

FEES POLICY

2023/24

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Policy Owner: Board
Date Approved: 16 March 2023
Next Review: March 2024
Responsibility for Review: Executive Director Resources
Policy Review Frequency: Annual

Applicable to staff: Yes
Applicable to students: Yes
Publish on College website: Yes

Consultation:

Undertaken with:	Yes/No:	Date:
Board/Committee	Board Resources	16 March 2023 9 February 2023
ELT	Via Fees & Charges Group	
SLT		
Unions		
Students		
Employees		
Employers/Stakeholders		

Any Associated Documentation, for Reference:

Financial Regulations
Admissions Policy

ELT SIGN-OFF: Iain Stott – Interim Executive Head of Resources



FEES POLICY 2023/24

1. Policy Statement

The College's policy is to optimise income from fees and charges by adopting a market-driven approach to setting fee and charges levels, but also wherever possible to take account of the individual's ability to pay. The policy is a key contributor in being:

- Flexible, customer service driven and responsive to change.
- Able to grow income through increased business development and commercial activity.

The College sets fees in respect of all its courses and chargeable provision. Some fees are determined outside the College's control (for example the University of Central Lancashire).

Fees are reviewed on an annual basis.

In those areas where the College has discretion to determine fee levels, the Corporation Board has a responsibility to approve the Policy that will guide the setting of fees and will have due regard to:

- The College's compliance with funding agency priorities and remittance rules, ensuring that the Fees Policy does not disadvantage any individual or group.
- Financial viability and market forces

In recent years, there has been a significant Government shift in both further and higher education policy that requires learners and employers to make an increased contribution towards the cost of course provision. The College adopts the principles set out in the ESFA Financial Memorandum, which outlines the funds available for adult further education and provided instructions on how money should be spent.

2. Fee Policy Statement

The College will set fees for all its course provision and charge fees where applicable.

In determining fee levels, the College will operate legally and within national published guidelines where these exist, in addition to the Corporation Board principles outlined above.

For courses of study, the College will operate a single fee policy, i.e. a combined course and examination fee. Additional, re-sit or late entry examination fees will be charged separately. Residential costs associated with trips or events and other fees will also be charged separately.

Learners are responsible for the purchase of additional resources for their courses that will remain the property of the learner, and can be used outside the learning environment. These may include (but are not restricted to) kits, course equipment and books. Costs of trips will also be charged separately. Further information will be provided on the course information leaflets and at enrolment.

The College will operate procedures for remitting, waiving or reducing fees for certain learners in appropriate cases, where evidenced, and in accordance with guidance from the relevant funding body.

All staff must comply with this guidance. Staff with responsibility for enrolling learners or providing initial advice and guidance are directed towards the more detailed provisions set out in the 2023/24 Fees and Charges Schedule, 2023/24 Enrolment Guidance and any subsequent updates. Any special offer discounts must be agreed in advance of the offer by the chair of the Fees & Charges Group (Executive Director Resources).

3. Responsibilities

The College undertakes to:

- 3.1 Notify learners (and their sponsors/employers where appropriate) promptly of any fees due and of the arrangements for payment. Learners will be notified of fee levels prior to enrolment.
- 3.2 Operate procedures to ensure that the fees policy is operated fairly and consistently across the institution.
- 3.3 Operate procedures to ensure the prompt collection of fees.

The College expects learners (and their sponsors/employers as appropriate) to:

- 3.4 Pay any fees due promptly. The College will take all necessary steps to ensure the payment of fees is met and a range of the following sanctions will be applied to those who default:
 - Withdrawal of access to College IT resources
 - Suspension and Exclusion
 - Refusal to re-enrol until outstanding debts are paid
- 3.5 The College reserves the right to refer unpaid accounts to external agencies to pursue payment and, in addition, the College may exclude debtors from the College and/or seek recovery through the courts.

4. Adult Skills Funding Agency Funded Provision – Fee rates for 2023/24

Fees will be based on the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) fee assumption for 2023/24.

The overall College fee income target is calculated on this assumption; however individual courses may be charged a higher or lower rate, depending on market conditions. The variation of a fee from the agreed formula would be on the production of a business case presented to the Fees & Charges Group and will be subject to ratification by the Executive Leadership Team (ELT).

5. Lifetime Skills Guarantee – Level 3 Free Courses for Jobs Offer

The Level 3 Free Courses for Jobs Offer (previously known as the National Skills Fund) has been established to help adults who do not already have a level 3 qualification to access hundreds of fully funded level 3 courses. As such, no fees are charged for Level 3 Free Courses for Jobs Offer funded learners, in line with the government's long term commitment to gain skills for life.

6. Higher Education Courses

Fees for HE courses will be determined by the fee structure of Office for Students (OfS). HE courses fees will be published on the College website and Student Loan Company Portal, as required by Office for Students (OfS).

7. Fees for Non-UK Learners

Fees for non-UK learners (where ineligible for any agency funding) are to be based on the funded rates, but this may be varied based on factors such as market rates, competitor rates and agency fees. Learners from EU and EEA countries are no longer eligible for agency funding.

8. Fees for Advanced Learner Loans

Learners studying eligible ESFA provision at Level 3, 4, 5 and 6 have the option of paying for their fees with an Advanced Learner Loan. The College will set the loan amount in accordance with the '*2023/24 2022/33 ESFA Funding Rules*' and '*2023/24 Learner Loans Facility Conditions*'.

9. Fees for Non-Agency Funded Learning (including commercial)

Fees for non-agency funded learning (including all commercial fees) will reflect current market rates and anticipated group sizes. Breakeven learner/delegate numbers will be set for each course/programme. Course/programmes will only go ahead once this is reached. Clear procedures for collecting fees, the timing of fees and for refunds are set.

All non-agency costings must be approved in line with procedures that ensure that provision is viable.

10. Apprenticeship Fees

The Apprenticeship Levy was introduced in April 2017. From 2020/21 Non-levy employers have been required to reserve their funding directly through their Digital Account, prior to learners starting their Apprenticeship. Levy-paying employers have continued to record their payments to the College in their Digital Account. Where there are insufficient funds in an employer Digital Account, employers will be required to pay the outstanding balance for that month.

The College will collect and record payment of fees from non-levy employers, for the percentage they are required to contribute, as outlined in the '*ESFA Apprenticeship Technical Funding Guide*' at the rate advised by the ESFA.

The College sets the cost of apprenticeships, based on the Apprenticeship price matrix that considers costs and overheads. This determines the base price. The price charged to employers is negotiated, based on prior learning and skills of the individual learner, as required in the ESFA funding rules.

The College will ensure that apprenticeship provision is viable whilst providing high quality training for employers throughout the North West. The cost of apprentices who are employees of the College must only include direct costs.

End Point Assessment (EPA) resit fees will be charged in line with the relevant Apprenticeship Training Services Agreement and Addendum that is agreed with each employer for each apprentice.

11. Devolution of Adult Education Budget

In 2019/20, the DfE devolved a proportion of the AEB function to specific combined authorities. Devolved authorities are responsible for their own funding rules, which apply to providers in receipt of devolved AEB funding, for delivery to residents in their areas. The College is not in receipt of devolved AEB funding and is still funded through national ESFA AEB funding. Therefore, the College is unable to accept AEB funded learners from devolved areas (e.g., Liverpool City Region and Greater Manchester).