



Isle of Man
Government

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Department of Education, Sport and Culture
Free School Meals and Free School Travel Card

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Glossary

Department means the Department of Education, Sport and Culture (DESC) including schools, UCM, Villa Gaiety and MSR.

UCM means University College Isle of Man.

Qualifying Benefit means either of the following Income Based Job Seekers Allowance, Income Support or Employed Persons Allowance.

Contents

Summary	3
About this guidance	3
Who is this document for?	3
Key points.....	3
Effective Date.....	3
Free School Meals and Free School Travel Cards.....	4
Associated Resources	6
Version Control	7
Review Date	7

Summary

About this guidance

This document details the Department's procedure on providing Free School Meals and Free School Travel Cards to pupils who are attending one of the Island's primary or secondary school or pupils who are 18 and under and in full time education at the University College Isle of Man (UCM) and at least one of their parent/carers are in receipt of a qualifying benefit.

Who is this document for?

The information contained within this document applies to parents and carers, pupils and the wider public for information. It may also be reference by Departmental staff, the schools maintained by DESC & UCM.

Key points

This document applies to those people in receipt of a qualifying benefit and who wish to apply for Free School Meals and/or Free School Travel Cards for their child(ren)

The Department's Corporate Services Team will maintain these records in line with the retention period.

Information provided within your application will be shared with the Social Security Division of the Treasury. If you wish to apply for a Free School Travel Card, information provided within your application will be shared with the Public Transport Division of the Department of Infrastructure.

Effective Date

This document is effective from 29/08/2023. It will be kept under review and updated at least annually.

Free School Meals and Free School Travel Cards

Background

Free school meals are provided to pupils whose parents/carers meet the eligibility criteria and apply for this provision.

Eligibility

A parent or carer may apply for free school meals and free school travel cards for pupils attending one of the island's primary or secondary schools, or pupils who are under the age of 18 and in full time education at the University College Isle of Man (UCM), if the family is in receipt of any of the qualifying benefits. These benefits are:

- Employed Person's Allowance
- Income Based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income Support

In the case of pupils attending University College Isle of Man (UCM), the parent(s) or carer(s) must not be in receipt of an award from the Student Awards Section of the Department of Education, Sport & Culture.

Free School Travel Cards may only be issued providing the pupil travels more than one mile to or from the school/college they attend.

Provision

The free meal allowance is calculated to enable the child to obtain a 2-course midday meal excluding drinks (water is available in all schools).

The Department operates a school meal service for primary school children. The service provides a good range of healthy meal choices in order to fulfil some of the daily nutritional requirements of primary school children. Meals meet minimum requirements for protein, zinc, iron and vitamins and don't exceed maximum recommended levels of salt, sugar and fat.

Each of the Island's secondary schools operates their own canteen service which offers a choice of meals to pupils, details of which are available from each school.

Application process

Applications for free school meals can be made by completing an online application form which can be found on the Department's section of gov.im

The application will ask for the applicant's permission for the Department to verify the information that has been provided relating to benefits, with the Social Security Division of the Treasury. Free School Meals and Free School Travel Card applications can only be approved once verification has been sought by the Social Security Division of the Treasury.

Free School Travel Cards may only be issued providing the pupil travels **more than one mile** to or from the school/college they attend.

Parent and Carer's Responsibility

Parent/Carers will inform the Department immediately of any change in circumstances, which would influence the eligibility for Free Schools Meals and Free School Travel Cards. Please contact the Department by telephone on 685808 or by emailing Admin.DESC@gov.im or in writing to Corporate Services Team, Department of Education, Sport and Culture, Thie SliEAU Whallian, Foxdale Road, St Johns, Isle of Man, IM4 3AS

Parent/Carers agree to the appropriate sharing with the Department and the Social Security Division of the Treasury of such personal data (including name and date of birth of applicant) considered necessary to inform the outcome of such application.

Where necessary, parent/carers agree to the appropriate sharing with the Department and Public Transport Division of the Department of Infrastructure of such personal data (including applicant details and name and education details of the pupil) considered necessary to inform the outcome of such application.

Associated Resources

Information relating to school meals can be found by following these links:

<https://www.gov.im/categories/education-training-and-careers/schoolmeals/>

<https://www.gov.im/about-the-government/departments/educationsport-and-culture/policies-and-procedures-a-to-z/f/#accordion>

<https://www.gov.im/categories/benefits-and-financial-support/familiesand-children/school-meals/>

<https://www.gov.im/categories/education-training-and-careers/schoolmeals/free-school-meals-and-free-school-travel-application-form/>

Each school or UCM will be able to provide full details of the service they offer.

Version Control

The business area that owns this document is Policy, Strategy and Governance

Version	Author	Date	Changes
V0.1	Corporate Services Executive Officer (KC)	20.07.2023	First Draft

Review Date

This document was issued on 29/08/2023 and is due be reviewed in 08/2024