Hardship and Discretionary Bursary Policy

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Policy Details

Policy Title	Hardship and Discretionary Bursary Policy
Policy Number	ADM-004
Policy Owner	Admissions Department
Version	6
Effective Date	01 July 2026
Scheduled Review Date	30 June 2027
Applicable To	All Premium Schools

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1. Purpose

This policy applies to Taaleem Holdings PJSC (hereafter referred to as "Taaleem" or the "Company") and is designed to guide the process of

- Hardship Bursary: determining financial need for families seeking assistance due to a change in their financial situation. This type of assistance is intended for situations where the hardship is expected to improve or come to an end.
- Discretionary Bursary: providing discretionary discounts that do not fit within the framework of the other discounts offered by the Company

2. Scope

a. Taaleem upholds an ethos of listening to parents, providing flexibility in paying school fees. Transparent communication is maintained regarding school fees, with any changes communicated to parents in advance. Each family's case is treated individually, with the Company prepared to discuss and offer solutions based on evidence presented for changes in circumstances.

b. Should a family struggle to pay fees due to changing circumstances, Taaleem is open to discussing and implementing solutions.

3. Hardship Bursary

A **'Hardship Bursary'** will be awarded for one academic year, or for the remainder of the academic year where the application is approved during the academic year. Families may reapply each year if the circumstances giving rise to the hardship continue to exist.

The objective of both the family and the school should be to support a return to the school's approved published fees when the family's financial circumstances improve, while enabling the student to continue their education at the school.

3.1. Application for a Hardship Bursary

a. Parents seeking a hardship bursary must submit the prescribed application form together with all supporting documentation requested by the school. This may include, but is not limited to:

   i. Recent salary statements for both parents (if both are employed)
   ii. Bank statements for both parents (including current, savings and credit card accounts, as applicable)
   iii. Details of the family's financial commitments, and supporting evidence of the change in financial circumstances, such as medical reports, employer letters confirming termination of employment, salary reduction, unpaid leave or changes to employment benefits, evidence of final settlement following termination of employment, or
   iv. Any other relevant supporting documentation requested by the school.

Note: The school reserves the right to request information about any recognised fund transfers. Bank statements will be requested for a minimum of 3 and maximum of 6 months.

b. Both parents are expected to provide full and accurate financial information, where applicable, to enable the school to assess the family's financial circumstances.

c. To formalise the agreement of the hardship bursary, parents are obligated to sign a Non-Disclosure Agreement.

3.2. Assessment of Hardship Bursary

a. Applying for a 'Hardship Bursary' can be a challenging and often a last resort for families. At Taaleem, we prioritise full confidentiality concerning the personal documents and information parents provide, ensuring that only individuals involved in the approval process have access to this information.

b. The decision to accept or decline a hardship bursary and determining the percentage is based on various criteria points, including but not limited to:

   i. A sudden change in a family's income due to a change in circumstances.
   ii. The comparison of a family's monthly income to the termly fees for their child/children.
   iii. Evidence suggesting that the circumstances may not be permanent and could improve in the future.
   iv. The number of years the child has attended the school.
   v. The year group the child is currently attending, especially if it's a year where they must complete examinations.
   vi. Consideration of a school's over-subscription and whether there is a waiting list.

d. These criteria ensure a comprehensive evaluation process, allowing us to make informed and fair decisions while considering the unique circumstances of each family applying for a hardship bursary.

e. Parents must promptly notify the school of any material change in their financial circumstances, including where the hardship that formed the basis of the hardship bursary no longer exists.

f. **The school reserves the right to review, amend or withdraw a hardship bursary where a family's circumstances change or the eligibility criteria are no longer met.**

3.3. Approval of Hardship Bursary

a. All documents are accepted and / or prepared by the school Admissions Manager.

b. The application is reviewed by the Cluster Finance Manager (CFM), who assesses the family's financial circumstances, recommends an appropriate bursary percentage, and confirms whether sufficient budget exists within the school's overall approved discount budget. Where a discount request falls outside the approved budget, the Cluster Finance Manager's comments on the financial impact will be captured in emails as part of the approval workflows.

c. The Principal reviews and approves the final bursary percentage based on the recommendations by the Cluster Finance Manager.

d. The final application is reviewed and approved by the Head of Marketing and Admissions at Central Office via email.

e. All unbudgeted hardship bursaries require additional approvals from the Cluster Director of Education and the Chief Operating Officer (via email).

f. A Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA) is then signed by the school Principal and the parents.

3.4. Renewals

a. A hardship bursary will be awarded for one academic year, or for the remainder of the academic year where the application is approved during the academic year. Where the circumstances giving rise to the financial hardship continue and the parent(s) wish to be considered for a hardship bursary for the following academic year, a new application, together with the required supporting documentation, must be submitted prior to the end of the current academic year.

b. Approval is not automatic and each application will be assessed on its own merits in accordance with this Policy.

4. Discretionary Bursary

The need for a **Discretionary Bursary** discount may arise in exceptional circumstances that fall outside the standard discount framework, such as low utilisation in a school, a parent considering enrolment at a competitor school, or a request from a senior member of Taaleem's leadership or Board of Directors for special consideration.

4.1. Application and Assessment of a Discretionary Bursary

a. Request for a new discretionary bursary should be formalised via email, outlining the following (as applicable): details of the specific circumstance, justification for the discount, potential impact on the school if the discount is not granted etc.

b. The CFM will review the proposed discretionary bursary discount to assess the impact on the school's overall approved discount budget and confirm budget availability before the recommendation is finalised. Where a discount request falls outside the approved budget, the Cluster Finance Manager's comments on the financial impact will be captured in emails as part of the approval workflows.

4.2. Approval of Discretionary Bursary

a. Formal email approval is required jointly from the school Principal and the Head of Marketing & Admissions for any discretionary bursary discount.

b. All unbudgeted discretionary bursary discounts require additional approvals from the Cluster Director of Education and the Chief Operating Officer (via email).

c. A Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA) will be signed by the school Principal and the parents for each new discretionary bursary approved.

d. The approval and NDA will not be required to be renewed annually for existing approved discretionary bursary discounts.

4.3. Renewals

a. Once approved, a discretionary bursary discount will remain applicable for the duration of the student's enrolment at the school and will be grandfathered in each year by the Finance team as part of the annual budgeting process. The approval process outlined above applies only to new discretionary bursary discounts awarded during the current academic year and does not apply to existing grandfathered discretionary discounts.

5. Note

a. In exceptional cases, a parent may refuse to sign a NDA with the school. An email trail will be maintained where this is highlighted to the Principal for visibility.

6. Implementation Timeline

This policy shall be implemented within thirty (30) days from the Effective Date indicated on the cover page, allowing adequate time for communication, training, and adoption across all relevant Taaleem entities. Where any requirement in this policy is dependent on a system functionality, configuration, or tool that is not yet implemented, such requirement shall take effect only once the relevant functionality is operational. Until such time, existing processes shall continue to apply.

7. Non-Compliance

Deliberate and / or repeated non-compliance with this policy may be addressed in accordance with applicable company procedures.

Version Control

Version No.	Date	Details of Changes
4	April 2024	New format and updates in line with the Compliance department
5	Sep 2025	Annual refresh – minor updates made
6	July 2026	Annual refresh – approvals and process for discretionary bursary updated

Disclaimer: