



FEES POLICY

For completion by The Executive

Strategic Theme (7Ps)	Purpose	X	Place		People	X	Prosper	
	Partnership		Potential		Planet			
Policy/Document Reference No.	FIN03							
Category	Finance							
Owner (job title)	VP Finance & Resources							
Issue Date	August 2025							
Review Date	July 2026							
Postholder Responsible for Review (job title)	VP Finance & Resources							
Authorised By: (ELT/Corporation)	Corporation							
Communicated via/Location: (Policy Acceptance software/website/portal etc)	Portal							
For completion by The Author								
Version control	August 2025 – updated version VP Finance & Resources							
	Date and Details of Change (Author)							

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1. Purpose

This document outlines the policies and procedures operated by the College in the setting and operation of fees associated with academic provision for the period 1 August 2025 to 31 July 2026. In preparing this document care has been taken to ensure that the recommendations of the Department for Education (DfE)(and where appropriate, devolved authorities), and the Office for Students (OFS) for fees as outlined in the funding guidance have been given due consideration.

The College has a policy of equal opportunities and seeks to ensure that arrangements for fees and charges are consistent with this.

With the exception of the Principal no member of staff is authorised to use or approve fee rates other than those contained within this policy.

Further guidance on the use or interpretation of this policy may be obtained from the Vice Principal – Student Experience and Support, Vice Principal - Finance and Resources and Head of Management Information.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Staff/Students/Partners

3. Policy Statement

The College is committed to ensuring that its course fees are fair, represent value for money and are reviewed annually. The College also commits to providing potential learners with clear information about its fees, concessions and payment methods.

This document outlines the fees associated with academic provision for the period 1 August 2025 to 31 July 2026. In preparing this document care has been taken to ensure that the DfE fee recommendations as outlined in their funding guidance have been given due consideration.

The College aims to optimise income from fees and charges by adopting a market driven approach to setting fee levels, but also wherever possible to take account of an individual's ability to pay. This document sets out the basis on which charges are arrived at, and the circumstances in which learners may not be required to pay the full fee.

The College has a policy of equal opportunities and seeks to ensure that arrangements for fees and charges are consistent with this.

Learners or their sponsors, unless they qualify for exemptions/ waivers, may be charged:

- 1) A tuition fee.
- 2) A materials charge (specific to individual courses).
- 3) External fees (awarding body, examination, registration).

These principles extend to all areas of charging for teaching and related services, including further and higher education, educational and training contracts, and commercial activities. Where the award of a grant supports the activity, then the terms of that grant, if different from the policy principles, must take precedence.

Fee concessions will be offered in accordance with government directives, and to learners in groups for whom the Department for Education DFE (and where appropriate, Combined authorities) offers discretionary fee compensation as detailed in this policy.

All fees are normally due at enrolment. Instalment arrangements may be available in certain circumstances subject to the approval of the VP - Finance and Corporate Operations or Head of Finance, in-line with Financial Regulations (for Apprenticeship provision where a contribution from the employer is mandated, instalment arrangements are available without prior approval and subject to the conditions prevailing at the time of enrolment).

Fee refunds or waivers will only be allowed where the College has cancelled a course, there is a justified complaint, or in exceptional personal circumstances. For Apprenticeship provision, partial fee refunds of the mandated contribution from employers may be permitted in certain circumstances.

Fee Issues

Tuition Fee

Tuition fees are calculated individually for each course.

In determining the appropriate fee, the curriculum team will consider market conditions, College strategy and funding body regulations, as well as the cost of running the course.

The standard funding rate for the course or qualification will also be instrumental in determining the final fee rate. Each course has a standard tuition fee which is payable by qualifying learners on funded courses. A special fee rate will be payable where a learner is ineligible for funding.

Where a course lasts for two or more academic years a tuition fee is charged annually. Fees for second and subsequent years of a course may differ from fees in the current year.

Where an eligible learner enrolling on a funded course does not wish to be entered for the examination/assessment, meaning no funding can be claimed, a higher fee rate reflecting this will be charged. Where, in exceptional circumstances, the Principal endorses the

decision not to enter for examination or assessment, the additional fee rate may be waived.

Learners who fail to complete their funded programme within the allocated time are no longer eligible for funding. If the learner wishes to return in order to complete these studies a further charge will be made.

Learners who apply to transfer to an alternative learning programme may incur an additional charge if there is an increased fee level associated with the new programme of study.

Late joiners will be charged the full tuition fee applicable to any FE programme followed. HE fees are based on semesters and students commencing in the second semester may be entitled to pay a reduced fee in their first year of study.

Recreational courses do not attract any fee remission and are not governed by DfE rulings and the full fee must be paid regardless of age.

19+ Full time FE learners

Full-time FE learners aged 19+ who do not qualify for “full funding” as defined by the Department for Education will be charged a fee for each year of their course. Additional charges may be made for materials, equipment, uniforms, educational visits and non-attendance at tests or exams.

Learners aged 19+ will be charged in line with their eligibility for 19+ Advanced Learning Loans.

These learners may be eligible to take out an Advanced Learning Loan.

HE Fees

Fees for full-time and part-time Higher Education (HE) courses are governed by the Colleges Access and Participation Plan. The HE Fees policy details the specific rates for courses.

HE fees are based on semesters. The academic year consists of two semesters. In certain circumstances students who are unable to commence the first year of the course until the second semester may be eligible to have their fees reduced for the first year of study only.

Fees for full and part-time HE courses run by the College on behalf of Universities (i.e. franchised) are determined and charged by the host University.

External Fees

These are fees payable to awarding bodies and cover registration, examination and assessment fees. They are usually payable on enrolment.

Examination, registration and assessment fees (including late entry charges) are payable by all learners aged 19 and over, with the exception of those learners classed as fully funded by the Department for Education (and where appropriate, Combined Authorities) and 19-24-year olds with an Educational Health and Care Plan (EHCP) funded by the DfE at the 16-19 year old rate, or certain categories of learners who are ordinarily eligible for co-funding, under a low wage scheme introduced by the Government for 2018/19 onwards, subject to agreement by the College.

Where an external fee is payable in addition to the tuition fee this is clearly identified on the College website. If learners are directly responsible for the payment of external fees staff should ensure that learners are made aware of these additional costs.

Learners aged 16-18 who have poor attendance (below 85%), who have failed to complete the required work, or who fail to attend an examination without good reason can be charged for their external fees.

Learners aged 16-18 who are re-taking an examination resulting from an initial failure or are re-taking an exam with the aim of a marginal improvement in grades will also be charged the external fee.

Any late entry fees incurred by the College will be recharged to learners, unless the late entry is the fault of the College.

In exceptional circumstances members of the public, who are not enrolled learners, may wish to sit examinations already running at the College. If agreed, in addition to any examination fee the College will also charge a Private Candidates Fee to cover College overheads. The College will review individual requests to sit exams not already running at the College however costs may be prohibitive to private candidates.

A learner who has withdrawn from a course but who wishes to sit the examination must be entered as a Private Candidate and pay the appropriate fee. Additionally, if the examination entry fee had previously been remitted the learner must pay this in addition to the Private Candidate Fee.

The Private Candidates Fee is in addition to the examination fee and covers College overheads.

Once sums have been paid over to an external body, refunds cannot be made, nor any sums invoiced waived.

Any learners who fail to attend an examination will be charged the awarding body fee except where the absence is due to illness and a doctor's certificate can be provided.

Any private candidate learners who fail to attend an examination will be charged the full fee.

Retakes

External fees for examination re-sits are payable by all learners. In addition, candidates may be required to pay an additional charge to cover the administration associated with the re-sit.

Where no charge is made by the awarding body for a re-sit a standard fee of £20 may be charged to candidates to cover administration, invigilation and room hire.

Exam Support Assistance

The College will arrange for appropriate support services for those learners who have been identified as requiring additional support during exams.

Learners who are in receipt of 19+ Advanced Learning Loans do not qualify for College support and will be charged for additional learning support unless they are eligible for funding from the Loans Bursary scheme.

Additional Qualifications

External fees for additional qualifications are payable by all learners, however tuition fees for funded additional qualifications are remitted in full for those learners identified in the fee concessions section.

To be funded, an additional qualification must be extra to a learner's main qualification and must not duplicate any element of the main or other additional qualifications. It must be included in the learning agreement, and require additional GLH (Guided learning hours) to complete.

Educational Visits and Materials

Some full-time programmes may include field trips and residential visits which are an integral part of the programme. Where a residential fee is payable in addition to the tuition fee this will be discussed during interview stage, and confirmed during induction. Learners defined by the Department for Education as Fully Funded cannot be charged for trips or visits where without attending them a learner cannot complete and achieve their learning aim.

All educational visits should be self-financing. Charges for visits should be in line with College policy. The College does not aim to generate any surplus from student visits; however, any deficit resulting from an educational visit will be borne by the organising department.

The cost of all course materials should generally be incorporated within the tuition fee. However, where costs are significant and vary from learner to learner a separate charge may be made in addition to the tuition fee. Learners defined by the Department for

Education as Fully Funded cannot be charged for materials where without them a learner cannot complete and achieve their learning aim. However, a charge may be made if the learner wishes to keep these outside of the learning environment, for example artwork, models, and food.

The College will pass on to learners the full cost of learning materials for study by Open/Distance learning.

Special/protective clothing, equipment, and materials which learners may need in order to participate in certain activities which form part of the course, but which they retain will attract an additional charge.

Where a student fails to return items loaned to them such as learning resources, books and equipment, the College reserves the right to seek payment for these items in full.

16-18 Learners

Definition

For the purposes of the funding agreement, '18', means 'under 19 on 31 August in the teaching year when the learner commences a programme of study' and also 19-24 year olds with an EHCP funded by the DfE at the 16-19 year old rate.

Charges to 16-18 Learners

Tuition fees cannot be charged to learners aged 16-18 in full-time or part-time education. It is intended that such learners should continue to receive free tuition in any consecutive subsequent year of study on the same programme.

No compulsory enrolment, registration or examination fees can be charged to learners aged 16-18 in full-time or part-time education, other than in the following circumstances which confirm that reasonable conditions of attendance can be applied in order for students to qualify for free examination entry.

Examinations and re-sits may be charged for as follows;

- Where the required attendance or completion of work has not been achieved.
- Where the learner fails without good reason to sit the examination for which the College has paid.
- Where a learner re-sits an examination resulting from an initial examination failure.
- Where a learner re-sits an exam with the aim of achieving marginal improvements in grades.

Requirements for attendance and coursework must be applied reasonably. Absences or non-completion of coursework because of illness or other acceptable reasons should

not be grounds for charging.

The College may set conditions for and seek voluntary contributions from students or their sponsors. Requests for voluntary contributions must make it clear that there is no obligation to contribute, and that learners would not be treated differently according to whether they or their sponsors have made any contribution in response to the request. Any request for voluntary contributions needs to be adequately communicated in advance of the activity taking place.

No fees should be charged to students aged 16-18 for instrumental tuition which is part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination, which includes music qualifications on the section 96 list.

The College does not charge EDBS fees to learners aged 16-18 where a EDBS check is necessary for learners to undertake and complete their course. However if the learner does not pass the probation period, the cost of the EDBS will be payable.

No tuition fees can be charged for provision funded by the DfE at the 16-19 yr old rate for students with learning difficulties or disabilities aged 19-24.

Students aged 16-18 in full-time or part-time education may be charged for other elements of their study programme as set out below;

- Where clothing or equipment is necessary for the learner's health or safety, a charge may be made for clothing and equipment that the learner retains, but only if the learner also has the option of borrowing the clothing or equipment free of charge.
- Fines for the late return of library books or other disciplinary fines (provided such penalties have been made known in advance); and deposits on lockers, ID cards, keys, library cards or smartcards and equipment that are fully refundable except in cases of damage or theft. Fines and deposits are not fees.
- Photocopying and printing, including computer printouts, are not fees as long as they are not course-specific, are optional and there are alternative sources for these services.
- The recreational use of leisure and other non-academic facilities where the activity taking place is not a requirement of a course syllabus or not part of a student union membership free entitlement.
- Travel, board and lodging and other additional costs, including any tuition costs, associated with field trips and similar activities that may form part of or be outside the requirement of the course syllabus or agreed study programme.
- Optional extra activities where the activity is taking place outside a required part of an agreed study programme. Examples of optional extra activities include theatre, cinema or museum visits or other day or residential visits that are not a requirement of course syllabuses.
-

Fully Funded Learners

Definition

The Department for Education defines the following Learners as entitled to full funding for their learning programme. (Learners must also be undertaking a current, learning aim which is eligible for funding).

Apprentices aged 16 to 21 on the day they start:

- a Level 2 Standard (see below) *
- a Level 3 Standard (see below) *
- Higher apprenticeships at Level 4, 5 and 6 for their non-prescribed higher education learning aims (see below) *

*For new starts from 1 April 2024, where the employer does not pay the apprenticeship levy, the government will fund all of the apprenticeship training costs, up to the funding band maximum, for apprentices who are aged between 16 and 21 years old when they start their apprenticeship training. (Reference www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeship-funding/apprenticeship-funding updated Feb 2025).

English and maths for those aged 19 or older

The DfE will fully fund eligible learners for:

- GCSE English language or maths
- Functional Skills English or maths from Entry to Level 2
- Stepping-stone qualifications (including components, where applicable) in English or maths approved by the DfE

To be eligible for the legal entitlement the individual must meet the usual residency eligibility and:

- be aged 19 or over, and
- not previously attained a GCSE in English or maths at grade 4 or above (or a qualification which is at a comparable or higher level) or have been assessed as having an existing skill level lower than grade 4 (even if they have previously achieved a GCSE or equivalent qualification in English and maths), as part of their legal entitlement

If a learner wants to 'retake' their GCSE English and maths because they did not achieve

a grade 4 or higher (C or above), the DfE will not fund the learner to only resit the exam.

Learners must not be enrolled on qualifications which are not necessary for progressing towards a GCSE or Functional Skill Level 2.

Essential Digital Skills for those aged 19 or older

The DfE will fully fund individuals aged 19 or older and assessed at below Level 1, including individuals who are employed, as part of their legal entitlement on the day they start the following qualifications:

- Essential digital skills qualification (EDSQ) up to and including Level 1
- Digital functional skills qualifications (DFSQ) up to and including Level 1

Individuals aged 19 to 23 (excluding English, maths and ESOL)

- Provision up to and including, Level 1 to support progression to a first full Level 2
- Provision, up to and including Level 2 for those who already have a full Level 2 if they meet the eligibility for Local Flexibility**
- Qualifications defined within the legal entitlements that are:
 - first full Level 2
 - first full Level 3
- Provision that falls under the Free Courses for Job Offer

Individuals aged 24 or older (excluding English, maths and ESOL)

- Provision up to, and including, a Level 2, if they meet the eligibility for Local Flexibility**
- Provision that falls under the Free Courses for Job Offer

**Local Flexibility covers learners who are unemployed (irrespective of their benefit status) or are employed or self employed earning under the threshold – see below.

Earnings Threshold

The DfE have introduced the earnings threshold as part of a new eligibility criteria that enables learners to be fully funded if they earn below £25,000. The policy entitlement includes learners who are unemployed, employed, or self-employed.

The College may fully fund learners who are unemployed, employed, or self-employed, up to and including level 2 and the level 3 Free Courses for Jobs offers, if they earn below £25,000 annual gross salary.

Charging Fully Funded learners

Where the Department for Education (and where appropriate, Combined Authorities) has made a full contribution to the costs of a learners programme, providers must not make compulsory charges to learners for any delivery of the learning activity funded by the Agency.

This includes: administration, registration, assessment, material or examination costs whether incurred directly by the provider or charged by other organisations such as awarding bodies. This includes charges for identification passes, uniforms, tools and materials where a learner cannot achieve their learning aim without them.

Providers can pass on fees or subscriptions made by professional bodies in order to become a member of that organisation on to the learner or their employer if they are aged 19 years or more. If achieving the learning aim relies on membership you can make the learner pay this as a requirement of enrolling.

DLS (Discretionary Learner Support) may be used to support professional fees. Learners funded via an Advanced Learning Loan may apply to the Loans Bursary Fund.

Where additional or optional services or provision are supplied then the College will ask a fully funded learner or their employer to pay. This also applies to learners funded via an Advanced Learning Loan. For example; trips and visits where they are not a central part of the learning aim being delivered. It cannot be compulsory that the learner takes up the extra or optional provision to complete or achieve their learning aim.

Other charges outside of learning can also be charged where they do not directly relate to the learning activity, for example library fines, replacement keys or ID cards, and printing and photocopying outside of learning.

If a fully funded learner needs an Enhanced Disclosure & Barring Service (EDBS) check to take part in learning they cannot be charged for this. If the learning is associated with the learners employment their employer is responsible for carrying out and paying for the EDBS check.

Materials used in a learning activity can be charged for if the learner wishes to keep them outside of the learning environment, for example, artwork, models and food.

LLDD Learners

The Department for Education will fund learners with learning difficulties or disabilities as set out in the Apprenticeship, Skills, Children & Learning Act 2009, and will fund provision for individuals who are:

- Aged 19 and over and under 25, who are not subject to an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHC Plan) or Learning Difficulty Assessment (LDA) for their learning programme,

- Aged 25 and over.

The Department for Education will fund apprenticeship training for individuals who:

- Have left compulsory school age but are under 19, or
- Are 19 or over, including those who are subject to an EHC Plan or LDA for their learning programme.

The DfE is responsible for funding provision and support costs for any other learners aged 19 to 24 who are subject to an EHC Plan or LDA for their learning programme.

Co-funded learners

General

Learning for Level 2 and below

The Department for Education (and where appropriate, Combined Authorities) will fully fund learners who are aged 19 to 23 and have not previously achieved a full level 2 if they choose a qualification from the level 2 legal entitlement list.

Any other learners aged 19 and over wishing to undertake a qualification at level 2 or below (either from the legal entitlement list or local flexibility offer) will be fully funded if they meet the definition of being below the earnings threshold or unemployed. If they do not meet the definition of being below the earnings threshold or unemployed they will be co-funded.

Advanced Learning Loans

General

Unless included in the Free Courses for Jobs Offer, the Department for Education no longer funds learners aged 19 or over when they start their learning for provision at Level 3 and above. For these learners' Agency funding has been replaced by Advanced Learning Loans. The only exception to this is where a 19 - 23 year old learner undertakes their first full Level 3 qualification that is approved by the DfE for first Level 3 entitlement and the learner receives the training fully funded.

Where agreed by the DfE, Loans can be used to fund the following;

- A-Levels and AS-Levels (up to a maximum of four full A-Levels)
- Access to HE Diplomas
- Vocational qualifications including technical and professional qualifications at Levels 3, 4, 5 and 6.

Loans cannot be used to fund components of qualifications.

For specific details on learning aims that are eligible to be funded through a loan refer to the learning aims section of the FALA (Find a Learning Aim) site or the Advanced Learning Loans Qualifications Catalogue.

Where a learner takes out a loan for the Access to HE Diploma, completes it and progresses to, and completes a Student England funded HE course, the balance relating to the Access for HE Diploma will be written off by Student Finance England, and not the College.

Eligibility

Learners are entitled to up to four Loans, which they can take out either one after the other or at the same time.

Learners must apply for a loan for each learning aim.

Within the entitlement of four loans, a learner is entitled to apply for:

- No more than one loan to complete an Access to HE Diploma
- Up to eight loans to undertake a maximum of four A-Levels (this will be treated as one single loan entitlement)
- No more than four loans to undertake vocational qualifications including technical and professional qualifications at Levels 3, 4, 5, and 6.

Eligibility for Loans is assessed by the Student Loans Company (SLC).

Loans have a minimum value of £300.00. Loans will be calculated based on the lower of the FALA funding rate for the qualification and the College fee for the qualification.

Charging Loan learners

Learners can only apply for loans to cover the tuition fee element of their provision, including all costs and charges for items without which a learner cannot complete their course.

Providers can pass on fees or subscriptions made by professional bodies in order to become a member of that organisation on to the learner funded via a Loan. If achieving the learning aim relies on membership you can make the learner pay this as a requirement of enrolling. Learners funded via an Advanced learning Loan may apply to the Loans Bursary Fund to support professional fees.

Where additional or optional services or provision are supplied then the College will ask a Loan funded learner to pay. For example; trips and visits where they are not a central part of the learning aim. It cannot however be compulsory that the learner takes up the extra or

optional provision to complete or achieve their learning aim.

If a learner funded by a Loan needs a Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) check to take part in learning they cannot be charged for this. If the learning is associated with the learners employment their employer is responsible for carrying out and paying for the DBS check.

Learners cannot be confirmed as started for the purpose of a Loan until they have been attending for 2 weeks and continued confirmation of attendance needs to be made every 3 months.

Payment

The SLC will make Loan payments to the College to cover the learner's fees based on actual attendance on the course. If a learner drops out or stops attending the course before the course end date, payments to the College from the SLC will cease, and the learner will become personally liable for any unpaid fees.

SLC allow for loans to be deferred in certain circumstances. However, College does not recognise deferment of fees. If a student wishes to defer their studies, they will need to request fee remission for any outstanding fees using the "Tuition Fee Refund Request" online form.

Learners eligible for Loans cannot access any College funding including additional learning support, but may be able to apply to the Loans Bursary fund for support with other costs.

A learner can apply for a Loan retrospectively (after the initial liability point but while still undertaking the Learning Aim). If a learner applies for a loan retrospectively, and they have already paid fees to the College, the College will refund any portion of the fees paid which are covered by the Loan.

Please see the HE Fee Policy for SLC payments on HE Courses.

Tailored Learning

As a College we recognise the importance of using Tailored Learning to engage the local community and to promote further learning. Where appropriate, the College may ask for a fee contribution to help with the development of this provision. Charges will be dependent upon the employment and benefit status of the learner, and also the type of provision being delivered.

Fee Concessions

General

Fee remission is available to all 16-18-year-old FE learners, including those on part-time

programmes, and for adult learners who meet the specified criteria as outlined above.

Learners seeking reduction or remission of fees under these policies must produce satisfactory documentary evidence when enrolling of their entitlement to receive benefit or proof of their membership of the relevant group.

Funding guidance states that in order for a learner to be eligible for funding for their learning programme the learner must have the legal right to be resident in the UK at the start of their programme. Any person subject to a Home Office deportation order will ordinarily be ineligible for funding until their situation has been resolved to the satisfaction of the Home Office, as funding can only be claimed for learners who can complete their programme.

For individuals of all ages, eligibility for funding is based on the premise that a Learner must be able to complete and achieve the aim or programme of study within the time that they have available. For example, a Learner who is planning to leave England in three months cannot be funded for an aim that is planned to take 12 months to complete and achieve.

To qualify for DfE funding the individual must be eligible for funding on the first day of the learning aim. If a learner has already started a learning aim when they were not eligible for funding any change in their circumstances making them eligible will not result in them receiving DfE funding for that learning aim. However they may be able to receive funding for future learning aims.

Block bookings concessions, early enrolment discounts and other incentives may be considered at the discretion of the Principal.

DfE Remission Policy

Full details of this policy are set out in the relevant funding DfE documents for 2025/26. The information below is the Colleges interpretation of this guidance at the time of publication.

Tuition Fee

Tuition fees are remitted for;

- Learners aged 16-18 in full-time or part-time education. For the purpose of the funding agreement “18” means “under 19 on 31 August in the teaching year the learner commences a programme of study”. It is intended that such learners should continue to receive free tuition in any consecutive subsequent years of study on the same programme whilst they remain aged under 19.
- Those classed by the Department for Education as Fully Funded Learners

External Fees

The following full-time Agency-funded learners are fully exempt from paying external fees:

- Those aged 16–18 (i.e. under 19 on 31st August in the calendar year when the programme begins), on their main qualification.
- Those classed by the DfE (and where appropriate, Combined Authorities) as Fully Funded Learners

External fees for examination **resits** are **not** remitted by the College.

College Staff

The College provides a range of in-house training and development events that are designed to support staff in their work at the College. The College also supports attendance at relevant, short external events, within financial constraints.

College staff may also choose to undertake long courses for personal and career development. Where such courses incur a fee, staff may apply to the College's Long Term Award Panel for support. Course fees may be fully or partially funded, dependant on the relevance of the course to their work at the College and the availability of funds. (On some HoW College programmes the number of staff places may be limited). Examination fees and professional subscriptions remain the financial responsibility of the member of staff.

Where there are other fees in addition to the tuition fees, (i.e. residential, registration fee/s etc.) financial support will be at the discretion of the Long Term Award Panel.

Where staff are required to achieve qualifications as part of their role this will be supported where possible, although staff may be required to contribute towards some costs. Applications supported by an individual's line manager and line SLT, should be submitted to the Long Term Award Panel for final approval.

Full details of eligibility for support and repayment criteria if staff withdraw from a programme, or leave the College's employment after signing a professional development agreement are contained within the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Policy.

Staff would not normally be supported on full cost programmes.

Attendance on the learning programme must be outside normal contracted working hours; alternatively staff who are released for training must make up the time. This excludes Basic skills aims, which are available to all staff (both teaching and support staff) during working hours.

Other Fee Issues

Student Loan Company (SLC) funding

Some learners have their tuition fees funded via an SLC loan. Continued payment of Loan funding by the SLC to the College is dependent on the learner's continued attendance on the programme of study. If a learner drops out or fails to complete the course or programme of study then Loan funding will cease.

In these cases the learner becomes personally liable for any part of their fees not covered by Loan funding and will be responsible for reimbursing the College for that portion of their agreed fee no longer covered by SLC payments. This liability is reiterated on the enrolment form and in the Funding & information letter for Advanced Learner Loans and the 'Financial Implications' document available on demand.

Please see the HE Fee Policy for SLC payments on HE Courses.

Refunds and Waivers

A refund of fees is the repayment of fees already received by the College; a waiver occurs when the College discharges part or all of a learner or sponsor's obligation to pay outstanding fees.

The College does not refund tuition fees where a learner simply decides to stop attending a course.

Refunds of tuition fees or mandated employer contribution (full or partial) will be given in the following circumstances,

- When the College cancels a course.
- When a learner withdraws from a course during the first 3 weeks of the course. (although an administration fee may be chargeable).
- Where during their programme, an apprentice withdraws, or transfers between employers (an administration fee may be chargeable, and refunds will be calculated pro-rata).
- At the discretion of the Principal if, as the result of a complaint that has followed the complaints process, the College is found to be at fault.

With the exception of a cancelled course and a complaint, the learner is expected to complete a "Tuition Fee Refund Request".

If a course is cancelled, or a complaint upheld, the department concerned will complete a

refund request, via the College portal, on behalf of the learner.

For all of the circumstances above the form will be forwarded onto the Head of Finance who will authorise the request and process as a priority.

All other requests for fee refund/waiver must be submitted by the learner and will be at the discretion of the Principal or Vice Principal Finance and Corporate and will only be considered in **exceptional** circumstances.

Refunds will normally be made by cheque, BACS or directly back onto the payment card originally used. Evidence of the original payment must be provided in order to support the refund claim.

Learners requesting a refund will have a refund / cancellation fee deducted from any refund awarded, and in addition any external fees already paid over to awarding or other bodies will not normally be refunded. Candidates who have enrolled but subsequently withdraw will be charged a cancellation fee.

Refunds will normally be made within 10 working days of receipt of an authorised refund request.

Sponsors and Employers

Where a learner's fees are to be paid by a third party (e.g. an employer), written evidence of the third party's commitment to pay these fees is required at the time of enrolment. This may be in the form of a letter, email, contract agreement or purchase order addressed to the College. An invoice will be issued to the employer, payable in line with standard College payment terms.

If the sponsor provides no documentation to confirm acceptance of the fees and the College invoice remains unpaid, the learner will become liable for the full fee.

Financial Support

Learners may be able to obtain financial support where they are experiencing difficulty in commencing or continuing their studies. This support may be for fees or other costs. Learners should contact the Advice Centres. (Access to support is by application and is not automatic).

Principal's Discretion

The Principal will have discretion to approve fee-charging arrangements for categories of learners or course programmes not directly referred to by this policy, or where an alteration is considered appropriate for marketing or other reasons.

Funding eligibility

General

Learners who are attending programmes of more than one term's duration and are eligible for funding at the start of their programme, will usually be eligible for funding for the whole duration of their learning aim. Similarly, learners who are not eligible for funding at the start of their programme are very unlikely to become eligible for funding during the period of their learning programme.

Those learners not eligible for funding will be liable for higher fee rates to compensate for the absence of DfE funds.

DfE Funded Learners

Funding eligibility is detailed in full in the Department for Education (and where appropriate, Combined Authorities) funding documents issued for 2023/24. Further advice can be obtained from the Head of Management Information

Most individuals will be eligible for funding if they:

- Are a UK national or have right of abode in the UK
- Have been ordinarily resident in the UK, Republic of Ireland or British Overseas Territories or Crown Dependencies (Channel Islands and Isle of Man), Gibraltar or EEA for at least the previous 3 years on the first day of learning, and
- The learning is taking place in England.

There are some further flexibilities for learners from the EU/ EEA. Please see the relevant funding guidance for full guidance.

Enrolment at more than one funded provider

While funding bodies recognise that learners may occasionally enrol at more than one provider, groups of learners enrolled on a full-time programme at one provider should not be enrolled on part-time programmes with other providers, including through sub-contract provision. For example, it would not be appropriate for several learners enrolled on a full-time sports and leisure programme to be enrolled at another provider to undertake a first-aid or sports coaching qualification.

Learners in the Armed Forces

British armed forces personnel, Ministry of Defence personnel or civil and crown servants resident in England, are eligible for DfE funded ASF where learning takes place in England.

Members of other nations' armed forces stationed in England, and their family members, aged 19 and over, are eligible for DfE funded ASF if the armed forces individual has been ordinarily resident in England for the previous 3 years on the first day of learning. The DfE will not fund family members that remain outside of England.

ESOL

Charges may be made for materials, equipment, uniforms, non-attendance at tests and College visits. External candidates wishing to take a stand alone ESOL test will be charged the External Candidates fee.

Higher Education Students

General

Funding eligibility is set out and governed by the Education (Fees & Awards) Regulations 1997.

HND and Foundation Degrees (full-time and part-time mode of study) fees are set by the College and where appropriate in association with any validating partners. These fees are set out in the Access and Participation Plan available on the College website.

Responsibility for the funding of all prescribed HE lies within the Office for Students (OfS).

The funding provided by the OfS for HE learners is intended to fund all the learners' studies. If, in order to gain their HE qualifications, a group of Learners requires, for example, key skills, additional tuition in mathematics or sports coaching awards, then this would be funded out of the resources provided by the OfS for the HE programme. This does not cover EDBS fees.

OfS funded students are not eligible for DfE funding.

International Students

Full-time

Overseas students are not entitled to DfE (and where appropriate, Combined Authorities) funding and must therefore pay the overseas rates. The overseas rate will be the fully-funded rate of the qualification on FALA.

Overseas students are defined as:

- Nationals of countries outside the UK.

- Students who have not lived in the UK for three years.
- British Nationals returning to England after spending time abroad outside the UK, unless this was temporary.
- Those with British national (overseas) passports or similar and Hong Kong nationals are ineligible for DfE funding until they have been resident in the UK for three years.
- Students from outside the UK whose main reason for residence in England has been attendance at a fee-paying school or non-maintained school.

There are further flexibilities afforded to learners with certain immigration statuses. Details of these will need to be recorded on the Residency Form, with Biometric Permit / Home Office evidence provided. The decision to award funding will be made on a case-by-case basis.

International students must be in possession of a Visa permitting them to enter/remain in the UK as a student. Refunds will not be made if the student cannot complete a course because no visa is held or if a visa is found to be defective.

International students attending full-time programmes (at least 580 GLH) will pay the international fee relevant to that programme. Any additional tuition on an individual basis may attract a further charge.

Part-time

International students who wish to undertake a part-time College course will need to pay a fee, which reflects the loss of any subsidy arising from their overseas status. The overseas rate will be the fully-funded rate of the qualification on FALA.

Payment

International students on a student visa will be required to pay all fees prior to the commencement of their course. Payment arrangements for other international students are in line with standard College terms.

Electively Home Educated (EHE) 14 to 15 year olds

The College may admit children aged 14 or 15 who are being electively home educated (EHE), to take courses on an infill basis by arrangement with the local authority or with the parents. These courses are funded by the DfE at the 16-19 year old rate and the student then counts for lagged funding in just the same way as if they were aged 16 – 18 years old.

Any charges made to this group should follow the same rules as charging 16-18 year old learners as detailed on page 9-10. Local authorities and parents should no longer be

expected to pay fees for this provision.

We are only funded by the DfE for EHE students if they are enrolled onto Part-time courses.

Fees & Payment

Personal and Employer Contributions

All learners eligible for funding are either fully funded or co-funded. Where the learner is co-funded then either the learner or their employer will need to make a contribution towards costs of learning to add to the state's contribution.

DfE funding is no longer available for learners aged 19 years or over for provision at Level 3, 4, 5 and 6, except in those circumstances outlined above. Learners may access Loans to fund their learning or may choose to pay for this provision in full themselves.

Apprentices cannot be made to contribute financially to the direct cost of learning. DfE Funding Guidance states that employers should be made aware of the financial value of the government's contribution to training their apprentices. The College is expected to provide this information at the start of the apprenticeship and at the start of each funding year.

Employers subject to the apprenticeship levy will utilise this to provide funding for their employees subject to enough funding being available in their levy account. Non-levy paying employers (and levy-paying employers with insufficient levy account funding) are required to contribute 5% of the agreed value of the apprenticeship. Any agreed charges over and above the government's maximum funding band for each apprenticeship will need to be paid in full.

Payment of Fees

All fees become payable on the completion of an enrolment form either by the learner or their sponsor unless the learner is entitled to full fee remission.

The preferred method for payment of fees is by credit or debit card, however, the College would accept cheque by exception. Instalment payments may also be made by recurring card payment.

Instalments

Payment of fees may be made in instalments when fees due at enrolment exceed a pre-determined level.

Fee Amount	No. of instalments	Payment of instalments
ESOL courses over £76	Two	50% at enrolment one further instalment by 1 December
£0 - £250	Two	50% at enrolment one further instalment within 2 months of start of course
£250 and over		25% at enrolment a maximum of 5 further equal payments before the end of April (End date may change if enrolment is non-standard year)

Instalment payments may be made via recurring card payment.

Instalment applications will not be considered unless accompanied, at enrolment, with an initial payment as above.

Any other proposed alternative instalment arrangement must be approved by the VP - Finance and Corporate Operations or Head of Finance before any commitment is made, with the exception of approved Apprenticeship instalment arrangements.

Non-Payment of Fees

Continued attendance on a programme of study is dependent upon the learners' payment of their fees. Where instalment terms have been agreed, but an instalment is not paid by the due date the full outstanding balance will become immediately payable.

Learners who default on instalment agreements will not be offered this facility for any subsequent enrolment.

Learners undertaking a two-year programme will not be allowed to automatically progress to the second year of the course where fees relating to the first year remain unpaid. In addition, learners who complete a programme of study but have fees outstanding will not be allowed to enrol on further programmes of study until arrangements to clear the outstanding debt have been agreed.

The College uses a debt collection agency to recover unpaid fees and learners should be aware that the College reserves the right to share certain personal information necessary to facilitate the collection of debts with that agency.

Proposed Fees 2025-26

Tuition Fees

Individual fee rates are quoted for all College courses. Fees quoted are only valid for the current academic year. Learners commencing courses covering more than one year should be advised that an additional fee is payable for the second and any subsequent years, and that fee rates change annually.

ESOL programmes

Fees will be payable in line with the FALA fully funded rates for learners who are non fundable learners.

LLDD

Learners not eligible for fee remission (EU Citizen)

£3.15 per GLH

External Fees

Examination / Assessment Fees – in line with awarding/examining bodies rates. (additional charge for late entry where applicable)

College overhead costs will be agreed on an individual basis by the VP - Finance and Resources

Private candidate fee: £60 plus invigilation / room costs in addition to standard awarding body/College external fees.

Learners who have failed to complete a programme and wish to return

Infill to group sessions– rate dependant on provision type/viability

Assignment/Unit marking/assessment fee £35.00

One-to-one tuition £61.50 per hour

International Students

(Payment strictly in advance only)

International learners will not be eligible for DfE funding and will therefore be charged the same rate for a course as other non-funded learners. This will normally equate to the rate applied to Loan funded learners or for HE courses the standard fee rate applied to all learners.

4. Definitions

Ref Department for Education definitions 2025/26

16-18 year old learner

For funding purposes, the DfE defines a 16–18-year-old learner as; aged 16, 17 or 18 on 31 August in the relevant funding year. Such learners are normally eligible for DfE 16-19 year old funding

subject to the other regulations in the DfE guidance.

To maintain eligibility for funding for individual learners during a learning programme, a wider definition has been agreed with the Department for Education. For funding eligibility purposes, any learner who was aged 16, 17 or 18 on 31 August in the funding year when they began a programme of study continues to be funded as a 16- to 18-year-old learner. If they become 19 years old during their learning programmes such students are funded at 16-18 rates to complete their learning programmes.

Absence

DfE guidance states that institutions must ensure that students are withdrawn from a programme where they have not attended classes for 4 continuous weeks, excluding holidays. The DfE does not distinguish between authorised and unauthorised absence for funding purposes.

Actual End date

The DfE defines this as the date that the learner completed the learning activities necessary to achieve the learning aim or the date the learner withdrew from the learning activities, accurate to within a week. (as set out in the ILR Specification: 2025-26)

Assumed fee income

The DfE's funding approach assumes that all learners other than those eligible to full funding are charged a tuition fee. The assumed fee income will be reflected in a reduction to the funding payable for the programme. The current fee income assumption is 50%. To further clarify, the College will receive the fully-funded rate (as determined on Find a Learning Aim (FALA)) for learners entitled to fee remission. Fee-paying Home students pay a co-funded contribution (50% of the fully-funded rate). Since no funding can be claimed for Overseas students, they are required to pay £100% of the fully-funded rate.

Civil partner

A person who is in a civil partnership as recognised by the state.

European Economic Area (EEA), Switzerland and the overseas territories

The European Economic Area, abbreviated as EEA, consists of the Member States of the European Union (EU) and 3 countries of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) (Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway; excluding Switzerland). The Agreement on the EEA entered into force on 1 January 1994.

EEA citizen

An individual who is a citizen of Iceland, Liechtenstein, Switzerland or Norway. It is recognised that all EU citizens are EEA citizens. However, the non-EU group need definition.

EHC Plan

An EHC Plan is the document which replaces Statements of Educational Needs and Learning Difficulties Assessments for children & young people with special educational needs. The local authority where the holder of such a plan lives, has the legal duty to 'secure' the educational provision specified in the EHC Plan, i.e. to ensure the provision is delivered.

Full Level 2 qualification

Full level 2 is the level of attainment which, is demonstrated by:

- GCSE/O Level (5 or more GCSEs grades A*-C)
- GCSE (9-1) (5 or more GCSEs grade 4 or above)
- 2 or 3 AS Levels (for AS qualifications regulated before 1 September 2015)
CSE Grade 1 (5 or more)
- 1 A Level
- Higher 14-19 Diploma
- QCF Diploma level 2
- QCF Certificate level 2 at 13 or 14 credits undertaken before 2014 to 2015
Level 2 Principal Learning
- NVQ level 2
- GNVQ Intermediate
- Technical Certificates in the 16-19 Performance Tables
- QCF Certificate level 2 at 15 credits and above
- From 1 August 2015 vocational qualifications of 150 GLH or more that are on the level 2 and level 3 legal entitlement qualification list.

Full Level 3 qualification

Full Level 3 is the level of attainment which is demonstrated by:

- A Levels (2 or more advanced level passes)
- 4 or more AS Levels (for AS qualifications regulated before 1 September 2015)
- QCF Diploma Level 3
- QAA Access to HE
- Advanced 14-19 Diploma
- GNVQ Advanced
- NVQ level 3
- AVCE double award
- Tech Levels which are in the 16-19 Performance Tables
Applied Generals which are in the 16-19 Performance Tables (from 1 August 2015)
- QCF Certificate at Level 3 which is 30 to 36 credits
From 1 August 2015 vocational qualifications of 300 GLH or more that are on the level 2 and level 3 legal entitlement qualification list.

Functional skills

Applied practical skills in English, maths and digital that provide the learner with the

essential knowledge, skills and understanding to enable them to operate effectively and independently in life and work.

Full-time learner

For funding purposes, a full-time student (aged 16 to 17 or aged 18 to 24 with an EHC plan) is one enrolled on a programme in funding band 5 (580 hrs+), band 4a (485 hrs+) or on a T Level programme. A part-time student is engaged in a study programme in funding band 4b or in funding bands 3 to 1.

For some purposes other than funding calculations, it is important to measure whether a learner is in full-time education and training over a period other than a year. In this context, learners engaged in education or training of more than 16 planned hours a week are also considered full-time during this period.

Guided learning hours

All times when a member of staff is present to give specific guidance towards the learning aim being studied on a programme. This includes lectures, tutorials and supervised study in; for example, open learning centres and learning workshops. It also includes time spent by staff assessing a learner's achievements.

It does not include time spent by staff in the day-to-day marking of assignments or homework where the learner is not present. Neither does it include hours where supervision or assistance is of a general nature outside the study of the learners.

Higher apprenticeships

A framework of qualifications where the main aim is at Level 4 or above.

High Needs Students

Those who need more support than normal to get access to progress towards and successfully achieve their learning goals.

Individualised learner record (ILR)

The individualised learner record (ILR) is used by providers to record all relevant funding ILR data about its learners across all funding streams.

FALA

The Find a Learning Aim (FALA) site is the repository for detailed information on learning aims including funding rates.

Learner support

The DfE 16-19 year old funding stream gives financial support for particular groups of young learners. This includes learner support funds that support the learner to stay in learning.

Learning programme

A learning programme comprises all of a student's activities that lead to a set of outcomes agreed with the learner as part of their IAG process.

A learning programme may be composed of one or more learning aims and may span more than one funding year.

A learning programme will generally be centred around learning aims at a single level, with a minority of, if any, learning aims at a different level being used to support the wider needs of the learner (for example, a GCSE retake in Mathematics would be appropriate for a learner studying non mathematical A Levels).

National funding rates 2025-26

Table 1: national funding rate for students funded via the 16 to 19 funding formula

Band (study programmes)	Annual planned hours	Students	National funding rate per student
5	580+ hours	16 and 17 year olds and students aged 18 and over with high needs	£5,026
4a	485+ hours	students aged 18 and over who are not high needs	£4,157
4b	485 to 579 hours	16 and 17 year olds and students aged 18 and over with high needs	£4,157
3	385 to 484 hours	all students	£3,381
2	300 to 384 hours	all students	£2,673
1	up to 299 hours	all students	£5,026 proportion of band 5

No recourse to public funds

In an individual's passport the UK Border Agency may have stamped "no recourse to public funds". Public funds are defined in the immigration rules and the benefits and services listed do not include education or education funding. As a result this condition therefore makes no difference to a learner's eligibility, which must be determined under the normal eligibility criteria.

Ordinary residence

For funding purposes the DfE regards as ordinarily resident in a given country any person who habitually, normally and lawfully resides from choice and for a settled purpose in that country. Temporary absences from the relevant area should be ignored. Someone who

has not been ordinarily resident because he or she or the person's parent or spouse or civil partner was working temporarily abroad will be treated as if they were ordinarily resident in the relevant area.

Overseas learner

For funding purposes an 'overseas' learner will be defined as "One who does not meet the criteria for a home learner". Overseas learners are not eligible for DfE funding and can be charged full cost tuition fees.

Parents-to-be

Learners who are expecting to be unavoidably absent from learning for a period of time, such as for maternity or paternity leave, should not be discouraged from entering into a learning agreement. Providers should ensure that the planned start and end dates for the learners' programme, as agreed at the commencement of the programme, reflect the overall planned duration of study.

Partnership provision

Learning provision that is delivered with the involvement of a third party.

Part-time learner

A learner engaged in a programme that is less than 580 study hours for 16 /17 yr olds or 485 study hours for 18 yrs + in the academic year.

Programme weighting

A funding uplift reflecting the fact that some learning aims of similar length are more costly to deliver than others; there are four programme weighting factors in the 16-18 model.

Qualifying days for funding

Where the learner or apprentice has not achieved the learning aim you only qualify for DfE funding if the learner or apprentice is in learning for the minimum number of qualifying days. This is calculated from the number of days between the learning start date and the learning planned end date, including both of those days.

Planned length of the learning aim	Minimum qualifying days
168 days	42 days
14 – 167 days	14 days
Fewer than 14 days	1 day

Small or medium-sized enterprises (SME)

A micro, small and medium sized enterprise which employ fewer than 250 persons and which have an annual turnover not exceeding 50 million euro, and/or an annual balance sheet not exceeding 43 million euros.

Transfer

Where a learner transfers between funding aims (i.e. they withdraw from a learning aim and as a direct result at the same time start studying for another learning aim with the same provider) funding is only available for the latter aim in that academic year.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 Governing Body

Ensure the policy aligns with relevant legislation and is effectively implemented and reviewed annually by Corporation.

5.2 Principal and Senior Leaders

VP Finance & Resources to oversee the implementation and regular review of this policy.

5.3 Staff

Comply with the policy and participate in relevant training.

5.4 Students

N/A

6. Procedures

As per policy statement.

7. Monitoring and Review

Annual review by VP Finance & Resources.

8. Legal and Regulatory Framework

DfE Funding guidance for young People 2025 to 2026

DfE Funding guidance for young people 2025 to 2026: funding rates and formula

DfE funded Adult Skills Fund (ASF) funding rules: 2025 to 2026

DfE funded Adult Skills Fund (ASF) funding rates and formula 2025 to 2026

DfE Advanced learner loans funding rules 2025 to 2026

Apprenticeship funding rules for training providers 2025 to 2026

WMCA Combined Authority Adult Skills Fund Funding Rules 2025 to 2026

Consumer Markets Authority Guidelines

9. Training and Awareness

Policy available on the portal.

10. Environmental Impact/Sustainability Considerations (if applicable)

N/A

11. Legal Requirements/Issues outside of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

See no. 8 above Legal and Regulatory Framework.

12. Equality Impact Assessment Statement

The Equality Act 2010 does not require public authorities to carry out EIAs by law. The College does however, carefully consider the impact, when creating or amending its policies, on all concerned parties regarding Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and records this at ELT meetings in order to demonstrate compliance with Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED).

13. Related Policies and Documents

Access and Participation Plan

College Financial Regulations and Procedures.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Policy

13. Appendices

N/A