

**FEES POLICY**  
**2024/25**

# FEES POLICY 2024/25

**Policy Owner:** Board  
**Date Approved:** 4 July 2024  
**Next Review:** March 2025  
**Responsibility for Review:** Vice Principal Corporate Services  
**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	4 July 2024 14 March 2024
	Resources	2 May 2024 8 February 2024
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 – Vice Principal Corporate Services -



## **FEES POLICY 2024/25**

### **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.

ESFA funded learners will not be charged for equipment required for their course. However, they are able to purchase additional resources 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 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 2024/25 Fees and Charges Schedule, 2024/25 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 (Vice Principal Corporate Services).

### **3. Responsibilities**

The College undertakes to:

- 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.
- Operate procedures to ensure that the fees policy is operated fairly and consistently across the institution.
- Operate procedures to ensure the prompt collection of fees.

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

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

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 2024/25**

Fees will be based on the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) fee assumption for 2024/25. Adult learners who are required to pay a fee (co-funded learners) will be charged 50% of the non-weighted funding rate as published, for 2024/25, in the Learner Aims Record Service.

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).

Fees for adult learners will be remitted in line with the ESFA guidance for those who are unemployed and/or earning below the earnings threshold of £25,000.

## **5. Adult Skills Funding – Tailored Learning**

Tailored learning replaces both Community Learning and non-regulated provision and is aimed at learners furthest from employment. The College will remit fees for learners who are unemployed and/or earning below the earnings threshold of £25,000, as outlined in the Adult Skills Funding Guidance. Learners who do not meet the ASF remission criteria will be charge a fee for Tailored Learning at a rate of £3.50 an hour per learner.

Where the Tailored Learning provides a direct progression route to further education and training, at the College, funded through the Adult Skills Fund, the fee charged for the Tailored learning will be deducted from the co-funded fee charged against the ASF course.

Tailored Learning qualification aims categorised as Essential Skills at levels pre-entry, Entry, level 1 and level 2 in English, ESOL, Essential Digital Skills and Maths will not be charged.

## **6. Free Courses for Jobs Offer**

The Level 3 Free Courses for Jobs Offer (previously known as the National Skills Fund) has been established to support the development of new skills for adult learners and improve the prospects of eligible adults in the labour market. As such, no fees are charged for Level 3 Free Courses for Jobs Offer where learners are eligible for funding. In 2024/25, the ESFA have removed the prior attainment eligibility criteria, meaning learners who are either unemployed or earning below the threshold of £25,000 can study multiple course, from the Level 3 Free Courses for Job Offer, consecutively.

## **7. Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL)/Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)**

Where it is identified that a learner has evidence of APL or RPL at the point enrolment, the associated co-funded fee for Adult Skills Funded or Tailored Learning will be reduced by the corresponding percentage deduction that the funding is reduced by.

## **8. Higher Education Courses**

The fees structures for full time and part time HE courses will be determined by the fee limits prescribed by the Government. HE course fees will be published on the College website and Student Loan Company Portal, as required by Office for Students (OfS).

The College has been approved to offer specific modules through the modular acceleration programme (MAP). The modular acceleration programme is a 2-year pilot to fund tuition fees for learners who study specific modules of higher technical qualifications (HTQ), such as a Higher National Certificate (HNC) at level 4. Learners do not need to pay back any tuition fees. However, the funding accessed for MAP will reduce the amount remaining in a future Lifelong Learning Entitlement account. This is called the 'residual entitlement'.

The Lifelong Learning Entitlement will replace the current Student Loan system and is expected to expand to cover levels 4, 5, and 6 over the next two years.

## **9. Fees for Non-UK Learners**

Fees for non-UK learners (where ineligible for any agency funding) are to be based on the weighted 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.

## **10. 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 '*2024/25 ESFA Funding Rules*' and '*2024/25 Learner Loans Facility Conditions*'. The Advanced Learner Loan rates for all eligible qualifications are published on the Learning Aims Record Service.

## **11. 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.

## **12. 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.

### **13. Devolution of Adult Skills**

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

Any learners wanting to enrol from a devolved area, in 2024/25, will be charged a fee equivalent to the weighted funded rate, as published in the Learner Aims Record Service. If the qualification and learner are eligible for an Advanced Learner Loan, they can access these, even if they are from a devolved area, as loans are not subject to devolution.