



Document Title	Tuition Fee Policy – Further Education 2017-18
Author	Assistant Principal Information & Planning
Approving Body	Governing Body
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1. PURPOSE

The purpose of the policy is to ensure that:

- i. Fees are levied appropriately and consistently.
- ii. The college is operating in accordance with the requirements of its funding and monitoring bodies.

2. SCOPE

The policy applies to all student-based academic activity.

3. RESPONSIBILITY

The Assistant Principal Information & Planning (*APIP*) is responsible for policy compliance. The Deputy Principal (*DP*) is responsible for implementation.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

City of Westminster College course fees are set annually in accordance with the requirements of its funding and monitoring agencies. These include EFA, SFA, HEFCE, Ofsted and auditors.

The college endeavours to ensure that all fee information released to the public is accurate.

To support equality of opportunity the college will:

- i. Provide information and assistance in applying for financial support for course fees.
- ii. Provide instalment payment options in cases of financial hardship.
- iii. Provide a range of student support services that include information and guidance on courses, progression, funding, fees, bursary funds and financial support.

5. DEFINITIONS

5.1 FULLY FUNDED

Home Students can be fully funded (pay no fees) if both their personal status and their chosen course meet the qualifying criteria. These include the student's funding status, their age, their prior attainment, their benefits status, and the level and type of their course. The personal status criteria are detailed in section 6.

5.2 CO-FUNDED

Some Home Students, dependent on age, benefits status and course, will be charged fees. These may include elements for tuition, exam costs, materials and trips. The tuition fee will be approximately 50% of un-weighted funding value of the qualification studied. These students are referred to as 'co-funded', because the SFA pays the college the remainder of the full funding value. The co-funding criteria are detailed in section 7.

5.3 HOME STUDENTS

The EFA and SFA only fund Home Students. In all but exceptional circumstances, Home Students must meet the 3-year residency requirement. The student must have been legally and ordinarily resident in the United Kingdom, or another European Union (EU) or European Economic Area (EEA) country, continuously for the 3 years prior to the commencement of learning. The college will seek authority to fund students from Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales, from the relevant agency. The full list of qualifying countries is in Appendix 1.

5.4 INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

An international student is a one who does not qualify as a Home Student. International students are charged fees at a higher rate to reflect the full cost of their individual learning programme.

6. FULLY FUNDED STUDENTS

The following categories of students undertaking classroom based Further Education (FE) learning will be entitled to full funding of their fees, subject to satisfactory evidence of status being provided at enrolment:

- i. Aged 16 to 18 on the 31st August in the calendar year when the student commences a programme of study.
- ii. Aged 19 and continuing onto the second year of their programme, which they started when aged 16-18.
- iii. Learners aged 16-18 studying an intermediate or advanced Apprenticeship programme.
- iv. Aged 19-23 and undertaking a first Full Level 2, 3 or Level 4 "jumper" qualification (for this category the age at which the learner starts the learning aim applies and not their age at the start of the academic year).
- v. Aged 19 and older undertaking a course up to Level 2 and in receipt of either Job Seekers Allowance (JSA), Employment Support Allowance work related activity group (ESA WRAG), or Universal Credits due to being unemployed and required to undertake skills training.
- vi. Aged 19 or older and unemployed, studying a learning aim up to Level 2 and receiving any state benefits e.g. Income Support.
- vii. All learners without grades A* - C in GCSE English and Maths (no age restrictions apply) undertaking English and Maths as part of the new suite of English and Maths qualifications up to Level 2.

- viii. Learners aged 19-23 released in the community on temporary licence (*RoTL*) and studying a course up to Level 3.
- ix. Ex-British Armed Forces personnel discharged on medical grounds or having completed four or more years of service and undertaking their first Full Level 2 or 3 qualifications.
- x. Learners aged up to 24 and undertaking a Traineeship.
- xi. Trade Union representatives studying Trade Union Congress (*TUC*) learning aims.

7. CO-FUNDED STUDENTS

The following categories of students will be charged a tuition fee approximately equal to 50% of the un-weighted SFA funding rate for the learning aim they intend to study. They may also be charged fees at enrolment to fully cover the costs of examinations, course materials or mandatory trips.

- i. Home Students over 18, studying SFA funded learning aims below Level 3, who do not meet any of the fully funded criteria in section 6.

8. UNFUNDED STUDENTS

Home Students aged over 18, and studying SFA funded learning aims at Level 3 or 4 will be unfunded and charged a tuition fee equal to 100% of the weighted SFA funding rate for the learning aim they intend to study. These students will not be charged examination fees.

- i. Students in this category can either self-fund or apply for an Advanced Learning Loan to pay the cost of their tuition.
- ii. Students will only be eligible to receive a loan that is either equal to, or less than the funding rate for the course. The minimum sum the student can apply for is £300.
- iii. Loans will not be means tested and will be available to eligible learners aged over 18 studying in England on approved qualifications.
- iv. Should a student loan application be declined the student will become liable for the full fees of the course.
- v. Should a student withdraw from the course during any period of the academic year they will be liable for the fees up to the end of the term that they withdraw.

Students on multiple learning aims will have to meet the cost of funding any additional course studied that is not funded by the Advanced Learning Loan. Please note all other rules apply as outlined in section 7(i) above.

9. OVERSEAS STUDENTS

Overseas (aka International) students will be expected to pay fees that reflect their unfunded status and the administrative costs of recruitment, support and meeting Home

Office requirements. The tuition fee for Level 3 courses will vary depending on the programme of study; however the minimum overseas FE fee for 2016/17 is £6,500.

10. FULL COST PROVISION

Fees for all full cost courses (courses that do not attract any funding) will be determined on a course by course basis, as agreed by the Directorate in consultation with the Vice Principal Finance and Corporate Services and the Assistant Principal Information and Planning.

11. SCHOOL LINK AND FRANCHISED STUDENTS

School Link and franchised students will be admitted to courses at the discretion of the College where contracts have been agreed by the College and the external partner organisation. These students are not charged individually as the external partner will be invoiced directly.

12. DISCRETIONARY/ LEARNER SUPPORT FUNDS

Home students who are unable to meet the full costs of tuition fees and meet specific eligibility criteria may be able to get assistance from the College Discretionary / Learner Support Funds. Students can access information from the Learner Support Team pre, during and after enrolment.

13. EXAMINATION FEES

Co-Funded and Full Cost students will, where applicable, be expected to pay the appropriate examination or awarding body registration fees. This includes the payment for re-sits and early examination entries not endorsed by the College.

Note: The College will not generally consider requests for early entry or re-sit. However, where such requests are supported by the College (Functional Skills, GCSE Maths /English up to Level 2) the standard cost will be met in full by the College.

Alternatively, where a re-sit or early/late entry request is independently requested by a student, this will be considered on an individual basis by Curriculum Management and the College reserves the right to refuse any such requests. Where independent requests are approved, the associated cost will be met in full by the student. Please refer to the College Examination Re-sit Policy for further information.

14. PAYMENT OF FEES BY INSTALMENTS

14.1 HOME STUDENTS

The College may, in exceptional circumstances, permit some fees to be paid by instalments. Students, upon request, will be given information regarding acceptable payment methods and instalment options as part of their enrolment instructions.

Instalment plans will generally only be available where the total fee due exceeds £750. Exceptions to this lower limit are at the discretion of the Deputy Principal Curriculum and Quality, informed by the Vice Principal Finance and Corporate Services, the Assistant Principal Information & Planning and the Head of Learner Services. All additional costs will be included when setting up the individual payment plan. There will be a maximum of three instalments, with payment of the first instalment at enrolment, the second by 30th November and the third, where applicable, by 1st March.

14.2 INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

International students will be required to pay their fees in full prior to the start of their course.

15. REFUND OF FEES

15.1 REASONS WHERE REFUNDS MAY BE CONSIDERED

The College has a general policy of making no refunds other than in cases where action taken by the College results in a student being unable to take up a place on the course; e.g.

- i. The course is cancelled by the College.
- ii. The dates of the course are changed and the student can no longer attend.
- iii. The student withdraws prior to the commencement of the course due to exceptional circumstances beyond their control.

15.2 EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES WHERE FEES MAY BE REFUNDED AT COLLEGE DISCRETION

- i. Where a student transfers from one course to another, the difference in course fees will be refunded or, should any additional charges apply, the student will be required to pay the difference.
- ii. Where an additional fee has been paid at enrolment for materials, visits etc. the fees may be refunded if approved by the appropriate Director or Head of School. The refunded amount will reflect the period attended and or materials used to date.

15.3 REFUND OF FEES - INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

- i. If an international student withdraws before the commencement of a course or within two weeks of the course start date a full refund will be given less an administration fee of £100.
- ii. Where the student withdraws after two weeks of attendance but before the end of Term 1, two thirds of the fee will be refunded less the administration charge of £100.
- iii. If attendance includes any period in Term 2, only one third of the fee will be refunded less the administration fee.
- iv. If attendance includes any period in Term 3, no fees will be refunded.
- v. If an international student visa has been refused a full refund will be given less an administration fee of £100.

16. FAILURE TO PAY

The College will take reasonable steps to advise and support students in financial difficulty, through the Finance and Student Support services.

Subsequent to support measures being considered and applied, failure to pay agreed monies in line with any agreed arrangements will, in most cases, ultimately result in suspension or withdrawal from the course and the referral of the debt to the College's debt recovery agency.

Appendix 1: Home Student Residency - Qualifying Countries

Countries or areas where residency establishes eligibility for funding

a) Member states of the European Union

Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Republic of Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the UK.

b) Other territories categorised as being within the European Union

Other territories are categorised as being within the European Union for the purposes of the fees regulations; these are:

Cyprus: any Cypriot national living on any part of the island qualifies for EU residency and is considered an EU national

Finland: includes the Aland Islands

France: the French Overseas Department (DOMS) (Guadeloupe, Martinique, French Guiana, Reunion and Saint-Pierre et Miquelon) is part of metropolitan France and is part of the EU

Germany: includes the former German Democratic Republic and the tax-free port of Heligoland

Portugal: Madeira and the Azores are part of the EU; Macau is not

Spain: the Balearic Islands, the Canary Islands, Ceuta and Melilla are part of the EU

United Kingdom: Gibraltar is part of the territory of the EU

To note: The Channel Islands and Isle of Man are part of the United Kingdom and Islands but not part of the EU

Andorra, Monaco, San Marino and the Vatican are not part of the EU

c) EEA and eligible overseas dependent territories

For funding eligibility purposes, this is defined as all member states of the EU and Iceland, Liechtenstein, Switzerland, Norway and all the eligible British overseas territories and EU overseas territories listed in paragraph d below).

Although Switzerland is not part of the formally recognised EEA, its nationals are eligible under various international treaties signed by the UK and Swiss governments.

d) Eligible overseas territories of other British and EU member states

Learners who are nationals of certain British overseas territories and of certain European overseas territories are eligible for funding, depending on the three-year rule on residence in the EEA.

These are as follows:

- *Anguilla*
- *Bermuda*
- *British Antarctic Territory*
- *British Indian Ocean Territory*
- *British Virgin Islands*
- *Cayman Islands*
- *Falkland Islands*
- *Henderson Island*
- *Montserrat*
- *Pitcairn, Ducie and Oeno Islands*
- *South Georgia and the South Sandwich Isles*
- *St Helena and its dependencies*
- *Turks and Caicos Islands*
- *Greenland and Faroe Isles*
- *Antilles (Bonaire, Curacao, Saba, St Eustatius and St Maarten)*
- *Aruba*
- *New Caledonia and its dependencies*
- *French Polynesia*
- *Saint Barthélemy*
- *The Territory of Wallis and Futuna Islands*
- *Mayotte*
- *French Southern and Antarctic Territories*