



# **FEES POLICY 2020/21**

## **1 INTRODUCTION / OVERVIEW**

This document outlines HRC's approach to setting and operation of fees associated with academic provision for the period 1 August 2020 to 31 July 2021. In preparing this document care has been taken to ensure that the recommendations of the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) for fees as outlined in the Adult Education Budget (AEB) Funding Rules have been given due consideration.

## **2 GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

- 2.1 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. For HE fees, charges will be applicable but will operate in conjunction with the student loan availability which supports learners in funding their education. This will also apply to adult learning for adults aged 19 and over studying a Level 3 qualification or higher who are required to pay fees but will also operate in conjunction with the Student Loans Company (SLC).
- 2.2 The College has a policy of equal opportunities and seeks to ensure that arrangements for fees and charges are consistent with this.
- 2.3 Learners or their sponsors, unless they qualify for exemptions/waivers, are to be charged tuition fees and other fees.
- 2.4 The College must ensure that when a learner starts learning they are aware of fees that they may have to pay, including course fees and other fees during the time spent following the learning aim.
- 2.5 The college must also ensure that all learners are aware of their Fees and Charging Policy; so that if a learner's circumstances change they are informed of the consequences in respect of the fees which may or may not be charged
- 2.6 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.
- 2.7 A Fees Policy will be produced annually and will be considered by the SLT. This will summarise fee levels, concession entitlement and refund policy. Higher rates may be calculated for learners for whom the College does not receive any ESFA or other grant funding as this will essentially represent a full cost delivery. In addition, the College has the discretion to negotiate arrangements with employers for large numbers.
- 2.8 Fee remission will be offered in accordance with government directives and to learners in groups for whom the ESFA offers discretionary fee compensations.
- 2.9 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.

### **3 TUITION FEES**

- 3.1 The College will review the tuition fees annually. For part-time courses the assumed fee income will be a percentage of the National Funding Rate for the learning aim in line with ESFA recommendations.
- 3.2 In determining the appropriate fee, the Senior Leadership Team will consider market conditions and College strategy, ESFA funding regulations as well as the cost of running the course.
- 3.3 Where a course lasts for two or more academic years a tuition fee is charged annually. The fee calculated will be applicable for the duration of the course and indicative fees for future years may be given but these are subject to change each year unless the learner pays upfront for future years.
- 3.4 Learners who fail to complete their ESFA funded programme within the allocated time are no longer eligible for ESFA funding. If the learner wishes to return in order to complete these studies a further charge will be made.
- 3.5 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.
- 3.6 Late joiners will be charged the full tuition fee applicable to the programme followed.

### **4 19+ FULL TIME LEARNERS**

- 4.1 Learners will be charged a standard tuition fee for each year of their course. This fee is inclusive of examination registration.
- 4.2 Additional charges may be made for materials, equipment, uniforms, educational visits and nonattendance at assessment tests or exams.
- 4.3 Learners may be eligible for an Advanced Learner Loan if they are studying at level 3 to 6, and these loans may cover the cost of tuition, so learners do not have to pay upfront. The fees applicable for these learners will be based on a maximum calculated from the Learning Aims Reference Application calculation of funding and will be supported by the availability of the advanced learning loan. <https://www.gov.uk/advanced-learner-loan>
- 4.4 Apprentices cannot be made to contribute financially to the direct cost of learning and will not be charged fees.

### **5 FEE CONCESSIONS**

- 5.1 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.
- 5.2 Where fees are remitted for learners who meet the criteria, the provider should not charge the learners tuition fees, or exam registration.
- 5.3 The categories of learners who are entitled to fee remission are:
  - All 16-18 year old FE learners (the Secretary of State does not expect tuition fees to be charged to full-time or part-time 16-18 year olds)
  - 19-23 year old learners studying their first Full Level 2 qualification
  - 19-23 year old learners studying their first Full Level 3 qualification.
  - 19-23 year old learners working towards their first Full Level 2 who are studying

an approved qualification at Level 1 or below

- Learners studying English and math's learning aims as part of the new suite of English and math's qualifications
- Those learners on universal credit, because they are unemployed and required to undertake skills training up to Level 2, or are receiving Job Seekers Allowance, Employment and Support Allowance and are in a work-related activity group
- Unemployed learners wanting to enter employment and are in receipt of state benefit who are studying up to Level 2, where their income is under £338 per month
- Learners who are on a low income, earning under £17,004 annual gross salary and studying a qualification up to Level 2
- Any other remission categories as advised by the Education & Skills Funding Agency in the funding rules 2020/21

5.4 Learners not in receipt of full fee remission are expected to pay tuition fees.

## **6 LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS AND DISABILITIES (SEND)**

6.1 Learners aged 19-24 years on their start date who have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan in the year will be funded through the ESFA under the 16-18 funding model. As such no fees will be collected for learners in the above category.

6.2 SEND students who over 25 years old are funded through the ESFA under the AEB funding model, and will be expected to pay a fee unless they meet the fee remission criteria.

## **7 OTHER FEES**

7.1 If the ESFA fully funds a learner's programme, the College must not make compulsory charges relating to the direct costs of delivering a learning aim. Direct costs mean administration, registration, assessment, materials or examination costs and can include charges for identification passes, uniforms, tools and materials where the learner cannot achieve their learning aim without them.

7.2 Optional extras may be charged as a fee to the learner and this can be applied to trips and visits that are not a central part of their learning. The College may also charge for items not relating directly to the learning activity. Charges may be made to fully funded learners or learners funded by loans if they want to keep materials used in a learning activity outside of the learning environment e.g. artwork, models, food.

7.3 If learners are directly responsible for the payment of other fees, staff should ensure that learners are made aware of these additional costs.

7.4 Any late entry fees incurred by the College will be recharged to learners, unless the late entry is the fault of the College. Once sums have been paid over to an external body, refunds cannot be made, nor any sums invoiced waived.

7.5 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.

## **8 ADDITIONAL QUALIFICATIONS – FULL-TIME LEARNERS**

If learners wish to enrol on additional qualifications that are not part of their full-time programme, then they will be liable for payment of all fees incurred. The additional qualification must be checked and agreed by the Deputy Principal, Finance and Resources before the learner is enrolled.

## **9 EDUCATIONAL VISITS AND MATERIALS**

- 9.1 Some full-time programmes include field trips and/or residentials which are an integral part of the programme.
- 9.2 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; any deficit resulting from an educational visit will be borne by the organising department.
- 9.3 The cost of materials should generally be additional to the tuition fee.

## **10 INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS (NON-EU)**

- 10.1 International full-time learners (non-EU) will generally hold a visa under Tier 4 (General) Students of the Points-Based Immigration System. The College will have ensured that the procedures laid down by this System have been met (eg the learner must be studying a course of at least NQF Level 3 and will have obtained a standard of English of at least B1 level of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages).
- 10.2 The learner may already have been granted Indefinite Leave to Remain or Limited Leave to Remain by another immigration route (eg as a dependant of an asylum seeker), in which case the Tier 4 rules will not apply and the learner will be free to follow their preferred course of study, subject to the normal learner recruitment and enrolment requirements.
- 10.3 International students attending full-time programmes (at least 540 glh) will pay a standard fee of £6,500 irrespective of the course followed. Any additional tuition on an individual basis may attract an additional charge.
- 10.4 Payment arrangements for overseas students will be in line with standard College fee payment terms.
- 10.5 **International Part-time Learners (non-EU)**
  - 10.5.1 Learners under Tier 4 of the Points-Based Immigration System may only study on courses which involve a minimum of 15 hours per week organised (ie classroom) daytime study, and lead to a qualification of at least NQF Level 3.
  - 10.5.2 However, if the learner already has Indefinite Leave to Remain or Limited Leave to Remain (see above), then they will be free to follow their preferred course of study, subject to the normal learner recruitment requirements. Consideration would need to be given regarding whether or not fees shown below would be payable.

## **11 14-16 YEARS LEARNERS**

The College runs a number of day-release programmes for school pupils in Hertfordshire. The rates are based on the number of glh taught.

### **11.1 Alternative Provision Programme**

Fees are paid by schools, Social Services or Local Authorities for students on the Alternative Provision programme. Payment is expected to be made on receipt of invoice. Pro-rata rates are available for late starters and part-time learners. Leavers will be eligible for full cost to end of year.

### **11.2 Other learners under aged 16 years**

11.2.1 Learners under the age of 16 years who are Electively Home Educated (EHE), who wish to join any course must have permission from their Local Authority to join the College. The College needs to seek confirmation from the ESFA that the learner will be funded before they commence their programme.

11.2.2 Learners who are under 16 years who wish to join any other course that does not meet the above criteria will not be funded therefore liable to pay the full adult fee applicable to the course plus a subsidy to cover any loss of funding.

## **12 HIGHER EDUCATION FEES**

12.1 The basic fee which will be charged has been determined by the College based on full or part-time attendance, and in conjunction with the appropriate validating University where applicable. The standard fee for most courses is £6,165 per year (see website for prices).

12.2 A tuition fee loan up to the full tuition fee amount charged is available from the Student Loans Company. Repayment of the loan will commence once the student has completed the course and is earning over £26,500 per year (undergraduate loan) or £21,000 a year (postgraduate loan).

12.3 A range of financial support is available to help with tuition fees and living costs with a means tested maintenance grant and support will also be available for part-time students.

## **13 PAYMENT OF FEES**

13.1 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.

13.2 Payment of fees may be made by cash, credit or debit card, or cheque.

## **14 INSTALMENT PLANS**

14.1 Payment of fees may be made in instalments when fees due at enrolment exceed the cost of £250.00. An instalment administration fee of £20 is charged for this facility for programmes with fees up to £500. Amounts above £500 will incur an admin fee of 5% of the total instalment figure.

Fee Amount	No. of instalments	Payment of instalments
£250 and over	Max 3	1/3 at enrolment and admin fees remainder in two equal instalments due: 1 November and 1 December
£1,000 and over	Max 3	1/3 at enrolment and admin fees remainder in two equal instalments due: 1 December and 1 March
HE fees – Non-Loans	Max 3	1/3 at the beginning of each term and admin fees (Invoiced each term)

- 14.2 Instalment payments may be made via direct debit, credit card (in person only), or post-dated cheque.
- 14.3 Instalment applications will not be considered unless accompanied with a payment of 1/3 of the cost of the course plus the set-up administration charge of £20.00.
- 14.4 Overseas students are not normally eligible for the instalment plan and any exceptions must be agreed in advance by the Deputy Principal, Finance and Resources.
- 14.5 Where the College is unable to collect any instalment payment on its due date an additional £20.00 charge will be levied to cover the costs of re-collection.
- 14.6 Any other proposed instalment arrangement must be approved by the Finance Department before any commitment is made.

## 15 NON-PAYMENT OF FEES

- 15.1 Continued attendance on a programme of study is dependent upon the learners' payment of their fees.
- 15.2 Where instalment terms have been agreed, but an instalment is not paid by the due date, the full outstanding balance will become immediately payable, together with an additional administration charge to cover the extra collection costs. Learners who default on instalment agreements will not be offered this facility for any subsequent enrolment.
- 15.3 If a learner or their sponsor pays for fees by cheque, and the issuing bank subsequently dishonours this cheque, an administration fee of £25.00 per default will be charged to cover the additional costs of re-collection.
- 15.4 Learners undertaking a two-year programme will not be allowed to progress to the second year of the course where fees relating to the first year remain unpaid.
- 15.5 Where fees remain outstanding on completion of a programme of study, examination and other certificates may not be released and learners will not be entitled to graduate. In addition, learners who complete a programme of study but have fees outstanding will be flagged on the MIS system and will not be allowed to enrol on further programmes of study until the outstanding debt has been cleared.

## 16 REFUND

Refunds of tuition fees will only be given in the following circumstances:

- When the College cancels a course.
- When the College has evaluated that the learner is not suitable for the course and no alternative course is offered.
- At the discretion of the Deputy Principal, Finance and Resources.

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

## 17 FEE RATES

Fees quoted are only valid for the current academic year. Learners commencing courses covering more than one year will be charged their tuition fee annually. The fee calculated will be applicable for the duration of the course and indicative fees for future years may be given but these are subject to change each year unless the learner pays upfront for future years.

Please see 2020/21 Fees Schedule at Appendix 1.

## 18 HE FEES – BURSARIES AND SUPPORT

- 18.1 Fees for new HE students joining the College in September 2020 are detailed in Appendix 2. There are no longer going to be bursaries payable by the college although all students including part time students will be able to apply for a student loan and in some cases to obtain grants.
- 18.2 All students will be able to apply for a Tuition Fee Loan. For those students who choose not to take out a fee loan, upfront payment of fees will be expected.
- 18.3 Students may also be entitled to apply for Maintenance Grants and Maintenance Loans. Parent's Learning Allowance, Childcare Grant, Adult Dependant's Grant and Disabled Student's Allowances may also be available for some students.

### Version Control

Date of document establishment and initial approval	February 2010
Version number	10
Approving body	Board of Governors
Designated owner	Deputy Principal Finance and Resources
Linked policies and procedures	Financial Regulations Fees Procedure
Date of review	July 2020
Date approved by approving body	July 2020
Date of next review	July 2021



## **2020/21 FEES SCHEDULE**

### **Home Full-time FE Learners aged 16 – 18 years**

Full time learners between the ages of 16 – 18 years will not be charged tuition or examination fees (for a first attempt at an examination).

### **Home Full-time FE (infill) Learners aged 19 years plus**

The assumed fee income will be 50% of the National Funding Rate for the learning aim in line with the ESFA recommendations. The fees are outlined in Appendix 1.

### **Part-time Courses aged 19 years plus**

The assumed fee income will be 50% of the National Funding Rate for the learning aim in line with the ESFA recommendations. The fees are outlined in Appendix 1.

### **Other Fees**

Course specific depending on materials and trips to be charged.

### **Resit Fees**

Learners re-sitting a unit or examination will pay a re-sit fee.

- GCE/GCSE – College will pay for first attempt, students to pay for any resits at a cost of £25 per unit.
- BTEC Level 1 Functional Skills written papers – College will pay for first attempt, students to pay for any further resits at a cost of £25 per unit.
- BTEC Level 1 Functional Skills Online exams – College will pay for first two attempts, student to pay for any further resits at a cost of £25 per unit.
- BTEC Level 3 Written exams – College will pay for first attempt, student to pay for any resits at a cost of £40 per unit.
- City & Guilds online exams electrical/catering/construction etc - College will pay for first two attempts, students to pay for any further resits at a cost of £10 per unit.
- Construction Awards online and written exams- College will pay for first two attempts, students to pay for any further resits at a cost of £10 per unit.

The exams department will not make any entries for resits until payment has been made by the student.

### **Online Assessments**

All learners will get two free attempts for online assessment tests. On the third attempt, the learner will be eligible for a resit fee of £20. Payment for online assessments must be made at least 2 days prior to the test.

### **International Full-time Learners (Non-EU)**

Tuition Fee:	£6000
Examination Fee:	£150 (includes centre and board fees)
Total:	£6150

### **International Part-time Learners**

Part-time programmes, £12 per glh plus exam registration fee if applicable.

### **International Higher Education Learners**

HE Programmes, fee per academic year £7,500 including examination fees (Additional charges for support and English language tuition may apply).

### **14-16 Years Learners (Schools Provision)**

Charged based on the guided learning hours for the qualification being delivered

### **14-16 Years Learners (EHE)**

14-16 learners who are electively home educated will not be charged tuition or examination fees (for a first attempt at an examination).

### **Other students under age 16 years**

As per National Base Rate for the qualification quoted in the ESFA Funding Guidance.

### **Instalment Set Up Fee**

£20 per application. Amounts above £500 will be charged at 5% of the total instalment fee.

### **Default Fee**

£20 per unpaid instalment/dishonoured cheque.

### **Higher Education Fees**

Please see website for current fees

### **Full time Programmes £6,165**

The above fees are for new HE students joining the College in September 2020. There are no longer going to be bursaries payable by the college although all students including part time students will be able to apply for a student loan and in some cases to obtain grants.