

FEES POLICY

2025/26

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Policy Owner: Board
Date Approved: 13 March 2025
Next Review: March 2026
Responsibility for Review: Vice Principal Corporate Services
Policy Review Frequency: Annual

Applicable to staff: Yes
 Applicable to students: Yes
 Publish on College website: Yes

Consultation:

Undertaken with:	Yes/No:	Date:
Board/Committee	Board Resources	13 March 2025 6 February 2025
ELT	Via Fees & Charges Group	5 February 2025
SLT		
Unions		
Students		
Employees		
Employers/Stakeholders		

Any Associated Documentation, for Reference:

Financial Regulations
 Admissions Policy

ELT SIGN-OFF: Iain Stott – Vice Principal Corporate Services -



FEES POLICY 2025/26

1. Policy Statement

The College's policy is to optimise income from fees and charges by adopting a market-driven approach to setting fee and charges levels, but also wherever possible to take account of the individual's ability to pay. The policy is a key contributor in being:

- Flexible, customer service driven and responsive to change.
- Able to grow income through increased business development and commercial activity.

The College sets fees in respect of all its courses and chargeable provision. Some fees are determined outside the College's control (for example the University of Central Lancashire).

Fees are reviewed on an annual basis.

In those areas where the College has discretion to determine fee levels, the Corporation Board has a responsibility to approve the Policy that will guide the setting of fees and will have due regard to:

- The College's compliance with funding agency priorities and remittance rules, ensuring that the Fees Policy does not disadvantage any individual or group.
- Financial viability and market forces

In recent years, there has been a significant Government shift in both further and higher education policy that requires students and employers to make an increased contribution towards the cost of course provision. The College adopts the principles set out in the DfE Financial Memorandum, which outlines the funds available for adult further education and provided instructions on how money should be spent.

2. Fee Policy Statement

The College will set fees for all its course provision and charge fees where applicable.

In determining fee levels, the College will operate legally and within national published guidelines where these exist, in addition to the Corporation Board principles outlined above.

For courses of study, the College will operate a single fee policy, ie a combined course and examination fee. Additional, re-sit or late entry examination fees will be charged separately. Residential costs associated with trips or events and other fees will also be charged separately.

DfE funded students will not be charged for equipment required for their course. However, they are able to purchase additional resources that will remain the property of the student, and can be used outside the learning environment. These may include (but are not restricted to) kits and books. Costs of trips will also be charged separately. Further information will be provided on the course information leaflets and at enrolment.

The College will operate procedures for remitting, waiving or reducing fees for certain students in appropriate cases, where evidenced, and in accordance with guidance from the relevant funding body.

All staff must comply with this guidance. Staff with responsibility for enrolling students or providing initial advice and guidance are directed towards the more detailed provisions set out in the 2025/26 Fees and Charges Schedule, 2025/26 Enrolment Guidance and any subsequent updates. Any special offer discounts must be agreed in advance of the offer by the chair of the Fees & Charges Group (Vice Principal Corporate Services).

3. Responsibilities

The College undertakes to:

Notify students (and their sponsors/employers where appropriate) promptly of any fees due and of the arrangements for payment. Students will be notified of fee levels prior to enrolment.

Operate procedures to ensure that the fees policy is operated fairly and consistently across the institution.

Operate procedures to ensure the prompt collection of fees.

The College expects students (and their sponsors/employers as appropriate) to:

Pay any fees due promptly. The College will take all necessary steps to ensure the payment of fees is met and a range of the following sanctions will be applied to those who default:

- Withdrawal of access to College IT resources
- Suspension and Exclusion
- Refusal to re-enrol until outstanding debts are paid

The College reserves the right to refer unpaid accounts to external agencies to pursue payment and, in addition, the College may exclude debtors from the College and/or seek recovery through the courts.

4. Adult Skills Funding Agency Funded Provision – Fee rates for 2025/26

Fees will be based on the Education & Skills Funding Agency (DfE) fee assumption for 2025/26. Adult students who are required to pay a fee (co-funded students) will be charged 50% of the non-weighted funding rate as published, for 2025/26, in the Learner Aims Record Service.

The overall College fee income target is calculated on this assumption; however individual courses may be charged a higher or lower rate, depending on market conditions. The variation of a fee from the agreed formula would be on the production of a business case presented to the Fees & Charges Group and will be subject to ratification by the Executive Leadership Team (ELT).

Fees for adult students will be remitted in line with the DfE guidance for those who are unemployed and/or earning below the earnings threshold of £25,000.

5. Adult Skills Funding – Tailored Learning

Tailored learning replaces both Community Learning and non-regulated provision and is aimed at students furthest from employment. The College will remit fees for students who are unemployed and/or earning below the earnings threshold of £25,000, as outlined in the Adult Skills Funding Guidance. Students who do not meet the ASF remission criteria will be charge a fee for Tailored Learning at a rate of £3.50 an hour per student.

Where the Tailored Learning provides a direct progression route to further education and training, at the College, funded through the Adult Skills Fund, the fee charged for the Tailored learning will be deducted from the co-funded fee charged against the ASF course.

Tailored Learning qualification aims categorised as Essential Skills at levels pre-entry, Entry, level 1 and level 2 in English, ESOL, Essential Digital Skills and Maths will not be charged.

6. Free Courses for Jobs Offer

The Level 3 Free Courses for Jobs Offer (previously known as the National Skills Fund) has been established to support the development of new skills for adult students and improve the prospects of eligible adults in the labour market. As such, no fees are charged for Level 3 Free Courses for Jobs Offer where students are eligible for funding. In 2025/26, the DfE have removed the prior attainment eligibility criteria, meaning student who are either unemployed or earning below the threshold of £25,000 can study multiple courses, from the Level 3 Free Courses for Job Offer, consecutively.

7. Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL)/Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

Where it is identified that a student has evidence of APL or RPL at the point enrolment, the associated co-funded fee for Adult Skills Funded or Tailored Learning will be reduced by the corresponding percentage deduction that the funding is reduced by.

8. Higher Education Courses

The fees structures for full time and part time HE courses will be determined by the fee limits prescribed by the Government. HE course fees will be published on the College website and Student Loan Company Portal, as required by Office for Students (OfS)

The College has been approved to offer specific modules through the modular acceleration programme (MAP). The modular acceleration programme is a 2-year pilot to fund tuition fees for students who study specific modules of higher technical qualifications (HTQ), such as a Higher National Certificate (HNC) at level 4. Students do not need to pay back any tuition fees. However, the funding accessed for MAP will reduce the amount remaining in a future Lifelong Learning Entitlement account. This is called the 'residual entitlement'.

The Lifelong Learning Entitlement will replace the current Student Loan system and is expected to expand to cover levels 4, 5, and 6 over the next two years.

9. Fees for Non-UK Students

Fees for non-UK students (where ineligible for any agency funding) are to be based on the weighted funded rates, but this may be varied based on factors such as market rates, competitor rates and agency fees. Students from EU and EEA countries are no longer eligible for agency funding.

10. Fees for Advanced Learner Loans

Students studying eligible DfE provision at Level 3, 4, 5 and 6 have the option of paying for their fees with an Advanced Learner Loan. The College will set the loan amount in accordance with the '*2025/26 DfE Funding Rules*' and '*2025/26 Learner Loans Facility Conditions*'. The Advanced Learner Loan rates for all eligible qualifications are published on the Learning Aims Record Service.

11. Fees for Non-Agency Funded Learning (including commercial)

Fees for non-agency funded learning (including all commercial fees) will reflect current market rates and anticipated group sizes. Breakeven student/delegate numbers will be set for each course/programme. Course/programmes will only go ahead once this is reached. Clear procedures for collecting fees, the timing of fees and for refunds are set.

All non-agency costings must be approved in line with procedures that ensure that provision is viable.

12. Apprenticeship Fees

The Apprenticeship Levy was introduced in April 2017. From 2020/21 Non-levy employers have been required to reserve their funding directly through their Digital Account, prior to students starting their Apprenticeship. Levy-paying employers have continued to record their payments to the College in their Digital Account. Where there are insufficient funds in an employer Digital Account, employers will be required to pay the outstanding balance for that month.

The College will collect and record payment of fees from non-levy employers, for the percentage they are required to contribute, as outlined in the '*DfE Apprenticeship Technical Funding Guide*' at the rate advised by the DfE.

The College sets the cost of apprenticeships, based on the Apprenticeship Price Matrix that considers costs and overheads. This determines the base price. The price charged to employers is negotiated, based on prior learning and skills of the individual student, as required in the DfE funding rules.

The College will ensure that apprenticeship provision is viable whilst providing high quality training for employers throughout the North West. The cost of apprentices who are employees of the College must only include direct costs.

End Point Assessment (EPA) resit fees will be charged in line with the relevant Apprenticeship Training Services Agreement and Addendum that is agreed with each employer for each apprentice.

13. Devolution of Adult Skills

In 2019/20, the DfE devolved a proportion of the Adult Skills budget function to specific combined authorities. Devolved authorities are responsible for their own funding rules, which apply to providers in receipt of devolved Adult Skills funding, for delivery to residents in their areas. The College is not in receipt of devolved Adult Skills funding and is still funded through national DfE Adult Skills funding. Therefore, the College is unable to accept ASF funded students from devolved areas (e.g., Liverpool City Region and Greater Manchester).

Any students wanting to enrol from a devolved area, in 2025/26, will be charged a fee equivalent to the weighted funded rate, as published in the Learner Aims Record Service. If the qualification and student are eligible for an Advanced Learner Loan, they can access these, even if they are from a devolved area, as loans are not subject to devolution.