



South Downs College

FEES POLICY 2016-17

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European Union
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Investing in jobs and skills

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FEES POLICY 2016-17

1. Scope

This document sets out the College's policy on the fees and related issues described below:

- Further Education courses
- Apprenticeships
- Higher Education courses
- Full cost recovery courses
- Materials and equipment fees
- Exam, validating and professional bodies registration fees
- Other fees
- Reduced and enhanced fees
- Payment methods
- Instalments
- Payment by employers or sponsors
- Payment by loans received from Student Loans (SLC)
- Refunds
- Outstanding fees
- Fee rates

Separate tuition fees apply to home and overseas learners. Home learners relate to those learners so classified by the Skills Funding Agency (SFA), Education Funding Agency (EFA) or the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) as appropriate, and supported by Government guidelines on fees, as determined by the Education (Fees and Awards) Regulations 1997, and subject to residency criteria. This generally includes nationals of the European Economic area and other overseas nationals holding a Home Office settled status. Asylum seekers meeting certain criteria may also be granted Home fee status. Those learners not classified as "home" will be charged at the overseas rate.

Tuition fees will be set annually in advance of the start of the college academic year. For courses approved by the Principal and his or her appointees during the college academic year, fees will be set at the time of approval.

This policy is subject to any change in guidance from the government funding bodies.

2. Further Education Courses

EFA Funded Learners

All EFA funded learners are exempt from tuition fees – currently this is stated in the "Funding guidance for young people 2015 to 2016":

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/459535/EFA_Funding_guidance_2015_to_2016.pdf

SFA Funded Learners

SFA funded learners can be fully-funded depending on their personal circumstances or the qualifications they study, if the course they study is listed as funded for 19+ students. These are set out below. However, these concessions are subject to variations in accordance with SFA/EFA guidance. Any concessions for fees will apply to tuition fees from the beginning of a learner's programme to the end of the programme.

2.1 Learners aged 19 to 23

(The age applies on the day they actually start the learning aim, not their age at the start of the funding year.)

Learners who need help to move into work, progress in work or remove a barrier to getting into work and who are Unemployed (see definition at end of document).

Entry or Level 1 aims (not English or Maths) if a learner wishes to progress to their first full Level 2 qualification and needs to complete this lower level in order to progress to a full Level 2.

An individual studying their first full Level 2 qualification.

An individual studying their first full Level 3 qualification.

Learners studying English and Maths learning aims as part of the new suite of English and Maths qualifications (this does not include ESOL qualifications) up to and including Level 2 (to achieve at least Grade C).

2.2 Summary of the levels of government contribution towards skills provision (excluding apprenticeships)

Provision	19-23 year-olds (first full qualification)	19-23 year-olds (additional qualification at this level)		24+ unemployed	24+ other
English and maths up to and including Level 2	Fully funded*	Fully funded*		Fully funded*	Fully funded*
Level 2	Fully funded*	Unemployed	Fully funded	Fully funded	Co-funded
		Employed	Co-funded		
Provision to progress to Level 2	Fully funded	Not applicable		Fully funded	Co-funded
Level 3	Fully funded*	Loan-funded		Loan-funded	Loan-funded
Level 3 qualifications**	Loan-funded	Loan-funded		Loan-funded	Loan-funded
Level 4 qualifications**	Loan-funded	Loan-funded		Loan-funded	Loan-funded
Level 5 qualifications**	Loan-funded	Loan-funded		Loan-funded	Loan-funded
Level 6 qualifications**	Loan-funded	Loan-funded		Loan-funded	Loan-funded
Traineeship#	Fully Funded (including 24- year-olds)	Not applicable		Not applicable	Not applicable
English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) learning up to and including Level 2	Co-funded	Not applicable		Fully funded	Co-funded
	Fully funded - unemployed	Not applicable			

*Must be delivered as one of the qualifications required for the legal entitlement – see table below for qualifications eligible as part of legal entitlement
#Excludes flexible element where funding depends on age and level.
**Qualifications designated for loans

Qualifications required for the legal entitlement	
Vocational and general qualifications	English and maths
19-23 core offer – Tech Levels, Applied General, A-Levels, AS Levels, Access to HE, Technical Certificates, GCSEs	English and maths core offer – GCSE English and maths, functional skills in English and maths
In addition – a limited number of technical or professional qualifications from the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF)	In addition – a limited number of other ‘stepping stone’ English and maths qualifications from the RQF

Fees for Learners aged 19 or over for second Level 3 up to Level 6 learning aim (non-apprentice)

(The age applies on the day they actually start the learning aim, not their age at the start of the funding year.)

All learners aged 19 and over will require a loan from the Student Loans Company (SLC) for the cost of the course, pay the fees themselves or a combination of the two. Students who are not fully funded may be co-funded.

Loans are for the cost of the course and not maintenance loans, and are paid directly by the SLC to the College.

Loans are not means-tested. Students do not repay the loans until they have finished the course and are earning over £21,000 per year.

Exams and materials fees are not applicable to loans students.

Where loans students achieve on 'Access to HE' courses, and subsequently progress and achieve a degree course with an Higher Education Institution, the SLC will wipe out the loans.

In order to confirm enrolment of a loans student on their intended course, the college will need to have received approval from the SLC that the SLC has granted such a loan.

Learners in receipt of loans are responsible for full course fees even though they may withdraw from the course or cease to receive the loan. The only exceptions are detailed in Section 14 (Refunds).

Tuition fees for non-funded provision which includes individual musical instrument tuition will be charged in full.

The table in 2.3 gives guidance to the levels of government contribution toward skills provision for non-apprenticeship provision. The College Admissions team can give guidance regarding fees for specific courses.

3. Apprenticeships

No fees will be charged for 16-18 year olds who are fully funded by the SFA.

Adults aged 19 and over will be chargeable subject to SFA guidance. The actual fee will reflect market conditions and the costs of delivery and be determined by the Senior Leadership Team.

Learners with Level 4 or equivalent prior attainment at the beginning of their Level 2 or 3 Apprenticeship will be chargeable at full cost of provision. Learners accessing a higher Apprenticeship will be chargeable subject to SFA guidance.

4. Higher Education Courses

Fees for HE courses will comply with HEFCE regulations and be determined by the Senior Leadership Team.

Fees for HE courses which are delivered by South Downs College under a franchise arrangement will be set in partnership with the relevant University.

5. Full Cost Recovery Courses

Fees for courses not funded by HEFCE, SFA or EFA will be determined from time to time with regard to specific subsidies from other funders, market forces and full costs of delivery. Remission does not apply to full cost courses.

Refer to South Downs College Schedule of fees which is published on our website.

6. Materials and Equipment Fees

The College may levy charges for materials, equipment and services which are not a prescribed part of the funded provision, or which are retained by the learner.

For clothing and equipment necessary to the health and safety of the learner, or necessary for the completion of the course, the learner may borrow the clothing and equipment free of charge from the College. If the learner wishes to retain the clothing or equipment once they have withdrawn from or completed the course, they must purchase the clothing or equipment or return it to the College at the end of their course. This applies to all learners.

The College can charge fines and penalties and deposits where not defined as fees.

7. Exam, Validating and Professional Bodies Registration Fees

Exam fees are charged in full to all learners on enrolment, except for EFA and SFA funded 16-18 year olds, fully-funded SFA learners and learners accessing SFA loans. Fees for resit exams will be charged in full in respect to all learners.

Subscription charges, made by professional bodies to become a member of that organisation, are payable by learners aged 19 or over.

Charges for Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks are payable by learners, except for EFA and SFA funded 16-18 year olds, fully-funded SFA learners and learners accessing loans from the Student Loans Company.

Exam fees for all full cost courses and any non-funded courses will be charged in full to the learner.

8. Other Fees

The College reserves the right to levy additional charges for the following:

- Where clothing or equipment is necessary for the student's health or safety, a charge may be made for clothing and equipment that the student retains, but only if the student also has the option of borrowing the clothing or equipment free of charge.
- For the sale of learning materials in bookshops, or similar facilities in institutions, that enables students to secure discounts on books, stationery or similar materials.
- Fines for the late return of library books or other disciplinary fines (provided such penalties have been made known in advance); and deposits on lockers, ID cards, keys, library cards or smartcards and equipment that are fully refundable except in cases of damage or theft. Fines and deposits are not fees.
- Photocopying and printing, including computer printouts.

- The recreational use of leisure and other non-academic facilities where the activity taking place is not a requirement of a course syllabus or not part of a student union membership free entitlement.
- Travel, board and lodging and other additional costs, including any tuition costs, associated with field trips and similar activities that may form part of or be outside the requirement of the course syllabus or agreed study programme.
- Optional extra activities where the activity is taking place outside a required part of an agreed study programme. Examples of optional extra activities include theatre, cinema or museum visits or other day or residential visits that are not a requirement of course syllabuses.

9. Reduced and Enhanced Fees

The Vice Principal has discretion to reduce or waive fees for home learners in exceptional circumstances.

Contracts with employers for multiple learners may be subject to negotiation.

10. Payment Methods

Cash, cheque and credit or debit cards can be used to pay fees.

11. Instalments

With the exception of learners receiving Student Loan Company (SLC) loans, home learners may agree payments by instalments, please contact Customer Services for further information.

For learners receiving SLC loans, the College will be paid in instalments as determined by the SFA, SLC and the College.

Students applying for loans which are not confirmed by the start of the course will be charged a 10% deposit which is only refundable when loan payments are received by the College.

12. Payment by Employers or Sponsors

A learner may have made an agreement for course and other fees to be paid by their employer or sponsor. This is an agreement made between those two parties.

Where it has been confirmed as part of the advice and guidance and enrolment process that the fees for the learner are to be paid by a sponsor or an employer, then formal and written confirmation of this must be submitted to the College, via an official purchase order, at which point the invoice is payable in full.

The College must receive any such purchase order or letter of authority for payment by a third party at the point of enrolment, otherwise the learner will be required to pay the full fees due.

If the learner has left the employment of the company that had agreed to pay the fees it may be possible that the learner has changed employment and the new employer is willing to pay the fees. In this event, it is acceptable for the liability to the College to be transferred provided that the new employer confirms its willingness to pay the fees via an official purchase order or in writing on its official letterhead.

13. Payment by Loans Received from Student Loans Company (SLC)

Where learners have applied for a loan from the SLC to pay for their intended course tuition fees, written confirmation from the SLC must be presented by the learner, or the College must be able to see approval by the SLC for the loan application on the SLC's portal.

Where the learner's course fees are being paid by the SLC, but the learner withdraws from the course and the SLC stops payment of course fees before the final instalment, the learner will be liable for all outstanding fees.

14. Refunds

Refunds will only be considered in the following circumstances:

- The College closes the course or changes the day, time or venue of a previously advertised course.
- Serious illness or hospitalisation of the learner, evidenced by medical certificates, excluding a long term medical condition which is known about at enrolment. In these circumstances the College reserves the right to refuse a refund. Any refund granted will be based on the remaining classes of the course after a claim has been received.
- Serious illness or hospitalisation of a partner, parent or child necessitating full time care by the learner, confirmed by a medical certificate. If this is a long term situation, known about at enrolment, then the College reserves the right to refuse a refund. Any refund granted will be based on the remaining classes of the course after a claim has been received.
- Other exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the College. In the first instance, an application in writing should be made to the relevant Director of Curriculum.
- No refunds if the learner leaves or is suspended, or excluded in accordance with the College Disciplinary Code.

15. Outstanding Fees

Learners must be advised that any fees that remain outstanding beyond their due date for settlement will prejudice their continuance on the course or entry for an exam.

All outstanding fees are to be paid up in full before a learner can progress onto the next year of their course or a new course at the College.

16. Fee Rates

Fee rates will normally be set by the end of March each year. The fee levels will reflect the College's Costing and Pricing Framework which considers:

- Current market rates
- Cost of delivery
- Funding available for co-funded provision
- EFA, SFA and HEFCE guidelines
- Financial contribution to College overheads.

For details of fees applicable to a specific course, please contact the College Admissions Team.

17. Definitions used in the Adult Education Budget which apply to this Policy

Unemployed

For funding purposes a learner is defined as unemployed if one or more of the following apply:

- They receive Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA), including those receiving National Insurance credits only.
- They receive Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) and are in the work-related activity group (WRAG).
- They receive Universal Credit, earn less than 16 times the National Minimum wage per week or £330 a month and are determined by Jobcentre Plus (JCP) as being in one of the following groups:
 - All Work Related Requirements Group
 - Work Preparation Group
 - Work Focused Interview Group
- They are released on temporary licence (RoTL) and studying outside a prison environment and not funded through the Offenders' Learning and Skills Service (OLASS).

Providers may also use their discretion to fund other learners if all of the following apply:

The learner receives other state benefits and earns less than 16 times the National Minimum Wage a week or £330 a month and the learner wants to be employed and you are satisfied that the learning is directly relevant to their employment prospects and the local labour market needs.

Full Level 2 definition

Level 2 is the level of attainment which, is demonstrated by:

- General Certificate of Secondary Education in five subjects, each at grade C or above, or
- Technical Certificate at Level 2 which meets the requirements for 16 to 19 performance tables, or
- other technical and professional qualifications which are part of 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)

Full Level 3 definition

Level 3 is the level of attainment which is demonstrated by:

- General Certificate of Education at the advanced level in two subjects, or
- a Quality Assurance Agency Access to Higher Education (HE) Diploma at Level 3, or
- a Tech Level; or Applied General qualification at Level 3 which meets the requirements for 16 to 19 performance tables, or
- 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.