



PLUMPTON

COLLEGE

GROUP

Finance Handbook

Fees Policy

SMT Assigned Owner	Finance Director
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Approved by	Corporation
Date of Approval	July 2020
Date of minor amendments approved by SMT	N/A
Frequency of review	Annual
Date of next review	April 2021

The SMT is delegated to approve minor changes to the policy in response to legal changes and best practice.

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1. Policy context

- 1.1 This policy is the reference source for all fees and charges, payment arrangements and remission rules to ensure a consistent approach and clear guidance across the college. Extracts from this document may be used as guides for students and college staff.
- 1.2 Tuition fees and remission arrangements are determined with reference to either or both of the student age and the course characteristics, in line with Government policy in force at the time. The policy applies to home students eligible for funding by the Education and Skills Funding Agency; those defined as being ordinarily resident for the last 3 years in the UK, or an EU or EEA country. All other students fall within the international students guidance. Students and their courses are normally classified into one of the following groups, which are then described in further detail in the following sections:
- Further Education 16-18 year old students, 19-24 year old students with an EHCP and under 16 year old electively home educated students
 - Further Education 19 year old or older students up to level 2
 - Further Education 19 to 23 year old students (excluding English and Maths)
 - Further Education 24+ year old students
 - Apprenticeships
 - Higher Education
 - International students
 - Full cost courses
- 1.3 Pound plus refers to how the College maximises the value of public investment. The College raises income from fees and charges, products, lettings, sponsorship and contributions in kind. Additionally it seeks continuous improvement of academic and support services and a greater social impact on the health, wellbeing and employability of the wider community.
- 1.4 The fees policy is approved by Corporation on an annual basis in accordance with the Articles of Government and sets out the general framework under which the College operates its management of fees.
- 1.5 The Principal, as Accounting Officer, is responsible for the fees of the College. The Finance Director is responsible for updating the fees policy and considering applications for fee waivers or refunds.
- 1.6 The College recognises that there may be exceptional circumstances in which a certain level of discretion may need to be exercised. Agreement from the Principal or Finance Director are required to apply the discretion to agree payment plans, waive, reduce or refund fees.

2. Government funding

2.1 The level of government contribution is set out in the table below as per the ESFA funded adult education budget funding and performance management rules 2020 to 2021.

- 2.2 For funding purposes, government define a student as unemployed if one or more of the following apply, they:
- receive Jobseekers Allowance (JSA), including National Insurance Credits only
 - receive Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
 - receive Universal Credit, and their earned income from employment (disregarding benefits) is less than £338 a month (student is sole adult in their benefit claim) or £541 a month (student has a joint benefit claim with their partner)
 - are released on temporary licence, studying outside a prison environment, and not funded by the Ministry of Justice.

Provision	19-23 year olds	24+ year olds unemployed	24+ year olds other
English and maths, up to an including level 2 (must be delivered as part of legal entitlement)	Fully Funded*	Fully Funded*	Fully Funded*
Level 2 (excluding English and maths) (First full level 2 must be delivered as part of the legal entitlement)	Fully Funded* (first and full)	Fully Funded	Co-Funded+
Learning to progress to Level 2	Fully Funded^ (up to and including level 1)	Fully Funded	Co-Funded+
Level 3 (First full level 3 must be delivered as part of the legal entitlement)	Fully Funded* (first and full)	Loan-Funded	Loan-Funded
	Loan-Funded** (previously achieved full level 3 or above)		
Traineeship#	Fully Funded (Including 16 to 24 year olds##)	N/A	N/A
Learning aims up to and including level 2, where the student has already achieved a first full level 2, or above	Co-Funded+	Fully Funded	Co-Funded+
	Fully Funded - unemployed		
Learning aims up to and including level 2, where the student has not achieved a first full level 2, or above	N/A	Fully Funded	Co-Funded+

*Must be delivered as one of the English and maths, and/or first full level 2 or first full level 3 qualifications required as part of the legal entitlements.

^Must be delivered as entry or level one provision from local flexibility.

Excludes flexible element where funding depends on age and level.

16- to 18-year-old learners must be eligible under the ESFA's young people's residency requirements.

** Availability of loans at level 3 does not replace the legal entitlement to full funding for learners aged 19 to 23 undertaking their first full level 3.

+ Low wage flexibility may apply, refer to AEB funding rules paragraph 159.

3. Further Education 16-18 students, 19-24 students with an EHCP, under 16 home educated

- 3.1 Students aged 16, 17, or 18 years on 31 August are eligible for funding and do not pay tuition fees.
- 3.2 Students aged 19-24 and have an Education, Health & Care Plan and whom the relevant Local Authority has agreed to fund, do not pay tuition fees.
- 3.3 The College is unable to enrol students who are under 16 years of age on 31 August except those enrolled on the designated programmes for 14 and 15 year olds and who count to the agreed College 14-16 Electively Home Educated funding target or unless specific arrangements have been made with the Local Authority, School or Academy to pay in full all fees due.
- 3.4 The College will be unable to obtain funding for any students who are enrolled full time with another funded provider/School and who may wish to follow part of their programme at a Further Education institution during school hours. In such circumstances, whatever the age of the student, this provision should be treated as collaborative or link provision, and the School/Academy/Partner provider is expected to meet the full costs of this provision.
- 3.6 A range of professional, evening and Higher Education courses are specifically targeted at adult students and the College will not normally be able to enrol 16-18 students onto these courses. In addition, professional and regulatory legislation may preclude under 18s accessing particular courses.

4. Further Education 19 or older students up to level 2

- 4.1 Students aged 19 or older are normally charged tuition and exam fees and may also have other fees and charges where applicable.
- 4.2 Some 19 year old students on a course with an eligible learning aim up to Level 2 are exempt from tuition fees, but will still need to pay other fees and charges, if they fall into one of the fee remission categories:
- Students defined by Government as unemployed; see section 2.2.
 - Students studying Entry or Level 1 aims where a student has an entitlement to a full Level 2 qualification.
 - Students studying Functional Skills in English or Mathematics at a level above that at which they have been assessed (entry Level, Level 1 and Level 2). If a student is studying other courses then they will normally be charged separately for these.
- 4.3 Most courses are delivered over one academic year. Where a student is continuing on a funded course that runs over more than one academic year (e.g. those on the second year of a course which they started in the previous year) will continue to receive the fee remission as established in the preceding year even if their circumstances have since changed.

5. Further Education 19-23 students (excluding English and maths)

- 5.1 Students aged 19-23, including students who are employed, are fully funded if the learning aim they enrol on is:
- Qualifications defined within the legal entitlement that are a students;
 - first full level 2
 - first full level 3
- Provision up to and including;
- level 1 to support progression to a first full level 2
 - level 2 for those who already have a full level 2 if they are unemployed

- 5.2 Provision will be co-funded up to and including level 2, for students who have already achieved a full level 2 or above, who are not unemployed.
- 5.3 Students who have achieved a Level 3/Level 4 course in the past, are enrolling on designated Level 3 or above course do not qualify for Government funding. Instead, these students will in most cases be able to apply for an advanced student loan, which are paid directly to the College. Advanced student loans will only be available for those courses listed by the College and on the approved list of ESFA eligible qualifications. Students will receive a learning and funding letter from the College confirming course eligibility and maximum value before they apply for the advanced student loan.
- 5.4 The advanced student loan value will cover tuition and exam fees but the student must pay any other fees and charges where applicable.
- 5.5 If a student is ineligible or chooses not to take up the advanced student loan, the student must pay tuition and exam fees and may also have other fees and charges where applicable.
- 5.6 If a student has paid fees using the advanced student loan and subsequently withdraws from the course, advanced student loan support will cease and the student will remain liable for the balance of the remaining fees.
- 5.7 If a student is a direct entry to a later year of study, they will be charged a proportion of fees based upon the balance of teaching, learning and assessment for that year of study.

6. Further Education 24+ students

- 6.1 Students aged 24 or older will not normally qualify for Government funding. Instead, these students will in most cases be able to apply for an advanced student loan, which are paid directly to the College. Advanced student loans will only be available for those courses listed by the College and on the approved list of ESFA eligible qualifications. Students will receive a learning and funding letter from the College confirming course eligibility and maximum value before they apply for the advanced student loan.
- 6.2 The advanced student loan value will cover tuition and exam fees but the student must pay any other fees and charges where applicable.
- 6.3 If a student is ineligible or chooses not to take up the advanced student loan, the student must pay tuition and exam fees and may also have other fees and charges where applicable.
- 6.4 If a student has paid fees using the advanced student loan and subsequently withdraws from the course, advanced student loan support will cease and the student will remain liable for the balance of the remaining fees.
- 6.5 If a student is a direct entry to a later year of study, they will be charged a proportion of fees based upon the balance of teaching, learning and assessment for that year of study.

7. Apprenticeships

- 7.1 Apprentices 16-18 or 19-24 with an EHCP are fully funded for non-levy employers with fewer than 50 employees.
- 7.2 Co-investment fees are required for other apprentices with non-levy employers. Co-investment fees will be based upon government policy at that time. The fee contribution must be cash and not an 'in kind' arrangement.

- 7.3 Levy employers total cost of an apprenticeship can be set at any level up to the ESFA funding caps and will be negotiated with the employer according to the individual requirements of each apprentice.

8. Higher Education

- 8.1 The Office for Students defines Higher Education courses in terms of schedule 6 of the Education Reform Act 1988. This includes Higher and Degree apprentices where the study involved at least one element at level 4 or higher.
- 8.2 The fee which applies to each course is set out in the College prospectus or available on the College website.
- 8.3 Part time study and resits of modules will be calculated based on the number of credits.
- 8.4 The College offers Higher Education students the facility to pay by instalments, although many students elect to apply for an advanced student loan to cover their fees.

9. International students

- 9.1 International students covers all students who do not qualify for home student status eligible for funding by the Education and Skills Funding Agency as defined in section 1.2. The College is required to confirm students' status prior to the start of their course, if insufficient evidence of eligibility is provided then the student will be liable for the international fee rate.

10. Full cost courses

- 10.1 Some training programmes and courses are run by the College with no external funding and therefore a commercial rate must be charged either to participating students or a sponsoring organisation. Fees are either paid by students at enrolment or by the organisation in advance.
- 10.2 No remission applies to full cost courses and advanced student loans cannot be obtained for such courses.
- 10.3 The pricing structure differs as bespoke solutions are often provided based on contract negotiations with employers or organisations based on a per student or per group costing methodology.

11. Transfers

- 11.1 Where a student transfers from a course the College has closed to an alternative high cost course, no additional charge will be made.
- 11.2 Where a student transfers to a same fee course, no additional charge will be made.
- 11.3 Where a student decides to transfer to a higher fee course, the student will pay the difference in fees. This will be subject to an administration fee.
- 11.4 Where a student decides to transfer to a lower fee course, then a partial refund may be made. This will be subject to an administration fee.

12. Fees and charges

- 12.1 The College will charge where appropriate for trips, clothing, personal protective equipment and materials should they wish additional practice or to retain them for personal use outside of the course and are not an integral part of their study programme.

- 12.2 Exam fees include assessment, examination and registration. The College will charge exam fees in circumstances where the required attendance or completion of work has not been achieved, or the student fails without good reason to sit the exam for which the institution has paid. Charges may also be levied where a student re-sits an exam resulting from an initial exam failure or where a student re-sits with the aim of achieving an improvement in grade.
- 12.3 A facility fee is payable in advanced for all our full time Further Education students including full time electively home educated students. Paid annually at enrolment, this fee assists in providing non-educational facilities, which include security, sports amenities, membership of the sports and social clubs, minibuses, Wi Fi access, television room, on-site medical support and free car parking subject to availability.
- 12.4 A transport fee is payable in advanced for use of College busses are charged on a half-termly basis on a 1, 2, 3 or 4-5 days per week basis. No refunds will be made for transport fees after the start of a half-term.
- 12.5 Without payment of fees and charges, enrolment cannot take place unless alternative arrangements have been agreed in advance by the Finance Director.
- 12.6 The College reserves the right to offer student and staff discounts. All discounts require the approval of the Principal or Finance Director.

13. Residential fees

- 13.1 Residential fees are reviewed annually and cover the provision of accommodation, heating, lighting and meals; payable either in full, in 6 monthly instalments or linked to advanced student loan payment dates.
- 13.2 Residents are required to pay an initial deposit to secure a room. The deposit is offset against the residential fees and includes a refundable fee to act as security for the room and to cover any damage or losses associated with the residential student.
- 13.3 No refund will be made in respect of temporary absence from a room or for meals not taken. Meals from the dining room may not be exchanged for food from the College snack bars.
- 13.4 Should a student have difficulty in meeting the requirements for payment of charges they should contact the Student Services Manager without delay.
- 13.5 Students will not be allowed to return for a new term unless any outstanding invoices have been paid or arrangements are in place to pay by agreement with the Finance Director.
- 13.6 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 College accommodation is on the basis that should you wish to leave residency before the end of the academic year you are responsible for paying residential fees for 6 chargeable weeks following the College receiving written notification.
- 13.7 Students who are excluded from residency due to poor conduct will be charged a further 6 weeks residential fees from the date at which they are excluded.

14. Payment

- 14.1 A student will not be able to enrol upon or continue a programme of study without either:
- Providing evidence of eligibility for remission of tuition fees
 - Paying the full fee at the point of enrolment
 - Paying a deposit and entering into a payment plan with the College

- Demonstrating evidence of application for an advanced student loan for the full amount of the fees
- Demonstrating evidence of application for an advanced student loan for part of the fees and payment of the balance in full or by entering into a payment plan with the College

- 14.2 Payment can be made by debit card, credit card (except American Express) or bank transfer. Fees must be paid at or prior to enrolment unless alternative arrangements have been agreed in advance by the Finance Director.
- 14.3 Where a student's fees are to be met by a third party (such as their employer) in the absence of payment the student remains liable for all fees and charges.
- 14.5 If a student fails to pay two consecutive instalments, their payment plan will be cancelled and the full amount outstanding will become due and payable immediately.
- 14.6 If a student withdraws or is suspended from the course the tuition fee liability is determined by the date and all outstanding fees will become due and payable immediately.
- 25% from the first day of the first term
 - 50% from the first day of the second term
 - 75% from the first day of the third term
- 14.7 Students with outstanding fees due to the College will not be allowed to enrol onto a new course or continue onto a further year of study until the debt has been paid in full or a payment plan agreed with the Finance Director.
- 14.8 Unpaid fees may be referred to a solicitor or debt collection agency for recovery and any additional costs incurred will be payable by the student.

15. Financial support for students

- 15.1 To assist students who would otherwise suffer financial hardship in paying their fees, the Finance Director may give approval to pay fees in instalments. A student's ability to pay and previous payment history with the College may be taken into account.
- 15.2 A range of bursaries and other financial support is available to students. Details of the support available can be found in the bursaries policy, on the College website, or from the Bursaries Officer bursaries@plumpton.ac.uk

16. Refunds and compensation

- 16.1 If a full time student withdraws before the start date of the course the student will be entitled to a full refund of fees, providing they have informed the College in writing or by email at least 10 working days before the course start date. This will be subject to an administration fee.
- 16.4 Fees paid via the Student Loans Company and Student Finance England cease at withdrawal any fees outstanding will be charged to the student directly for full payment.
- 16.5 Fees are refundable in full if the College should close a class or the attendance of the applicant is made impossible or inappropriate by some action by the College.
- 16.6 Fees will not be refunded where course closure is temporary due to fire, flood or other force majeure, adverse weather conditions or industrial action.
- 16.7 No refunds will be made for any other fees and charges.

- 16.8 Exceptional circumstances may be considered by the Principal or Finance Director on a case by case basis.
- 16.9 In the event of a student protection plan being triggered the College will fund reasonable travel costs as a result of relocation of provision; provisions for ongoing bursary support for those students in receipt of a bursary or similar funding who continue their studies on alternative programmes ; compensation for additional tuition fees and maintenance costs where students have to transfer programme or provider which resulted in an impact on the time required to complete the qualification.