



POLICY / PROCEDURE

Document Title	Fees Policy
Version	Version 1.1
Equality Impact Assessment Status	Complete
Approved by	Corporation
Date approved	21st July 2015
Effective date	22nd July 2015
Date of next review	July 2016
Lead responsibility	Executive Director of Finance and Resources

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of this document is to outline the College's policy on the fees associated with tuition for the 2015-16 academic year. The policy covers all aspects of the College's provision, including further education, commercial work, schools provision and access programmes.
- 1.2. The College aims to optimise income generated from fees by adopting a market driven approach to setting fees, but also wherever possible, taking into account an individual's ability to pay.
- 1.3. The College has a policy of equal opportunity and seeks to ensure that arrangements for fees and charges are consistent with this.

2. Scope

- 2.1. This policy applies to all employees involved in the determination of the College's fees and charging structure, as well as all learners under the College's care.

3. Policy / Principles

3.1. The National Fee Framework (Further Education Provision)

- 3.1.1. In order to establish the funding arrangements that will apply against a particular learning programme, the eligibility of the learner must be proven. In order for a learner to be eligible to receive government funding for their learning programme, the learner must have the legal right to be resident in the United Kingdom at the start of their programme.
- 3.1.2. The national fee framework assumes that all learners other than those eligible for fee remission and those learners aged 16-18, are charged a tuition fee as a contribution. This assumed fee will, where relevant, be reflected in a reduction of the funding payable for the programme by 50% of the national base rate. This is part of the wider strategy "to raise the contribution of employers and learners who can afford to pay in order to redirect funds to support growth in priority areas of learning".

Learner Responsive Funding Models

- 3.1.3. The SFA and EFA Funding Guidance identifies that fee remission is applicable to all 16-18 year old learners, including those on part time programmes, and continues to be available for adult learners who meet a range of specified criteria. Where fees are remitted no charge will be made by the College to the learner as the fully-funded national funding rate will be payable. Where the learner is ineligible for fee remission they will be considered co-funded learners because it is assumed that the learner themselves, or their employer, will pay a tuition fee and the exam fee either themselves or via a student loan if they are following a Level 3 Certificate or Diploma course and are aged 24 years or older.

Employer Responsive Funding Model

- 3.1.4. The SFA Funding Guidance 2015-16 (Learner Eligibility) outlines the rules on whether learners are fully funded or co-funded. For those learners that are co-funded, the employer is expected to make a contribution to the funding of the course. This is in recognition of the benefit they will receive from the training being delivered.

3.2. The College's Approach to Fees

16-18 and Adult classroom based

- 3.2.1. Further Education courses are fully funded for those learners aged 16 to 18 who are UK or European Union Nationals.
- 3.2.2. The College's approach to charging fees to Adults who are co-funded is based on a 50% contribution from the learner against the national base rate funding figure.
- 3.2.3. Learners who are not eligible for fee remission will be expected to pay a fee on enrolment.
- 3.2.4. Learners studying programmes where a full fee is payable (i.e. commercial training, or full cost recovery) are not to have their fees waived under any circumstances.
- 3.2.5. Learners aged 24+ undertaking a course at level 3 or above will either need to apply for a 24+ Advanced Learning Loan or cover the cost of the fee themselves.

Work Based Learning

- 3.2.6. The Agency assumption is that employers will pay at least 50% of the national rate for learners aged 19 and over who are not subject to fee remission (Appendix 2). Due to market forces, the College will regularly review its charges in relation to workplace activity to ensure competitive pricing. As a **minimum**, employers will be charged a suitable fee where funding provided by the Agency falls short of the cost of delivery of that provision.
- 3.2.7. Learners on Full Cost Recovery courses (i.e. courses for which no Agency funding is received) are not to have their fees waived under any circumstances.
- 3.2.8. Learners aged 24+ undertaking a Certificate or Diploma course at Level 3 or above (except HE) will need to either apply for a 24+ Advanced Learning Loan or cover the costs of fees themselves.

Apprenticeships

- 3.2.9. Learners enrolled on Apprenticeship programmes are subject to complex funding arrangements that involve the participation of employers and fee criteria dependent upon a variety of factors. In line with funding agency guidance no fees shall be charged for 16-18 year old Apprentices.
- 3.2.10. The Agency assumption is that employers will pay at least 50% of the national rate for learners aged 19 and over. However due to market forces the College at present waives fees for Apprenticeship provision. Wherever possible employers are encouraged to pay a contribution in kind rather than a fee.

Access Courses

- 3.2.11. Tuition fees for Access courses are set by the College following discussion within the SMT. Fees for 2015-16 have been capped at the maximum level of loan available for the relevant course(s).

Schools Provision

- 3.2.12. Students under the age of 16 as at 31st August 2015 are not eligible for Agency funding without express written permission from the Agency. Therefore where school pupils attend the College on a part time basis as part of their school education the funding is negotiated between the College and the school.

- 3.2.13. Since the Agencies will not fund courses taken by learners aged under 16 who wish to take an evening class out of school hours it is College policy to charge the course fees as quoted in the part-time prospectus (providing prior approval for the enrolment is given by the school, the parent/guardian and the Course Leader or lecturer).

Commercial Work / Full Cost Recovery

- 3.2.14. Adhoc commercial work will be assessed on an individual project basis and must be commercially viable. The Executive Director of Finance and Resources, or Finance Manager should be consulted in the construction of any proposal for commercial training delivery.

Financial Support

- 3.2.15. Learners may be able to obtain financial support for fees or other costs where they are experiencing difficulty in commencing or continuing their studies. Learners should contact the College to discuss the options available.

3.3. Examination and Registration Fees

- 3.3.1. All learners whose fees are not eligible for remission are normally charged the fee set by the examination boards/awarding bodies for entering examination at the time of enrolment.
- 3.3.2. It is currently College policy that examination entry fees are not charged to 19+ learners whose tuition fees are eligible for remission provided the following criteria are met:
- It is the learner's first attempt at the examination at this centre.
 - The relevant subject lecturer approves the entry. If a learner's examination entry is not supported by his/her lecturer (for example due to poor attendance or lack of progress), the examination fee is charged.
- 3.3.3. 19+ learners retaking examinations previously undertaken at the College may be charged the examination fee, which would be payable prior to the examination entry.
- 3.3.4. 19+ learners who fail to take the examination without good reason are charged the examination/awarding body fee, except where the absence is due to illness and a doctor's certificate can be provided.
- 3.3.5. The policy to remit examination fees for those learners aged over 19 whose tuition fees are remitted does not extend to the cost of registration with a professional body such as AAT, CMI and NEBOSH, these fees must be paid by the learner or employer.

3.4. Other Fees

- 3.4.1. Some programmes require material, equipment and/or clothing, an additional separate charge may be made for these and learners should check before enrolling on the course. These fees must be paid by all learners or employers.

3.5. Refund of Fees

- 3.5.1. It is College policy that a full refund of fees paid by learner/employer is approved only in the following circumstances:
- If a course is cancelled by the College;
 - If a learners complaint regarding the quality of the delivery of a course is upheld following an investigation in accordance with the College's complaints procedure.

3.5.2. The College may, at the discretion of the Principal, award a pro-rata refund calculated on the basis of the number of actual attendances less a £30 administrative charge in the following circumstances:

- If a learner withdraws from a course due to illness or as a result of a change in employment or having to leave the area for employment reasons.
- If a learner notifies the College to cancel his/her place on a course before the commencement of the course.

3.5.3. A refund of exam fees will only be made if a learner withdraws his/her entry for an examination and the College is able to obtain a refund from the examination board.

3.6. Payment

3.6.1. Costs to the learner of the programme of study will be identified as fully as possible and communicated to the learner in a timely manner.

3.6.2. Fees will be due at the point of enrolment.

3.6.3. Employers or sponsors who are funding a learner's fees must provide the learner with a letter of support for them to submit at enrolment stating that they will be funding the learning. Letters must be on original headed paper and signed, no photocopies will be accepted and the learner will not be able to enrol without this letter of support.

4. **Relevant Legislation / Regulation**

4.1. The following legislation and regulations apply to this policy / procedure:

- SFA and EFA Funding Guidance and Rules;
- Financial Memorandum.

5. **Related Documents**

5.1. The following related documents are relevant to this policy / procedure:

- Financial Support for Learners Policy

6. **Accountability**

6.1. The Executive Director of Finance and Resources is responsible for the drafting and implementation of this policy.

6.2. He is also responsible for ensuring that this document is regularly reviewed and updated – and is the first contact point for managers seeking advice and guidance about the Fees Policy or making enquiries about its interpretation.

6.3. All managers are responsible for ensuring that they and their team members follow the requirements set out in this document.

6.4. All employees are responsible for adhering to the requirements set out in this document.

7. Equality & Diversity

- 7.1. The College has paid due regard to equality considerations during the preparation and implementation of this Policy and Procedure.
- 7.2. These considerations included the potential for any differential negative effect on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race (including ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality), religion or belief (including lack of belief), sex, sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership.
- 7.3. The College’s judgement is that there is no such negative effect on those grounds and, consequently, no potential breach of the Equality Act 2010.
- 7.4. The operation of this Policy and Procedure will be monitored by the Personnel Manager in order to establish that no unlawful discrimination is taking place and to identify opportunities for the College to enhance equality of opportunity and fair treatment.

8. Review

- 8.1. This document will be reviewed by the Corporation in July 2016.
- 8.2. The Executive Director of Finance and Resources will undertake this review, taking into account the outcomes of the monitoring process, legislative changes and developments in good practice.
- 8.3. The outcome of the review will be reported to the Senior Management Team.

9. Document Identification

Category [select ONE only]	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Programmes/courses <input type="checkbox"/> Partnerships <input type="checkbox"/> Finance <input type="checkbox"/> Quality <input type="checkbox"/> Governance <input type="checkbox"/> Health and safety <input type="checkbox"/> Facilities <input type="checkbox"/> Computer Services <input type="checkbox"/> MIS <input type="checkbox"/> Admissions <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching and learning <input type="checkbox"/> Personnel
Audience [select ALL that apply]	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Employees <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Learners <input type="checkbox"/> Partners <input type="checkbox"/> Suppliers