



South Staffordshire College

Lichfield • Cannock • Tamworth • Rodbaston



Fees Policy

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Audience:	All Staff and Governors

Fees Policy including Fees Refund Policy

1.0 Policy Statement

- 1.1 The purpose of this Policy is to establish the approach of the College in respect of charges to be levied for learning and training activities that encourages participation whilst recognising that those who can afford it pay an appropriate contribution and those who cannot afford it are appropriately supported.
- 1.2 “Fees” relate to all payments made by learners or their sponsors which are charged by the College to contribute to the full or partial costs of College courses including course tuition, registration and examination costs, equipment and resources and any other attributable costs.
- 1.3 This Policy also gives guidance on how the College deals with any refunds of fees.
- 1.4 This Policy will support the implementation of our “Purpose”:

“Transforming the life chances of our communities.”

2.0 Scope

- 2.1 This Policy applies to all areas of the College including subsidiaries and will involve all staff and governors.
- 2.2 Other policies and procedures linked to this Policy include:
 - Financial Regulations

3.0 General

- 3.1 This Policy will be implemented in accordance with all existing and emerging legislation and in accordance with the relevant guidance documents from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and any other relevant funding bodies. The ESFA issues new funding guidance annually.
- 3.2 The College will comply with conditions as specified in each of the contracts it holds for the provision of education and training. Full cost courses will be charged at a commercial rate and must be agreed in advance with the Deputy Principal Finance & Resources. A minimum rate is applicable to full cost courses.
- 3.3 Costs to the learner of the programme of study will be identified as fully as possible, including any administration fee applicable, essential equipment, essential clothing essential trips and visits plus any other costs associated with the programme of study.
- 3.4 These costs must be communicated to the learner in a clear and timely manner preferably at

the time of enrolment. (Note: an exception to this might be due to costs not being known at the start of the programme due to legislation changes etc.)

- 3.5** Fees will be remitted where students meet certain conditions identified by the relevant funding body. The conditions are summarised in the Fee Appendix.
- 3.6** Monies will be due at the time of enrolment unless payment by instalments is approved, Learners are awaiting their final assessment from Student Finance England or the Learner provides evidence that their employer has agreed to pay the fees.
- 3.7** In cases referred to in 3.6. the learner must complete and sign the appropriate liability form stating that they accept liability for the full amount of fees due.
- 3.8** Fees for programmes of study which last for more than one year, are payable separately for each year of study. A learner should not be enrolled on a subsequent year of a course of study if monies are still owed to the College from the previous year.
- 3.9** All fees due should be paid before the learner can be entered for any examination or registered with an awarding body.
- 3.10** Where there are fees still outstanding and the College is holding a certificate for a learner then the learner should be asked to call and collect the certificate and settle any sums outstanding in full before the certificate will be released.
- 3.11** Partial or full fee refunds will only be made in specified circumstances identified within the fees guidance (see the Fees Appendix).
- 3.12** To balance the need to respond to expectation of increased contributions from individuals and employers with ensuring access to education and training, the College reserves the right to amend fees in-year in response to local market forces on the authority of the Chief Executive Principal.
- 3.13** The College will ensure that fees and any measures to support learners' attendance and achievement are maintained at levels which are both attractive within the market and are financially viable.

Adult Education Budget Provision Procured via the West Midlands Combined Authority ("WMCA")

- 3.14** AEB funding the in parts of the West Midlands under the jurisdiction of the WMCA has been devolved to the WMCA. The total value of this funding to the West Midlands is around £25 million. The College has been awarded funding as part of this procurement round.
- 3.15** As the devolved funding system is relatively new, the WMCA have opted to align with ESFA

funding eligibilities, rates and entitlements.

- 3.16** Provision funded by AEB from the WMCA will therefore be subject to the same funding rules as ESFA funded courses in the Fees Appendix.

Adult Learner Loans

- 3.17** Adult learner loans are provided by Student Loans England.
- 3.18** Fee collection from the learner may be delayed if Student Loans England prior to the start of the course has not processed the financial assessment. Learners must produce proof that an application to the Student Loans England has been made. If proof cannot be produced, the College will request that the full fee be charged or the student be withdrawn.
- 3.19** Learners who withdraw and are subject to Learner Loans will normally have their instalment payments to the College from Student Loans England retained by the College. If a Learner Loan had not been approved prior to withdrawal, the College will invoice for fees based on the Refund Policy.

Employer Training Fees including Apprenticeships

- 3.20** Employer training fees are generally provided by the learner's employer.
- 3.21** Tuition fees for workplace provision such as apprenticeships and Workplace Learning are based on contracts commercially negotiated by the Apprenticeship and Employer Engagement Department or Faculties.
- 3.22** Negotiated pricing and total contract arrangements should be agreed with the Deputy Principal Finance & Resources or Deputy Chief Executive prior to commencement.

Higher Education Fees

- 3.23** Full time tuition fees for Higher Education courses are determined by the individual institution at up to £9,000. The College does not have its own arrangements with the Office for Students (OfS) and instead works through third party universities. The College charges up to £5,950 per year for full time courses.
- 3.24** The College has decided to charge tuition fees based on discussions with partners and assessing the local market.
- 3.25** Part time courses are charged a fee based on the number of units or hours as a proportion of the full time tuition fee.
- 3.26** Learners need to apply for financial assistance from Student Finance England before their course starts.

- 3.27** Fee collection from the learner may be delayed if Student Loans England prior to the start of the course has not processed the financial assessment. Learners must produce proof that an application to the Student Loans England has been made. If proof cannot be produced, the College may request that the full fee be charged or the student be withdrawn.
- 3.28** Learners who have a Sponsor or Employer paying course costs on their behalf will need a headed letter from the Employer or Sponsor when registering. An invoice will be sent to the sponsor/employer within one month of the learner starting the course.

Schools 14-16 Provision

- 3.29** The College works with a number of local schools to provide vocational options for their learners. The College operates a £75.00 per group flat rate for all types of provision which is run from the College's premises.
- 3.30** The College may need to charge a participating school additional charges for materials, PPE and other requirements depending on the provision being undertaken.

4.0 Refunds Policy

- 4.1** The College does not refund tuition fees where a learner simply decides to stop attending a course.
- 4.2** A full refund of fees may be awarded to a student in the event of the College cancelling a course on which that student has enrolled and no alternative course is suitable; or if the student withdraws from a course due to any of the reasons below before the course has commenced;
- A student is unable to attend the course due to an amendment to the time at which it is scheduled or to the location at which it will take place;
 - A student has a serious medical condition (medical certificate required as evidence);
 - An entitlement error is made following incorrect assessment at the time of enrolment; or
 - Course fees are lowered after the date on which the student paid (the student will receive a refund for the difference between the fee paid and the reduced fee).
 - A cooling off period of 14 days from dates of registration
- 4.3** Should a student withdraw from a course after the course start date or fail to attend the course on which they have enrolled they will not be entitled to a refund (including tuition, materials, registration and exam fees).
- 4.4** In either of these situations, a student has the right to appeal in writing for a refund to the Assistant Principal of Curriculum & Quality, who will consider each individual request on its specific merits, and will inform the students of his decision within 14 working days of receipt of the written appeal. The Assistant Principal of Curriculum & Quality may decide to award a partial refund based upon the number of weeks attended and the specific circumstances that have led to the student withdrawing from the course.
- 4.5** If a refund is issued due to no fault of the College a £20 administration will be charged.
- 4.6** Refunds will normally be returned on a pro-rata basis unless the grounds for refund are due to Quality, in which case the full course fees can be refunded if deemed necessary.
- 4.7** Refunds requested as result of a complaint regarding the quality of service provided by the College will be subject to investigation by the Assistant Principal of Curriculum & Quality. In these circumstances the Deputy Principal Finance and Resources will have the final decision on whether a refund is due within 14 days of receipt of the complaint.
- 4.8** Any refunds agreed will be paid back in the same method they were made to the original person or organisation making the fee payment unless paid by cash where a bank account will need to be provided.
- 4.9** Refunds must be authorised by a Director of Faculty and payments will be made within 14

working days of a refund request being authorised.

- 4.10** In the event of a refund being authorised, exam and registration fees will only be refunded if they have not already been paid to the relevant Examinations Board.
- 4.11** No fees will be refunded if an attendee decides to leave their course in the third term.
- 4.12** Refunds for employment related provision should be granted on the same grounds as described for classroom related provision, however the College accepts that in some cases other commercial arrangements may be put in place as an alternative to a refund. These arrangements should be agreed by the Deputy Chief Executive.

5.0 Responsibilities

Governors

5.1 The Corporation will be responsible for: -

- Responsibility for the solvency of the College and safeguarding of its assets;
- Secure the efficient, economical and effective management of all the College's resources and expenditure, capital assets and equipment and staff, so that investment of public funds in the College is not put at risk;
- Determine tuition and other course costs payable to the College by students.

Chief Executive Principal

5.2 The Chief Executive Principal will be responsible for: -

- Financial responsibility as Chief Accounting Officer;
- The management of resources within estimates approved by the Corporation.

Deputy Chief Executive

5.3 The Deputy Chief Executive is responsible for: -

- The breadth and character of the College's provision;
- Agreeing employer training fee levels;
- Agreeing employer training refund arrangements.

Deputy Principal Finance & Resources

5.4 The Deputy Principal Finance & Resources is responsible for: -

- Production and maintenance of the Fees Policy on an annual basis;
- Responsibility for the accurate monitoring and receipt of course costs, charges and other financial information;
- Agreement to certain types of non-standard course cost frameworks such as international course costs;
- Ensuring that financial policies are adhered to.

Directors of Faculty, Curriculum Managers

5.5 Directors of Faculty and Curriculum Managers will be responsible for: -

- Correct interpretation and execution of the Policy in business planning and enrolment;
- Use of the Policy to ensure that learners receive correct initial advice and guidance (IAG) on financial requirements when enquiring about or starting on a course;
- Passing on information on material costs to interested parties such as Student Finance and Finance.

Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

5.6 SLT will be responsible for: -

- Correct interpretation and execution of the Policy in business planning and enrolment;
- Use of the Policy to ensure that learners receive correct initial advice and guidance (IAG) on financial requirements when enquiring about or starting on a course;
- Passing on information on material costs to interested parties such as Student Finance and Finance.

All Staff

5.7 All staff will be responsible for: -

- Imparting accurate financial IAG on course costs to prospective and new learners;
- Observing refund policies when dealing with withdrawing learners.
- Maintaining proper records of transactions and contracts, particularly in relation to income;
- Report any matter which involves, or may involve, financial irregularities to the Deputy Principal Finance & Resources or the Chief Executive Principal, or via the College's Whistleblowing Policy.

6.0 Monitoring and Review

- 6.1** The College will review this Policy annually. This review will take place in January, and any policy revisions will be completed and published prior to the completion of the curriculum planning cycle for the subsequent year.
- 6.2** The internal monitoring of the implementation of this Policy will be the responsibility of the Deputy Principal Finance & Resources.
- 6.3** The responsibility for ensuring that this Policy, and its associated processes and procedures, remain appropriate and comply with changes in legislation will be held by the Deputy Principal Finance & Resources.

Fee Appendix (2020/21)

Type Programme/Level	Fee
Full Time – Entry to Level 2 courses	Fully Funded - FREE Co Funded - £1,000 (includes all subsidiary aims & awarding body registration fee)
Full Time – Level 3 Programmes	Maximum weighted loan rate (LARS)
Part Time – Classroom based provision (Entry, Level 1 and Level 2 courses)	Fully Funded - FREE Co Funded - 50% of un-weighted funding value + material and awarding body fee
Part Time – Classroom based provision (Level 3 & 4)	Maximum weighted loan rate (LARS)
Higher Education Programmes	Refer to individual programme price
English & Maths Qualifications (GCSE or Functional Skill) plus Essential Digital Skills	FREE if learner does not have GCSE grade A*-C / 9-4 or above
ACL Provision (County & SSC Provision)	Charged at £5.00 per hour
Full Cost Provision	Charged at a minimum of £8 per hour

Remission Categories

Code	Description	Fees reduced
01	16-18 year old learner	100%
04	Unemployed	100%
09	English Or Maths	100%
10	Fees Waived - College Policy	As authorised
22	First Full Level 2 Legal Entitlement 19-23 year olds	100%
24	First Full Level 3 Legal Entitlement 19 to 23 year olds	100%
84	ASL Early Bird Incentive 5% Discount	5%
85	ASL 50% Remission Staff Only	50%
87	Progression (to support progression to level 2)	100%
91	Low Income below £17,004	100%

2021/22 Fee Guidance Grid

Provision	16-18 year olds (19-24 High Needs EFA Funded)	19-23 year olds other	19-23 year olds Unemployed	24+ Unemployed	24+ Other
Level 1 Provision	Fully Funded (Waiver 01)	Fully Funded Tuition (For provision to support progression to level 2) (Available only to those with prior attainment less than level 2) (Waiver 87)	Fully Funded (Waiver 04)	Fully Funded (Waiver 04)	Full Time Course Co- Funded £1,000
		Fully Funded if employed and earning less than *£17,004 per annum (Waiver 91)			
Level 2* Provision (Full time or equivalent) *Qualifications listed as legal entitlement only	Fully Funded (Waiver 01)	First Full Level 2 Legal Entitlement Fully Funded Tuition (Waiver 22)	Fully Funded (Waiver 04)	Fully Funded (Waiver 04)	Co-Funded £1,000
		Co Funded £1,000			
		Fully Funded if employed and earning less than *£17,004 per annum (Waiver 91)			
Level 3 Provision *Qualifications listed as legal entitlement only	Fully Funded (Waiver 01)	First Full Level 3 Legal entitlement Fully Funded (Waiver 24)	First Full Level 3 Legal entitlement Fully Funded (Waiver 24)	First Full Level 3 Legal entitlement Fully Funded (Waiver 24)	Adult Loan / Full Fee
		Adult Loan / Full Fee (ADL Weighted rate)	Adult Loan / Full Fee (ADL Weighted rate)	Adult Loan / Full Fee (ADL Weighted rate)	
Level 4 / 5 Provision	N/A	Adult Loan / Full Fee (ADL weighted rate)	Adult Loan / Full Fee	Adult Loan / Full Fee	Adult Loan / Full Fee
English & Maths Only Qualifications (For learners with below grade C / 4)	Fully Funded – No Fee (Waiver 01)	Fully Funded – No Fee (Waiver 09)	Fully Funded – No Fee (Waiver 09)	Fully Funded – No Fee (Waiver 09)	Fully Funded – No Fee (Waiver 09)