

Plumpton College

Fee Policy 2016-17

Approved date:

Approving Body: Finance & General Purposes Committee

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Prepared by:

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1 Introduction

1.1. Plumpton Colleges' approach to setting and collecting tuition fees, accommodation fees and associated charges (such as materials, equipment and educational visits) is reviewed on an annual basis.

1.2. The approach of the College to recovering fees is largely dictated by its principal funding bodies.

1.3. Plumpton College is not a business; it is classified as an exempt charity under the 2001 Further and Higher Education Act. However, the College is required to recover fees for many of the programmes that it runs – such as Short courses etc

1.4. Actual fees for 2016-17 are set out in Appendix 1.

2 Objectives

2.1. This policy seeks to ensure that:

- The College has a fees policy that is fair, equitable and clear;
- Tuition fees and associated charges are calculated and applied consistently across the entire curriculum offer of the College;
- Any barriers to participation presented by tuition fees and associated charges are mitigated by providing flexible payment options and/or assisting learners to access appropriate financial support to meet the cost of these;
- The College can respond flexibly to market forces and government policy, including fee guidance issued by funding bodies; the Skills Funding Agency (SFA), the Education Funding Agency (EFA) and the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE);
- The College generates a proportion of overall income from non-publicly funded sources;
- The College develops appropriate and effective targets relating to fee income generation, and reviews performance against these regularly, and in relation to sector benchmarks.

3 General Principles

3.1. The College has a Single Equality Scheme and seeks to ensure that arrangements for fees and charges are consistent with this.

3.2. Learners or their sponsors, unless they qualify for exemptions/waivers, are to be charged:

- a tuition fee;
- a materials charge (specific to individual courses);
- external fees (awarding body, examination, registration).
- Facility fee – for all our full time FE students (excluding students in Floristry or at our sites in Stanmer, Netherfield and Green Oak). This is paid annually at enrolment. This fee assists in providing non-educational facilities which include security, sports amenities, membership of the Sports and Social Club, minibuses, Wi Fi access, television room, on-site medical support and free car parking subject to availability.

Residential Fees will also be charged where a student has a confirmed residential place or is required to complete Routines as part of their course (please see below section 10 for Residential fees policy). A supplementary amount will be added to the facility fee for residential students to cover the additional facilities offered to these students.

3.3. Classroom based learners are ultimately responsible for ensuring that their fees are paid, even where a third party (e.g. an employer) intends to pay on their behalf.

3.4. Where learning is predominantly delivered in the workplace (including all Apprenticeships) employers are ultimately responsible for ensuring fees are paid in accordance with the Adult Education Funding requirements. A learner cannot pay their own fees unless they are self-employed and are, therefore, both learner and employer.

3.5. All fees are due at enrolment and continuing attendance on a course or programme of study is dependent on the payment of all fees due. Appendix 1 sets out the fees payable for subsidised courses. Instalment arrangements are available provided that certain criteria are met.

3.6. No tuition fees are payable by 16–18 year old FE learners, including those on part time programmes, or by adult learners who meet the specified criteria in Appendix 1.

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

3.8. In order for a learner to be eligible for Government funding for their learning programme the learner must have the legal right to be resident in the UK at the start of their programme. There should also be a reasonable likelihood that the learner will be able to complete their programme of study.

3.9. A learner's status at enrolment (e.g. employed, in receipt of eligible benefit) applies throughout the year on that learning aim.

3.10. Where a learner has previously taken an examination with Plumpton College, resit examination fees will apply. These examination fees are set by the individual awarding bodies and are payable in advance of the re-sit.

3.11. Other charges imposed by awarding organizations (re-marking, requests for scripts) will be passed on to all learners.

4 Further Education Course Fees: 16 – 18 Learners

4.1. Although the College is prohibited from charging 16-18 year old learners tuition fees in respect of EFA funded further education courses, the following costs will be passed on to these learners:

- The cost of any equipment necessary to undertake their programme of study if this equipment will remain the property of the learner once the course has been completed; in most cases the student will be requested to purchase these items themselves prior to the start of the course and as such the cost of these items will be met by the student at the time of purchase.
- The cost of any materials on practical courses such as Floristry will be invoiced in the case of 16-18 learners. In the instance where financial assistance can be provided by the college the specified amount will be credited against any invoice produced for payment;
- The cost of any trips or visits associated with the programme of study;
- Facility fee – for all our full time FE students (excluding students in Floristry or at our sites in Stanmer and Netherfield). This is paid annually at enrolment. This fee assists in providing non-educational facilities which include security, sports amenities, membership of the Sports and Social Club, minibuses, Wi Fi access, television room, on-site medical support and free car parking subject to availability.
- The cost of any examination re-sits, where appropriate.

5 Further Education Course Fees: Other Learners

5.1. Tuition fees are payable annually. For example a fee will be payable for each year of a two year course.

5.2 Where the College splits a 2 year course into two 1 year courses;

- where year 2 is funded from a student loan, the loan becomes payable.

- other students will continue to benefit from any entitlements applied in the first year for reduced fees. This benefit does not continue beyond year 2.

5.3. Continuing learners who are over 18 and began a learning aim before the age of 19 will normally have their fees waived. Any start of a new learning aim, that is not part of a programme, is subject to fees.

5.4 The College has a discretionary fund for fee remission. Student's applications are considered on an individual basis by the College's Student Finance Officer.

6 Bespoke Employer Courses

6.1. Payment for such courses is due upon receipt of invoice

6.2. Bookings may be cancelled or transferred with no penalty if notification is received more than 15 working days prior to the start date of the course. If less than 15 working days' notice is given, you will be charged the full fee for the course. An administration fee of 50% will be charged if the course is cancelled after email confirmation of dates has been received.

7 Higher Education Course Fees

7.1. Where the College offers degree level courses accredited by a university, for example the University of Brighton, the Colleges' fee policy will apply.

7.2. The College offers higher education learners the facility to pay by instalments, although many learners elect to apply for a student loan to cover their fees.

8 International Fees

8.1. All international students (from outside of the EU/EEA) will be expected to pay their fee in full before the commencement of the course.

8.2. Where students fail to obtain a visa, please see paragraph 11.2 below.

9. Advanced Learner Loans

9.1 Advanced Learner Loans will be available for learners:

- aged 19 and over and UK resident;
- studying at a Skills Funding Agency approved provider in England;
- studying at Level 3 and above:
 1. QAA Access to HE Diploma courses
 2. QCF Level 3 and 4 certificates and diplomas

- Note that learners aged 19-23 may be able to access fully funded provision i.e. not required to take out a loan under certain circumstances including that the course is their first full level 3 qualification.

9.2 Full details of the access to these loans and also the accompanying bursary are available on request and also within the College Bursary policy, further information is available from Student Services.

10. Residential Fees

10.1 The charges for residence are determined annually by the corporation for the duration of the ensuing academic year and are payable either termly in advance, set up for payment by Direct Debit or paid in full. This will ordinarily be dealt with at the enrolment session at the beginning of term.

10.2 Residents are also required to pay £150 room deposit to act as security for the room and to cover any damage or losses associated with the residential student. Students will not be permitted to move in until the room deposit has been paid.

10.3 Charges cover the provision of heating, lighting and 3 meals a day and evening snack from the college canteen. Meals from the canteen may not be exchanged for food from the college snack bar.

10.4 No refund will be made in respect of temporary absence from a room due to sickness or for periods of work experience undertaken during term dates or during private study weeks.

10.5 No refund will be given for meals not taken.

10.6 Students will not be allowed to return to College for a new term unless any outstanding invoices have been paid or arrangements are in place to pay by agreement with the Director of Finance and Administration.

10.7 Should a student have difficulty in meeting the requirements for payment of charges he/she should contact the Director of Finance or the Student Services Manager without delay as College Regulations impose penalties where students owe money to the college.

10.8 In order to maintain Residential Fees at levels at which students can afford, the College aims to operate on the basis of full occupancy for the academic year. Acceptance of a place in Plumpton College accommodation is on the basis that students/parents commit to paying the full Residential Fees on a rolling two months basis. This means that should you wish to leave residency before the end of the academic year you are responsible for paying residential fees for two months following the date of Notice to leave. The only exceptions to this are:

- a. Where a student is permanently excluded from the College Residencies on disciplinary grounds residential fees will cease.
- b. Where the College is able to re allocate the accommodation a pro-rata amount will be charged based on the move-out/move in date.

11 Payments of Fees and Instalments

11.1. All fees become payable on the completion of an enrolment form either by the learner or sponsor unless the learner is entitled to full fee remission. Payment of fees may be made by cash, credit or debit card, or by BACS. In the case of instalments a Direct Debit is required and will be completed at enrolment.

11.2. Administration fees are applied to fees as follows:

- All home students fees will be deemed to include a non-refundable administration fee of £50 unless due to College cancellation;
- All overseas students' fees will be deemed to include a non-refundable administration fee of £2,100. This will be deducted from any refund where a student is unsuccessful in obtaining a visa;
- Fees for learners who transfer from one course to another will not be subject to an additional administration fee.

11.3. Where the total fee is less than £300 learners must pay in full at the time of enrolment

11.4. Where the total fee is £300 or more, and the course is more than 12 weeks in duration, learners can pay a 25% deposit followed by a maximum of three equal monthly instalments, preferably payable by Direct Debit. Instalments may span academic years, depending on the start date of the course. Where the total fee is £1,000 or more and the course lasts an academic year learners can pay a 15% deposit followed by a maximum 6 monthly instalments, preferably by Direct Debit.

12 Unpaid Fees

12.1. The College will use appropriate debt recovery procedures where learners breach the terms of their instalment agreement, and may exclude such learners from the College.

12.2. 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, and learners who complete a programme of study but have fees outstanding will not be allowed to enrol on further programmes of study until the outstanding debt has been cleared. These learners will also not be invited to the annual Awards Ceremony.

12.3 Students remain liable for the fees in the event of withdrawal of a course funded by the Student Loans Company.

13 Fee Refunds (General)

13.1. The college operates a no refund policy. Fee refunds or waivers will only be approved where the College has cancelled a course (or very significantly altered start dates and/or location).

13.2. If a learner wishes to withdraw from a course prior to its commencement, and informs the College in writing or by email at least 10 working days before the start date, a refund will normally be given, less an administration fee of £50.

14 Fee Refunds (FE)

14.1. The number of attendances a learner actually attends has no bearing on the refund policy above.

14.2. The full fee for a course is payable even if the learner decides not to complete the course.

14.3 A refund of the Facility Fee will only be given if the student withdraws within 4 weeks from the start date of the course. This will be subject to the £50 administration fee.

15 Fee Refunds (HE)

15.1. Where a learner elects to pay fees via a HE student loan, the Student Loans Company (SLC) will make payments to college per term, or part term attended, as follows: term one (25%), term two (25%) and term three (50%). Any remaining fees not covered by the loan therefore will be charged to the student accordingly.

15.2. Where a learner is paying their own fees, or fees are paid by a sponsor, in the event of a withdrawal refunds are payable in line with College policy and this is typically on a pro-rata basis of attendance.

16 Fee Refunds (Short Courses)

16.1. It is College policy that NO REFUNDS are made after the commencement of the course, except in extenuating circumstances. This is at the discretion of the Principal. Bookings may be cancelled or transferred with no penalty if notification is received more than 10 working days prior to the start date of the course. If less than 10 working days' notice is given, you will be charged the full fee for the course.

17 Deferrals

17.1. Where a learner is obliged to withdraw from a course it may be possible to defer fees, at the discretion of the Principal, for up to 12 months. No further deferral will be granted and the fees will be forfeit after the specified period.

18 Interpretation of the Policy

18.1. The College recognises that there may be exceptional circumstances in which a certain level of discretion may need to be exercised.

18.2. Agreement from the Principal and Finance Director are required to apply the discretion to waive or reduce deposits payable under instalment arrangements having regard to the personal circumstances of individual learners. However, waivers and reductions will not be given to learners with previous poor payment history.

18.3. This policy sets out the minimum tuition fee to be charged for different aspects of the College curriculum offer. Where appropriate, a higher tuition fee can be charged at the discretion of the College.