

**Basic Food Employment & Training**

**Whatcom Community College**

**Student**

**Process, Procedure and Policy Manual**

Updated: February 2023

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## ACRONYMS

AAS	Associate in Applied Science
AAS-T	Associate in Applied Science-Transfer Basic
BFET	Food Employment & Training
DSHS	Department of Social and Health Services
DTA	Direct Transfer Agreement
FAFSFA	Free Application for Federal Student Aid
GPA	Grade Point Average
IEP	Individual Employment Plan
MRP	Major Related Program
SAP	Satisfactory Academic Progress
SSDI	Social Security Disability Insurance
TANF	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
WASFA	Washington Application for State Financial Aid
WCC	Whatcom Community College
WCCC	Working Connections Child Care

## BFET Directory

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## Section I: APPLICATION & ENROLLMENT PROCESS

### Application Process

Basic Food Employment & Training (BFET) application is embedded into BFET Individual Employment Plan (IEP) ([Appendix A](#)) which is completed during an individual BFET on-boarding meeting or may be submitted through the BFET website. BFET Canvas, on campus and off campus resources, funding, potential barriers and Individual Employment Plan will all be discussed in this meeting.

### Acceptance Steps and Process

Students are eligible for BFET once they have met with a BFET staff member, completed an IEP and have been confirmed eligible for federal basic food assistance by Department of Social and Human Services (DSHS).

Students must be registered for classes before eligibility can be determined.

When possible, students not eligible due to DSHS guidelines will be notified by a BFET advisor with reason they are not eligible for BFET (e.g. closed food benefits, open Temporary Aid for Needy Families (TANF), receive state and not federal food benefits).

Students will complete their IEP during the BFET on-boarding meeting, or electronically, and will sign both their plan and the DSHS/Whatcom Community College (WCC) approved Authorization to Release Information form and the BFET Student Contract ([Appendix B](#)).

### Continued Student Enrollment in BFET

Assuming the student has met all requirements of the WCC BFET program and is in good academic standing with WCC Financial Aid ([Appendix F](#)), registered in classes and has maintained their open food benefits, they will be automatically enrolled in the BFET program continuously through their training program at WCC.

If a student “stops out” for 180 days (6 months) or more at WCC, for any reason, they are considered a new student and will need to re-enroll into BFET program as a new student and complete the BFET on-boarding process.

## Section II: REQUIREMENTS FOR CONTINUED ENROLLMENT IN BFET

Once a BFET student is confirmed eligible by DSHS, the following must be done for a student to remain active in BFET:

### Email Communication

It is required, by WCC, that email communications with college staff, including BFET, be sent solely from the student email address provided by Whatcom Community College. When emailing BFET staff, please use the email address ending in @student.whatcom.edu.

### Mid-Quarter Progress Reports

BFET students are asked to submit a Progress Report of current class grades/progress during the second month each quarter. A Canvas announcement will be posted as a reminder and progress reports can be submitted via Canvas or emailed to BFET staff.

### Individual Employment Plan and Consent to Release Information Form Updates

Students are required to update their Individual Employment Plans and Student Contract forms annually. Students are also required to update their Individual Employment Plan when they change their program intent.

Students can schedule an appointment with a BFET advisor to update their IEP.

### Satisfactory Academic Progress

Students are required to maintain satisfactory academic progress and will be suspended from BFET if their Grade Point Average (GPA) falls below 2.0 cumulative.

If a life circumstance occurs that may have an impact on the student's GPA for a quarter, please contact a BFET advisor to discuss a one quarter grace period for GPA improvement.

### Open Federal Food Benefits through DSHS

Students must meet all requirements through DSHS to keep their food benefits open. If a student's food benefits closed for any reason by DSHS, their BFET activity component will be closed.

## Section III: PROGRAMS ELIGIBLE FOR BFET

Students must be enrolled in a program of study that will lead to employment after completion of a certificate or degree. In addition to program certificates and degrees, BFET students may be able to enroll in individual courses. Please work with a BFET advisor to identify individual courses to enhance employability.

### Direct Transfer and Major Related Programs

Direct Transfer Agreement (DTA) and Major Related Program (MRP) at WCC are eligible only if they provide enough training in career skills that lead to an employment upon completion of those degrees.

### Bachelor of Applied Science

Bachelor of Applied Arts and Science Degrees are not eligible for BFET services per BFET Grant guidelines.

### Associates in Liberal Studies

Degrees in Liberal Studies are not eligible for BFET for BFET Services per BFET Grant guidelines.

### Associates of Applied Science and Associates of Applied Science-Transfer

Associates of Applied Science (AAS) and Associates of Applied Science-Transfer (AAS-T) programs are eligible programs for BFET students if a clear employment outcome has been identified.

### Short Certificates

Short Certificates that lead to employment may also be eligible for BFET if they lead to employment.

### ELL

English Language Learner (ELL) classes are designed for all immigrants, refugees, undocumented, and US citizens wanting to learn English.

### ABE

Adult Basic Education (ABE) classes help students develop skills in reading, writing, and math for college or career readiness.

### HSC

High School Completion (HSC) is a program designed to assist students in completing required classes to obtain their High School Diploma.



## Section IV: FUNDING POLICY AND PROCEDURE FOR BFET STUDENTS

Financial assistance can only be provided once eligibility verification is completed for the current month. Students who do not turn in DSHS paperwork, who discontinue food benefits, or who go on TANF are not eligible for BFET funding.

Funding is dependent on current grant money availability, will be determined quarterly, and all other sources of student aid will be taken into consideration.

### Childcare

It is the responsibility of the student to secure childcare approved by DSHS, sign up for subsidized child care ([Working Connections Childcare](#)). The only responsibility of BFET staff, regarding childcare, is to verify the student's schedule in the DSHS database, Ejas.

### Books

Books may be funded for current BFET students eligible for financial aid with room in their financial aid budgets. Students request book support by filling out a Funding Assistance Application and return the form to BFET staff by email or in person. Once approved, the BFET coordinator will purchase the textbooks and students will be instructed to sign Participant Reimbursement form when books are picked up from the BFET office, located in Laidlaw Center 116. Students will receive an email when books are available for pick-up.

BFET staff must receive a Funding Assistance Application, each quarter if assistance is needed, and a list of all textbooks being requested by the student ([Appendix C](#)).

Reimbursement for previously purchased books are not allowed per BFET grant guidelines.

### Tuition

Tuition and fees funding may be available for qualified BFET students if there is NO other financial aid available at time tuition is due. Student must submit request for tuition assistance through email, in-person, or through Canvas. If approved, students are notified through email. BFET staff pays tuition balance owed through our financial aid office.

BFET staff must receive a Funding Assistance Application each quarter that funding is requested ([Appendix C](#)).

### Deadlines for Funding

BFET staff set quarterly deadlines regarding student access to funding services. BFET students are notified via BFET Canvas of deadlines for quarterly access to services.

## Section V: Funding and Participation Restrictions

### Students in Loan Default Status

Students in loan default status who are not actively rehabilitating the loan through a monthly payment plan approved by the lender are not eligible for BFET funding. BFET staff can check with Financial Aid regarding the Fresh Start Program on a case by case basis. Please describe your specific circumstances to a BFET advisor for further guidance and support resources.

### Running Start Students

Running Start students may be eligible for BFET funding if the following applies:

- Eligible for federal food benefits
- Not receiving TANF or other cash assistance
- Age 16 or older and physically and mentally able to work
- Enrolled in BFET eligible degree or certificate, and taking classes directly related to the degree/certificate
- Maintain a GPA of at least 2.0 each quarter.

BFET can only provide funding support for books, fees and support services directly related to the degree or certificate. BFET will not pay for tuition and fees that the student's High School is directly responsible for.

### Students with Previous Bachelor's Degrees or Higher

Students who have earned Bachelor's degrees or higher are eligible for BFET support if they are retraining in a program likely to lead to employment. To be considered for funding, students must be enrolled in one of the following programs: Substance Use Disorder Professional, Nursing Assistant, Nursing, Medical Assisting, CIS/Software Development/Cybersecurity. Students must apply for additional funding within the first 60 days of their program; if denied for outside funding, students will be required to present proof of denial. BFET financial support for students who have earned Bachelor's degrees is limited to a maximum of 45 credits of tuition and fees if NO other financial aid funding is in place at time tuition is due and, as with any financial support, is dependent on availability of funds and student eligibility for financial aid.

A Supplemental Application for BFET Tuition Support will be required for all students with a prior Bachelor's degree or higher ([Appendix D](#)).

Students, with prior Bachelor's degrees, pursuing any other professional/technical program will be BFET eligible, but ineligible for BFET funding.

### Students with Previous Degrees

BFET at WCC is focused on providing support for training that would lead to employment. Students are eligible to receive BFET services for up to two two-year degrees or certificates. Students who choose to attend WCC for additional training may be eligible to participate in BFET, without BFET funding, to continue their food benefits and access childcare support IF an Individual Employment Plan is in place that clearly states why more training is required to secure employment. BFET Advisors will work with BFET students to support them in securing employment and will also refer them to BFET community partners.

### Students Who Have Exhausted Federal Financial Aid

BFET financial support for students who have exhausted their lifetime Pell, Washington College Grant or Federal Loans are limited to one quarter of tuition and fees if NO other financial aid funding is in place at the time tuition is due and, as with any financial support, is dependent on availability of funds and student eligibility for financial aid.

### Students Who Are Receiving Social Security Insurance

Students receiving Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) from DSHS will need to attest that they are willing and able to be employed upon degree attainment. This is done through the initial on-boarding process and is included in the Student Contract.

### Program Changes

If a BFET student changes their program of study, they are required to update their Individual Employment Plan within ten days after the change.

Individual Employment Plans may designate a career goal rather than a specific program, which can be broad enough to include programs with similar requirements in an industry sector.

## Section VI: REINSTATEMENT POLICY and PROCEDURE

Students have a number of requirements to remain active in BFET (see [Section II: Requirements for Continued Enrollment in BFET](#)). The following addresses when students are dropped from BFET and the process for reinstatement. A student will not be reinstated after the third suspension for the same instance.

### Student Academic Process (SAP)

BFET follows the WCC Financial Aid office Satisfactory Academic Progress policy ([Appendix E](#)). Students must submit a Petition for Reinstatement of Aid form ([Appendix G](#)) to the Financial Aid office when they are suspended due to SAP.

Students must submit a Petition of Reinstatement of Aid to financial and self-pay the number of credits required by Financial Aid. Students may be eligible for BFET services, but will not be eligible for BFET funding assistance until a quarter has been completed successfully and the student has been reinstated by Financial Aid.

BFET may provide tuition assistance for up to two attempts of one course, but will not provide funding beyond those two attempts if a course is not completed successfully.

## APPENDIX

- Appendix A [BFET IEP Application](#)
- Appendix B [Authorization to Release Information form and Student Contract](#)
- Appendix C [BFET Funding Application](#)
- Appendix D [Supplemental Application for BFET Tuition Support](#)
- Appendix E [Satisfactory Academic Progress Requirements \(SAP\)](#)
- Appendix F [Academic Progress Policy](#)
- Appendix G [Petition for Reinstatement of Aid](#)