

Charging & Remissions Policy

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Policy Owner	CFO
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Equality Impact Assessment	

Policy Purpose:

Provide a framework within which the Trust's student fee setting, fee refund and overdue fee processes are devised and operated. The Policy also sets a framework for ensuring that comprehensive guidance and information regarding fees is available and accessible to (prospective) learners, their parents, staff, Local Governing Body members, and Trustees.

Links to other policies:

- Attendance Policy
- Student Fee Instalment Policy

Document History

Version	Approved by	Date Approved

Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework within which the Trust's fee setting, fee collection, refund and overdue fee processes are devised and operated. The Policy also sets a framework for ensuring that comprehensive guidance and information regarding fees is available and accessible to (prospective) learners, their parents, staff, Local Governing Body members, and Trustees.

Individual colleges within the Trust operate within this policy framework.

2. Approval of Trust Fees Policy

The Trust Fees Policy and any subsequent amendments to this Policy will require the approval of the Trust Executive Team (TET) and the Trust Board. The Policy will be reviewed annually.

3. The Trust's Fee Setting Processes

In setting fee rates for courses the Trust considers a broad range of factors, not limited to but including, ESFA guidance, financial viability, demand, the curriculum plan and competitor pricing. The Trust reserves the right to use a mixed approach in deciding fees and will consider factors of acceptable cost recovery, market forces and government policy.

The Trust reserves the right once fees are set to be flexible in discounting in order to be able to respond to demand and market opportunities.

The Trust reserves the right to cancel any course or change the fee rate where the costs of delivery, or low numbers, may result in a course not being financially viable.

There will be an annual review of fees.

Fees will usually be published on each college's website.

3.1 Full Cost / Commercial

The Trust runs some courses which are not subsidised by Government funding. Colleges will charge fees such that the courses make a required level of financial contribution.

Once prices are set, courses will only run if demand is sufficient to generate the required level of contribution.

3.2 Additional Fees and Charges

The Trust will be clear in its fee guidance to learners of all costs.

The Trust will charge students for items including, but not limited to the following:

- Music tuition unless the tuition is a requirement of the ESFA-funded programme that the student is following
- materials/ uniforms & kits unless the items form part of a requirement of the ESFA-funded programme that the student is following
- trips

- printing & copying
- replacement ID cards,
- travel on college- procured bus services.
- Students taking part in sporting competitions who breach rules of the competitions and hence cause the trust to incur fines from the competition organisers will be charged for those fines.

3.3 Fees Waived

Any categories of fees waived by the Trust that exceed funding body fee remission guidelines will be reviewed annually, and any new proposed changes to categories of fees waived will require the approval of the Trust Executive Team.

4 Guidance on Fees

Details of all course fees, and types of financial support available will be published on individual college websites. The Trust will ensure that all interested parties have access to clear information about fees.

4.1 16-19 Provision

The Trust will follow the ESFA funding guidelines available on the Gov.uk website. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/16-to-19-education-funding-guidance>

Where the ESFA fund courses the Trust will not charge students for tuition, registration or examination fees except where

- A student fails, without good reason (it is for the Trust to determine what constitutes a good reason), to sit the examination, or to submit outstanding work for accreditation, for which the Trust has paid

4.2 Adult Learners

The Trust will charge adult learners in line with the latest funding guidance, which can be found by following the links below:

[23/24 AEB Funding Guidance](#)

[Level 3 qualification eligibility flow charts 23/24](#)

- Adult students who are not fully funded (“co-funded students”), will be required to pay a contribution to their course fees, The fee contribution required will be set in line with published funding guidance
- In many cases, students will be eligible for a loan from the Student Loans Company to pay for their course.
- For all learners, materials fees reflecting actual costs may also be charged.
- For all learners, mandatory equipment charges may be charge

4.3 Post Exam Service Fees

Colleges may charge students for post exam services, such as clerical checking or re-marking of papers. These charges will vary according to current awarding organisation fees published on their respective websites each year.

For more information, please contact the college exams team

4.4 School Age Learners

Where 14-16 learners study at a college under a programme agreed with local schools / other partners, fees will be set in accordance with 3.1.

5. Payment of Fees

Where fees are payable, in the majority of cases they must be paid for in full at enrolment. Students may request an Instalment Plan to enable payment to be spread, subject to the criteria set out in the Trust Student Fee Instalment Policy

For Adult students paying by Advanced Learner Loan, or employer funded methods, evidence of funding must be provided at enrolment e.g. a letter from employer or from the student loan company.

5.1 Payment methods

Students can pay for fees by any of the following methods, except where Wisepay is mandated:

- **Wisepay** – this is the normal payment method
- **Credit or debit card** at college reception.
- **Instalments**, subject to the criteria set out in the Trust Student Fee Instalment Policy
- **Employer Funded.** Learners whose employer has agreed to pay their fees are required, at enrolment, to produce an Employer's Authorisation Form or letter from their employer to confirm their commitment to pay the fees. The Trust will issue an invoice to the employer which must be paid on receipt of invoice.

5.2 Advanced Learner Loan (students aged 19+ on a course that is eligible)

Where fees are payable, any student who has not paid or brought in sufficient evidence at enrolment will not be guaranteed a place on the course.

Students retain ultimate responsibility for the payment of their fees, even where they have a student loan or sponsorship agreement in place. If another organisation, including employer, has agreed to pay the student's fee but then does not do so, the student will become liable to pay the fee instead. This applies if the student tells the College that they have applied for an Advanced Learner Loan but does not complete the application, or if the loan application is subsequently refused.

5.3 Payment of overdue fees

Non-payment of fees by the due date by either a student or their employer, may affect a student's continuation of a course, entry for an examination or access to resources.

All outstanding fees are to be paid in full before a student can progress onto the next year of their course or start a new course at college.

For the purposes of fee collection, fees are defined as tuition fees, exam fees, trips.

Where a student is having problems with the payment of fees, they must contact the college at an early stage. We will consider whether to offer alternative payment plan options.

If a student falls behind on payments, does not contact the college, or fails to follow revised payment plans, the trust will take legal action which may include seeking County Court Judgement or referral to a debt collection agency.

5.4 Financial Support

For students on low incomes undertaking government subsidised courses, the college may be able to offer financial support for payment towards costs associated with your course. Students requiring information about financial support should in the first instance refer to the college website.

5.5 Refunds

1. Where a course is cancelled by the college, the college will refund all fees that have been paid, in full
2. Where a student withdraws from a course, fees remain payable, and refunds will only be considered in the following circumstances:
 - a) An application to withdraw and request for fees to be waived and refund given is made in writing within the first 4 weeks of the course start date.
 - b) Withdrawal is due to the exceptional personal circumstances of the learner that prevents continued participation in the course.

In both instances a £20 administration fee will be deducted from any refund made.

5.6 Cancellation of Courses

For cancellation of courses **over 22 weeks** in duration, the college will provide a minimum of 15 working days' notice.

For cancellation of courses **up to 22 weeks** in duration, the college will provide a minimum of 5 working days' notice

6. Staff choosing to access college courses

Staff choosing to access college courses are required to pay fees in line with this policy, unless it has been identified as a development need as part of their appraisal to enable them to carry out their role, and has been approved to be funded .