Policy/Procedure/Guideline Review

Policy/Procedure/Guideline:	Fees Policy 2026/27
Senior Manager Responsible:	Deputy Principal (Finance & Resources)
Author:	Assistant Principal Finance and HR
Approved By:	Board
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Publication:	East Lancashire Learning Group Staff Hub Nelson and Colne College Website Nelson Lancashire Adult Learning Website East Lancashire UC website Accrington and Rossendale College Website
Changes Made:	Version 1 – for internal consultation Aligned to latest DfE Funding Rules and Lancashire Combined County Authority (LCCA) flexibilities (where appropriate) and updated references therein including changes to legal entitlements, local flexibilities and updated take-home pay threshold for unemployed students (para 3). Academic year updated throughout. Fees rates updated – uplifted by c3%.

East Lancashire Learning Fee Policy 2026/27

1. INTRODUCTION

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

It covers provision funded through:

- The Department for Education (DfE)
- The Lancashire County Combined Authority (LCCA) (devolved Adult Skills Fund)
- Higher Education, Advanced Learner Loans, Apprenticeships and self-financed provision.

Where funding is delivered through a devolved authority, the relevant devolved authority funding rules will apply. Where provision is funded directly by the DfE, the DfE funding rules will apply. The Group will ensure that the operation of this policy remains aligned to the latest published funding rules in force at the point of enrolment.

In 2026/27 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.

Where fees are due or evidence is required to claim full funding from the funding body, full payment or confirmation of payment arrangements and/or required evidence, as outlined in this policy, must be supplied before the enrolment can be completed and attendance on the course can commence.

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 – DfE Funded Full or Part-Time Learning

For the academic year 2026/27 students are defined as 16-18 if they are 16, 17 or 18 years old on 31 August 2026. 16-18-year-old students on DfE funded full or part-time learning programmes (classroom based, traineeships or apprenticeships) will not be charged fees related to tuition, compulsory enrolment, registration or initial examinations.

Note: in accordance with DfE funding rules, 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 not be charged for initial entry to examinations related to their study programme, but may be charged for the cost of any examination entry not undertaken due to a failure to attend where the college has already paid the fee. Charges will be applied for re-sits undertaken due to initial examination failure or 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. Construction, Hair, Beauty and Art require the students to obtain specific equipment for which a fee will be charged if purchased by the college and given to the student to retain, where the student does not wish to avail themselves of the option to borrow 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 2026 with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) will be fully funded and the provisions outlined in paragraph 2.1 will apply.

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 Skills Fund (ASF) – Funding Framework

For the 2026/27 academic year, Adult Skills Fund provision delivered by the Group is funded through:

- Lancashire Combined County Authority (LCCA) – devolved funding allocation
- Department for Education (DfE) – non-devolved funding allocation

Students will be funded under one allocation only, and the relevant funding rules will apply.

3.2 Residency and Funding Availability

ASF funding is subject to eligibility criteria, including residency and the availability of funding allocations. Where a student is ordinarily resident in a devolved area for which the College does not hold a funding allocation:

- ASF funding may not be available; and
- The student may be required to pay fees in line with the College's self-financing arrangements.

3.3 Fee Status Categories

All adult students will be assigned on of the following fee statuses:

Category	Description	Fee Position
Fully Funded	Meets eligibility for full funding	No tuition fees payable
Co-Funded	Partially funded by ASF	Tuition fee contribution payable
Self Funded		Full cost fees payable

3.4 Fully funded students (Fee remission)

The following students, who are aged 19 or older on 31 August 2026, and meet the residency criteria, will be entitled to full funding for their course, in accordance with the latest published LCCA or DfE funding rules. This includes tuition, exam and registration fees, plus any additional essential costs, for example DBS charges, materials and uniforms, where the student cannot complete and achieve their learning aim without them. The College will not make compulsory charges relating to the direct costs of delivering a learning aim to students who are fully funded. If the required evidence of eligibility is not provided at enrolment, the College reserves the right to charge the relevant co-funded or full cost fee until satisfactory evidence is produced.

Appendices 1 and 3 - Charts 1 and 2 show where full funding is the applicable level of government contribution for LCCA/DfE funded ASF. Where the type is red this applies to LCCA funded students only.

3.4a Legal Entitlements (LCCA and DfE)

LCCA and DfE funded ASF includes support for 4 legal entitlements to full funding for eligible adult students where the student is enrolled on qualifications that DfE has approved for funding in the DfE list of qualifications approved for funding:

- **English and maths, up to and including level 2** - for individuals aged 19 and over, who have not previously attained a GCSE in English or maths at grade 4 or above (or a qualification which is at a comparable or higher level) or have been assessed as having an existing skill level lower than grade 4 (even if they have previously achieved a GCSE or equivalent qualification in English and maths). They 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 (DfE), and/or
- **First full qualification at level 2 for individuals aged 19 to 23** on the day their course commences, if they choose a qualification from the level 2 legal entitlement list (See Appendix 2 for further details of Level 2 Entitlement), and/or
- **First full qualification at level 3 for individuals aged 19 to 23** on the day their course commences, if they choose a qualification from the level 3 legal entitlement list (See Appendix 3 for further details of Level 3 Entitlement), and/or
- **Essential Digital Skills qualifications (EDSQs) OR Digital Functional Skills (FSQs), up to and including level 1**, for individuals aged 19 and over on the day their course commences, who have digital skills assessed at below level 1.

A student can only be fully funded for one vocational qualification from the entitlement qualifications list when exercising their legal entitlement.

Where an eligible student aged 19 to 23 completes a qualification that appears on both the legal entitlement list and the Free Courses for Jobs list, they will be treated as having exercised their level 3 legal entitlement.

3.4 b Employment and Earnings Criteria

Students will be fully funded where:
They are studying:

- A Level 2 programme or below from the local flexibility offer*
- Free courses for jobs (FCfJ)
- Tailored learning
- SWAP
- The King's Trust
- English for speakers of other languages (ESOL)

And they are unemployed or earning below the relevant earnings threshold. The earnings threshold applied will depend on the funding source.

LCCA funded provision:

- Up to and including level 2: £26,800 gross annual salary
- Level 3 Free Courses for Jobs (FCfJ): £29,431 gross annual salary

DfE funded provision:

- £26,800 gross annual salary

Evidence of the above will be required on enrolment and the benefits must be active at that time. Examples of relevant evidence are:

- Wage slip dated within 3 months of learning start date
- Universal Credit statement dated within 3 months of learning start date
- Current employment contract which states gross monthly/annual wages

- A student is defined as being unemployed if one or more of the following apply, they:
    - Receive Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA), including those receiving National Insurance Credit only
    - Receive Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
    - Receive Universal Credit (UC), and their take-home pay as recorded on their UC statement (disregarding UC payments and other benefits) is less than £952 a month (student is sole adult in their benefit claim) or £1,534 a month (student has a joint benefit claim with their partner)
    - Are released on temporary licence, studying outside a prison environment, and not funded by the Ministry of Justice

- We may also use our discretion to fully fund other students if either of the following apply. The student:
    - receives other state benefits (not included in the list above) and their take-home pay (disregarding UC and other benefits) is less than £952 a month (student is sole adult in their benefit claim) or £1,534 a month (student has a joint benefit claim with their partner)
    - is not receiving any benefits, wants to be employed, and we are satisfied identified learning is directly relevant to their employment prospects and the local labour market needs

Local Flexibility Offer

Regulated qualifications, and/or their components, that the DfE fund, as listed on find a learning aim, which is not part of the English and maths, or level 2 or level 3 legal entitlement offer.

3.4 c Free courses for jobs offer

Free Courses for Jobs (FCFJ) is a targeted offer that supports eligible adults to access specified qualifications which improve their prospects in the labour market. The offer now includes eligible level 3 qualifications and a defined number of level 2 construction qualifications listed by DfE for 2026/27.

The offer includes:

- Adults aged 19 to 23 may access FCFJ on a fully funded basis where they meet the below earnings threshold / unemployed criteria, or where they are above the earnings threshold (section 3.4 b)and have not already achieved a full level 3 qualification. Adults aged 24 and over may access FCFJ on a fully funded basis where they meet the below earnings threshold / unemployed criteria (section 3.4 b); where they do not, Advanced Learner Loan funding will apply where the qualification is loan-funded.DfE list of qualifications approved for funding

Where an eligible student aged 19 to 23 completes a qualification that is included on both the legal entitlement list and the FCFJ list, they will be treated as having exercised their level 3 legal entitlement.

3.4d Other Eligible Groups

- Students enrolling onto The King's Trust Team Programme - Students aged 16-18 enrolling will be funded as per Section 2.1. Students aged 19+ enrolling on The King's Trust Team Programme will be fully funded where they meet the criteria outlined in Section 3.4b; otherwise the applicable fee status will be determined in line with the DfE ASF contribution rules for the learning aim.

- For LCCA funded provision, students will be fully funded where they are:
    - Under formal redundancy consultation: or
    - Have received notice of redundancy

  Appropriate evidence must be provided at enrolment.

- For provision funded through LCCA, the College may apply additional flexibilities in line with local funding rules to support priority groups.

3.5 ASF Co-Funded Students

Appendix 1 - Charts 1 and 2 show where co- funding is the applicable level of government contribution for LCCA/DfE funded ASF. Where the type is red this applies to LCCA funded students only.

3.5 a Students will be co-funded where they:

- Do not meet the criteria for full funding outlined in section 3.4; and
- Are enrolled on ASF-funded provision (sections 3.1 and 3.2)

In these cases the College receives partial funding and the student is required to pay a fee contribution.

3.2 b Part-Time Courses

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

3.5 c Full-Time Courses

For 2026/27, a fee of £825 (including examination fees of £165) 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 full funding outlined in Section 3.1 above e.g. legal entitlements or earnings threshold criteria.

Note: in accordance with DfE 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 additional course costs, 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
£49.50 plus college administration fee of £10) 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.

3.5 d 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 3.2c) 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.

3.5 e Discretionary Support for Fees

Hardship funding may be available to support tuition fees, where the student is not eligible to full funding for the reasons listed by the DfE (outlined in section 3.1) and:

- the fee level is prohibitive for the student due to their employment and/or benefits status
- the qualification is substantial and supports future employment prospects

In these circumstances, then the college has discretion to offer the following:
- Up to 100% of fee chargeable for essential skill qualifications (English/Maths/Digital/ESOL)
- Up to 100% of fee chargeable for substantial vocational or occupational qualifications

Funding for courses that are being undertaken for personal interest or leisure purposes will not be supported through hardship funding. Courses where Student Loans Company loan funding applies will not be supported.

3.6 Self-Funded students

Students will be treated as self-funded where:
- They are not eligible for ASF funding:or
- ASF funding is not available due to residency or allocation constraints.

The fee for 2026/27 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 2026/27 is £12.10. 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.

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

3.7a 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 3.1a and 3.1c.

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

- AS/A Levels up to a maximum of 4 full A levels
- Other general and vocational and technical qualifications at levels 3, 4, 5 and 6, including reformed technical qualifications and Alternative Academic Qualifications (see qualifications designated for loans)
- 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.

Where a student takes out a loan for an Access to HE diploma, completes it and progresses to and completes a Student Finance England fundable HE course designated under the Education (Student Support) Regulations 2011 at level 4, 5 or 6, the outstanding balance of the loan for the Access to HE diploma will be written off.
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.

3.7b Course Fee

The course fee includes tuition and examination costs and is guided by the maximum rate detailed in the DfE's Learning Aim Reference Service. The total fee will be advertised in 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.

3.7c 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 DfE 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.

3.7d 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.

3.7e 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.

3.7f 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.

3.8 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 2026/27 academic year will be £9,525. The standard tuition fee for part- time programmes will be a pro rata of £9,525.

4.2 Continuing Students

Fees for students continuing the same programme in 2026/27 will be based on the fees paid by students in the same circumstances in 2025/26 increased by the Retail Prices Index Excluding Mortgage Interest (RPIX) but subject to a cap at the new student rate outlined in para. 4.1.

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 2026/27 entry will be set and published by the end of July 2026.

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. TAILORED LEARNING

Tailored Learning (TL) forms part of the Adult Skills Fund (ASF) and is delivered through LCCA devolved funding with a fee paid by the student where applicable.

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

Tailored Learning Courses are delivered and reported to the LCCA under the following seven delivery strands:

- Engaging and/or building confidence
- Preparation for further learning
- Preparation for employment
- Improving essential skills (English, English for Speakers of Other Languages, maths and digital provision)
- Equipping parents/carers to support children's learning
- Health and well-being
- Developing stronger communities

5.1 Types of Tailored Learning

There are two main categories of Tailored Learning:

- **Publicly Advertised Programme**

These courses are accessible to eligible adults, delivered through the main college sites and community venues within Lancashire. Students on this provision may be required to pay a course fee. Where a regulated qualification is delivered through Tailored Learning, the fee status will be determined in accordance with the ASF contribution rules in Section 3.1.

- **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, wellbeing 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
- General population health and wellbeing
- Wellbeing in the workplace

5.2 Tailored 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 DfE. The determination of tuition fees for all individual programmes is set on a programme-by-programme basis, informed by, and aligned to, an assessment of market value. In line with the ASF Tailored Learning rules, the College will seek to collect fee income from those who can afford to pay and will, where appropriate, consider charging employers for employer-facing Tailored Learning. Tailored Learning funding will not be used for provision that is primarily or solely for leisure purposes.

Fees are payable at the beginning of each course as part of the enrolment process.

5.3 Fee Reduction 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 reduction and will pay a maximum course fee of £21 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
- 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

Apprentices will not be charged tuition fees for their apprenticeship training. Where costs are not covered by government funding, these will be met by the employer in line with apprenticeship funding rules.

The funding arrangements and fees due for apprentices are dependent on the type of employer and the age of the apprentice:

Employers with a pay bill over £3 million each year and therefore pay the Apprenticeship Levy will fund the cost of the apprenticeship from their levy pot.

For non-levy paying employers taking on an apprentice aged 16-21 from 1 April 2024, the apprenticeship will be fully funded by the government.

For non-levy paying employers taking on an apprentice aged 22-24, where the apprentice has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or has been in the care of their local authority, the apprenticeship will be fully funded by the government up to the funding band maximum.

For non-levy paying employers in all other circumstances, they will share the cost of training and assessing their apprentices with government – this is called 'co-investment'. These employers pay 5% towards the cost of apprenticeship training and the government pays the remaining (95%).

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 DfE funding requirements, the College reserves the right to amend these arrangements in line with any changes introduced by the DfE.

7. FEE PAYMENT

7.1 Examination/Registration and Tuition Fees

Where 19+ students do not meet the criteria for full funding from the DfE 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 and where the total fees due from a student are less than £150 must be paid in full at enrolment.

For courses which are longer than 20 weeks and the fees due from a student are greater than £150, payments can 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.

Appendix 5 details the available options for payment of fees

7.4 Fee Instalments

For courses lasting longer than 20 weeks and 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 courses lasting between 8 - 19 weeks inclusive and 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 1st 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 and 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 DfE'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 2026/27 is £9,850. 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 2026/27 will be charged a rate of
£11.20 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 2026/27.

7.9 Asylum Seekers

Asylum seekers aged 19+ may be eligible for publicly funded FE provision where they have lived in the UK for 6 months or longer while their claim is being considered by the Home Office and no decision has been made, or where they are receiving eligible local authority support.

Individuals who have been refused asylum may also be eligible where they meet the relevant DfE residency and support criteria in force at the point of enrolment. Students whose immigration permission includes a 'no recourse to public funds' condition are not excluded from education funding solely for that reason; eligibility will be assessed under the normal DfE funding rules. Those aged 16-18 remain eligible for funding subject to the prevailing DfE eligibility rules.

7.10 Ministry of Defence Schemes for members of the Armed Forces and Veteran's Community

The Ministry of Defence (MoD) promotes lifelong learning among members of the Armed Forces and the veteran's community by providing Learning Credits through the Enhanced Learning Credits scheme (ELC) and Further Education and Higher Education (FEHE) scheme.

The schemes entitle eligible service personnel and service leavers to receive financial assistance towards their learning. https://www.enhancedlearningcredits.com/

7.11 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.

7.12 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.

7.13 Apprenticeships

7.13a 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 DfE). Where this applies, the college will issue an invoice to the employer for the 5% co-investment payment.

7.13b 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 2021 all Non-Levy employers are required to reserve funding via the digital Apprenticeship Service.

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

Invoicing

Up to a value of £349.99, employers will be required to settle invoices in full within standard terms (30 days from invoice date).

Where the invoice value is > £350 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.

7.13c Levy Transfer

For employers who either do not pay the levy or have exhausted the levy funds in their apprenticeship service account, they can receive levy funds from other levy paying employers. This is referred to as a 'Levy Transfer'.

Where employers are funding an Apprentice via Levy Transfer they are required to inform the college. If at any point the employer who has transferred the Levy funding ('sending' employer') to the employer employing the apprentice ('the receiving employer') if the sending employer has insufficient funds to cover the cost of the apprenticeship training, the receiving employer must pay co-investment at 5% to the college. The college will issue an invoice to the employer for the 5% co-investment payment.

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

8. COLLEGE BURSARY FUNDS

Students who are studying an DfE 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 Skills Fund, 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 Central 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.

<u>Full-time Home/EU Students</u>

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 2026 the year would begin in January 2026 and end in January 2027.

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 the planned end date. Any overpayment arising from this calculation will be refunded to the employer (within 30 days of the withdrawal being processed by the college) subject to a £20 administration fee charge.

9.4 Tailored Learning

The College 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 Tailored 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:

- East Lancashire Learning Group Staff Hub
- Nelson and Colne College Website
- Lancashire Adult Learning Website
- Accrington and Rossendale College Website
- East Lancashire UC 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 2026/27

14. MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITY

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

Appendix 1 – Funding Body Contributions Charts

Chart 1: 19 to 23 Year Olds

19-23 Funding

Provision	Notes	Funding
English & maths up to and including level 2	Must be delivered as part of the legal entitlement	Fully funded
Essential digital skills qualifications up to and including level 1	Must be delivered as part of the digital legal entitlement qualifications	Fully funded
First full level 2 entitlement (excluding English & maths)	First full level 2 must be delivered as part of the legal entitlement qualifications	Fully funded
Learning aims up to and including level 2 (local flexibility offer)	For those who meet the earnings threshold, unemployed criteria or are under formal redundancy consultation	Fully funded
	For those where the above conditions do not apply	Co-funded
First full level 3 legal entitlement	First full level 3 must be delivered as part of the legal entitlement qualifications	Fully funded (ASF)
Free courses for jobs (FCFJ) offer	For those who meet the earnings threshold, unemployed criteria or are under formal redundancy consultation or have not achieved a full level 3	Fully funded (FCFJ)
	Learners above the earnings threshold and have achieved a full level 3	Advanced learner loan
English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) learning up to and including level 2	For those who meet the earnings threshold, unemployed criteria or are under formal redundancy consultation	Fully funded
	For those where the above conditions do not apply	Co-funded

LCCA additional provisions in red type

Chart 2: 24+

24+ Funding

Provision	Notes	Funding
English & maths up to and including level 2	Must be delivered as part of the legal entitlement	Fully funded
Essential digital skills qualifications up to and including level 1	Must be delivered as part of the digital legal entitlement qualifications	Fully funded
First full level 2 entitlement (excluding English & maths)	First full level 2 must be delivered as part of the legal entitlement qualifications	Fully funded
Learning aims up to and including level 2 (local flexibility offer)	For those who meet the earnings threshold, unemployed criteria or are under formal redundancy consultation	Fully funded
	For those where the above conditions do not apply	Co-funded
Free courses for jobs (FCFJ) offer	For those who meet the earnings threshold, unemployed criteria or are under formal redundancy consultation	Fully funded (FCFJ)
	For those where the above conditions do not apply	Advanced learner loan
English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) learning up to and including level 2	For those who meet the earnings threshold, unemployed criteria or are under formal redundancy consultation	Fully funded
	For those where the above conditions do not apply	Co-funded

LCCA additional provisions in red type

Appendix 2

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 qualifications from the full Level 2 legal entitlement list found on the DfE list of qualifications approved for funding .

Examples of qualifications which would preclude remission on the grounds of Level 2 entitlement are given in the prior attainments table (Appendix 4).

Level 2 qualifications that are not part of the legal entitlement may:

- be fully funded within the below earnings threshold and unemployed policy entitlement (see para. 3.1 b)
- otherwise be co-funded.

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 student must be working towards one of the following qualifications identified as eligible for funding by the DfE on the DfE list of qualifications approved for funding.

Examples of qualifications which would preclude remission on the grounds of Level 3 entitlement are given in the prior attainments table (Appendix 4).

Level 3 qualifications that do not meet the legal entitlement criteria for Level 3 may:

- be fully funded through the Free Courses for Jobs (FCFJ) offer
- be eligible for funding through an Advanced Learner Loan (ALL)

LEGAL ENTITLEMENTS - PRIOR ATTAINMENT LEVELS (EXAMPLES)

Previous Highest Qualification	Qualification Examples	Is the student entitled to tuition fee remission under the Legal Entitlement?		
		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 meets the requirements for the 16 to 19 performance tables.	**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. • Technical, or applied general qualification at level 3, which meets the requirements for the 16-19 performance tables • Core maths at level 3.	**No**	**No**	**No**

ASF Funding Rules no longer uses prior attainment as an eligibility criterion for the policy entitlements. Students can be fully funded if they meet the residency eligibility criteria, are aged 19 and over and earn below the earnings threshold or are unemployed (see paragraph 3.1b).

Appendix 5

Payment Arrangements for FE Students aged 19+ (on 31st August 2025), HE Provision and Courses Delivered for Employers

Provision Type	Learner/Employer Financed	Course Fee Value	Payment Method
Workplace/Employer Delivery	Employer Financed (Letter/Email confirming Sponsorship Required)	Greater than £150	Pay in Full on Enrolment via Worldpay or Cash (Cash limit - £500)
			Invoice
			Direct Debit
			Instalment Plan
		£150 or less	Pay in Full on Enrolment via Worldpay or Cash (Cash limit - £500)
			Invoice
Teacher Training Course	Learner Financed	Greater than £150	Pay in Full on Enrolment via Worldpay or Cash (Cash limit - £500)
			Initial Teacher Training Bursary
			Student Loan
			Direct Debit
			Instalment Plan
HE Course	Employer Financed (Purchase Order/Letter/Email confirming Sponsorship Required)	Greater than £150	Pay in Full on Enrolment via Worldpay or Cash (Cash limit - £500)
			Invoice
			Direct Debit
			Instalment Plan
	Learner Financed	Greater than £150	Student Loan
			Pay in Full on Enrolment via Worldpay or Cash (Cash limit - £500)
			Direct Debit
			Instalment Plan
Level 3 including LAL Community Courses	Employer Financed (Purchase Order/Letter/Email confirming Sponsorship Required)	Greater than £150	Pay in Full on Enrolment via Worldpay or Cash (Cash limit - £500)
			Invoice
			Direct Debit
			Instalment Plan
		£150 or less	Pay in Full on Enrolment via Worldpay or Cash (Cash limit - £500)
			Invoice
	Learner Financed	Greater than £150	Advanced Loan
			Pay in Full on Enrolment via Worldpay or Cash (Cash limit - £500)
			Direct Debit
			Instalment Plan
		£150 or less	Pay in Full on Enrolment via Worldpay or Cash (Cash limit - £500)
Level 2 and below including LAL Community Courses	Employer Financed (Purchase Order/Letter/Email confirming Sponsorship Required)	Greater than £150	Pay in Full on Enrolment via Worldpay or Cash (Cash limit - £500)
			Invoice
			Direct Debit
			Instalment Plan
		£150 or less	Pay in Full on Enrolment via Worldpay or Cash (Cash limit - £500)
			Invoice
	Learner Financed	Greater than £150	Pay in Full on Enrolment via Worldpay or Cash (Cash limit - £500)
			Direct Debit
			Instalment Plan
		£150 or less	Pay in Full on Enrolment via Worldpay or Cash (Cash limit - £500)
LAL ESOL Courses	Learner Financed	Greater than £90	Pay in Full on Enrolment via Worldpay or Cash (Cash limit - £500)
			Instalment Plan
		£90 or less	Pay in Full on Enrolment via Worldpay or Cash (Cash limit - £500)