

## 1. Purpose

This policy is designed to provide users with a consistent and coherent approach to the charging of fees to students and employers and to any remission or refunds to which students may be eligible.

## 2. Application of this Policy

All staff using this policy must ensure that students with protected characteristics are not disadvantaged for any reason by any part of this policy and the processes within it.

## 3. Fee Policy

### 3.1. FE Courses

#### 3.1.1. 16-18 year old students

Full-time and part-time students (who are not also studying full-time elsewhere) aged under 19 years on the 31 August in the academic year in which their course commences are not required to pay tuition fees for full or part-time FE funded courses.

A voluntary contribution will be requested from each full-time student; this is not mandatory. The contribution will be £70 for a 2 year course and £35 for a one year course.

Qualification resit costs will be charged by the College for all provision at level three or above. The rate charged will be based on the Awarding Organisations' prevailing rate. Resit charges for qualifications at level 2 or below will be paid by the College.

#### 3.1.2. Full-time adult students (19+)

The tuition fee for adults who are 19+ at the start of their level 1 or level 2 course on ESFA funded full-time (above 450 annual guided learning hours) will be £950 per year. This figure excludes examination and registration fees which will be an additional charge depending on the qualification.

The tuition fee for adults aged 19 and over (as at the start date of their course) on Level 3 and 4 full-time (above 450 annual guided learning hours) courses will be set during the planning process, an Advanced Learner Loan may be available.

Adult Students whose tuition fees are funded through a bursary or other fee remission will not be charged Awarding Body registration or accreditation fees. However all adult students will be charged associated fees and subscription charges made by professional bodies (e.g. AAT). The College's Fee Remission Policy is detailed at paragraph 4 of this document.

### **3.1.3. Part-time Adult Students (19+)**

Where the ESFA co-fund a student's programme of study the tuition fee payable is reduced by an assumed contribution rate of 50% of the national funding rate.

The tuition fee for adults aged 19 and above (as at the start date of their course) on ESFA funded part-time Entry level, level 1 and level 2 courses will be set during Curriculum Planning and indicated in the part-time course details.

The tuition fees in provision are for the whole of a qualification. Awarding Organisation registration and accreditation fees will be added on top of the tuition fee and will be payable in year 1 of a multi-year course.

Adults Students whose tuition fees are funded through a bursary or other fee remission will not be charged Awarding Organisation registration or accreditation fees. However all adult students will be charged associated fees and subscription charges made by professional bodies (e.g. AAT).

### **3.1.4. Payment of fees by 19+ Advanced Learner Loans**

You can apply for an Advanced Learner Loan from Student Finance England to help with the costs of a course at a college or training provider in England. 19+ Advanced Learner Loans are available in 2018/19 for Certificates and Diplomas (Level 3 - 6) up to the maximum funding rate as set by the ESFA. This funding rate is shown in the catalogue of funding rates published by the ESFA (LARS). The College is permitted to charge higher fees than shown in the catalogue but a student would need to make other arrangements to pay the difference. However, the College has decided not to exceed the above rates and therefore additional fee payments by students will not be needed, other than for associated fees and subscription charges made by professional bodies (e.g. AAT).

The actual fee will normally be the rate in the catalogue of funding rates published by ESFA for Advanced Learner Loans. In exceptional

circumstances the rate may be adjusted based on the advice of Curriculum Leader to the Group Vice Principal of Information & Strategic Development and the Finance Director.

Please note; not all learning aims offered, particularly Awards at Level 3 or 4, are eligible for a 19+ Advanced Learner Loan. Where available, the College is keen to ensure the facility is available to students, but this cannot be guaranteed.

Advanced Learner Loans are drawn down and paid to the College over the duration of their course, but only while a student continues to attend the course. Students leaving the course early whose fees are funded by 19+ Advanced Learner Loans will be required to pay the difference between amounts paid to the College on your behalf by Student Finance England and the total fees due for the course unless the outstanding balance of fees due is waived. See section 6 for further detail regarding Fee Waivers.

### **3.1.5. Apprenticeships**

In May 2017 the Apprenticeship Levy was introduced by Government. This is a change to the way in which funding flows and fees are collected.

All medium and large employers of Apprentices of any age are now liable to pay a fee. Small employers (under 50 employees) must pay a fee for any apprentice aged 19+ at start. The level of fee is agreed with the employer at initial engagement by the Business Solutions Team. These fees will be based on the cost of sign-up, delivery and end-point assessment; they are governed by a nationally agreed cap. The College may choose to charge above the cap level for some Apprenticeship Standards; the employer is liable for any proportion of a fee agreed above the cap level.

A contract for the apprenticeship delivery and associated fees must be signed prior to delivery commencing.

Levy Paying Employers will have this agreed fee automatically paid to the College from its Digital Levy Account by the Skills Funding Agency. Should the employer utilise all of its Levy funds, the funding approach reverts to a co-financing arrangement. From this point 10% of all future planned payment will be liable to the employer and 90% will be paid by the ESFA.

Non-Levy Paying Employers must pay 10% of the agreed fee to the College based on the terms in the signed contract. The remaining 90% will be paid to the College by the ESFA.

Apprentices of all age groups enrolling on an apprenticeship which includes a Prescribed HE qualification such as a HNC/D or Foundation Degree may still be liable for the College's standard part-time HE fees as the ESFA/Levy are unable to fund these qualifications (see section 3.3). An HE qualification usually forms part of a Higher Apprenticeship.

Employers enrolling apprentices under the terms of the College's sub-contract with SBC Training Ltd will pay any fees directly to the College.

For further information on the approach to Levy based fees please contact the Business Solutions Team.

### **3.1.6. Workplace Learning (NVQ Only)**

NVQs delivered in the workplace are fully funded for those aged 19-23 years old without a first full level 2 (for level 2 aims) or a first full level 3 (for level 3 aims). Functional Skills English and Maths learning aims delivered in the workplace are also fully funded for students of all ages. All other aims in the workplace are delivered on a full cost basis, fees will vary based on the relative size and level of qualification, and will be set during the curriculum planning process. The College reserves the right to vary this fee based on volume arrangements with individual employers.

### **3.1.7. International Students**

Students not entitled to "home" fees according to Department for Education (DfE) on a full-time FE programme (450 or more annual planned learning hours) will be charged £8,850 per year plus £150 registration fee. Part-time overseas students will be charged pro-rata.

International students studying a full-time Office for Student (OfS) funded College HE programme will be charged £9,250 per annum; part-time will be charged on a pro-rata basis.

International students requiring student support will be charged £25 per hour for this service.

## **3.2. Full Cost Recovery Tuition Fees**

Full cost recovery courses will be appropriately costed taking into account teaching and support costs, accreditation costs, premises and overhead costs and margin.

Full cost course fees will be approved on a course-by-course basis by either the Group Vice Principal – Information and Strategic Development or the Finance Director.

### **3.3. HE Fees**

HE fees are based on a charge of £49.50 per credit. For a 2 year course this results in annual charges for first years as follows:

Full-time: £5,940

Part-time: £49.50 per credit, dependent on number of credits (usually £2,970)

Fees for second and third years will remain at original levels; based on £49.50 per credit for the duration of the programme. Whatever a student is charged in the first full year of a course will be the fee that they are charged for all subsequent years unless the year is only a part year when a reduced fee will apply.

Note that for part-time HE fees Curriculum Leaders can request exceptional variations, which should be upwards only, for approval by the Finance Director or Group Vice Principal – Information and Strategic Development.

The exception to this is the Certificate of Post Compulsory Education and Training where the charge is £4,500 per annum.

HE fees are inclusive of examination costs.

### **3.4. Community Learning Fees**

Fees for Community Learning are calculated to cover costs. No remitted fees are available for these courses; the fee has already been subsidised in the curriculum planning process.

### **3.5. Payment of Fees**

Published fees usually relate to the full cost of the course, with the exception of full-time and HE provision which both have annual fees.

Fee payment is due at enrolment and all enrolling students will be expected to make payment at that point, unless they qualify for remission of fees (see section 4 below)

or if any of the points below apply. Failure to make arrangements for payment within 14 days of enrolment may result in being asked to leave the course until such time as the account is settled.

Payment can be made by cash, cheque, debit card or credit card.

Payment may also be made by direct debit, usually by 4 instalments of which the first instalment must be paid at enrolment.

If a student is being sponsored by an employer, fees can be invoiced to the employer provided the student produces a signed letter from the employer on headed paper at enrolment confirming the arrangement. Employer sponsored student fees must be paid within 14 days of receipt of invoice. If the fee is not received from the Employer the student will become liable for the fee.

For courses that qualify for an HE Student Loan or a 19+ Advanced Learner Loan, the student should bring evidence that the loan is in place when they enrol. Where the student has been unable to complete the loan application process at time of enrolment or cannot produce evidence that a loan is in place the College will invoice the student at their point of enrolment.

Students intending to apply for a HE Student Loan or a 19+ Advanced Learner Loan after enrolment must do so immediately and provide the College's Finance Department with proof of a loan being in place as soon as the loan has been confirmed. If students do not complete the application process or fail to secure a loan within six weeks of the start of their course the full invoiced amount becomes payable immediately. Failure to pay fees will result in being asked to leave the course until such time as the amount due is settled or alternative arrangements are agreed with the College's Finance Department.

### **3.6. Fees Flow Chart**

A fees flow chart for classroom learning is attached at Appendix 1 of this document.

## **4. Fee Remission Policy**

### **4.1. FE Courses**

In setting fee levels, the ESFA and the College operate a Fee Remission Policy, there are also Student Support Funds to support individual students with payment of tuition and exam fees. Government rules on funding and benefits may change up to the point of enrolment.

A separate ring-fenced bursary fund is also available to provide limited support to students 19+ Advanced Learner Loans.

Details of the support available are documented in the College's Student Bursary and Hardship Policy.

Remission categories are as set out in Appendix 2.

### **4.2. HE Courses**

#### **4.2.1. Full and Part-time Students**

There is no remission for HE courses.

#### **4.2.2. Intermitting Students**

Students who, in exceptional circumstances and with the permission of the HE and Education Lead, take a break from their HE course will remain on the same fees package that they signed up to and would not fall under any new loan agreement. If they withdraw and then apply to return to the same or a different course they would then be subject to any new tuition fee loan arrangements.

In the academic year of intermitting, fees will be owed based on 50% in term 1, 75% in term 2 and 100% in term 3. Partial attendance within a term constitutes liability for the whole of that term's fee. Fees will not be applied pro-rata within a term.

## **5. Amendments to the Fee, Fee Remission and Refund Policy**

The ESFA Funding Rules 2018 to 2019, which stipulates tuition fees and remission categories, has been published but on occasion later versions with changes to fee remission categories are published. If the guidance requires changes to the College's Fee, Fee Remission and Refund Policy, the Principal has delegated authority from the Corporation to approve the changes.

## **6. Refund and Fee Waiver Policy**

- 6.1.** This policy sets out the circumstances in which unpaid fees may be reduced (a fee waiver) or where fees already paid will be repaid (a refund). Requests for refunds or fee waivers must be made using the form attached at Appendix 3.
- 6.2.** No promises of a full or partial refund or fee waiver may be given by any staff member until agreement has been received from the Finance Director or Group Vice Principal – Information and Strategic Development.
- 6.3.** Before a request to refund or waive fees to a full-time student can be accepted, the student must have formally withdrawn.
- 6.4.** HE students who withdraw from their course in the first term will be liable for 25% of the fee as per Student Loans Company loans. Students who leave in the second term will be liable for 50% of the fee and leavers in the third term will be liable for the full fee. Partial attendance within a term constitutes liability for the whole of that term's fee. Fee waivers will not be applied pro-rata within a term.
- 6.5.** Other than due to cancellation of a course by the College, no refunds or fee waivers be given automatically.
- 6.6.** Normally the College will not refund or waive fees due if an FE or Overseas student has attended class for more than two weeks. However, the College does have the discretion, in exceptional circumstances, to countermand this decision and refund or waive fees on a pro rata basis. This is likely to be because of an extraordinary and unexpected change in personal circumstances that prevents attendance; such as loss of work, long-term illness or recovery from illness, permanent or long term disability or the need to provide care for an immediate family member due to an unexpected deterioration in their health. Appropriate evidence of such exceptional changes in circumstances must be provided to support requests for a fee waiver. A change in student circumstance is not an automatic reason for a refund or fee waiver. An individual's decision to curtail their studies because of a change in heart, subsequent decision to seek employment, or to relocate are not considered to be exceptional circumstances.
- 6.7.** Costs incurred on the behalf of the student will not be refunded or pro-rated in any circumstances. All outlay for examination and registration fees, materials fees if bought specifically for that student, plus a £20 administration fee shall be deducted from any fee waiver or refund.



**6.8.** Where applicable, pro rata refunds or fee waivers will be calculated as follows:

$$\text{Amount due} = \left( \text{Tuition fees} \times \frac{\text{No. of weeks attendance}}{\text{No. of course teaching weeks}} \right) + \text{Exam, Admin Fee and other costs}$$

For the purpose of the pro-rata calculation the Number of week's attendance is deemed to be the higher of either the number of weeks actually attended or the number of weeks of possible attendance before the student actually notified the College of their intention to leave.

**6.9.** In the case of refunds the amount due will be deducted from the amount actually paid by the student to determine the refund due to the student.

**6.10.** Where a fee refund is due because of an error in the amount charged, or if a course is cancelled no administration fee shall be applied. The Provision Coordinator is responsible for submitting a fully completed fee refund form (Appendix 3) to Finance to enable the refund payment to be made.

**6.11.** Amounts paid for Trips or Visits will be refunded in full if the trip is cancelled unless there was clear notification at the point of booking or payment that deposits paid were non-refundable. Please see the Trips and Visit Policy for further information regarding Trips and Visits.

**6.12.** Finance is responsible for checking the student's payment record for any outstanding welfare loans, planned future Discretionary or Bursary Fund payments and expected payments for visits and for making appropriate adjustments before completing a payment of the refund in a timely manner.

**6.13.** All refunds must be approved by the Finance Director or the Group Vice Principal - Information and Strategic Development prior to payment being made.

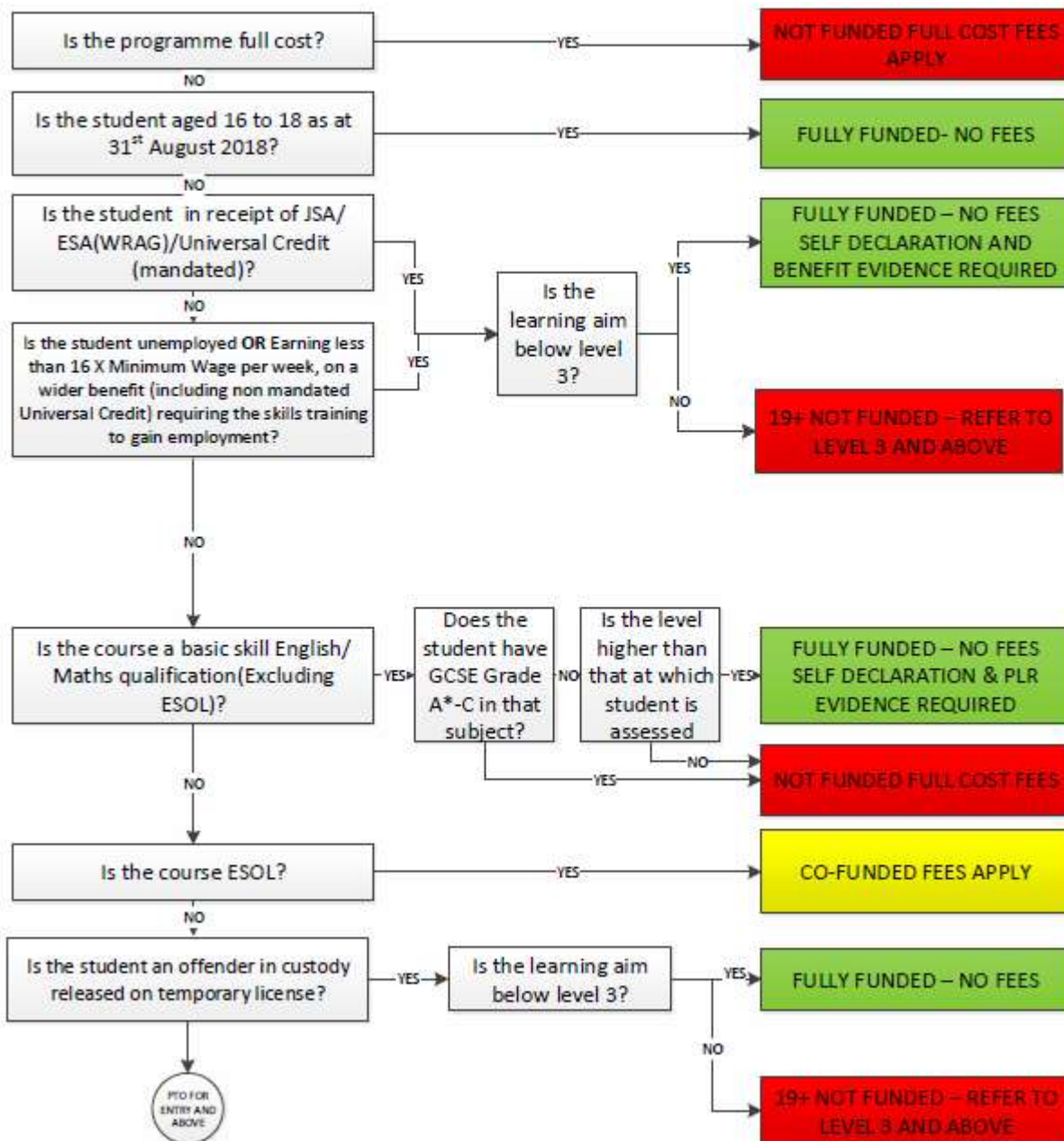
**6.14.** Refund requests for anything other than student fees should be directed to the Finance Department.

## **7. Equality and Diversity**

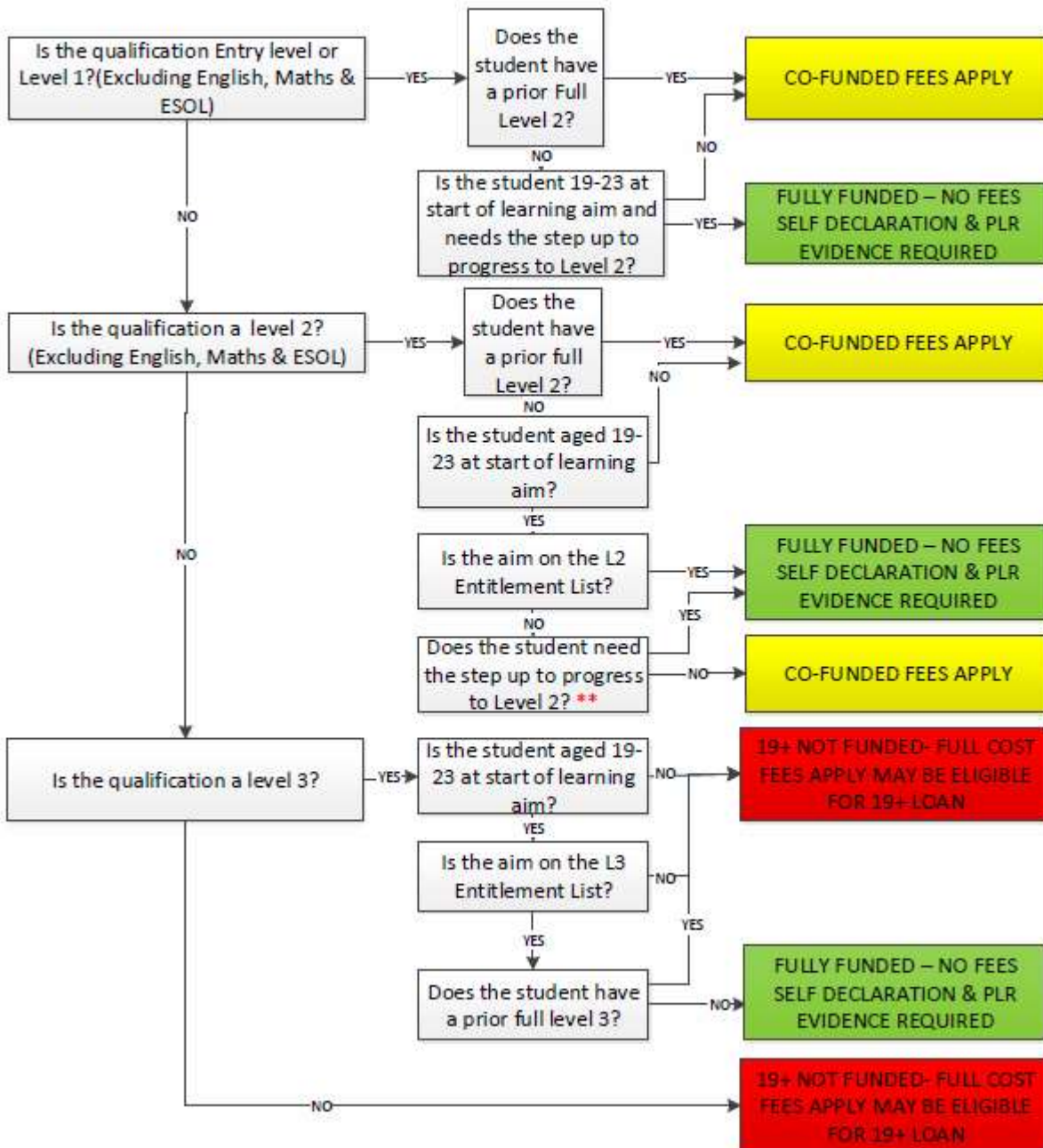
This Policy has been subject to an Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment. All individuals will be treated equally and fairly in the application of this Policy. All reasonable requests to accommodate requirements in terms race, age and disability will be accommodated, as long as it is practicable to do so.

**Appendix 1**

**FEE'S FLOW CHART CLASSROOM LEARNING  
2018/19**



**FEE FLOW CHART CLASSROOM LEARNING  
2018/19**



**Appendix 2****TUITION FEE REMISSION POLICY HOME AND EU STUDENTS – 2018/2019**

Remission Type	Remission Categories	2017/2018 Policy	Recommended Policy for 2018/2019	Notes
ESFA	Full-time and part-time students (who are not also studying full-time elsewhere) aged under 19 years on the 31 August in the calendar year when their course commences.	Nil fee; plus voluntary contribution.	Nil fee; plus voluntary contribution.	Statutory requirement and fee remission claimed from ESFA.
ESFA	16-18 students enrolling to Adult Community Learning courses. Must have prior approval from Curriculum Leader for appropriateness based on Safeguarding and Health & Safety considerations.	Nil fee	Nil fee	Statutory requirement and fee remission claimed from ESFA
ESFA	Under 16 students enrolling to any College provision and <b>NOT</b> in other statutory education.	Nil fee; plus voluntary contribution.	Nil fee; plus voluntary contribution.	Statutory requirement and fee remission claimed from ESFA
College	Under 16 students enrolling to any College provision whilst also in other statutory. Must have prior approval from Curriculum Leader for appropriateness based on Safeguarding and Health & Safety considerations.	Full Cost Recovery	Full Cost Recovery	Enrolment should be verified by the CL for Safeguarding and H&S purposes.
ESFA	19-23 year old students who do not have a full Level 2 or higher qualification who need the additional step to at Entry Level or Level 1 to enable them to progress to full level 2 in future.	Nil fee	Nil fee	Fee remission claimed from ESFA
ESFA	19-23 year old students studying their first full Level 2 qualification, and enrolled to an eligible aim.	Nil fee	Nil fee	Fee remission claimed from ESFA
ESFA	19-23 year old students studying their first full Level 3 qualification, or jumping to Level 4 without first full level 3 qualification, and enrolled to an eligible aim.	Nil fee (19-23 year olds)	Nil fee (19-23 year olds)	Fee remission claimed from ESFA
ESFA	Unemployed students, enrolling to an aim up to Level 2 to help them enter employment, in receipt of Jobseekers' Allowance (JSA) <b>OR</b> Employment Support Allowance (Work related Activity Group) <b>OR</b> Universal Credit earning less than 16 times the National Minimum Wage per week/less than £338 per month (or £541 for a household) <b>AND</b> are in one of these groups: Work Related Activity Group, Work Preparation Group, Work Focused Interview Group.	Nil fee (all 19+)	Nil fee (all 19+)	Fee remission claimed from ESFA

ESFA	19-23 year old unemployed students, enrolling to an aim at Level 3 or above to help them enter employment, in receipt of Jobseekers' Allowance (JSA) <b>OR</b> Employment Support Allowance (Work related Activity Group) <b>OR</b> Universal Credit earning less than 16 times the National Minimum Wage per week/less than £338 per month (or £541 for a household) <b>AND</b> are in one of these groups: Work Related Activity Group, Work Preparation Group, Work Focused Interview Group.	May be eligible for an Advanced Learner Loan	May be eligible for an Advanced Learner Loan	Loan facility provided by ESFA and Student Finance England
ESFA	Unemployed/Employed students in receipt of a state benefit other than those listed above AND earning less than 16 times the National Minimum Wage per week/less than £330 per month AND enrolling to a qualification that will help them enter employment. Their course(s) must be relevant to their employment prospects and local labour market needs.	Nil fee (19+ up to Level 2, 19+ L3 or above may be eligible for a loan)	Nil fee (19+ up to Level 2, 19+ L3 or above may be eligible for a loan)	Fee remission claimed from ESFA
ESFA/SFE	19+ students enrolling to an aim at Level 3 or above, where aim is available for an Advanced Learner Loan.	19+ may access an Advanced Learner Loan for Tuition Fee only, other fees are payable at enrolment	19+ may access an Advanced Learner Loan for Tuition Fee only, other fees are payable at enrolment	Loan facility provided by ESFA and Student Finance England
ESFA	Students studying English and maths learning aims at Entry Level, Level 1 or Level 2 that are part of the approved suite of English and maths qualifications as described in the ESFA's Funding Rules 2017 to 2018.	Nil fee	Nil fee	Fee remission claimed from ESFA
ESFA	GCSE English/maths for all adult students who do not have A* to C in the subject already and who will be attending classes i.e. funding is not available for re-sits only. (This does not apply to International GCSE's)	Nil fee	Nil fee	Fee remission claimed from ESFA
College	19+ students enrolling to Adult Community Learning courses.	Standard Course Fee Applies	Standard Course Fee Applies	No cost to the College
College	College staff (where a course is outside normal working hours).	Nil tuition fee, however staff member should pay cost of registration/certification.	Nil tuition fee, however staff member should pay cost of registration/certification.	Marginal cost to the College.

**The College reserves the right to charge an appropriate fee to students who enrolled under "remission" status and a change in status puts them into a "non-remitted" category at a later date during their programme.**

**The College reserves the right to waive individual fees at the discretion of the GVP – Finance and Asset Management or the GVP – Information and Strategic Development.**

**Appendix 3****Application for the Refund or Waiver of Fees**

**Please refer to the Fee Policy for guidance on fee rules before completing this form.**

**Part 1: To be completed by the Student and returned to the Curriculum/Programme Leader (via Reception).**

NAME:		Date of this Refund Application:	
Contact Telephone Number:			
Address:			
Student Number:			
Course Title:		Course Ref:	
Are you requesting a refund or waiver?		For how much?	
Bank Account:		Sort Code:	
What is the reason for your request? (Please give as much detail as possible, and attach additional information as required or use additional space overleaf):			
Signature:			Date:

**Part 2: To be completed by the Curriculum/Programme Leader then submitted to the relevant Provision Coordinator.**

NAME:		Date of this Review:	
Have you confirmed the student & course details above?			
Recommendation (including details of the student's attendance, rationale for recommendation and any other relevant information):			
Signature:			Date:

**Part 3: To be completed by Finance**

Confirmation of Amounts Owing as:

Comments:

Finance Name and Signature:

Date:

**Part 4: To be completed by Finance Director or GVP I & SD**

Decision (circle): Approved / Declined

Rationale:

Authoriser's Name and Signature:

Date:

**Additional Information**

Please use this space for any additional information (or attach to the form):

**Appendix 4**

**Process Flow for fee refund and waiver applications**

**Process Flow for Fee Refund and Waiver applications**

<b>Step 1</b>	Form Completed by Student or Provision Co-ordinator (PC) for Course Closures or Change	<b>Student Request:</b> Name, student number & contact details, date of refund application Course Title & Ref Amount of refund/waiver requested Reasons for refund/waiver Any supporting information attached Form is available from Moodle or Reception	<b>Course Closure or Change:</b> PC completes single top sheet PC prints Bulk Refund from Report Centre Course Sales Team contact each student to inform of change and collect refund/bank details from students if no alternative available
<b>Step 2</b>	Form submitted to CL/PL	Either directly or via reception	Course Sales Team submit form to CL/PL
<b>Step 3</b>	CL/PL Review	CL/PL to Make a recommendation, including rationale and any relevant background information CL/PL to send forms to Finance	<b>Target:</b> <b>Within 7 days of Step 2</b>



<b>Step 4</b>	Finance Review	Finance confirm amounts owing Finance submit to Finance Director/GVP I&SD (GVPs)	<b>Target:</b> <b>Within 14 days of Step 3</b>
<b>Step 5</b>	Finance Director or GVP – I&SD Review	Review and approve or reject refund application	<b>Target:</b> <b>Within 7 days of Step 4</b>
<b>Step 6</b>	Decision communicated via Letter to applicant	Standard letter, amended according to circumstances, communicating the decision Sent by the Finance Director Finance Director to advise Finance to process payment or credit note	<b>Target:</b> <b>Within 7 days of Step 5</b>
<b>Step 7</b>	Approvals communicated to Finance	Finance Director to advise Finance to process payment Finance raise payment or credit note	<b>Target:</b> <b>Within 7 days of Step 6</b>