

# Fees Policy 2024/25

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# 1. Scope and Purpose

## 1.1 Purpose

- 1.1.1 The purpose of this policy is to explain the process for paying your tuition, the options that are available to make your payments and the sanctions that we apply if you default. It is the legal basis of the contract between us and you, for the payment of your fees.

## 1.2 Scope

- 1.2.1 How do we set our fees? When we are setting fees, we set them so that we comply with Government funding rules set by the Education and Skills Funding Agency, each fee is fair compared to other fees in the College and they are competitive compared to fees in other organisations. We usually set our fees before the start of the academic year. Occasionally, this is not possible, but we will never increase the fee for your course, for that academic year, after you have enrolled with us.
- 1.2.2 Following approval by the Corporation, the Fees Policy will be communicated via the Head of MIS and Reporting to all relevant staff involved with enrolment, admissions, and the provision of information, advice and guidance (IAG). The policy shall be operated with effect from 1 August 2024 and refer to all courses commencing from then until 31 July 2025.
- 1.2.3 Once we have set our fees, we publish them on our website and on our course information sheets. You should be told about fees when we invite you to enrol. You can ask us at any time if you are not clear about what we will be charging you. We will also tell you about any payment options available to you, for example, instalments and Advanced Learner Loans or any help you may get towards paying your fees
- 1.2.4 The Fees Policy will be available from the College website ([www.wiltshire.ac.uk](http://www.wiltshire.ac.uk)) under the Policies and Procedures section.

# 2. Accountability

## 2.1 Accountability

- 2.1.1 Responsibility lies with the Senior Leadership Team to ensure that the Fees Policy is adhered to. On a day-to-day basis MIS, Admissions, Customer Service Advisors and Bursary & Student Funding Officers will operate the policy in conjunction with the Head of Finance or delegated manager.

## 3. Procedure

### 3.1 Course Fees

- 3.1.1 A course fee will be set for each course offered by the College. Fees for most courses are made up of several elements. They include tuition and examination costs but can also be subject to administration charges and in some cases, material costs.
- 3.1.2 In addition, some courses require the learner to purchase special equipment, clothing and to pay for educational trips and professional membership.
- 3.1.3 A separate fee will be recommended for learners who fall outside of the Education and Skills Funding Agency home fee rules and are classed as overseas students. The course fee will be set using the criteria described above in paragraph 1.2.1.
- 3.1.4 All course fees set will be valid for the period 1 August 2024 to 31 July 2025. Where learners enrol on courses that continue beyond 31 July 2025, they should be made aware that any fees due after this date (e.g., for the second year of a course) may fluctuate as a result of external influences.
- 3.1.5 Course fees for School's provision for learners aged under 16 will be set by the relevant SLT Member, arrangements to collect these fees will be made directly with the school or Local Authority in conjunction with the Finance Department.

### 3.2 Examinations

- 3.2.1 The charge for examinations undertaken as part of a course are included within the course fee. This will include registration, entry and certification. It will not include professional body membership e.g., AAT, CIPD, which may need to be paid directly to the professional body by the learner.
- 3.2.2 The costs of resitting/retaking examinations or assessments are not included in the course fee.
- 3.2.3 Learners are also liable for paying any late entry fee which may apply, except where the College has caused the application to be late.

### 3.3 Fee Remission

- 3.3.1 Fee remission is only available for learners assessed as eligible to pay home fees enrolling on an Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) funded classroom course as indicated in our course information sheets on our website.
- 3.3.2 There is no fee remission entitlement Full Cost Courses (courses with penultimate letter 'S?').

3.3.3 Eligibility to receive fee remission is assessed at the start of the course, eligibility will remain the same for the duration of that course. Courses enrolled on subsequently will require the learner to be reassessed.

3.3.4 The following groups of learners **may** be entitled to full fee remission subject to the required evidence being presented and meeting the standard eligibility criteria:

- Learners aged under 19 (on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2024) who are not enrolled at any other educational institution including schools.
- Learners aged 19-24 (on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2024) with an Education, Health and Care Plan) who are not enrolled at any other educational institution, including schools.
- Learners 19 or over on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2024 studying a qualification at Level 2 or below who are:
  - Studying an approved English or maths qualification, who have not already attained a GCSE grade 4 (C), or higher.
  - Defined by the Education and Skills Funding Agency as unemployed and are in receipt of one of the following benefits JSA, ESA or Universal Credit (subject to an earnings limit).
  - In receipt of another state benefit, wishing to enter employment or progress into more sustainable employment, and the learning is directly relevant to their employment prospects and local labour market needs. This remission is subject to an earnings limit.
  - Employed or self-employed, eligible for co-funding and earn less than £25,000 gross annually (evidence of this will need to be provided).
- Learners aged 19-23 who enrol on a qualification that is their first full Level 2 course and is listed as part of the legal entitlement (evidence of previous qualifications will need to be provided along with a declaration that this is your first Level 2 course).
- Learners aged 19-23 who enrol on a qualification that is their first full Level 3 course and is listed as part of the legal entitlement (evidence of previous qualifications will need to be provided along with a declaration that this is your first Level 3 course).
- Essential digital skills qualifications, up to and including level 1, for individuals aged 19 and over, who have digital skills assessed at below level 1.

3.3.5 Level 3 Free Courses for Jobs Offer – A learner may be entitled to full fee remission as part of the Level 3 Free Courses for Jobs Offer, subject to the required evidence being presented and meeting the standard eligibility criteria and all of the below criteria:

- Meet the Education and Skills Funding Agency's definition of 'unemployed' or 'low wage' criteria.
- Enrol on an eligible Level 3 Free Courses for Jobs Offer qualification.

3.3.6 Wiltshire College and University Centre does not receive any funding allocations from any devolved authorities.

### 3.4 **Payment of Fees**

3.4.1 Learners must indicate how they want to pay their fees when they enrol. They will not be able to enrol until they have either:

- Paid all fees in full, or
- Paid a deposit and signed an agreement for the balance, via Recurring Card Payments, or
- Provided evidence that your employer or another organisation is paying the fees, i.e. an employer's undertaking form or a purchase order requesting to be invoiced, or
- Provided evidence that they have approval from the Student Loan Company for an Advanced Learner Loan, or
- Provided any evidence required to claim full Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) funding in situations where they have claimed fee remission (we will tell you what to bring if this applies to you).

3.4.2 If an employer or another organisation has agreed to pay the learner's fees but then does not do so, the learner will become liable to pay them.

3.4.3 Recurring card payments are available for courses longer than 12 weeks and costing more than £150. Recurring card payments are subject to a £20 administration fee and will consist of a 25% deposit and 3 equal monthly payments for courses under £1000 and 3 equal payments in alternate months for courses above £1000. Payment must be made in full within 6 months of enrolment.

3.4.4 Advanced Learner Loans are available from the Student Loans Company (SLC) for learners aged 19 or over studying level 3 – 6 courses (excluding prescribed higher education courses) as specified by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). If the learner has applied for an Advanced Learner Loan but does not complete their application or the application is later refused, the learner will become liable for the course fees. If a learner stops attending before completing the course, payments from the SLC will also stop. The learner will become liable for all outstanding course fees.

### 3.5 **Refunds and Fee Liability**

3.5.1 In the event of a course being cancelled prior to commencement by the College a full refund will be given.

- 3.5.2 All learners will be given a 14 day 'cooling off' period following their enrolment taking place and fees being paid unless the course commences within those 14 days.
- 3.5.3 If a learner withdraws from a course before the start date of the course the learner must write to the Head of MIS and Reporting to request a refund. If the letter or e-mail is received prior to the start of the course, then the refund will be approved by and processed by the Finance Office. £35 will be retained by the College to cover administration fees.
- 3.5.4 If a learner withdraws due to a serious medical condition, the learner must write to the Head of MIS and Reporting requesting a refund, attaching a medical certificate as evidence. Refunds will be made on a pro-rata basis from the date of the refund request less a £35 administration fee. Refunds will not be considered for any other reason.
- 3.5.5 Learners paying by the Advanced Learner Loan will be invoiced for any remainder of the fee not already covered by previous loan payments should they withdraw after commencement of the course. No refunds will be given for Advanced Learner Loan payments already received by the College under any circumstance.
- 3.5.6 All refunds will be made at the discretion of the College.
- 3.5.7 Refunds will not be paid to an individual if their employer or another person has paid the course fees.
- 3.5.8 Fees for Halls of Residence are refundable from the next full term following withdrawal less a £35 administration fee.

### **3.6 Course Transfers**

- 3.6.1 In the event of the College agreeing to a student transferring between courses, there will be no financial penalty, however, if the course transferring on to has a higher Course fee or affects the student's eligibility for fee remission the student must pay the difference.

### **3.7 Outstanding Debts**

- 3.7.1 Any learner who has outstanding debts for tuition fees will be asked to settle their debt prior to enrolling on any further courses.
- 3.7.2 Debts relating to accommodation may result in the learner being asked to leave college accommodation.
- 3.7.3 Learners who have outstanding debt, or do not meet their agreed payment schedule in year may be asked to leave the course.

## 4. Associated Documents

This policy should be read alongside the following policies and procedures:

Examinations Policy  
Admissions Policy  
Higher Education Fees Policy  
Apprenticeship Fees Policy

## 5. Equality Statement

It is intended that this policy is 'fair to all'. Where any part could potentially lead to unequal outcomes, the procedure then justifies why this is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

## 6. Policy Review and Ownership

This document is owned and managed by the Head of MIS and Reporting. The policy will be reviewed and amended as required, and at least every two years by the Head of MIS and Reporting or appropriate substitute.

## 7. Amendments Log

Version	Date of Issue	Amendment Summary	Author
V1.0			