the money appropriately or if you do not complete the course.**

#### **Section E: Terms and conditions**

- E1. Please make sure you tick the box to confirm you have understood the terms and conditions of the bursary scheme.
- E2. Please make sure that you let us know of any changes to your contact details during the application process, otherwise we will not be able to tell you if you are successful.
- E3. You must not copy from others or use published information such as wording from prospectuses or training materials. An application will be deemed invalid if it appears that information has been shared with, or copied and pasted from, another source.
- E4. Bursary awards can only be paid into a UK bank account held in the name of the award winner. Details will be requested only if your application is successful.
- E5. It is a condition of the award that all bursary winners must provide a written report of around 750 words or if preferred, a short video on their progress. Written or video reports must be submitted by **25 July 2025**. Bursary winners will also be required to send receipts or other evidence to prove how the funds have been spent. Action may be taken to reclaim funds from you if you do not provide the required report and/or cannot prove proper use of the bursary.
- E6. The writer of the best progress report will be invited to the annual WCSM Presentation Evening (likely to take place in early July) where they will have the chance to meet experienced professionals from all parts of the eye care sector. They may also be eligible to receive a special award, named after past Freeman of the Company Anne Macintosh.