

FE Fees Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework within which the College's fee setting and refund processes are devised and operated.
- 1.2 The policy also sets a framework for ensuring that comprehensive information and guidance regarding fees is available and accessible to prospective learners, staff and Governors.

2. Scope of this policy

This policy applies to all fees for non-Higher Education (HE) courses.

3. Fee Setting process

- 3.1 The setting of fees will be reviewed annually. Any changes are recommended to the Senior Management Team for approval.
- 3.2 In setting fees for courses the College considers a broad range of factors, including, but not limited to, ESFA funding guidance, financial viability, demand, the curriculum plan and competitor pricing.
- 3.3 The College reserves the right, once fees are agreed, to be flexible in discounting in order to be able to tactically respond to demand and changes in market opportunities.
- 3.4 The College reserves the right to cancel any course or change the fee rate where the costs of delivery may result in financial loss and, or, cancel any course that is not financially viable due to lack of students enrolling.

4. Fee Remission

The College will apply fee remission as outlined in the latest version of the ESFA Funding Rules.

5. Further Education Provision

- 5.1 The College will follow the ESFA funding rules available on the Gov.uk website. [ESFA: funding rules, rates and formula - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/esfa-funding-rules-rates-and-formula)
- 5.2 Examination fees for re-sits will be charged in accordance with the College re-sit policy.

- 5.3 Fee paying adult learners, including those who take out an Advanced Learner Loan, will be wholly responsible for the payment of their fees in full.
- 5.4 For all learners a fee covering costs for materials may also be charged.

6. Fee Waivers

- 6.1 The College cannot waive exam, registration or certification fees where these apply.
- 6.2 Fees can only be waived with the express permission of the Vice Principal Finance & Resources.

7. Payment of Fees

- 7.1 Fees become payable in full on enrolment, learners have an option to sign up for a payment plan to spread the cost of courses that exceed 12 weeks. The payment plan will be set up for a maximum of 8 payments with the last instalment being made two months before the end of the course. Should the agreement not be followed, the College reserves the right to refuse future instalment plans.
- 7.2 Learners whose employer has agreed to pay their fees are required to submit a completed Employer Authorisation Form from their employer at the time of enrolment confirming their employer will cover the full cost of the course. The normal method of payment will then be for the College to issue an invoice for full payment.
- 7.3 For courses less than two years in length (five terms or less), fees quoted apply for the full course. Where a course runs for two or more years, further fees will apply for each subsequent year of the course.
- 7.4 Students funding their course with a Student Loan need to have an approved application in place by the end of the first half term. If at any point, but no later than the first half term, the Student Loan has not been confirmed, the student will be required to either pay in full or set up a payment plan (see 7.1). Any payments received would be refunded once the loan has been confirmed. Failure to make these payments will result in the student being withdrawn from the College.

- 7.5 Any student who is unable to pay within the original agreed terms will be withdrawn from their course unless further payment terms have been agreed with the Finance Manager.

Any student with outstanding debt at the end of the year:

- Will not be permitted to progress to the next year of study or enrol on another course;
- Will not receive references;
- Will have their outstanding debt passed to a debt collection agency for recovery. The debt collection agency will also apply charges. As a result, their credit rating and ability to obtain finance in the future may be affected.

8. Financial Support

For learners on low income undertaking government subsidised courses, the College is often able to offer financial support for payment towards costs associated with their course, such as materials, equipment, educational trips etc. Learners requiring information can look on the College website (<https://www.southampton-city.ac.uk/student-support/>) or contact the Student Finance Officer at studentfinance@Southampton-City.ac.uk.

9. Refunds upon withdrawal

9.1 Students attending a course lasting more than 12 weeks but less than two years, who withdraws, will be charged as detailed below. These rules apply regardless of the method used to pay for the course. Application of a withdrawal fee commences from the first week of teaching.

- Students leaving within 14 days of their course start date will not receive a refund of any deposits, registration fees or regulatory prepayments paid prior to registration unless exceptional circumstances apply but the College will refund any other tuition fees that the student has paid.
- Students withdrawing before the end of the first term will be liable for 25% of the annualised tuition fee.

- Students withdrawing during the second term will be liable for 50% of the annual tuition fee.
- Students withdrawing during the third or later term will be liable for the full annual fee.
- All withdrawals are dependent upon written notification of withdrawal being received by the College before the end of the current term.

Students attending a course of two years or more duration, will be subject to the same refund rules set-out in section 9.1, for each year of the course.

Failure to pay outstanding fees will result in the debt being passed to a debt collection agency as described in section 7.5

- 9.2 Students attending a course which is under 12 weeks duration, who withdraw once the course has started will not be entitled to a refund.
- 9.3 Where a course is cancelled by the College, full refunds will be made to students.
- 9.4 Where a learner is withdrawing as a result of personal circumstances, or where the learner can demonstrate the College has failed to deliver what could reasonably be expected, then an application for a refund should be made in writing to the Vice Principal Finance & Resources. The College may require provision of evidence to justify any request for refund on compassionate or medical grounds.
- 9.5 If a student is excluded from College for misconduct no refund will be granted.
- 9.6 Where a learner's fees are paid through a sponsor, the sponsor will be required to complete the Employer Authorisation Form as noted above. In the case of cancellations made by an employer or sponsor in advance of 48 hours of the start of the course, the College will offer credit towards other offerings of the course or an alternative to be redeemed within 12 months. Cancellation within 48 hours of the start of the course, or after the commencement of the course, will not be offered credit.

9.7 Any refunds processed will be subject to a 10% administration fee (maximum £50).

10. Status of this Policy

10.1 This policy was approved by SMT in March 2022.

10.2 The policy will be reviewed biennially by the SMT.

Date approved: March 2022

Approved by: SMT

Date reviewed: March 2022

Date of next review: March 2024