

Policy number:	F158	Originator:	Director of Finance
SharePoint:	Policies and Procedures: Finance		
EIA Meeting Date:		EIA Required:	Yes
Approved by:	SMT	Date:	31/08/2021
Review Frequency:	Annually		
Review Date:	August 2022		
External Web Site appropriate:	Yes		
Linked policies/College documents:			
Summary available:	No		

Fees, Refund and Compensation Policy

This document can be made available in other formats, on request

Fees

POLICY STATEMENT:

The College is committed to maintaining a fair and transparent policy for the setting of fees for the delivery of publicly funded and non-funded courses. In establishing such a policy the College takes account of:

- Government Policy, Office for Students and ESFA funding rules
- the needs of its local communities
- local and national economic conditions
- Value for money for students and employers
- The need to maximise income to ensure quality of delivery, safe and appropriate learning spaces and recover overheads sufficiently to ensure the financial viability of the College.

The objective of the policy is to set the framework of charges that are applied both for publicly funded and non-funded courses.

POLICY DETAILS:

14-18 Fees

Students will not be charged for the planned curriculum delivery, In some circumstances it might be necessary for the College to request a voluntary contribution or charges a fee for items such as printing, library fines, use of recreational facilities, trips and examination costs. These charges will be in accordance with the ESFA funding rules.

19+ Full time Fees

Where a programme has Government entitlement to funding, the fee will be set at the current published funding rate. If 19+ learners are admitted to day-time programmes primarily run for 16-18 learners the College reserves the right to adjust the fee, if that fee would be prohibitive for the 19+ learner based on the level of study.

Where a programme does not have Government entitlement to funding, the fee will be dependent upon the teaching and assessment costs, duration of the course, educational materials and resources required, awarding body costs, a fair recovery of overheads and minimum class sizes to break-even. The fee will be calculated and then compared to local (or national if appropriate) competitors to assess value for money. An adjustment may then be made to the fee

For all co-funded students, the fee will normally be set at 50% of the full fee.

Part time courses

Where a programme has Government entitlement to funding, the fee will be set at the current published funding rate. If 19+ learners are admitted to day-time programmes primarily run for 16-18 learners, the College reserves the right to adjust the fee if that fee would be prohibitive for the 19+ learner based on the level of study.

Where a programme does not have Government entitlement to funding, the fee will be dependent upon the teaching and assessment costs, duration of the course, educational materials and resources required, awarding body costs, a fair recovery of overheads and minimum class sizes to break-even. The fee will be calculated and then compared to local (or national if appropriate) competitors to assess value for money. An adjustment may then be made to the fee

For all co-funded students, the fee will be set at 50% of the full fee.

Adult Community Learning

Students will be a set a fee dependent upon the teaching and assessment costs, duration of the course, educational materials and resources required, awarding body costs, a fair recovery of overheads and minimum class sizes to break-even. The fee will be calculated and then compared to local (or national if appropriate) competitors to assess value for money. An adjustment may then be made to the fee.

Full Cost courses

Students will be a set a fee dependent upon the teaching and assessment costs, duration of the course, educational materials and resources required, awarding body costs, a fair recovery of overheads and minimum class sizes to break-even. The fee will be calculated and then compared to local (or national if appropriate) competitors to assess value for money. An adjustment may then be made to the fee

Higher Education Courses

Students will be a set a fee dependent upon the teaching and assessment costs, duration of the course, educational materials and resources required, awarding body costs, a fair recovery of overheads and minimum class sizes to break-even.

The fee will be calculated and then compared to local (or national if appropriate) competitors to assess value for money. The fees will also be assessed against the OFS (Office for Student) rules, with due regard to fee caps and contributions of funding from the OFS.

Apprenticeships

Under current funding rules the apprentice will not be charged for planned curriculum delivery or resources required for their study.

Fees will be charged to employers based on current apprenticeship funding rules, as set by the Institute of Apprenticeships and the ESFA.

ANNUAL REVIEW OF FEES

There will be an annual review of fees with the new fees usually published on the College website and printed prospectus from June.

PAYMENT OF FEES AND EVIDENCE FOR FUNDING

Students are expected to comply with one of the following criteria before they are permitted to commence their learning:

- Payment has been received in full
- The Student has provided the evidence requested by the Admissions team to complete:
 - The Low wage entitlement to Government funding form
 - The Unemployment entitlement to Government funding form
- The Student has provided the evidence requested by the Admissions team for prior attainment of qualifications to verify entitlement to Government funding
- The Student and Director of Finance has signed an agreed instalment plan
- The Student has completed a student loan application
- The Students employer/sponsor has provided a purchase order for the full amount of the course fees and signed the Employer Authorisation Form
- The Student is enrolled as an apprentice, where payment will be triggered by the Apprenticeship System

Students will not be permitted to enrol onto any new programme if there are fees outstanding for any other enrolled courses.

Students are not excluded from classes if they have fees outstanding or a loan application pending, however, the College reserves the right to not register the student or claim certification with the awarding body.

The Admissions and Finance Team will work with the student to assist in the application of loans and instalment plans for students facing financial hardship, however, the College reserves the right to withdraw a student from their course if the above criteria have not been met within 90 days of enrolment.

Students who have applied for low wage entitlement or unemployment entitlement who have not provided the evidence necessary to complete their application, will be charged the full course fees.

Students who have not provided evidence of prior attainment of qualifications will be charge the full course fees.

All decisions to withdraw a student from their course will be made by the Principal and notified to the student or sponsor in writing.

Refund of Fees – all courses

Newbury College will endeavour to fulfil its commitment towards delivering all services to the students, employers and other stakeholders with which it engages. However, the College acknowledges that there are exceptional circumstances in which it may be unable to fulfil this commitment.

Before reaching this point the College will exhaust all options and avenues to provide a comparable service to that advertised. When it is deemed this commitment cannot be met then options to refund may be considered.

There may also be circumstances where a student wishes to terminate their contract with the College. This document is intended to provide an outline of the College's policy and process for a refund of fees.

POLICY ON REFUNDS

1 Refunds will be given under the following circumstances:

a) For students who pay their own Tuition fees:

- Students have a statutory right to a cooling off period to withdraw their application within 14 calendar days of their first date of attendance (as recorded on their attendance record). Withdrawals within this period will not incur any charges)
- A refund will be given if the Principal has taken the decision to close a course prior to its start date. No processing fee will be charged. (For example: low recruitment).
- A refund of tuition fees will be given to students whose course is closed after it's commencement due to unforeseen circumstances e.g. a lack of suitable teachers and/or facilities to provide the course; withdrawal or lack of approval from the awarding body for the provision of the course.
- Where arrangements for an alternative provider for the course are made and agreed with the student and provider then the fees may be transferred directly to the new provider.
- Students who are subject to disciplinary procedures will not be reimbursed for any course fees already paid, and where they have paid on instalments will be responsible for the whole course fees.
- Refunds will not be paid on examination fees unless the learner withdraws before the start of the academic year.
- On commencement of a course if a refund request is received, this will only be given in full in exceptional circumstances, for example maternity. In the instance of severe ill health, a GP's letter must be provided. Alternate arrangements for transfer to a similar course or courses later in the academic year will be offered and if accepted no processing fee will be charged. Otherwise the refund will be applied in line with the Fee Liability table below and subject to an administration charge (currently £25), which will be deducted from the refund.

Withdrawal Date:	Fee Liability
Within month 1 (but after 14 days cooling off period)	10%
Within Month 2	20%
Within Month 3	30%
Within Month 4	40%
Within Month 5	50%
Within Month 6	60%
Within Month 7	70%
Within Month 8	80%
Within Month 9	90%
Within Month 10	Full Fees

Prior to commencement of the course if a refund request is received from a payee, a full refund will be given but will be subject to an administrative charge (currently £25) which will be deducted from the refund.

- If a student requests a break from learning due to personal circumstances, such as ill health, the Director of Finance or designated senior manager will consider the request and may make arrangements for those fees to be transferred to an expected point of return to study. In this circumstance, any incremental costs incurred by the College such as awarding body registration fees, exam fees or specific learning materials will be invoiced to the student, plus an administration charge (currently £25). If the student, then decides not to return after the break in learning the sliding scale of charges will apply (see the above table)

b) For Students on short courses

- Students who withdraw after the start date of a short course of one College Term or 12 weeks or less are expected to pay the full fee.
- The only exception is where cancellation of the course is made 14 days before the start of the course. In this situation a full refund will be given less the administration fee (currently £25)

c) Refunds for students in receipt of a tuition fee loan from the Student Loans Company:

- Students have a statutory right to a cooling off period to withdraw their application within 14 calendar days of their first date of attendance (as recorded on their attendance record). Withdrawals within this period will not incur any charges)
- The Student Loans Company will be notified of the decision made to close the course.
- If an arrangement has been made for the course to be delivered through another provider and this is agreed with the student, the Student Loans Company will be notified of the arrangement. Any bursary payments agreed in advance will be honoured if the new provider is unable to provide this through their own allocation.
- A refund of the tuition fee will be given to the Student Loan Company where the Principal or designated senior manager has taken the decision to close a course prior to its start date.

d) Refunds for students whose tuition fees are paid by a sponsor:

- Students have a statutory right to a cooling off period to withdraw their application within 14 calendar days of their first date of attendance (as recorded on their attendance record). Withdrawals within this period will not incur any charges)

- When the employer agrees to act as a sponsor and signs the Employer Authorisation form:
 - The employer agrees to be responsible for the full payment of the sponsored fees and any costs incurred by the College to recover debts due to non-payment. The College reserves the right to charge statutory late payment fees and interest.
 - The employer accepts responsibility to pay the costs irrespective of whether the learner(s) withdraw from the course and/or leaves your employment.
 - The employer accepts the responsibility to enter into a separate contract with the learner(s) which includes a clause to allow release of learner data.
 - The employer understands that the learner may be asked to leave the course or will not be entered for exams until the payment has been received.

- In the event that the Principal has taken the decision to close the course, the sponsor/employer paying the student's tuition fees will be notified of the decision within 5 working days.

- If an arrangement has been made for the course to be delivered through another provider and this arrangement is agreed by the student, the sponsor/employer's approval will be sought. If all parties are in agreement with the arrangement the tuition fees will be reimbursed to the sponsor/employer so that they may make the payment to the new provider. Any bursary payments agreed in advance will be provided if the new provider is unable to meet these through their funding allocation.

- If no alternative arrangements can be made or the students and/or their employer are not satisfied with any alternative arrangements for the provision of the course, the tuition fee will be reimbursed to the sponsor/employer.

- A refund will be given in Full if a request for a refund is received from the payee prior 10 working days before the start of the course. In this circumstance, the refund is subject to an administrative charge (currently £25) which will be deducted from the refund.

- Prior to the commencement of the course, if a refund request is received, this will only be given in full in exceptional circumstances. In the instance of severe ill health, a GP's letter must be provided before the start of the course. Alternate arrangements for transfer to a similar course or courses later in the academic year will be offered and if accepted no processing fee will be charged.

- If a student requests a break from learning due to personal circumstances, such as ill health, the Director of Finance or designated senior manager will consider the request and may make arrangements for those fees to be transferred to an expected point of return to study. In this circumstance, any incremental costs incurred by the College such as awarding body registration fees, exam fees or specific learning materials will be invoiced to the student, plus an administration charge (currently £25).
- If a student is unable to continue their learning due to exceptional circumstances, a request for a refund can be submitted in writing to the Director of Finance, but as per the Employer authorisation form the sponsor has agreed to take responsibility to pay the costs irrespective of circumstances. The Director of Finance will assess the request and may make a discretionary refund based on the sliding scale of fee liability:

Withdrawal Date:	Fee Liability
Within month 1 (but after 14 days cooling off period)	10%
Within Month 2	20%
Within Month 3	30%
Within Month 4	40%
Within Month 5	50%
Within Month 6	60%
Within Month 7	70%
Within Month 8	80%
Within Month 9	90%
Within Month 10	Full Fees

2 Partial Refunds

- Students who withdraw after the start date are expected to pay the full fee. In exceptional cases, such as severe ill health during the first term of the year, a request for refund can be made in writing to the director of Finance who will review the request. In this instance a GP's letter must be provided. The amount of the refund will be at the discretion of the Director of Finance but in most cases will be in line with the Fee Liability table, based on a sliding scale. The Director of Finance or designated senior manager will inform the student, employer or sponsor (as appropriate) of the refund granted within 10 days of receiving the request.

3 Administrative Charge

- Other than in the examples outlined above or where tuition fees are funded through the Student Loan Company, all other requests for a refund will be subject to an administrative charge (currently £25) which will be deducted from the refund offered.

4 Bite-Size and One Day Only Courses

- In the case of courses of five days or less, a refund will only be available if notification of non-attendance is made to the College at least 10 working days before the date of delivery. The administration fee of £25 will apply.
- If non-attendance is notified less than 10 days before the commencement of a bite-size or one day course, the College may offer an alternative date but reserves the right not to issue a refund.

5 The Refund Process where a request for refund is made

- The student or their sponsor/employer must put the request for a refund in writing to the Director of Finance, explaining the reason why a refund is requested.
- The Director of Finance or delegated senior manager will review the request and will normally make a decision within 10 working days.
 - If the request is approved, then the refund will be processed by the Finance Office and paid within 10 working days.
 - If the request is refused, the student, employer or sponsor will be informed that they are entitled to appeal to the Principal.

6 The Refund Process where the College is unable to provide a course

- The student will be notified of the decision to close the course and of any alternative arrangements made for its delivery.
- The Student Loans Company or any sponsor/employer paying the tuition fees will be notified of the decision to close the course and of any alternative arrangements made for its delivery.
- The tuition fees will be repaid to the payee e.g. the student paying their own fees; the Student Loans Company or the sponsor/employer paying the student's tuition fees.

7 Compensation

Compensation is where the college needs to discontinue a course and the students are required to transfer to an alternative provider.

The College will consider eligibility for refund and/or compensation on a case by case basis. It will take into account factors including (but not limited to):

- (i) Maintenance costs
- (ii) What mitigation the College has put in place that the student may or may not have taken advantage of
- (iii) Additional tuition costs
- (iv) Travel costs as a result of relocation of provision
- (v) How much of the programme the student has completed

Relevant guidance published by regulatory bodies will be taken into account in preparing any such plans.

8. The Appeals Procedure

- Either the complainant or the respondent may appeal in writing, stating detailed reasons to the Principal within 5 working days of receiving written confirmation of the outcome of the formal complaint.
- The appeal will be acknowledged within 5 working days and the Principal will review and notify the final decision in writing to all those involved within 20 working days of receiving the appeal.
- If the decision of the Vice Principal is upheld, the refusal of the refund will be recorded under the Complaints Procedures.

<https://newbury-college.ac.uk/policies/27-complaints-policy-and-procedure/file>

This policy is available in other formats on request.

Date: August 2021

Reviewed: Feb 2019, Jan 2012, Mar 2012, August 15 (minor amends) June 16, November 16, March 2020, August 2021

Next review: August 2022