

## FEE & FEE REMISSION POLICY

This policy is available on-line at: [www.stc.ac.uk](http://www.stc.ac.uk)

- We will consider any request for this policy to be made available in an alternative format or language. Please contact: Student Services Coordinator
- We review our policies regularly to update them and to ensure that they are accessible and fair to all. We welcome suggestions for improving the accessibility or fairness of this policy.
- All our policies are subject to equality impact assessments\*. We are always keen to hear from anyone who wishes to contribute to these impact assessments. Please contact: Student Services Coordinator

\*Equality Impact Assessments are carried out to see whether the policy has, or is likely to have, a negative impact on grounds of: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

<b>Approved by:</b>	<b>Version:</b>	<b>Issue Date:</b>	<b>Review Date:</b>	<b>Contact Person:</b>
<b>Finance and Resources Committee</b>	<b>v.7</b>	<b>June 2016</b>	<b>June 2017</b>	<b>Head of MIS</b>

**Equal Opportunities:      Impact Assessed**

**Review:**

# SOUTH TYNESIDE COLLEGE

## FEE & FEE REMISSION POLICY

### 1 Policy Statement

The College is committed to a transparent fee structure that informs individuals and companies about the costs of study and examinations and also any exemptions to payment of fees.

### 2 Scope

This policy applies to Learner Responsive funded courses although reference is made to HE and full cost courses.

### 3 Legislation

No specific legislation applies to this policy.

### 4 Responsibilities

Everyone has a responsibility to give full and active support to the policy by ensuring:

- 4.1 The policy is known, understood and implemented.
- 4.2 The Deputy Chief Executive is responsible for the effective implementation of the policy.

### 5 Key Objectives

- 5.1 To operate at all times in line with the guidance supplied by the relevant funding bodies.
- 5.2 To ensure that the learner is aware of the full annual cost of the course on enrolment. This will include tuition, materials, examination, registration and any relevant costs such as a residential.
- 5.3 To provide facilities for staged payment for individuals through standing order/direct debit arrangements where the total cost is in excess of £100 and the course is longer than three weeks. Normal repayments will be 25% deposit paid on enrolment, and the remainder monthly with final payment two months before the end date of course. For short courses (less than 24 weeks) the deposit would be 50% paid on enrolment and the remainder paid monthly, with final payment received at least one month before the end date of the course. All Very Short courses (less than 12 weeks duration) must be paid for in full before the start of

the course. In exceptional circumstances this schedule could be changed with prior agreement.

- 5.4 The College will levy fees at the start of the course and will expect payment to be made prior to or at the point of enrolment. Initiating a standing order/direct debit or providing documented proof of sponsorship will be deemed to be classed as meeting this requirement. If learners consider they will have sponsorship or will be eligible for a loan but do not have evidence at the time of enrolment they will be required to pay a deposit that shall be refunded once the evidence is submitted.
- 5.5 Different payment arrangements are in place for foreign students who must pay their course fees in advance in order to allow the college to meet Border Agency requirements and for students sponsored by their employer.
- 5.6 To realise for the College a fee income in pursuit of College objectives.
- 5.7 To set fee levels that are market related.
- 5.8 Learning Loans continue to be offered for students aged 24 and above at the start of their course, studying specific Level 3 courses or above. Learning loans have been extended to 19-23 year olds studying level 3 and above courses (apart from the first full level 3 which remains fully funded by SFA). The college does not receive funding for these students. SFA give a maximum fee we can charge these students. The fees for these students will be set according to market forces, up to this limit.
- 5.9 The College reserves the right to take appropriate action against defaulters to encourage them to make appropriate arrangements to pay their fees. These actions may include withdrawal of student facilities (e.g. library cards, IT access) and suspension from class until the point that the learner has made appropriate arrangements to pay their outstanding fees.
- 5.10 The College also reserves the right to pursue defaulters through the College Credit Controller, the appointed college debt collection agencies and ultimately the courts if deemed necessary.
- 5.11 The College reserves the right that it will not release certificates, letters of confirmation of awards etc. until all debts are paid. This is reviewed on a case by case basis.
- 5.12 Refunds/reduction in fees are only given automatically if a course is cancelled or postponed, or if the learner withdraws within first three weeks of a course of 3 months or longer duration. If a learner withdraws after this period, all fees will remain payable in full although a refund/proportional reduction in fees may be considered at the discretion of the Head of School/Assistant Principal. If a student completes two thirds of their course before withdrawal, no refund/reduction in fees will be payable. Where Marine Short Course Bookings are

cancelled more than 21 days before the start of the course, the fee will be transferred to later dates of the same course but is non-refundable. Cancellations made within 21 days of the start date are not refundable or transferable. Individual Examination Fees will only be refunded if the Awarding Body refund the fee to the College

## **6 Learner Responsive Funded Courses**

**The following only applies to learners who have been resident in this country or the EEA for 3 years. Learners who do not have this residency MUST pay the overseas rates. Exceptions are made for recognized refugees and asylum seekers and other cases. More detailed information is available in the Funding Rules 2016/17 available on the Gov.uk website.**

Learners who are nationals of certain British Overseas Territories will also be eligible for funding subject to normal eligibility as defined in “Funding Rules 2016/17” published by the SFA.

The EFA/SFA contribute towards the cost of tuition for individuals and for employee training through the national base rate mechanism. Colleges are now being given a definite steer as to setting tuition fee levels.

Where fee remission does not apply, 50% of the unweighted fully funded rate for the learning aim represents the assumed fee income. This will be the basis of the tuition fee for the course, unless market forces deem otherwise.

The College has a policy for FE fees in accordance with the “Funding Rules 16/17” published by the SFA.

All courses carry an **annual fee** which can include TUITION, MATERIALS, EXAMINATION AND REGISTRATION.

Tuition fees and most exam/registration fees have been amalgamated into one fee to give clarity to learners and ease of administration.

### **6.1 No charges will be made to the following learners:**

1. Learners 16-18 (under 19 on 31 August 2016)
2. Learners who are 19 and are on the second year of a two year course
3. Learners aged 16 to 24 on the day they start a traineeship where they have not achieved a full level 3 qualification.
4. Learners aged 19 or older who are not starting an apprenticeship and :
  - Are starting GCSE English and Maths where they do not have these qualifications at grades A\* to C

- Are progressing towards GCSE English and Maths at Grade C or above, and are starting Maths or English aims at a level above that at which they have been assessed, including studies in the workplace
5. Learners aged 19 to 23 on day they start aim, studying:
- Provision to support progression to full Level 2
  - Provision up to and including Level 2 for those who already have a full Level 2 if they are unemployed
  - Their first full level 2 qualification
  - Their first full level 3 qualification
6. Individuals aged 19 or older on the day they start learning aims up to and including level 2 who need help to move into work, progress in work or remove a barrier to getting into work, and who are:
- released on temporary licence (RoTL), undertaking learning outside a prison environment and not funded through OLASS
  - receiving Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA), including those receiving National Insurance credits only
  - receiving Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) and are in the work-related activity group (WRAG), or
  - receiving Universal Credit, earn either less than 16 times the National Minimum Wage a week or £330 a month and are determined by Jobcentre Plus as being in one of the following groups:
    - All Work-Related Requirements Group
    - Work Preparation Group
    - Work-Focused Interview Group
  - At the college discretion learners may be funded if they earn either less than 16 times the National Minimum Wage a week or £330 a month and the college is satisfied that their learning is directly relevant to both the individual's employment prospects and the needs of the local labour market. The learner must also be seeking to progress to more sustainable employment
7. Other fully funded qualifications/categories
- Certain categories of students with learning difficulties and disabilities as listed in the SFA Funding Rules document

Learners continuing an aim or aims from 2015/16 will continue to receive fee remission as established in 2016/17. This only applies to continuing aims or programmes.

## 6.2 Examples of Full Level 2 Qualifications

5 GCSEs grade A\* - C or grades 1 – 4

5 'O' Level Passes or 5 CSE Grade 1

2 AS levels or more

1 A level or more

NVQ Level 2

Intermediate GNVQ

Technical Certificate at Level 2 which meets the requirements for 2018 16-to-19 performance tables

Other technical and professional qualifications on the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) and required as part of the legal entitlement for the Level 2 entitlement which must be at least 150 guided learning hours (glh)

## Examples of Full Level 3 Qualifications

4 AS levels or more

2 A levels or more

NVQ 3

BTEC National Certificate/Diploma

Access to HE Course

Tech level; or Applied general qualification at Level 3 which meets the requirements for 2018 16-to-19 performance tables, and a number of Tech levels and applied general qualifications from the 2017 16-to-19 performance tables

Other technical and professional qualifications which are part of the RQF and listed as part of the legal entitlement for the Level 3 entitlement which must be at least 300 glh

## 7 Learners aged 19 and above at the start of their course undertaking AS/A2/A Levels, Access to HE Diplomas, Certs and Diplomas at Level 3 or 4 which is not their first Level 3, whether employed or not

- SFA funding is no longer received for these learners, the only income we receive for them is the fee
- They can apply for Advance Learning Loans to pay for their fees, or can pay themselves as normal
- Should the learner be unsuccessful in their loan application or fail to successfully complete the loan application, the learner will assume individual liability for their tuition fees. The college will then invoice the learner directly and pursue this debt through its credit control processes.

## 8 Employer Responsive Courses

- All 16-18 Apprenticeships will be fully funded for the programme
- All 19+ Apprenticeships competency and technical knowledge qualifications will be co-funded
- Apprentice expected employer contributions can be made in the form of cash or via contributions to the delivery

- Other courses delivered in the workplace have similar fully funded/co funded rules as learner responsive but some rules change depending on prior qualifications, age and the size of the employer
- The Funding Rules for some Apprenticeships change in April 2017. The Policy will be updated accordingly when the details change

## 9 **HEFCE Funded Courses**

**HEFCE funded courses do NOT qualify for remission of fees, even if the learner is aged under 19, or is in receipt of a means tested benefit.**

The college does not receive any funding to cover lost income in this respect.

HE Learners are expected to pay on enrolment, unless their employers are paying or they are awaiting a decision from the Student Loan Company (SLC). They are informed to bring a copy of the SLC document when received, and if this shows that the SLC will not pay, the student will be invoiced.

Learners who are on a HE course at South Tyneside College funded via a partner university (eg Sunderland) shall be subject to their fee and fee remission policies

## 10 **Full Cost Recovery**

**Learners on Full Cost Recovery courses (courses for which we receive no funding) are not under any circumstances to have their fees waived.**

## 11 **Definitions**

EEA = The European Union plus Iceland, Liechtenstein, Switzerland and Norway.

Overseas Rate = The rate for any learner not eligible for SFA funding, i.e. the full cost rate.

Funding Rules 2016/17 available on

<http://skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk/providers/fundingrules/>

## 12 **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The Deputy Chief Executive will monitor and evaluate policy.

## 13 **Related Policies**

Admission Policy