



# **Hull Training and Hull Adult Education Service**

## **Pound Plus and Adult Education Fee Policy August 2020 – July 2021**

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If you require this information in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language, please contact us and we will do our best to help.

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## Introduction

This document provides guidance on the levels of funding and collection of fees for the service for the academic year 2020/2021

The fees policy is based on the principle set down by the Government that **those who are able to pay should do so**. This enables the service to continue to target more vulnerable groups and those on a lower income by offering reduced fees where the need is greatest.

Our accredited courses for Adult Learners; Community Learning; Workplace Courses and Apprenticeships are supported by Central Government funding through the Education and Skills Funding Agency who cover part of the course costs. There is an expectation that, where appropriate, learners or employers will make a contribution to the costs of delivering their programme through the payment of course fees.

**Section 1 details the funding and tuition fee levels for the 2020/2021 academic year.** The funding rules are set on an annual basis by the Education and Skills Funding Agency. These fee levels are set annually and approved by the Hull City Council.

**Section 2 describes the fees policy for the 2020/2021 academic year.** This section explains the regulations surrounding fees for different learners and different types of learning.

**Section 3 describes the fee remission, payment and refund policy for the 2020/2021 academic year.**

The guidelines for determining eligibility for tuition fee exemption (known as fee remission) on accredited courses are laid down by Central Government for all accredited provision. Separate guidelines have been applied to Community Learning courses.

**Section 4 deals with non-payment of fees.**

This section is intended to help staff collect fees fairly, effectively and outlines the service's policy towards learners who accrue a fee debt.

### **Please note:**

**The service reserves the right to amend any part of this Fee Policy, without notice, in response to changes in Education and Skills Funding Agency guidance.**

## Section 1

### **Funding and Tuition Fee Levels for 2020/2021 academic year**

- Many learners are able to access courses free of charge. These courses are paid for with grants received from Central Government.
- On co-funded courses where fees are charged, these represent only a proportion of the full cost of the course, with the remainder being paid for with grants from Central Government.

- Eligible learners may apply for a concession or financial support to help meet the fees for their course.
- Learners aged 19+ joining a qualification course at Level 3 or above are not eligible for grant funding, but may be eligible to apply for an Advanced Learning Loan to cover the cost of their course.

<b>Apprenticeships / Traineeships Funding and Tuition Fees</b>		
Level 2 Intermediate Apprenticeships	All Ages	Levy or Employer Contribution
Level 3 Advanced Apprenticeships	All Ages	Levy or Employer Contribution
Traineeships (without a full level 3)	16-23	Fully Funded

<b>Level of Government Contribution</b>			
<b>Provision</b>	<b>19- to 23-year-olds</b>	<b>24+ unemployed</b>	<b>24+ other</b>
English and maths, up to and including level 2 (Must be delivered as part of the legal entitlement)	Fully funded* (up to and including Level 2)	Fully funded*	Fully funded*
Essential Digital Skills Qualifications up to and including level 1	Fully funded*	Fully funded*	Fully funded*
Level 2 (excluding English and maths) (First full level 2 must be delivered as part of the legal entitlement)	Fully funded* (first and full)	Fully Funded	Co-funded+
Learning to progress to level 2	Fully funded^ (up to and including Level 1)	Fully funded	Co-funded+
Level 3 (First full level 3 must be delivered as part of the legal entitlement)	Fully funded* (first and full)	Loan-funded	Loan-funded
	Loan-funded** (previously achieved full Level 3 or above)		
Traineeship# (without a full level 3)	Fully funded ( <i>including 16- to 24-year-olds###</i> )	N/A	N/A
English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) learning up to and including Level 2	Co-funded	Fully funded	Co-funded+
	Fully funded – unemployed		
Learning aims up to and including Level 2, where the learner has already achieved a first full Level 2 or above	Co-funded	Fully funded	Co-funded+
	Fully funded – unemployed		

\*Must be delivered as one of the English and maths, and/or first full level 2 or first full level 3 qualifications required as part of the legal entitlements.

^Must be delivered as entry or level one provision from local flexibility.

# Excludes flexible element where funding depends on age and level.

## 16- to 18-year-old learners must be eligible under the ESFA's young people's residency requirements.

\*\* Availability of loans at level 3 does not replace the legal entitlement to full funding for learners aged 19 to 23 undertaking their first full level 3.

+ Low Wage flexibility may apply,

- Fee level will be set according to the resources and staffing requirements for the individual course and advertised in the course brochure.
- There may be instances where a class may be cancelled due to low numbers but the service may offer the opportunity to learners to increase fees to enable the class to run.

Workplace Courses	
Workplace Course fees	As advertised

Fees	
Fees as charged by the Awarding Organisation	Variable as advertised

Consumable Resource Fee
There will be further charges attached to some courses for consumables.

## Section 2 Fee Policy for 2020/2021 academic year

### 2.1 Accredited Courses (learners aged 19+)

Accredited courses provided by the service are through either classroom or workplace learning. Workplace learning is defined as any learning aim delivered within a workplace and in connection with the employed learners' occupation or their employer's business. Classroom learning is everything that is not workplace learning and includes Traineeships.

Accredited courses for adult learners are funded by a combination of

- Education and Skills Funding Agency contributions
- Contribution towards the cost of learning by the employer or learner
- Full cost of learning paid by employer or learner (or both) and possibly through Advanced Learner Loans

The fee components relevant to accredited courses are:

1. **Tuition fee** - the fee charged by the service for the delivery of the learning activity. This rate is either per hour or one set by the detailed costings of an individual course.
2. **Accreditation fee** - the fee charged by an Awarding Organisation for providing support to the course. This fee component can be made up of a variety of Awarding Organisation fees such as registration, certification, external quality assurance and assessment and exam costs.
3. **Reduced fee** - the fee charged by the service for the administration of the Awarding Organisation paperwork and fees.

Where possible a single all-inclusive fee comprising of all the above elements will be publicised. If this is not possible, due to delays in confirmation of any of the component fees, the fee that is publicised will be clearly marked as requiring an extra fee to be paid later.

Many learners who do not hold a Full Level 2 qualification may be entitled to their course tuition being fully or part funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

## **2.2 Community Learning & First Steps (learners aged 19+)**

Learning which

- maximise access to learning for adults, bringing new opportunities and improving lives, whatever people's circumstances
- promote social renewal by bringing local communities together to experience the joy of learning and the pride that comes with achievement
- maximise the effect learning has on the social and economic well-being of individuals, families and communities particularly those who are most disadvantaged

The fee components relevant to the courses are:

1. **Tuition fee** - the fee charged by the service for the delivery of the learning activity. This rate is either per hour or one set by the detailed costings of an individual course.
2. **Consumable resources fee** - the fee charged by the service for any consumable resources or materials that are required for the course.

Where possible a single all-inclusive fee comprising all the above elements will be publicised.

## **2.3 Apprenticeships**

An apprenticeship is a job with an accompanying skills development programme. Through your apprenticeship, you will gain the technical knowledge, practical experience and wider skills you need for your immediate job and future career.

The main rules governing apprenticeships are:

- the apprentice must be employed in a job; they may be an existing employee or a new employee
- the apprentice must work towards achieving an approved apprenticeship standard or apprenticeship framework
- the apprenticeship training must last at least 12 months
- the apprentice must spend at least 20% of their time on off-the-job training - this training must be directly relevant to the apprenticeship framework or standard

Specific eligibility criteria apply to Apprenticeships.

## 2.4 Learners below the age of 16

The service does not enrol learners below the age of 16 on any of its courses because the Government provides funding for learning to under 16s through schools and colleges.

If a young person is being home educated who is of compulsory school age they are not eligible for our courses and their parents should seek funding from the Local Authority or school if appropriate.

## 2.5 Learners aged 16 - 18

The fee to be charged to a learner in this category are dependent on a number of key factors: -

### Eligibility for fee remission

For the 2020/2021 academic year, a learner is defined as a 16-18 year old learner if they meet the following criteria:

The learner is aged between 16 and 18 on the 31 August 2020

### Course Type

The type of course determines the fee charged to 16-18 year old learners. Therefore, where a learner meets the criteria set out above, the following fees, dependant on course type, should be applied:

**Accredited courses** recognised as being suitable for 16-18 years old: no tuition, accreditation or local exam fees can be charged. We can charge for examinations and re-sits as follows

- where the required attendance or completion of work has not been achieved
- where the learner fails without good reason to sit the examination for which the institution has paid
- where a learner re-sits an examination resulting from an initial examination failure
- where a learner re-sits an exam with the aim of achieving marginal improvements in grades
- qualifications leading to a GSCE grade 4 to 9 or A\* to C in English and/or maths where the learner has not yet achieved either a grade 4 to 9 or A\* to C in these subjects are not treated as retakes for this purpose

**Community Learning:** learners under the age of 19 are not eligible to enrol on Community Learning classes with the service.

**Functional Skills English & maths:** no fee payable.

## 2.6 ESOL – English for Speakers of Other Languages (learners aged 19+)

**Accredited courses – up to and including L2 as listed below:**

- Functional Skills English and/or Maths
- Employability
- Essential Digital Skills

No tuition or resources fees\*

\*subject to eligibility criteria (EU residency)

## **ESOL Community Learning:**

### **Communication Skills for Working and Living in Hull**

Learning which

- maximises access to learning for adults, bringing new opportunities and improving lives, whatever people's circumstances
- promotes social renewal by bringing local communities together to experience the joy of learning and the pride that comes with achievement
- maximises the effect learning has on the social and economic well-being of individuals, families and communities particularly those who are most disadvantaged

No tuition or resources fees\*

\*subject to eligibility criteria (EU residency)

### **ESOL Full Cost**

All other ESOL provision will be charged at a fee which includes:

1. Tuition fee - the fee charged by the service for the delivery of the learning activity. This rate is either per hour or one set by the detailed costings of an individual course.
2. Consumable resources fee - the fee charged by the service for any consumable resources or materials that are required for the course.

## **2.6 Eligibility (EU residency)**

In general, learners who are European Union residents are eligible for Education and Skills Funding Agency funding and therefore the normal fee policy applies to their fees. However, there are very specific rules regarding eligibility set out in the document "ESFA Funding Rules 2020/2021"

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/838580/AEB\\_2019-20\\_rules\\_Sept\\_Draft\\_version\\_3\\_.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/838580/AEB_2019-20_rules_Sept_Draft_version_3_.pdf)

### **Important note:**

Learners who are non EU residents should contact the centre administration staff to discuss their enrolment and fees.

## **2.7 19+ Advanced Learning Loans**

For learners aged 19 or over funding for provision at level 3 and 4 is accessible through the Advanced Learning Loans system. A loan will be available up to a maximum of 100 percent of the rate. See separate guidance for the accessing of Advanced Learner Loans.



## Section 3

### Fee Remission, Payment and Refund Guidelines for 2020/2021

Learners who meet certain Education and Skills Funding Agency eligibility criteria do not have to pay the tuition part of their fee and therefore their tuition fee is remitted. The service has different eligibility criteria as a basis on which to offer a concessionary fee rate for its Community Learning courses.

These guidelines have been produced to enable staff to:

- determine a learner's eligibility for fee remission, or a concessionary fee
- know which types of evidence to request to prove eligibility

#### Discretionary Learner Support Fund

Funds are available in exceptional circumstances to enable learners to meet the cost of accreditation and exam fees if they are not otherwise able to do so (See Discretionary Learner Support Fund Policy.)

### 3.1 Accredited Courses

Learners on accredited courses who fall within one or more category given in section 3.7 may be eligible for fee remission.

Our fee remission categories for accredited courses are based on guidance issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

#### 3.1.1 Repeating an Accredited Course

The Education and Skills Funding Agency will **not** fund learners who wish to repeat an accredited course on which they have previously achieved a pass, withdrew before completion or did not complete. These learners are therefore required to pay the full cost of their course, which may be substantially higher than the advertised fee and should contact centre administration staff for more information.

### 3.2 Community Learning Courses

Learners on low incomes may qualify for a concessionary fee if they fall into one or more of the fee remission categories outlined in section 3.7.

### 3.3 Apprenticeships

For apprenticeships starting after 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 the employer will use their levy funding to pay for apprenticeship training or make a financial contribution to the training.

### 3.4 Full Level 2 and Level 3 entitlement

**Full Level 2 entitlement** - learners aged 19-23 years who do not have a full level 2 qualification or above are eligible for tuition and exam fees remission on all complete full level 2 qualifications.

**Full Level 3 entitlement** – learners aged 19-23 years undertaking their first full level 3 qualification will be eligible for tuition and exam fees remission on all full level 3 qualifications.

Full level 2 or full level 3 entitlement learners will need to complete and sign a self-declaration of eligibility form as evidence.

### 3.5 Progression funding

In 2020/2021 Entry or Level 1 courses will be at a reduced fee where a learner is aged 19-23 years and has an entitlement to a full Level 2 qualification, in that their highest prior attainment is Level 1 or below, and they need a step up from basic skills in order to progress to level 2. Full funding for a learning aim will not include repeat qualifications at the same level i.e. where there is no progression, unless it is part of a complementary personalised programme of learning.

Learners entitled to reduced fee with progression funding will need to complete and sign a self-declaration of eligibility form as evidence of eligibility.

### 3.6 Evidence of eligibility for fee remission

Learners are responsible for providing suitable evidence of their eligibility for reduced fee – as shown in section 3.7.

Learners must provide suitable evidence **at the time of enrolment**.

Please note that we cannot accept bank statements as proof of means-tested benefit receipt.

### 3.7 Categories of learner entitlements to fee remission in 2020/2021

**Accredited qualifications:**

Category	Evidence required
Aged 16, 17 or 18 on 31 <sup>st</sup> August 2020 and enrolling on a 2020/2021 course – courses listed in Section 96 only. <a href="http://www.dfes.gov.uk/section96">www.dfes.gov.uk/section96</a>	Birth certificate or Passport or Driving licence
19-23 year old learners studying their first Full level 2 qualification	Self declaration form
19-23 year old learners studying their first Full level 3 qualification	Self declaration form
19 -23 year old learners studying their first Level 3 without having a Full level 2 qualification	Self declaration form
Progression funding entitlement (19-23 year old)	Self declaration form
Those people who are on Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) (including the named dependant where the claim is joint) or Employment Support Allowance (ESA) in the Work Related Activity Group	DWP letter - needs to be current or this financial year
Those people who are receiving Universal Credit because they are unemployed, and who are mandated (required) to undertake skills training.	DWP referral form
Unemployed learners not claiming JSA or ESA who are actively looking for employment and are in receipt of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit (excluding Single Person Discount)</li> <li>▪ Income Support</li> <li>▪ Named dependant of someone in receipt of the above</li> </ul>	Official Confirmation Letter
Low Wage flexibility - earning less than £17,004.00 annual gross salary	Wage slip

**The additional following benefits can still be used for eligibility for fee remission on Community Learning courses:**

Category	Evidence required
They receive Universal Credit, earn less than £330 a month and are determined by Jobcentre Plus as being in one of the following groups:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All Work Related Requirements Group</li> <li>- Work Preparation Group</li> <li>- Work Focused Interview Group</li> </ul>	Official Confirmation Letter
In receipt of Pension Guarantee Credit	Official Confirmation Letter
In receipt of Working Tax Credit with a household income of less than £18,000	Official Confirmation Letter
In receipt of contribution based ESA (unless in the Work Related Activity Group)	Official Confirmation Letter

### 3.8 Payments methods

All fees are due on enrolment to a course. However, provided the relevant criteria are met, the service can offer payment by instalments.

#### 3.8.1 Paying by instalments

The option of instalment payments is available where the fee is greater than £100. The first instalment payment must be made on enrolment to the course.

##### Payment schedule for instalments:

1. For course fee of £100.00 - £149.00 we will require 50% of the fee to be paid on enrolment. The first instalment will include any accreditation and/or other fees due. Accreditation and/or other fees are paid to an external organisation (e.g. Awarding Organisation) and are therefore usually non-refundable.
2. The second payment will be for the remaining balance and will be invoiced at the start of the second term of the course.
3. For course fee of £150.00 and over we will require 34% of the fee to be paid on enrolment. The first instalment will include any accreditation and/or other fees due. Accreditation and/or other fees are paid to an external organisation (e.g. Awarding Organisation) and are therefore usually non-refundable.
4. The second instalment will be invoiced for 33% of the course fee at the start of term two.
5. The third instalment will be invoiced for the remaining 33% of the course fee at the start of term three.

##### Non-payment of instalments

Learners will be asked to sign a declaration of intent to pay for their course by instalments. The use of the instalment facility does not remove a learner's obligation to pay the course fee. Learners withdrawing before their course starts, or part way through will be subject to our cancellation policy (see section 3.9) and will be required to make any remaining instalment payments - unless a refund has been agreed (see section 3.10). Failure to pay will result in an invoice from the City Council and/or instigation of debt recovery procedures.

### **3.8.2 Withdrawal from a course**

On all accredited provision if a learner withdraws and is paying by instalments they will be invoiced for the remaining balance on the date of withdrawal, unless they have a medical certificate.

If learner is a non-fee paying and enters employment which prevents them from attending their course there is an expectation they will complete their learning by attending alternative provision.

Failure to comply will result in a £50.00 withdrawal charge. If it is not possible due to working hours to complete the full course learners will need to provide proof of employment and evidence of working hours.

Learners who have accessed the Advanced Learner Loans to fund their course and withdraw are still liable to pay the balance of the course fee to the service.

### **3.9 Refunds Policy/Cancellation Policy**

Learners should note that fees should be paid at the time of enrolment and are not automatically refundable. However, in the following circumstances a refund of the full fee will be provided:

- when a course which has not started is cancelled by the service because it has not reached viable numbers
- if the complaints procedure rules in favour of a learner who has expressed gross dissatisfaction with a course.

The service may at its discretion offer pro-rata refunds or a transfer to a similar course.

- This is usually only an option in the following circumstances:
- where a learner is forced to withdraw through ill health and a doctor certifies that they are too unwell to continue, a refund of remaining weeks less £10 administration fee.
- where a learner can provide evidence that they now have to act as a carer and have to withdraw from a course.
- payment to spouse/partner will be made in the event of the death of a learner.
- where an unemployed learner can provide evidence that they have subsequently gained employment which prevents them attending their course and they cannot transfer to a similar course at a more convenient time.
- when a course is cancelled by the service the remaining weeks will be refunded if classes cannot be re scheduled.

**Applications for refunds must be received no later than 2 weeks after last attendance. Applications received after this time will be rejected.**

Accreditation and/or other fees are paid to an external organisation (e.g. Awarding Organisation) and are therefore non-refundable.

Applications for refunds should be made in writing and submitted for approval to either the following email or postal address: [learneradvice@hullcc.gov.uk](mailto:learneradvice@hullcc.gov.uk) or Endeavour Learning & Skills Centre, Beverley Road, Hull, HU3 1UR

### **3.10 Cancelled classes**

If the service has to cancel or postpone a class for any reason outside of our control, for example if a tutor is unwell, we will try to offer an additional class at another time. If the majority of learners in the class can make the alternative date no refund/credit note will be offered to learners who are unable to attend. If no alternative date can be offered a time bound credit note will be given for the value of the missed session or sessions. Credit notes will normally last for duration of 6 months.

## **Section 4**

### **Non-payment of fees**

Course fees to be paid before the start date of courses. Learners who have not paid will not be permitted in classes.

**The service reserves the right to refuse enrolment to learners with outstanding fee debts.**

#### **4.1 Failure to pay**

If a learner fails to pay, then the learner will be excluded from attending further classes, completing assessments and examinations or receiving certification or qualifications.

Failure to pay will result in an invoice from the City Council and/or instigation of debt recovery procedures.

#### **4.2 Force Majeure**

**'Force Majeure'** means war, civil war, armed conflict, terrorist attack, governmental action, fire, flood, severe weather conditions, pandemic or epidemic or any other act or matter which notwithstanding the reasonable diligence and foresight of the service beyond their reasonable control.

The service will not be liable to the learners enrolled on courses to the extent that it is unable to perform its obligations by reason of Force Majeure, provided that the service shall use all reasonable efforts to minimise the effect of the Force Majeure and to resume performance of its obligations as soon as practicable.

The service will endeavour to provide information for the learners enrolled on courses as soon as reasonably practicable after becoming aware of an event of Force Majeure. The notice shall contain all relevant information relating to the event of Force Majeure including the nature and effect of the Force Majeure, the actions being taken (or to be taken) to minimise its effect and an estimated duration.

Where Force Majeure has a material effect on the provision of courses for longer than four consecutive weeks, the service may terminate the course being provided.

## **Section 5**

### **Pound Plus**

#### **What is Pound Plus?**

Pound Plus refers to additional income generated over and above core income from the (ESFA's) Adult Education Budget. It is a term used to describe how we evidence how we are maximising the value of public investment.

This is important because generating additional income and revenue is central to the objective of driving up participation within a very constrained public funding environment.

Pound Plus includes income generated or savings made through course fees, financial sponsorship, access to new learning spaces made available at no or reduced costs; use of volunteer workers; donations of equipment or consumable items; access to other funding sources or grants.

#### **Introduction**

We undertake a volume of activity that contributes to the wider delivery of community learning and the generation of additional income is central to the objective of driving up participation in the community.

The term 'Pound Plus' describes how we can demonstrate that we are maximising the value of public investment. It is used by the ESFA to describe the added value required to supplement the existing community learning income streams to benefit learners, particularly those who are disadvantaged and cannot afford to pay fees.

#### **HTAE generation of Pound Plus**

HTAE is committed to offering all learners the opportunity to enrol on a variety of programmes which are informal, practical and friendly.

HTAE offer a range of courses in community venues and schools which are free to all learners. We are able to offer these courses for free by using fee income generated from room hire and the provision of full cost courses.

A differentiated fees policy involving a mix of fee bearing public courses and free targeted provision is fully consistent with the HTAEs mission of ensuring that all adults have the opportunity to access learning including the most affluent and the most disadvantaged. Fee income, including that paid by individuals, has remained fairly steady over the past five years. In 2007/08 fee income was £5.064 million and it is expected to be slightly lower in 2012/13 at £4.85 million. In general, there has been a reduction in block fees and an increase in fees paid by individuals.

The ESFA contributes to the overall costs of delivering the programmes, but there is an expectation that we will add value to this funding by attracting extra income, cutting costs and reinvesting to widen the offer to disadvantaged learners.

To meet this expectation, HTAE works collaboratively with partners and other Council departments to ascertain local priorities and consider ways of securing added value. HTAE generates additional income and savings over that of which we receive from the ESFA by:

- Fee income from learners
- Income from room hire to local community groups and businesses
- Use of volunteers to support learning
- Curriculum efficiency – avoiding duplicate provision
- Curriculum planning – to ensure the course offer meets both the government priorities and the needs of the local communities.
- Use of external venues at no charge
- Income from room hire at our venues


### **Monitoring**

We will carry out regular reviews through our quality processes and self-assessment.

### **Authorised to sign for and on behalf of The Council**

#### **Assistant Director**


Name: Tracy Harsley

Signature: 

Date: 2.12.20

#### **Head of Service**

Name: Sharon Gamble

Signature: 

Date: Wednesday, 02 December 2020

## Annex 1 – Funding Flowchart for Accredited Courses (Other than English, maths and ESOL)

