

Fees Policy 2020/21

Further Education Courses

APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS ON 01 July 2020

Applies to:

Harrogate College



Keighley College



Leeds City College



Leeds College of Music



White Rose Academies Trust



CHANGE CONTROL

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1. Policy statement

Colleges' fees are set to ensure that, after public funding is taken into account, the colleges are able to cover the costs of every programme of study and make a contribution to their overhead costs.

2. Context and reasons for the policy

2.1. The colleges Further Education fees policy is set annually based on the guidance from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) regarding eligibility for funding.

3. Policy Objectives

- 3.1. Our staff, students, prospective students and students' employers and sponsors will understand:
- What the colleges' fees are
 - What additional charges may be made as part of the programme
 - When and how the colleges' fees are payable

4. Policy

4.1. General

The colleges' fees comply with Government funding directives and are designed to contribute to the full costs the colleges incur in delivering education and training to all students. The colleges will not change fees on a programme of study more than once a year (unless there are significant changes in Government policy that impacts on the colleges' ability to deliver the programme).

The colleges will not change fees for individual learners who are part-way through an agreed programme of study e.g. where a learner is under 19 at the start of an FE funded programme of study, they will benefit from the free tuition /exam fee policy for any consecutive study of the same programme of study, even if in a subsequent academic year of study, they are over 19.

4.2. Devolution of adult education functions

As of 1 August 2019 the funding of learners aged 19 undertaking adult education funded courses (AEB) who reside within devolved authority areas are subject to funding rules set out and published by the devolved authority. As a result of this change this fees policy only applies to AEB funded individuals who are eligible for funding within the ESFAs AEB funding rules which does not include any individual who is resident within the devolved authorities.

For the funding year 20/21 the devolved authorities are:

- The Greater Manchester Combined Authority
- The Liverpool City Region Combined Authority
- The West of England Combined Authority
- The West Midlands Combined Authority
- The Tees Valley Combined Authority
- The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority
- The Greater London Authority

At the time of writing the college has no funding agreements in place with any of the devolved areas. This means that any individual who resides in these areas and wishes to undertake any learning in the colleges that would ordinarily be funded under the AEB funding arrangements receives no government funding and is therefore liable to full cost tuition fees and exam fees and any other appropriate costs. The policy will be updated to reflect any changes in funding agreements with the devolved areas above and any future devolution deals.

4.3. Eligibility for Funding and Fees

The basis for funding and fees for individuals is based on the ESFA's published funding rules and college policy, as such they may be subject to amendments and clarifications, this includes but is not limited to the criteria for residency eligibility. Where required these changes will be made in subsequent iterations of the fees policy.

4.4. Fees

The colleges' fees may be made up of several elements:

- Tuition fees
- Awarding body registration fees or examination and certification fees
- Course specific charges

4.5. Colleges' fees vary according to your age, your level of study, qualifications on entry, the type of programme you are studying and where/how the course is delivered.

4.6. Colleges' fees are payable in advance, and for programmes of study which last for more than one year, are payable separately for each year of study.

4.7. Colleges' fees and examination fees (where applicable) are normally collected at enrolment, except:

- Where you are being sponsored, for example by an employer, the learner must provide written confirmation from your sponsor/ employer at the point of enrolment (an invoice will be sent out to the sponsor). Where the learner is unable to provide confirmation at enrolment, they are still entitled to enrol, however fee liability transfers to the learner, until such time as written sponsor/employer confirmation is received.
- Where you have been directly referred by Jobcentre Plus
- Where you are receiving active/locally agreed eligible benefits
- Where you are funding your course through an Advanced Learner Loan which has been approved.
- For certain examination fees for courses where the decision on which examination is to be sat is taken after some weeks of tuition (e.g. some language courses).

4.8. Awarding body registration fees, examination and certification fees are derived from actual awarding body charges.

4.9. The course specific charge relates to the costs of consumables, course specific computer licences, educational trips, specific course related library resources, attendance on residential trips, materials, equipment, uniforms, Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) checks, food, artwork, professional body

subscriptions etc. Some of these are purchased through the college, some through negotiated third party deals. These charges will be notified in the course information and will be applied consistently. These charges may be made after enrolment, but once billed, must be paid by you or your sponsor (if applicable).

- 4.10. Where you are required to have a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, and you are entitled to fee remission and do not pay fees, or you are funding your course through an Advanced Learner Loan you will not be charged. However, if the learning is associated with your employment, your employer is responsible for carrying out and paying for this check.
- 4.11. Ideally, all fees due must be paid before you can be entered for any examination. If, for any reason, you are entered for the examination, although your fees have not been fully settled the certificate or award may not be awarded to you until your debt has been settled in full. For further information, please contact the Director of Finance.
- 4.12. The colleges will charge full fees for non “home-based” students (see section 9) on government funded further and higher education course, in accordance with government directives (i.e. a minimum of 100% of the weighted value rate for the qualification).
- 4.13. The colleges will charge a commercial rate of fees for all students on courses not funded by the government, as there is no funding subsidy.
- 4.14. **Learner Support Funds**
In exceptional circumstances elements of a learner’s fees may be subsidised by awards from the Learner Support Funds (LSF). These awards are for students who face financial difficulty and have made a successful claim for assistance with fees through the fund. These awards will be in line with the colleges’ Student Financial Support Funds Policy and will constitute full or part payment of the colleges’ fees.
- 4.15. The ESFA will not fund any students repeating qualifications/learning aims they have already achieved (with the exception of GCSEs where the grades were below a C or grade 4 and the student is undertaking the full course). Any repeat qualifications or re-sits will be charged at a full cost rate.
- 4.16. For the academic year 2020/21 there are no changes to the eligibility for funding for EU and EEA learners. This means that learners continuing or starting their programmes during the academic year will continue to be funded as “home students” providing all other eligibility criteria are met.
- 4.14 If a learner falsely declares their eligibility to funding or remission, i.e. residency, prior attainment, qualifications, employment status or income in order to claim fee remission and/or funding that they are not entitled to, the college retains the right to invoice the learner any loss of fees/funding and additional costs incurred and may withdraw learners from their programme of study.

5. Setting the fee rate

5.1. Further education courses

The minimum fee level for adult (19 plus) further education courses is set at the fee remission value as determined by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). For 2020/2021 this is 50% of the un-weighted rate for the qualification per year, plus examination fees and course specific charges for

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those aged 19+ who are studying at, or below level 2. There is a minimum tuition fee of £1,100 for full time courses at level 2 or below.

In the case of English as a Second Language (ESOL) qualifications, the college will charge a fee set at £3 per course planned delivery hour, plus exams /accreditation fees.

For students on Level 3 and above qualifications and aged 19-23 with a prior attainment of a level 3 qualification and students aged 24+ the fee level is set at a minimum of 100% at the weighted rate for the qualification per year. Where the student is “topping up” and has already achieved elements of the qualification, the college will reduce the amount charged and will apply Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).

Students aged 19 and above who enrol to designated level 3 or above qualifications and are liable to pay tuition fees under this fees policy may be eligible to take out an Advanced Learner Loan to contribute in full or in part to the costs of their fees. These are available via Student Finance England (SFE), Information and terms and conditions are available at <https://www.gov.uk/advanced-learning-loans>

5.2. International Students

- The fee for International further education full-time students is £6,750
- The fee for International higher education students is £9,250 (£9,750 for Engineering).

5.3. Commercial rate courses

The fee for commercial rate (full cost recovery) courses is a minimum of £150 per teaching hour. Any variation to this will only be authorised by the Chief Financial Officer

4.6. Awarding body registration /exam fees

All registration /exam fees are charged within a band based on awarding body charges.

4.7. Schools collaborative provision

The fees for schools are:

- The rate in Leeds for individual places on vocational provision is £17.50 per hour. Group rates will be subject to negotiation.
- The rate in Keighley for individual places on vocational provision is £17.50 per hour. Group rates will be subject to negotiation
- Group rate in Leeds and Keighley - £115 per hour on school premises
- Alternative curriculum- individual rate is £17.50 per hour on college premises

4.8. Community Learning Provision

The colleges engage in community learning provision on behalf of the ESFA and Leeds City Council.

Pound Plus Fee Remission Policy (CLP delivery)

Where the provision is funded directly to the college by the ESFA as part of its contracted delivery (CLP) the colleges' FE fees remission policy will apply. The tuition fee rate will be set at £3 per teaching hour plus any additional examination/registration costs fees are payable by students. If the

student is eligible for a waiver under the ESFA funding rules then the tuition and exam fees will be waived in line with college policy.

Leeds City Council applies its own fees policy which the college implements on its behalf. The policy for 2020/2021 will be made available to staff and students once it has been received.

4.9. Apprenticeships

Employers are required to contribute to the costs of training for apprentices in line with government policy. This co-investment will be negotiated with the employer. Please see Appendix Two for further details.

4.10 Higher Education

The Higher Education Fees Policy is a separated document, available on request and on the college website.

6. Fee remission

6.1. The colleges will remit fees as shown below (these do not apply to students under the age of 16, or those who do not meet the ESFAs residency eligibility - please ask for further details):

- If you are between 16 and 18 on 31 August 2020, or 19-23 with an ECHP and are on an agreed programme of further education, are eligible for Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) funding and not studying at any other institution or undertaking an apprenticeship at any other institution, the college will not charge for your tuition, awarding body registration, or examination fees. If you or the course is not funded by the ESFA (i.e. Full Cost) then you will be expected to pay the fees as advertised.
- If you are aged 19 or over and are studying Basic English and Maths qualifications which are classified as legal entitlements by the ESFA (i.e. Functional Skills) and **not ESOL**, you are eligible for fee remission for tuition and exam or awarding body registration fees. This is on condition that the qualification being studied is at a level higher than previously obtained with either the college or any other institution, regardless of awarding organisation.

If you do not hold a GCSE at Grade C/Grade 4 or above in Maths and English Language and are studying GCSE English and Maths you will be eligible for remission on tuition and examination fees for these qualifications. This is on the understanding that you are enrolling to undertake and participate in a full course of learning and not just re-taking the examination. If you have previously achieved a GCSE Grade C (4) in English or Maths and wish to improve your grade, there is no funding available, regardless of employment status and full cost tuition and examination fees are payable.

- If you are 19+ and are studying Information technology aims designated by the ESFA as “Digital Skills” up to and including level 1, have digital skills assessed at below level 1.
- If you are aged 19-23 or over on 31 August 2020, studying at Level 1 and below, and are unemployed, you will not be charged tuition, exam or awarding body registration fees. This will be on the basis that you declare to us that you meet the ESFA definition of Unemployed as set out in the AEB Funding Rules
- If you are 19-23 or over on 31 August 2020 studying at level 1 and below, employed and earn a low income as defined by the ESFA (£16,009.50 per annum for 2020/2021) then you will not be charged tuition, exam or awarding body registration fees. This will be on the basis you are able to demonstrate your employment and income by providing appropriate evidence (ie 3 months wage slips or employment contract)

- If you are aged 24+ and studying at Level 2 and below, and are unemployed, you will not be charged tuition, exam or awarding body registration fees. This will be on the basis that you declare to us that you meet the ESFA definition of Unemployed as set out in the AEB Funding Rules.
- If you are 24 or over on 31 August 2020 studying at level 2 and below, employed and earn a low income as defined by the ESFA (£16,009.50 per annum for 19/20) then you will not be charged tuition, exam or awarding body registration fees. This will be on the basis able to demonstrate your income by providing appropriate evidence (ie 3 months wage slips or employment contract)
- If you are 19-23 and studying a level 2 or 3 qualification which has been classified by the ESFA as a legal entitlement (other than level 3 Access courses) in the classroom; or progressing to a level 2 qualification via entry or Level 1 courses, you will not pay tuition, exam or awarding body registration fees, on confirmation that you will be progressing. Confirmation of prior attainment and entitlement to this remission will be checked against the Personal Learner Record (PLR).
- If you are 19-23 and undertaking a level 2 course and do not already hold a level 2 qualification then the qualification must be classified as a legal entitlement in order to qualify for funding and fee remission. If the qualification is not a legal entitlement, your course is not funded by the ESFA and will be treated as a full cost enrolment and fees may be charged accordingly regardless of income or employment status.
- If you are 19-24 with a learning difficulty or disability and your place in college has been commissioned as a 'High Needs' placement by your Local Authority, you will not be charged any fees.

7. Refunds and transfers

7.1. The colleges operate a no refund policy for cancellations by an employer or applicant, except in limited circumstances. The full policy on fee refunds and recovery is available on the colleges' websites.

8. Payments policy

- 8.1. All students will be expected to make arrangements to pay their fees at the time of enrolment. The colleges accept payments by all major credit and debit cards, cheque and cash.
- 8.2. The colleges offer instalment payments by direct debit. Instalment payments are allowed on long courses (usually over 20 weeks) with a minimum value of £100, with an initial payment of 25% of the course fee. The rest of the fee is payable over a maximum of 6 further direct debit payments, as determined by the Director of Financial Resources. Courses which last fewer than 20 weeks, where the student has to pay not less than £200, will also be allowed to offer instalment payments, providing that the final payment is due before the expected end date of the student on the course.
- 8.3. Payments by instalment can include the cost of examination and registration fees. The debt on the exam/registration fees will be reduced first, followed by the tuition fees.
- 8.4. Employers will be invoiced for fees as soon as possible after the start of the course and will pay in accordance with the college's standard terms of business (30 days from date of invoice). Any transfer of fee liability from student to employer will require written confirmation of sponsorship from sponsor/employer.
- 8.5. Where examination or awarding body registration charges apply, students will be required to make payment in full before the entry can be processed.

- 8.6. In exceptional circumstances, a student's fees (examination /registration fees and course specific charges) may be paid in full or part by application to the Discretionary Learner Support Fund.
- 8.7 Where a student has informed the colleges that they intended to take out an Advanced Learner Loan to cover fees they remain liable for the tuition fees until the loan has been approved and payments received by the college from the Student Loan Company. If the student fails to apply for the loan or it is not approved or ineligible, or they cancel the loan; then the student must make arrangements to ensure fees are paid. Failure to do so may result in the student been withdrawn from their course and action taken in accordance with Section 9 of this policy to recover outstanding debt.

9. Failure to pay

- 9.1. Students are personally liable for payment of any tuition fees owed to the college. Failure to pay the agreed tuition fees or to pay agreed arrangements may result in the student being withdrawn from the course, but are still liable for any outstanding fees.
- 9.2. Students with outstanding debts will not be permitted to re-enrol for any further courses in either the current or future academic years until all debts have been paid.
- 9.3. The college will take reasonable steps to recover debts which may include the use of a debt collection agency and/or other legal action.
- 9.4. The colleges will take all reasonable steps to advise and support students in financial difficulty. Any student who is in financial difficulty should seek advice from the Student Life team as soon as possible.

10. Definitions

- 10.1. "Home-based" students are defined as being domiciled in the European Economic Area (EEA). Currently, this comprises: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. Or have right to abode in the UK
- 10.2. All family members of an EU national (who has a right of residence in the UK) are eligible 'home' students if they are ordinarily resident in the UK on the day that learning starts and the EU national has been ordinarily resident in the EEA for the preceding 3 years on the day that learning starts.
- 10.3. The age for funding purposes is normally determined by the age on 31 August in the academic year when the learner begins a programme of study. However, in the case of student on Apprenticeship funded programmes and 19+ level 3 provision and over, the age is at the start of the programme (further guidance on this can be provided on request).
- 10.4. Non EEA citizens who have been ordinarily resident in UK for at least 3 years and have government permission to live in the UK (not for education), refugees and their families and some asylum seekers are eligible for funding.

10.5. Unemployed

For funding purposes a learner is defined as unemployed if one or more of the following apply, they:

- receive Jobseekers' Allowance (JSA), including those receiving National Insurance credits only
- receive Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- receive Universal Credit, and their take home pay as recorded on their Universal Credit statement (disregarding benefits) is less than £338 a month (learner is sole adult in their benefit claim) or £541 a month (learner has a joint benefit claim with their partner)

- are released on temporary licence and studying outside a prison environment and are not funded through the Offenders' Learning and Skills Service (OLASS).

The college may, at its discretion, fund other learners if all of the following apply:

- The learner received other state benefits and earns either less than 16 times the appropriate age-related rate of the national minimum wage/national living wage a week, or £338 a month (individual claims) or £541 a month (household claims), and
- The learner wants to be employed (or progress into more sustainable employment, if they earn less than 16 times the appropriate age-related rate of the national minimum wage/national living wage a week, or £338 a month (individual claims) or £541 a month (household claims) and the college is satisfied that the learning is directly relevant to their employment prospects and the local labour market needs.

11. Contacts

- Director of Finance
- Director of MIS
- Head of Funding and Planning

12. Responsibility

- It is the responsibility of all staff to adhere to the policy and to advise students and potential students accordingly.
- It is the responsibility of the MIS and Finance teams to publicise and enforce the policy.

13. Conclusion

The adoption of this policy will enable the colleges to fund their courses appropriately in line with government guidance and good business practice, for the overall benefit of student.