

GUILDFORD COLLEGE GROUP POLICY

ACADEMIC/NON ACADEMIC: Non-Academic

FRAMEWORK AREA: Finance

POLICY TITLE: Fees Policy

LEAD COLLEGE MANAGER: Associate Principal Finance & MI

Consulted with: SLT

DATE OF VERSION: 1st March 2018

ORIGINATOR: Associate Principal Finance & MI

Status: Final	To be approved by: Finance and General Purposes Committee
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Supersedes: Fees Policy February 2017

Approved on: March 2018	Next Review date: March 2019
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1. Aim

To provide a framework for the setting of fees and to ensure that appropriate guidance and information is available to current and prospective learners, employers and other interested stakeholders.

2. Scope

The Fees Policy covers all aspects of the College provision, including tuition, exam and other course related fees for learners and employers.

3. Setting and approval of fees:

- Set and publish all fees in a timely manner;
- Set fees that support the strategic objectives of the College;
- Set fees that are considered to be fair and equitable to all interested parties;
- Ensure that the key principles listed below are applied consistently across the College;
- Ensure that fees set are in compliance with the various funding rules as published by each of the relevant funding bodies including fees assessment criteria for overseas learners;
- Ensure that fees are financially sustainable and in particular can support the income generation targets for the College;
- Ensure learners are made aware of opportunities to apply for relevant loans to assist with payments

4. Key Principles

- The course fees will be generated during the curriculum planning for the forthcoming academic year. The decision will be made in conjunction with Associate Principals and the process managed by the Fees and Charges Group.
- In setting its fees, the College will seek to ensure that all direct overheads are recovered and that courses contribute to the general overheads of the College to ensure financial viability, without adversely affecting learner participation.
- Fees for commercial work and overseas will be set following liaison between the Head of Sales and Marketing and the Associate Principal Learner Recruitment & Stakeholder Engagement.
- Charges to schools will be recommended by the Lead for Learner Recruitment, and as they will reflect the requirement for viable class sizes, may vary per pupil per annum.
- All Fees are required to be approved by the Fees and Charges Group (F&GP)
- Additions or amendments to the fees can only be approved by the F&GP
- Where the government funding agencies or the College proposes a change in policy that will significantly affect the level of funding or tuition fee, this should be reported to the F&GP to assess the potential impact and minimise the financial, funding and reputational risk to the College.

5. Tuition Fees

- The College policy is to charge the ESFA recommended rate for FE courses, this is currently 50% of the national unweighted funding rate. Fees maybe adjusted to take into account market conditions and participation targets.
- If a course is eligible for an Advanced Learner Loan, the loan value will be set at the maximum weighted value. The total full cost fees will not exceed the advanced learner loan fee charged. Fees maybe adjusted to take into account market conditions and participation targets.
- HE Fees will be set within the national fee framework and the College's Access Agreement, in conjunction with the Director of HE.
- No tuition fees will be charged to 16-18 year olds where ESFA funding is being claimed or learners aged between 19-24 who have Educational Health and Care Plans ('EHCP's') for EFSA funded courses.
- For adults over the age of 19, the College will operate in line with ESFA Funding Rules and guidance in relation to fee 'remission', and therefore tuition fees will be waived only in accordance with the ESFA Rules relevant to the year of enrolment
- The tuition fee for a learner who is not eligible for home fees on ESFA funded course will be charged the Full cost rate.
- The fees on multiyear courses maybe annual and subsequent fees payable in the following years.

6. Exam and Registration Fees

- Learners who have received full funding from ESFA and were not liable for tuition fees will not be required to pay exam and registration fees.
- There is no charge to HE learners where the level of tuition fee income covers the cost of awarding body registration
- There is no charge to learners who are being funded via the ALL, as the value of their loan incorporates the costs.
- Should any EFSA or ALL funded learner (full or partially funded) fail a scheduled examination, then, following investigation into the reason for failure, which will include a review of attendance level and timely submission of coursework/assignments on the courses, then the College reserves the right to require payment for any subsequent resit, which may include the costs for additional support e.g. scribe/reader.

7. Material fees and educational Visits

- Learners who have received full funding from ESFA and were not liable for tuition fees or are funded via the ALL will not be charged where the visit is a compulsory requirement in order to achieve their course.

- Learners on courses where the use of materials is significant may be requested to pay a contribution towards the material costs. Learners must be advised of any such costs prior to enrolment.
- Learners who have received full funding from ESFA and were not liable for tuition fees or are funded via the ALL will not be charged for any materials that are essential to their learning. Materials used in a learning activity will be charged if the learner wishes to keep them outside of the learning environment, this applies to all learners.

8. Payment of Fees

- Payment of course fees is due at the point of enrolment except where a payment is made by an employer or is being funded by a loan (HE or ALL)
- Instalment plans will be made available where total fees exceed £500 and the course runs for a minimum of two terms. For full details see Appendix A
- All short duration (10 weeks or less) Full Cost courses will require payment of fees in advance, as advised on the College website
- Where a learner is granted a waiver to fees at enrolment, based on information provided, should the College subsequently become aware later of further information that was pertinent to the assessment of that fee waiver, then the fee waiver will be removed and the learner will be expected to pay any fees due. For example, a check of the learner's prior attainment to the Government's records may reveal that a waiver was incorrectly granted.
- Each new 16-18 and 19+ apprentice, the College will determine whether the employer is a Levy payer or not and will inform employers of the required fees and methods of payment, in accordance with detailed guidance and the College's published fees.

9. Non Payment and Refunds

- Learners with debt outstanding for previous year courses will not be allowed to enrol unless the arrears are paid in full.
- Full refunds will normally only be available as a result of course closure.
- If an enrolled learner withdraws within the first 2 weeks of a long course (i.e. the course runs for a minimum of 2 terms), **due to exceptional circumstances**, then a refund, less administration fee will be given, otherwise full fees will be charged.
- Exceptional circumstances must be approved by the Associate Principal in the respective learning area in conjunction with the Head of Finance. No other refunds will be made.
- Should the College move to online enrolment and collection of fees, then the provisions of the 'Online and Distance Selling for Businesses' requirements will apply.
- Unpaid debts may be pursued through the small claims court and could preclude subsequent enrolments.
- If a loan is unsuccessful or not applied for the learner will be liable for the fees if attendance is pass the 2 weeks liability point.
- Requests for exceptions to these principles can only be approved by the Associate Principal Finance & MI

10. Appeals Procedure

- Learners who wish to appeal against fees charged must do so by writing to the Associate Principal Finance & MI, specifying clearly the grounds for appeal. A response will be made within 10 working days.

11. Approval of Policy

This Policy was approved by:

Finance and General Purposes Committee of Governors: 7 March 2018

12. Review of Policy

This Policy is scheduled for review by 31 March 2019 by the Fees and Charges Group

13. Publication of Policy

This Policy is published on GO for staff and on the College website for learners.

APPENDIX A

Payment by instalments are available for those enrolled on a course where the total fees exceed £500 and the course runs for a minimum of two terms.

The following conditions apply:

- The initial payment of 50% of the full fee is due on enrolment.
- Collection dates will be agreed with the learner at the point of arrangement.
- Monthly payments are due within the first three months after enrolment.
- Payments must be made by either recurring card payments, standing order, electronic transfer into the College's bank account, cash/card at the Finance office or by telephone.
- Failure to adhere to the plan may exclude the learner from further tuition and from the use of the College facilities. The learner may not be eligible to sit any exams until all overdue fees have been paid in full.
- Failure to maintain payments may result in legal proceedings.

Glossary of acronyms

ALL	Advanced Learner Loan
EHCP	Educational Health Care Plan
ESFA	Education and Skills Funding Agency
F&GP	Fees and Charges Group
FE	Further Education
HE	Higher Education