



Policy/Procedure/Guideline Review

| | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Policy/Procedure/Guideline: | Fees Policy 2021/22 |
| Senior Manager Responsible: | Deputy Principal (Finance & Resources) |
| Author: | Assistant Principal - Performance and Planning |
| Approved By: | Board of Corporation |
| Date Approved: | 5 July 2021 |
| Next Review Date: | 5 July 2022 |
| Publication: | Nelson and Colne College Group Staff Hub Nelson and Colne College Group Website Nelson and Colne College Website Lancashire Adult Learning Website Accrington and Rossendale College Website |
| Changes Made: | Aligned to latest ESFA Funding Rules. Academic year updated. Fees rates updated. |

Nelson & Colne College Fee Policy 2021/22

1. INTRODUCTION

This policy aims to give clear advice and guidance to students and staff regarding the costs of learning at Nelson & Colne College, Lancashire Adult Learning (LAL) and Accrington and Rossendale College.

This policy covers mainstream Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) funded Further Education (FE) programmes (informed by latest ESFA guidelines covering fees, remission of fees and associated funding), Higher Education (HE), Advanced Learner Loan provision, Apprenticeships and self-financed courses. Where the ESFA updates their guidance in year then the College will ensure the operation of this Policy is in line with the latest guidance.

In 2021/22 there are several types of fees which students/employers may have to pay. They are:

- Tuition fees
- Examination, assessment and registration fees
- Materials fees
- Miscellaneous fees, e.g. equipment, uniform etc.

2. STUDENTS AGED 16-18 YEARS AND STUDENTS AGED 19-24 WITH AN EDUCATION, HEALTH AND CARE PLAN (EHC PLAN)

2.1 Students Aged 16-18 – ESFA Funded Full or Part-Time Learning

For the academic year 2021/22 students are defined as 16-18 if they are 16, 17 or 18 years old on 31 August 2021. 16-18 year old students on ESFA funded full or part-time learning programmes (classroom based, traineeships or apprenticeships) will not be charged fees related to tuition, initial examinations or any aspect of enrolment.

Note: in accordance with ESFA funding guidelines, students who are aged 18 when they commence a qualification with a duration of 2 years are treated for fee purposes as 16-18 for the duration of the qualification i.e. they will not be liable for fees during the second year when they become 19. However, if the student moves to a different qualification after the first year they will be liable for fees.

Students will be charged for the cost of A Level examination re-sits and may also be charged in other areas e.g. GCSE retakes in order to try and improve existing grades. These are to be paid in full at the time the entry is processed. In the event of students seeking to enter re-sits after the published deadlines, a late fee will be charged.

Students will be required to contribute towards e.g. the costs of trips and visits whether or not they are directly related to their learning programmes.

Certain courses e.g. hair, beauty and art require the students to obtain specific equipment for which a fee will be charged if purchased by the college, where the student does not wish to loan equipment from the college. Where there are additional costs e.g. equipment, students may be eligible to apply for financial support from the College Bursary Funds.

2.2 16-24 with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan)

Students aged 16-24 on 31 August 2021 with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) will be fully funded.

2.3 Students Aged 16-18 – Self-Financed

16-18 year old students enrolling on a self-financing (see Section 3.3) or higher education (see Section 4) course will ordinarily need to pay the course fee depending on the type of programme/qualification.

3. STUDENTS AGED 19 YEARS AND ABOVE

3.1 Adult Education Budget - Fully Funded Students

The following students, who are aged 19 or older on 31 August 2021, will be entitled to full funding for their course, in accordance with the latest published ESFA guidance for individual's resident in areas of England outside of the devolved authority areas undertaking ESFA funded Adult Education Budget (AEB) provision. This includes tuition, exam and registration fees, plus any additional essential costs, e.g. DBS charges, materials and uniforms where the students cannot achieve their learning aim without them. (Ref: Adult Education Budget Funding Rules 2021-22, para 65-66).

As the College is unable to access funding to support individuals who reside in devolved areas the College reserves the right to charge individuals in line with the self-financing arrangements outlined in Section 3.3.

3.1a Unemployed Students/Students on Low Income/Wage

For students studying a Level 2 programme or below:

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

- They receive Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA), including those receiving National Insurance credits only.
- They receive Employment and Support Allowance (ESA).
- They receive Universal Credit, and their take-home pay as recorded on their Universal Credit statement (disregarding Universal Credit payments and other benefits) is less than £345 a month (student is sole adult in their benefit claim) or £552 a month (student has a joint benefit claim with their partner).
- They are released on temporary licence and studying outside a prison environment and not funded through the Ministry of Justice.

Students on Low Income

The college may also use its discretion to fully fund students who meet both of the following criteria:

- The student receives other state benefits (not listed above) and their take-home pay (disregarding Universal Credit payments and other benefits) is less than £345 a month (student is sole adult in their benefit claim) or £552 a month (student has a joint benefit claim with their partner), and

- wants to be employed, or progress into more sustainable employment, and their take-home pay (disregarding Universal Credit payments and other benefits) is less than £345 a month (student is sole adult in their benefit claim) or £552 a month (student has a joint benefit claim with their partner), and the learning activity being undertaken is directly relevant to their employment prospects and the local labour market need.

Students in Receipt of Low Wage

- The student is employed or self-employed and earns less than £17,374.50 annual gross salary. This must be evidenced by a wage slip or a Universal Credit statement within 3 months of the student's learning start date, or a current employment contract which states gross monthly annual wages.

3.1b English and Maths

Students (employed or unemployed) who have not previously attained a GCSE Grade 4/C or higher in English or Mathematics will be fully funded if they are undertaking:

- Functional Skills in English and Mathematics (Entry to Level 2); or
- GCSE English and/or Mathematics; or
- Stepping-stone qualifications (including components, where applicable) in English or Mathematics approved by the Department for Education and ESFA

3.1c Foundation Learning

Where a student, aged 19 – 23 on the day the course commences, has not previously achieved a full level 2 qualification and needs to study entry or level 1 qualifications to enable progression onto a level 2 programme, they will be fully funded for the entry level or level 1 qualification. This does not include English and Mathematics (see section 3.1b above) or ESOL.

3.1d First Full Level 2

Students aged 19 – 23 on the day their course commences, without a full level 2 qualification, will be fully funded for a level 2 qualification which forms part of the legal entitlement. (See Appendix 1 for further details of Level 2 Entitlement.)

3.1e First Full Level 3

Students aged 19 – 23 on the day their course commences, without a full level 3 qualification, will be fully funded for a level 3 qualification which forms part of the legal entitlement. (See Appendix 2 for further details of Level 3 Entitlement.)

3.1f National Skills Fund - Level 3 Adult Offer

As part of the Lifetime Skills Guarantee, the Government has developed a targeted level 3 adult offer to support 19+ adults without an existing full level 3 qualification. The offer includes: level 3 qualifications which will support the development of new skills for adult learners, and improve the prospects of eligible adults in the labour market. Where qualifications delivered by the college form part of this offer, these courses will be fully funded.

3.1g Digital Entitlement

Students aged 19+ on the day their course commences and who are assessed as having IT skills being below level 1 will be fully funded to undertake the following qualification: Essential Digital Skills qualification (EDSQ up to and including level 1)

3.1h Miscellaneous

Students enrolling onto the Prince's Trust team programme will not be charged a fee. Students aged 16-18 enrolling will be funded as per Section 2.1. Students aged 19+ enrolling on the Prince's Trust team programme will be fully funded provided they meet the criteria outlined in Section 3.1 otherwise they will be co-funded.

Students undertaking a Traineeship will be fully funded and therefore will not be charged a fee.

3.2 AEB Co-Funded Students

3.2a Part-time Courses

Course fees for all part-time programmes are published in the adult part-time prospectus. The determination of tuition fees for all individual programmes is informed by, and aligned to, the ESFA fee presumption guidance and the funding methodology. The College reserves the right to align course fees to market value.

3.2b Full-time Courses

For 2021/22, a fee of £700 (including examination fees of £140) will apply for all designated full-time programmes. This will apply to students aged 19–23 as at the programme start date on all course levels and students aged 24 or over as at the programme start date on a Level 2 course or below only (see Section 3.4 for Level 3 courses and above). This fee is for one year's study and further fees will be calculated on an annual basis.

This fee will be payable by **all** students except where they are covered by the fee waivers outlined in Section 3.1 above e.g. first full Level 2/3 entitlement or unemployment benefits fee remission.

Note: in accordance with ESFA funding guidelines, students who are aged 18 when they commence a qualification with a duration of 2 years are treated for fee purposes as 16-18 for the duration of the qualification i.e. they will not be liable for fees during the second year when they become 19. However, if the student moves to a different qualification after the first year they will be liable for fees.

Co-funded students will be required to contribute towards e.g. the costs of trips and visits whether or not they are directly related to their learning programmes. Where the College is required to obtain a DBS check for a student e.g. where students are following child, health and social care programmes, the cost of this (currently £54.50) will be charged to the student.

Certain courses e.g. art require the students to obtain specific equipment. Students will be charged for any equipment purchased by the college on their behalf.

Where there are additional costs e.g. DBS checks, equipment, students may be eligible to apply for financial support from the College's Bursary Funds.

3.2c Infill onto Full-time Courses

Students aged 19 and above wishing to infill onto part of a full-time learning programme (as defined in Section 3.2b) are liable to pay a fee subject to their eligibility for the fee waivers outlined above. In these cases, the tuition fee will be determined pro rata having regard to the guided learning hour content of the proposed course.

3.3 Self-Financing Courses

For self-financing part-time courses (not funded by the ESFA or through loans provision), the fee for 2021/22 will be determined by the College having regard to the cost of delivery, the number of students on the course and any other commercial consideration(s).

The standard hourly rate for self-financed part-time programmes for 2021/22 is £10.25. Actual fees will be determined on an individual programme basis. Fees will be payable on these courses by all students regardless of age or personal circumstances.

3.4 Students Aged 19 and Above Studying at Level 3 or Higher

3.4a Advanced Learner Loans

Advanced Learner Loans provide a source of fees and support to help people aged 19 and over undertake general and technical qualifications at levels 3, 4, 5 and 6 where they are not entitled to the funding outlined in 3.1e and 3.1f.

The following qualification types are designated as Advanced Loan provision by the ESFA:

- AS/A Levels up to a maximum of 4 full A levels
- General and technical qualifications at levels 3, 4, 5 and 6
- Access to HE Diplomas

Advanced Learner Loans enable students undertaking these qualifications to fund their course. Loans are available for students who are aged 19 and over on their first day of learning.

Students will have the option to self-fund the course or to take a full or partial loan (subject to eligibility) to pay for course fees.

3.4b Course Fee

The course fee includes tuition and examination costs and is guided by the maximum rate detailed on the ESFA's Learning Aim database. The total fee will be advertised on the Learning and Funding Information Letter.

Where the student requires a DBS to complete their course, this cost is included within the total course fee.

3.4c Fee Payment and Enrolment

If the student is fully funding the course themselves, they will be subject to the same conditions and payment options as detailed in Section 7 for ESFA co-funded courses (e.g. fee instalments, direct debits, employer/sponsor payment).

If the student is funding the course through a loan, either fully or partially, they must provide evidence of the loan approval before their enrolment can be completed.

If the student fails to provide the required evidence within four weeks of starting the course, the college reserves the right to invoice the student for the whole amount and/or require the student to leave the course.

3.4d Retrospective Loan Applications/Loan Amount Changes

Students can apply for a loan at any point during the year provided they are still in learning. If the student has made any payment themselves for the course, college will refund the student. The amount refunded will depend on payments already made and the loan amount issued.

Students may also increase or decrease the amount of the loan at any time. Depending on payments already made and the loan received, College may issue a refund, or alter existing payment arrangements.

3.4e Withdrawals

If the student is fully funding the course through a loan and they withdraw from their course, they will be legally responsible for payments for the period in which they were in attendance only.

3.4f Advanced Learning Loan Bursary Fund

Students who are either taking a partial or full loan may be eligible for additional financial assistance (e.g. childcare, travel, additional learning support) through the Advanced Learning Loans Bursary subject to an individual means test. Further information is given in the College's Bursary Funds Policy.

Students fully funding the course themselves are not eligible to apply to the Loan Bursary Fund.

3.5 Liability

The College reserves the right to invoice the student for any difference between their fee liability and payments made on their behalf.

4. HIGHER EDUCATION

For the purposes of this section, Higher Education is defined as being any programme of study leading to the whole or any part of an award falling within the remit of the Office for Students.

4.1 New Entrants

The College standard tuition fee for new entrants to full-time programmes of Higher Education in the 2021/22 academic year will be £7,725. The standard tuition fee for part-time programmes will be a pro rata of £8,240.

4.2 Continuing Students

Fees for students continuing the same programme in 2021/22 will be based on the fees paid by students in the same circumstances in 2020/21 increased by the Retail Prices Index Excluding Mortgage Interest (RPIX).

4.3 Variations from the Standard Fee

The College's Senior Leadership Team will have discretion to set fees on a programme-by-programme basis at levels other than the standard fee stated above, for example to reflect market conditions.

The Senior Leadership Team will also have discretion to approve the reduction or waiving of individual students' fees in exceptional cases.

4.4 Discounts

Students on flexible learning programmes will be entitled to have the following discounts applied to modules not undertaken by classroom teaching.

| | |
|-------------------------------|------|
| Credit Transfers | 100% |
| Recognition of Prior Learning | 50% |
| Online Learning | 50% |

4.5 Future Fees

The College does not undertake to keep tuition fees at any particular level, but will always remain within legally permitted limits.

New Entrants

The Office for Students and the Competition and Markets Authority will require that details of tuition fees for each year of each programme are included in publicity and marketing materials and disclosed to potential students prior to making a formal application. In order to comply with this requirement Higher Education tuition fees will be set annually in advance. Fees for 2022/23 entry will be set and published by the end of July 2021.

Continuing Students

Tuition fees charged to students continuing on the same programme will not rise by more than RPIX each year.

4.6 Students Funded by Student Loans

Students funding their courses through a student loan, either fully or partially must provide evidence of the loan approval before their enrolment can be completed.

If a student fails to provide the required evidence within four weeks of starting the course, the college reserves the right to invoice the student for the whole amount and/or require the student to leave the course.

4.7 Liability

The College reserves the right to invoice the student for any difference between their fee liability and payments made on their behalf.

5. COMMUNITY LEARNING

Community Learning (CL) is part of the Adult Education Budget (AEB) funded through the ESFA with a fee paid by the student (where applicable). Adults aged 19 or over on the 31st August 2020, who reside in areas of England outside of the devolved authority areas are eligible to participate in AEB funded Community Learning provision.

As the College is unable to access funding to support individuals who reside in devolved areas the College reserves the right to charge individuals in line with the self-financing rate outlined in Section 3.3.

Community Learning Courses are delivered and reported on the ILR under the following four delivery strands:

- **Personal and Community Development Learning** - learning for personal and community development, cultural enrichment, intellectual or creative stimulation and for enjoyment (in most cases not leading to a formal qualification)
- **Family English, Maths and Language** - learning to improve the English, language and maths skills of parents, carers or guardians and their ability to help their children
- **Wider Family Learning** - learning to help different generations of family members to learn together how to support their children's learning
- **Neighbourhood Learning In Deprived Communities** - supports local Voluntary and other third sector organisations to develop their capacity to deliver learning opportunities for the residents of disadvantaged neighbourhoods

5.1 Types of Community Learning

There are three main categories of Community Learning:

- **Publicly Advertised Programme**

These courses are accessible to all Lancashire resident adults, delivered through the main college sites and community venues within Lancashire. Students on this provision are required to pay a course fee.

- **Targeted Programme**

Targeted programme courses are delivered in partnership with a range of agencies including schools, community and voluntary organisations.

Targeted programmes aim to meet the learning needs of adults within the specific target groups detailed below and also contributes to local strategies for improving health, well-being and stronger communities through the delivery of Family Learning, Employability Programmes, digital, English, Maths (excluding ESOL) and provision for students with a learning disability/difficulty.

Courses delivered via this programme are free to the student.

Target groups include:

- People living in areas of high deprivation
- People recovering from drug or substance misuse
- People suffering from mental ill health
- People who are unemployed
- People whose English, maths and language skills are below Level 2
- People with learning disabilities/difficulties
- People with low skills and/or no or outdated qualifications
- People at risk of redundancy
- Offenders and ex-offenders
- Lone parents
- Unpaid carers

- Volunteers
 - Vulnerable and isolated older students
 - Working with families
- **Lancashire Time Credits**

Lancashire Time Credits are a way of thanking people for the time that they give to their local community. Students can use Lancashire Time Credits to attend particular programmes which are highlighted in LAL's Publicly Advertised Programme. (See Appendix 4 for more details).

5.2 Community Learning Course Fees

The course fee is the fee charged for the delivery of the learning activity. This fee represents only a proportion of the full cost of the course, with the remainder being paid for with grants from the ESFA.

Students will be expected (when required) to provide their own resources or, where available, purchase them from the College. This is called the Materials Fee and is payable in full by all students. Students who utilise their Lancashire Time Credits to attend programmes will also be required to pay the Materials Fee.

In certain circumstances students, including those attending programmes using Lancashire Time Credits may be charged for examination/registration costs; typically, this may occur in situations where students are re-sitting examinations.

Fees are payable at the beginning of each course as part of the enrolment process. Course fees are charged at £6.20 per hour for classroom delivery and £4.20 per hour for online delivery. The table below provides details of the charges for the different types of community learning provision.

| Band | Course (Type) | 2021/22 Fee (£) |
|-------------|--|------------------------|
| A | Targeted Learning and publicly advertised English, Maths and LDD | £nil |
| B | Publicly Advertised Programme Classroom delivery (except English, Maths and LDD) | £6.20 per hour |
| C | Publicly Advertised Programme online delivery (except English, Maths and LDD) | £4.20 per hour |
| D | Courses in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) (AEB and CL) | £1.00 per hour |
| E | Lancashire Time Credit Vouchers | £nil |

The College's Senior Leadership Team will have discretion to set fees on a programme-by-programme basis at levels other than the standard fee stated above, for example to reflect changes in delivery methods.

5.3 Fee Remission for Publicly Advertised Programme

It is acknowledged that course fees are a significant disincentive to enrolment. Therefore, in line with government priorities, certain courses and student criteria will enable students to have a reduction in fees.

Students in households in receipt of any of the benefits detailed below are eligible for fee remission and will pay a maximum course fee of £18.60 for up to 2 courses per year, after which normal course fees shall apply.

- Carer's Allowance
- Child Tax Credit
- Council Tax Reduction
- Disability Living Allowance
- Employment Support Allowance (WRAG)
- Housing Benefit
- Income Support
- Job Seekers Allowance (JSA)
- Pension Credit
- Personal Independence Payment
- Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit

Students in receipt of other benefits that are not stated above and are in financial difficulty should apply for support through the College Bursary Funds.

6. APPRENTICESHIPS

From the 1st May 2017, new funding arrangements came into effect for Apprenticeships. Employers with a pay bill over £3 million each year must pay the Apprenticeship Levy from 6th April 2017 using their levy pot.

Non-levy paying employers share the cost of training and assessing their apprentices with government – this is called 'co-investment'. From April 2019, these employers pay 5% towards the cost of apprenticeship training and the government pays the remaining (95%). This applies to any new Apprentices from 1st April 2019.

Where an Apprentice does not have a Level 2 in English and Maths, the Government will fully fund Apprentices to achieve Level 2 qualifications in these subjects as part of their Apprenticeship.

Employers will negotiate and agree the contract value of each Apprenticeship. A Payment Schedule outlining the cost of the Apprenticeship along with funding and payment arrangements will be completed which form part the contractual agreement between the College and the employer.

In order to ensure compliance with ESFA funding requirements, the College reserves the right to amend these arrangements in line with any changes introduced by the ESFA.

7. FEE PAYMENT

7.1 Examination/Registration and Tuition Fees

Where 19+ students do not meet the criteria for a waiver outlined in Section 3.1, or they are undertaking a self-financing course, tuition and examination/registration fees will be payable as outlined in Section 7.3.

7.2 Miscellaneous Fees

Payments due in respect of these items will be included within the course descriptions (for part-time courses) available from Student Services. Such fees will be payable by all non-fully funded students however they may be eligible to apply for financial support from the College's Bursary funds.

7.3 Fee Payment Arrangements

Fees for courses which are less than 20 weeks in duration or where the total fees due from a student is less than £150 must be paid in full at enrolment.

For courses which are longer than 20 weeks or the fees due from a student are greater than £150 can be made by instalments or direct debit. The exception to this is part-time ESOL courses, where courses costing over £90 can be made in two instalments. See Section 7.4 and 7.5 for further information regarding instalment arrangements and direct debit arrangements.

7.4 Fee Instalments

For courses lasting longer than 20 weeks or where the fees due from a student are greater than £150 students may pay by instalments in accordance with the arrangements outlined below:

- 50% of total fees to be paid at enrolment and 50% by the end of the 2nd month after the student starts the programme (except students on part time ESOL programme).
- If an instalment fee remains unpaid by the due date a £20 late fee will be charged.

For part-time ESOL courses where the fee due from the student is over £90 payment can be made in 2 instalments. A minimum of 50% of the course fee is to be paid at enrolment followed by a further final instalment at the end of the 2nd month after the programme starts. A £10 administration fee applies and students must enrol in person to sign their instalment agreement.

7.5 Direct Debit

For courses lasting longer than 20 weeks or where the fees due from a student are greater than £150 students may pay by direct debit in accordance with the arrangements outlined below:

The student will be required to complete the Bank's direct debit mandate. They must provide their bank's name, address, account number and sort code. They will also be required to provide identification evidence in the form of a valid passport or driving licence and a recent utility bill showing their current residential address.

25% of the total fee is to be paid at enrolment followed by 3 equal monthly direct debit collections (on or around 15th of the month) i.e. each monthly direct debit collection will be 25% of the total fees due. The first of these collections will be scheduled to take place in the month following the start of the programme.

In the event that a late enrolment means the scheduled first direct debit cannot be collected, 50% of the total fee must be paid at enrolment followed by 2 monthly direct debit collections.

Each student's circumstances must allow for a minimum of 2 monthly direct debit collections

to be made; it is not permissible for there to be only 1 collection.

The final direct debit collection **cannot** be scheduled to occur **after** the end date of a student's programme. In practice this has the effect of requiring that fees are paid earlier/fully at enrolment for short programmes. Failure to meet the agreed direct debit deductions may result in a £20 admin charge.

7.6 Other Payment Methods

Other payment options are available i.e. cash up to the sum of £500, debit/credit card or cheque.

7.7 Employer/Sponsor to Pay

Where a student provides satisfactory evidence (i.e. a letter or email compliant with the College's enrolment procedures) that their course fees are to be paid by an employer/other sponsor, they may enrol without payment of a fee. The employer/sponsor will be invoiced for the full amount of course fees due.

In the event that an employer/sponsor subsequently defaults, the student will be held liable for the outstanding course fees; this does not apply to Apprenticeships.

7.8 Overseas Students

Students from outside the UK/EU who do not meet the ESFA's criteria as being eligible for funding, will be charged tuition fees calculated on a full cost recovery basis. For overseas students following a full-time programme, the total fee due for 2021/22 is £9,000. This fee is payable in 2 equal instalments (50% of total fees to be paid at enrolment and 50% by the end of the 2nd month after the student starts the programme).

Overseas students following a part-time programme in 2021/22 will be charged a rate of £10.25 per guided learning hour plus examination and registration fees. These fees are due for payment in full at enrolment.

International students are those that require a visa to study at college. Colleges are now required to register with the UK Border Agency in order to be able to accept international students. It is not currently proposed that the College will have any international students in 2021/22.

7.9 Asylum Seekers

Asylum seekers aged 19+ are not automatically eligible for publicly funded FE provision although they may be eligible if certain conditions are met. Those aged 16-18 will remain eligible for funding.

7.10 Advanced Learning Loan Provision

Students studying on qualifying funded provision will be eligible to take out a loan with the Student Loan Company providing they meet the loan company's eligibility criteria.

7.11 Higher Education

Students on higher education programmes will normally be eligible to take out a loan with the HE Student Loan Company providing they meet the loan company's eligibility criteria.

Alternatively, individuals that choose to pay the College directly are eligible to spread the payment either by direct debit (over 4 months) or by instalment based on invoices being raised

in September, January and April to align with the maintenance grant payment profile.

Students eligible for an ITE (Initial teacher education) bursary will be eligible to spread the payment of their tuition fees over the first 4 months of their programme, in line with the receipt of their monthly payments; an invoice on enrolment will be issued for the full amount stating the payment dates.

7.12 Apprenticeships

7.12a Levy Paying Employers

Where an Apprentice is employed by an Apprenticeship Levy paying employer, payment for the Apprenticeship will be collected on a regular basis via the Employer's Digital Apprenticeship Service account.

Where an Employer's Digital Apprenticeship Service account has insufficient funds, the Government will take responsibility for making necessary payments to providers with the employer being required to make a 5% co-investment payment to the provider (or in certain exceptional circumstances the ESFA).

7.11b Non-Levy Employers

Where Non-levy paying employers share the cost of training and assessing their apprentices with government – this is called 'co-investment'. From April 2019, these employers pay 5% towards the cost of apprenticeship training and the government pays the remaining (95%). This applies to new Apprenticeships from 1st April 2019. From April 2021 all Non-Levy employers are required to reserve funding via the digital Apprenticeship Service.

In order to ensure compliance with ESFA funding requirements, the College reserves the right to amend these arrangements in line with any changes introduced by the ESFA.

Two means of payment will be available to Non-levy employers: invoicing and direct debit.

Invoicing

Up to a value of £250, employers will be required to settle invoices in full within standard terms (30 days from invoice date).

Where the invoice value is > £250, employers will have the option of paying via instalments as follows:

- 1) First £250 to be paid within standard terms (30 days from invoice date).
- 2) Remaining balance above £250 to be paid in up to 3 further equal instalments at 90, 150, and 210 days from invoice date respectively, subject to a minimum instalment payment of £100.

Direct Debit

Subject to the actual programme start date, collections will commence in the month the programme starts or the following month. The total amount due will be collected via 10 equal instalments (on or around the 15th of each month), with the exception that the first collection will be for a minimum of £100.

8. COLLEGE BURSARY FUNDS

Students who are studying an ESFA funded course, either fully or co-funded, or funding their course with an Advanced Learner Loan may be eligible for additional financial assistance (e.g. childcare, equipment, books) through the College Bursary Funds subject to an individual means test. Further information is given in the College's Bursary Funds Policy.

9. REFUND GUIDELINES

9.1 'Home'/EU FE Students

Students participating in a qualification being funded via either Adult Education Budget, Advanced Learner Loans or through a self-financing arrangement will only be eligible for a refund of fees in the following circumstances:

- The course has been cancelled by the College.
- The student withdraws prior to attending the course at least two full weeks before the beginning of a course or less than two weeks before the beginning of the course because of serious illness or hospitalisation. This does not apply for 1 day courses.
- A refund is applied for due to long term illness; appropriate evidence must be provided for consideration by the Student Services Manager. If the student has attended any classes, the refund of tuition fees will be on a termly/pro-rata basis. If an examination entry has not been made, this fee will be refundable.
- There are individual exceptional circumstances, as approved by a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

If the student withdraws after the course has commenced, they are still responsible for the payment of their tuition fees. However, exam fees will be refunded if their entry has not been sent to the examination board.

Where a refund of fees is requested by an individual, a £20 administration charge will be made by the College. This is not charged if the course is cancelled by the College.

9.2 Higher Education

Students who withdraw from any higher education programme within two calendar weeks of first enrolment will not be liable for tuition fees for that programme and any fees paid will be refunded; however, an admin fee of £20 will be payable to cover enrolment.

Full-time Home/EU Students

For this purpose, full-time is defined as undertaking 90 credits or more of planned study within the year in question. The year is defined according to start date of the student's studies. For example, for a student beginning his/her studies at the beginning of Semester 2 in January 2021 the year would begin in January 2021 and end in January 2022.

UK/EU Students in Receipt of Tuition Fee Loans

Withdrawal/Suspension in term 1: 25% of the total tuition fee is charged.
Withdrawal/Suspension in term 2: 50% of the total tuition fee is charged.
Withdrawal/Suspension in term 3: 100% of the total tuition fee is charged

These amounts are in line with the amount of the total tuition fee loan available from the Student Loan Company.

UK/EU Students Not in Receipt of Tuition Fee Loans

Withdrawal/Suspension in term 1: 33% of the total tuition fee is charged.
Withdrawal/Suspension in term 2: 67% of the total tuition fee is charged.
Withdrawal/Suspension in term 3: 100% of the total tuition fee is charged

Exceptions: this section does not apply to short courses and single modules (which are non-refundable), or to fees for any module(s) that have been completed at the time of withdrawal or suspension.

Part-time Home/EU Students

If a part-time student withdraws or is suspended from a Higher Education programme during the academic year fees will be charged for all modules that had already started at the date of withdrawal/suspension. If, for a student funded by a Student Loan, this results in a shortfall between the fees charged and payments from the Student Loans Company, the student will be liable for that shortfall.

International Students

International students will not be eligible for a refund of fees paid, regardless of withdrawal date.

Notes:

- 1) If the awarding partner for a student's programme has a policy that differs from the above **and** the terms of the agreement between the College and that partner require its fee/refund policies to apply to College students then the fee/refund policies of that awarding partner will take precedence.
- 2) There are circumstances where Higher Education students may have a statutory right to greater refunds than provided for above, for example under consumer rights regulations. Wherever this is the case, refunds will be made in line with students' statutory rights.

9.3 Employer Apprenticeship

In the event, for whatever reason, of an Apprentice withdrawing early from the programme prior to completion, an amended total cost due will be calculated pro rata based on the actual compared to expected programme end date. Any overpayment arising from this calculation will be refunded to the employer (within 30 days of programme end date) subject to a £20 administration fee charge.

9.4 Community Learning

Lancashire Adult Learning will refund **all fees** paid by students when the College:

- Cancels the course because we are unable to recruit a sufficient number of students to make the course economically viable.
- Permanently change the course to a different time and/or place from that advertised so that it is no longer convenient to you.
- Makes a significant change to the course aims and objectives.

Any course fees and examination/accreditation fees you have paid will be refunded in full, or if preferred, a transfer of fees to another course will be arranged.

9.4a Student Reasons

For Community Learning programmes, will refund **course fees only** when a student requests a refund:

- **At least two full weeks before the beginning of a course.**
- Less than two weeks before the beginning of the course because of serious illness or hospitalisation.

Where there are individual exceptional circumstances which are outside the control of the student, a student may appeal to the Assistant Principal by contacting Lancashire Adult Learning, Unit 1 Northlight House, Glen Way, Brierfield, Nelson, BB9 5NH. The Assistant Principal's decision is final.

The course fee will be refunded, less an administration charge of £20. If the course fee is less than £20, there will be no refund but no further administration charge will be made.

No refund will be made when:

- A student cancels an enrolment after the course has started.
- A student changes his/her mind about a course less than 2 weeks prior to course start date.
- The course becomes inconvenient to the student less than 2 weeks prior to course start date.
- A student has missed some sessions, including because of illness.

9.5 Direct Debit Payments

Where a course has been cancelled by the College, we will suspend the direct debit mandate and arrange a refund for any payments already made.

9.6 Refund Method

Anyone wishing to obtain a refund should complete an "Application for Refund of Fees" form which is available at Nelson and Colne College and Accrington and Rossendale College from Student Services and from Reception at Lancashire Adult Learning.

10. NON-PAYMENT OF FEES

The College may suspend continued study and/or prevent future enrolment on additional courses if any fees are outstanding. The College reserves the right to take legal action in the event of any outstanding fees.

11. DISSEMINATION

This document will be available as follows:

Nelson and Colne College Group Staff Hub
Nelson and Colne College Group Website
Nelson and Colne College Website
Lancashire Adult Learning Website
Accrington and Rossendale College Website

12. MONITORING AND REVIEW

12.1 The policy will be reviewed annually.

13. RELATED POLICIES/PROCEDURES

13.1 Documents related to this policy are:

- Bursary Funds Policy

14. MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITY

14.1 The Deputy Principal (Finance and Resources) has management responsibility for this policy.

FIRST FULL LEVEL 2 ENTITLEMENT

Eligible Students

The entitlement applies to students who:

- are aged 19-23 on the day the course commences
- have not yet achieved a full Level 2 qualification (for clarity it is not necessary to have already achieved a Level 1).

Eligible Qualifications

To be eligible for the entitlement an eligible student must be working towards one of the following qualifications identified as eligible for funding by the ESFA on the Learning Aim Reference Service (LARS).

- a full Level 2 qualification which meets the legal entitlement criteria for level 2 on LARS.

Examples of qualifications which would preclude remission on the grounds of Level 2 entitlement are given in the prior attainments table (Appendix 3).

Level 2 qualifications that are not part of the legal entitlement are not eligible for full fee remission on the basis of level but may be co-funded. The student may also be eligible for fee remission by reason of unemployment or low income (see section 3.1a)

FIRST FULL LEVEL 3 ENTITLEMENT

Eligible Students

The entitlement applies to students who:

- are aged 19 -23 on the day the course commences
- have not yet achieved a full Level 3 qualification (for clarity it is not necessary to have already achieved a Level 2).

Eligible Qualifications

To be eligible for the entitlement an eligible students must be working towards one of the following qualifications identified as eligible for funding by the ESFA on Learning Aim Reference Service (LARS).

- a full Level 3 qualification which meets the legal entitlement criteria for level 3 on LARS.

Examples of qualifications which would preclude remission on the grounds of Level 3 entitlement are given in the prior attainments table (Appendix 3).

Level 3 qualifications that do not meet the legal entitlement criteria for level 3 on LARS are specifically excluded from the entitlement.

PRIOR ATTAINMENT LEVELS (EXAMPLES)

| Previous Highest Qualification | Qualification Examples | Is the student entitled to tuition fee remission? | | |
|--------------------------------|--|---|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| | | Entry Or Level 1 | Full Level 2 (aged 19+) | Full Level 3 (aged 19-24) |
| Level 1 Qualification | 4 GCSEs at A-C or lower, or grade 4 or higher 4 O Levels/CSEs or fewer 1 AS Level | No | Yes | Yes |
| Level 2 Qualification | The following qualifications are now designated full at Level 2: • Five GCSEs at grade 4 or higher, or C and above. • Technical Certificates at Level 2 which appear in the 2018 16 to 19 performance tables. • Other approved technical and professional qualifications at Level 2 which are part of the RQF and listed as a requirement of the legal entitlement, which must be at least 150 glh | No | No | Yes |
| Level 3 Qualification | The following qualifications are now designated full at Level 3: • Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) Access to Higher Education Diplomas at Level 3. • Two A levels. • Four AS levels. • Tech Levels at Level 3 which are in the 2018 16 to 19 performance tables. • Applied general qualifications at Level 3 which are in the 2018 16 to 19 performance tables. • Certain Tech Levels and Applied general qualifications at Level 3 which appear in the 2017 16 to 19 performance tables. • Other approved technical and professional qualifications at Level 3 which are part of the RQF and listed as a requirement of the legal entitlement, which must be at least 300 GLH. | No | No | No |
| Level 4 Qualification | Teaching qualifications (including PGCE) First degree | No | No | No |

LANCASHIRE TIME CREDITS

About Time Credits

Time Credits have been developed from a time banking/social currency initiative as a tool for building stronger communities, encouraging citizens to be active and effective members of their local communities by giving their time to help and support individuals and organisations.

How LAL Students Can Earn and Spend Lancashire Time Credits

Following a volunteer course, a LAL student who undertakes a volunteer placement can earn one 'Time Credit Note' for every hour they volunteer. One Time Credit Note is equal to 1 hour of learning against identified courses in the publicly advertised brochure*.

How LAL is Recognised as A 'Spend' Partner

Anybody who has earned Time Credit Notes with other organisations can use these against identified course in the publicly advertised brochure*.

*It is not possible to use Time Credits as part payment for courses.

* If students choose an accredited course to spend with their credits, additional examination fees will apply.

* Those courses where Lancashire Time Credits apply are no more than 6 weeks in duration.