

Policy



South Devon College

COURSE FEES POLICY (P02)

2017-18

Course Fees Policy

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DRAFT – subject to change pending formal approval July 2017

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. South Devon College is committed to a fair and transparent policy in respect of charges made to learners.
- 1.2. We believe it is in the interests of the learner, and where applicable, the learner's sponsor(s) (an organisation or employer who is funding the learner) and the College, that learners receive prompt notification of any fees or charges due to us, along with the arrangements for payment. Learners are responsible for prompt payment.
- 1.3. Learners retain ultimate responsibility for the payment of their fees, even where they have a sponsorship agreement.
- 1.4. This fees policy does not apply to commercial or contract work, which is separately negotiated.
- 1.5. Types of fee included in this policy are:
 - Further Education courses (including Advanced Learner Loans)
 - Higher Education courses
 - Apprenticeships
 - International learners
 - Adult Community Learning
- 1.6. Details of College course fees for the Academic Year 2017/18 are set out in this document.
- 1.7. Course fees cover the whole duration of the course. A programme is made up of any number of courses or qualifications spread over a period of time and each course or qualification may have fees associated with it.
- 1.8. The College may at its discretion vary fees and charges in line with market conditions, government policy and guidance, and special initiatives. Variations must be authorised by the Assistant Principal - Systems, Information, Performance and Apprenticeships or Vice Principal or Principal.

2. GUIDING PRINCIPLES USED TO SET FEES & CHARGES

- 2.1. Learning providers are given discretion to determine their tuition and other fee charges, with certain limitations set by the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) and the Higher Education Funding Council of England (HEFCE).
- 2.2. The College operates a structure of fee banding to simplify a complex charging system and to make it easier for learners to see comparability. Banding attached at Appendix 1. For courses of 1 year or more, the College charges annually for its programmes of study, and fees in the second year of study and beyond may change.
- 2.3. The College charges a College Fee to all adults on full cost or government sponsored courses. The fee is banded at £100, £50 and £25 to reflect the size of the qualification. The fee is invested into infrastructure projects and bulk procurement opportunities that are then offered to learners at no cost. The maximum College Fee payable per learner per year is £100.
- 2.4. The College reserves the right to charge premium fees on individual programmes where market demand and/or cost justify; and similarly to reduce/waive fees in exceptional circumstances.

- 2.5. Where applicable, Examination, Registration & Certification and other fees will be charged in advance at the time a learner enrolls. These will not normally be refundable.
- 2.6. Other charges may apply to individual courses and will be identified separately. These will not normally be refundable. This includes resit fees, and fees to cover the cost of additional learning support beyond that reasonably provided in learning, where no government funding is available; such as on full cost courses.
- 2.7. Fees and examination fees are not chargeable to 16 - 18 year old full time or part time learners as defined in the Education Funding Agency (EFA) Funding Guidance and in line with their guidance. Similarly, no fees will be charged for learners with learning difficulties or disabilities aged 19 to 24 and a current Education, Health and Care Plan, where they are funded by the EFA.
- 2.8. In line with EFA funding guidance, it is intended that learners should continue to receive free tuition in any consecutive subsequent year of study on the same study programme as recorded in their learning agreement.
- 2.9. Learners are liable for the full payment of fees until formal confirmation of alternative arrangements is presented to the College.
- 2.10. The College reserves the right to exclude/suspend any learner who fails to pay their tuition and other fees, or make satisfactory arrangement to pay on, or by a set period after the start date of their course (**see section 13**). The College also reserves the right to not accept enrolment onto another course within the year or in the future if there are outstanding fees.

3. **FEE REMISSION**

- 3.1. The SFA recognises the importance of skills for gaining employment and for increasing the productivity of adults and will subsidise certain course fees enabling the College to offer fee remission for certain learners according to the SFA eligibility criteria.
- 3.2. The priority groups that are currently eligible for SFA subsidies include those unemployed on active benefits, those not in employment, those requiring adult Basic Skills (literacy and numeracy) or GCSE English or Maths at grade C or above and those without Full Level 2 or 3 qualifications. Age restrictions also apply to these categories.
- 3.3. The eligibility criteria changes each year and details of the changes will be communicated to learners through our marketing materials including website and through our support staff including Helpzone and Learner Information Services staff.
- 3.4. Learners will be required to provide evidence of their eligibility for fee remission (dated within 6 months before the course start date) and/or complete self-declarations as required at the time of enrolment.
- 3.5. Adult Community Learning offers a 20% discount to learners using the SFA eligibility criteria for FE courses.
- 3.6. In some circumstances, the College will offer qualifications that would be eligible for grant or loan funding but do not claim this, instead charging a commercial full-cost fee. Other providers may offer alternative funding routes for the same qualification.

4. HIGHER EDUCATION LEARNERS

4.1. SCOPE

- 4.1.1. Higher Education refers to course at Level 4 or above, which are designated as proscribed by the Higher Education Council for England (HEFCE). For the purposes of this document this is Higher National Certificates (HNC), Foundation Degrees (FDA/FDSc) and Bachelor Degrees (BA/BSc).

4.2. FEE LEVEL

- 4.2.1. For 2017/18 and 2018/19 the fee for new full-time Higher Education Learners will be £7,710 and £8,250 respectively per year of study.
- 4.2.2. Higher Education learners will remain on their starting fee point for the remainder of their programme in Higher Education at South Devon College.
- 4.2.3. Part time learners, and learners studying individual modules will be charged pro rata of the full time fee. Where the accumulation of modules results in a full qualification, a balancing payment will be required where the total cost of these modules is less than a full qualification.
- 4.2.4. New full-time Learners may be eligible for bursary support during the first year of their studies, in line with the agreed bursary offer.
- 4.2.5. A duplicate transcript may be issued at a charge of £12.50.
- 4.2.6. Where a learner is not required to complete a module due to Accreditation of Prior Learning, they will not be charged tuition fees for that module.

4.3. PAYMENT

- 4.3.1. A learner will not be able to enrol without either:
- Paying the full fee up front, or;
 - Demonstrating evidence of application to Student Finance England for a tuition fee loan for the full amount of the fees, or;
 - Demonstrating evidence of application to the Student Finance England for a tuition fee loan for part of the fees and payment of the balance in full or by entering into a Direct Debit arrangement with us, or;
 - Paying a deposit and entering into a Direct Debit arrangement with us for the balance.
- 4.3.2. Learners who elect not to take a loan will be required either to pay their fees in full prior to enrolment or enter into a Direct Debit agreement with us. See **Section 12** for information about paying by instalments.
- 4.3.3. Fees may be paid by credit or debit card, bank transfer, or cash. Instalment payments may only be made by setting up a Direct Debit agreement. Fees may be paid in person via the cashier's office within the Helpzone, Vantage Point or credit / debit card over the phone through finance office.
- 4.3.4. Any learner having problems paying their fees should contact the HE Team for information and support.

4.4. Learners who arrange a loan via the Student Finance England (SFE)

- 4.4.1. Student Finance England operates independently of the College, and payment or non-payment of loans by SFE to the College shall not be taken to guarantee compliance with the College’s rules regarding fees or in any way to affect the learner’s liability to the College for fees.
- 4.4.2. SFE's policy regarding payment of loans is independent of the policy operated by the College.
- 4.4.3. Learners retain responsibility for the payment of their fees and all other monies owing to the College, regardless of any loan via the SLC or sponsorship arrangements.
- 4.4.4. Any monies owed by the learner to Student Finance England are separate to the learner’s fee liability to the College.
- 4.4.5. HE learners who do not have evidence of a learner loan after 4 weeks from the start date of their course will be required to set up a Direct Debit and start paying their tuition fees in instalments. Once their loan has been approved any monies due back to them will be refunded into the bank account on the Direct Debit mandate form.
- 4.4.6. On production of evidence of a learner loan, the instalment plan will be cancelled and any monies due back to the learner will be refunded.
- 4.4.7. HE learners have the option to pay their fees in instalments by Direct Debit. These may be paid in 3 equal instalments, one per term, or by monthly instalments.

4.5. PERIOD OF LIABILITY

- 4.5.1. Any HE learner who withdraws or interrupts their studies during the academic year will be liable for the following tuition fees. This is based on guidance from Student Finance England and The Education (Learner Fees, Awards and Support) (Amendment) Regulations 2011:

Date	Fees Payable
From the point of enrolment up to the end of teaching in week 1, term 1.	0% of annual fee
Term 1 <i>From the beginning of Teaching in week 2 of Term 1, up to and including the First day of Teaching in Week 1, Term 2</i>	25% of annual fee
Term 2 <i>From the Second day of Teaching in Week 1, Term 2 up to and including the first day of Teaching in Week 1, Term 3</i>	50% of annual fee
Term 3 <i>From the second day of Teaching in Week 1, Term 3</i>	100% of annual fee

- 4.5.2. Any learner withdrawn due to non-payment of tuition fees will be liable as detailed above.
- 4.5.3. Liability for fees for HE Learners transferring to South Devon College from other establishments will be determined on an individual basis.

5. APPRENTICESHIPS AND TRAINEESHIPS

5.1. SCOPE

5.1.1. Apprenticeships refer to learners studying an approved apprenticeship in the form of a framework or a standard. This includes Higher and Degree Apprenticeships.

5.1.2. Traineeships refer to an approved traineeship of 6 months or less, to be defined by an employer.

5.2. FEE LEVEL

5.2.1. Apprenticeships - the SFA expect that fees should be charged to employers in respect of their contribution towards the cost of supporting apprenticeships and the college will comply with the compulsory elements of the SFA funding guidance and rules.

5.2.2. For continuing frameworks starting prior to 30th April /2017, the three tiered rates are £50, £80, and £110 per month, the tier being determined by the overall funding available for the Framework. For Apprentices continuing on a Trailblazer / Standard the amounts chargeable will remain as per the negotiated fees agreed at the start of the apprenticeship with individual Employers.

5.2.3. With the introduction of the new SFA apprenticeship funding methodology, there is a stricter expectation for employers to contribute financially to supporting apprenticeships. Details of the arrangements are included in appendix 2.

5.2.4. The College reserves the right to vary any fee levels to enable it to respond to exceptional circumstances, individually negotiated contract opportunities, or market conditions.

5.2.5. There are no fees charged for Traineeships.

5.3. PAYMENT METHOD

5.3.1. Fees are payable monthly by Direct Debit for the duration of the apprenticeship.

5.4. PERIOD OF LIABILITY

5.4.1. The employer liability for future contributions ceases if the apprentice leaves their organisation. No refund of contributions up to the point of leaving will be made.

6. INTERNATIONAL LEARNERS

6.1. SCOPE

6.1.1. An international learner is defined as a non-EU/non-EEA national who has no residency status in the European Union; in-line with UK Border Agency guidance.

6.2. FEE LEVEL

6.2.1. Where learners are not eligible for SFA/EFA grant funding the following learner rates will be charged in 2017/18 for a year of study.

6.2.2. Further Education full time - £7,300 per annum plus a programme weighting factor (if applicable) for 2017/18 starts.

6.2.3. Higher Education full time - £10,800 per annum for 2017/18 starts and £11,250 per annum for 2018/19 starts.

6.2.4. Additional charges may apply in line with United Kingdom Border Agency requirements.

6.2.5. If additional learning support is required this will be chargeable in addition to the international fee above.

6.3. PAYMENT METHOD

6.3.1. A non-refundable administration fee of £250 will be required prior to issue of Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (tier 4).

6.3.2. International fees are payable in advance and are non-refundable.

6.3.3. International learners are not entitled to pay by instalments.

6.3.4. No bursaries are available for international learners.

6.4. PERIOD OF LIABILITY

6.4.1. All fees and charges are payable in advance and are not refundable.

7. UNDER 16 LEARNERS

7.1. SCOPE

7.1.1. Under 16 learners refer to learners who commence their studies in September 2017, who are under the age of 16 at the start of the academic year.

7.2. FEE LEVEL

7.2.1. Individual learners under the age of 16 for whom no EFA approval for funding has been given and who seek to enrol on a College course will normally require a letter of support from their school or educational psychologist. The school (i.e. the LEA for maintained schools) or parents will be required to pay a fee based upon the income that the College would have received from the EFA.

7.2.2. The standard fee for a learner in 2017/18 undertaking a normal programme will be based on the EFA funding formula. Any additional costs which may be incurred over and above a normal programme will be charged in addition to this basic fee rate.

8. ADVANCED LEARNER LOANS

8.1. SCOPE

8.1.1. Advanced Learner Loans refer to learning loans for learners aged 19 and over for study on eligible level 3, 4, 5 or 6 qualifications, excluding Advanced and Higher Apprenticeships and Higher Education. The College will comply with the compulsory aspects of the Funding Rules 2017/18 document relating to Advanced Learner Loans.

8.2. FEE LEVEL

- 8.2.1. Tuition fees will vary depending upon the course. The course fee will be presented to you on the enrolment form or offer letter.
- 8.2.2. The loan can cover all costs and charges for items which a learner cannot complete the course without. Any additional costs which may be incurred over and above the loan value will be charged in addition to the loan value.

8.3. PAYMENT METHOD

- 8.3.1. Learners must apply to the Student Loans Company (SLC) for the Advanced Learner Loan. The Student Loans Company is responsible for assessing whether learners are eligible for a loan and for administering repayments.
- 8.3.2. The College recommends that individuals consider their own financial circumstances before applying for a loan and look into all the options available. Free independent financial advice is available from The Money Advice Service at moneyadviceservice.org.uk
- 8.3.3. If a learner's loan is not approved after 4 weeks, the learner will be required to set up a Direct Debit and start paying their fees in instalments. If their loan is approved at a later date, any monies due back to the learner will be refunded back into the account details on the Direct Debit mandate form. The fee liability Self-Declaration must be signed and dated by the applicant before enrolment onto any Advanced Learner Loan course can proceed. This has been written in accordance with Student Finance England guidance.

8.4. PERIOD OF LIABILITY

- 8.4.1. Learners should note that once they have attended the course, cancelling their loan with the Student Loan Company will not remove the requirement to pay fees. The balance will remain outstanding against the learner's enrolment record until payment of all fees due has been received.
- 8.4.2. Learners will be liable for the full SLC loan amount taken out or full level of loan taken up until the point of formal withdrawal from the associated qualification regardless of any other circumstances including, for example, outstanding or unresolved complaints or disputes.
- 8.4.3. Learners who wish to transfer from one course to another, or take a break in learning must seek advice from the Helpzone to understand the possible implications before making a decision.

9. SUPPORT WITH COSTS

9.1. Limited discretionary funds for Further Education are made available from the Government to support eligible learners enrolled on funded courses and contribute towards costs as determined by the College Learner Support Fund criteria. Examples of costs that may be eligible for support are:

- Exam and/or registration fees
- Tuition
- Essential kit and equipment

- Books
- Travel

- 9.2. Full-time and part-time learners required to pay fees but who are eligible for support from the Learner Support Fund will be required to contribute at least 30% towards the cost of exam/registration fees.
- 9.3. Eligibility for support towards costs will be determined on the basis of applicant income, identified need and availability of funds.
- 9.4. Childcare: Support may be available towards meeting the cost of OFSTED registered childcare up to a ceiling determined by the College. Any learners under 20 will be funded by Care to Learn for childcare costs.
- 9.5. For any learners requesting support with fees, the Helpzone will be able to offer advice as to possible routes.

10. SPONSORS

- 10.1. Learners may ask the College to invoice external sponsors, such as employers or other third parties. Learners must provide, at or before the time of enrolment, evidence to confirm the amount or proportion of the fees and charges being paid by the sponsor.
- 10.2. In the event that evidence from a sponsor is provided at a later date, then any amount which has been paid by the learner will be refunded to the extent that the fees/charges are to be paid by the sponsor.
- 10.3. It is the learner's personal responsibility to ensure that fees and charges are paid on time. This is the case irrespective of whether fees are being paid by a sponsor (including the Student Loans Company).
- 10.4. If the sponsor does not pay for whatever reason, the responsibility for payment of any outstanding fees or charges falls to the learner.
- 10.5. Sponsors are liable for all fees up to the point of a student withdrawing, regardless of the reason for withdrawal.

11. REFUND POLICY

- 11.1. If the College cancels a course it will refund the full fees paid by the learner.
- 11.2. Individual staff at the College are not permitted to waive fees or authorise refunds. This can only be authorised by the Assistant Principal Systems, Information, Performance and Apprenticeships.
- 11.3. If a learner withdraws from a course before the start date of the course the learner will be entitled to a refund of tuition and exam fees, providing they have informed the LIS Enrolments Team at least 2 weeks before the course start date. An administration fee of £10 will be retained.
- 11.4. If a learner withdraws from the course after the course start date or does not attend the course they have enrolled on there will be no refund of payments made (including tuition, material, registration and exam fees) unless the learner has withdrawn due to their own serious medical condition (medical certificate required as evidence), and then a proportionate refund of tuition fees may be made (based on the proportion of the

course attended), on application to the Assistant Principal Systems, Information, Performance and Apprenticeships. The application will be acknowledged and considered by senior staff using information collated from interested parties.

- 11.5. In the event of a refund being authorised, exam fees will only be refunded if they have not already been paid on to the relevant Examinations Board.
- 11.6. The administration fee for paying fees by instalments of £10 is non-refundable.
- 11.7. Where a “College Fee” has been applied, this is non-refundable.
- 11.8. Refund applications will only be considered within the relevant academic year and tuition fees will not be reduced to learners who start their courses late.
- 11.9. Refunds will normally be paid by Bacs within 28 days of authorisation of refund. All payments made through our Online Shop will be refunded to the debit/credit card used to make the original payment.
- 11.10. All refunds for any item purchased from the College (including its retail outlets) can only be processed by the Finance Department.

12. PAYMENT OPTIONS

- 12.1. All fees are payable on enrolment. However, to assist learners who would otherwise suffer financial hardship in paying their fees in one sum, approval may be given to pay fees in instalments by Direct Debit. A learner’s previous payment history may be taken into account when deciding approval.
- 12.2. The method of payment for instalments will be by Direct Debit, except at the time of enrolment when the first payment is due.
- 12.3. Payment options are not available to international learners, employers (except for apprenticeship fees) or for amounts owed under £100.
- 12.4. There is a £10 non-refundable administration fee for learners wishing to pay by instalments.
- 12.5. If approved, a Direct Debit form must be signed at the time of Enrolment.
- 12.6. Direct Debit payments will be taken on or just after either 20th or 28th of each calendar month.
- 12.7. Where fees are £100 or more and instalments are approved, the total fee will be divided equally between the agreed number of instalments, the first payable on enrolment and the remainder by Direct Debit, with a minimum monthly payment of £25.
- 12.8. Direct Debit payments will be taken from September 2017 onwards for 2017/18 courses.
- 12.9. All instalment plans starting at the beginning of the academic year must end by May 2018. For short courses, the last instalment is due before the end date of the course.
- 12.10. All instalment plans for learners on 2 year courses starting September 2017 must end by July 2018.
- 12.11. If a learner cancels their Direct Debit, all outstanding fees will become immediately payable in full.

- 12.12. If a learner fails to pay two consecutive instalments, their instalment plan will be cancelled and the full amount outstanding will become due and payable immediately.
- 12.13. If there are insufficient funds in your bank/building society account to cover the cost of a Direct Debit instalment, the learner will incur charges from their bank/building society. Any such charges are the learner's responsibility and will not be refunded by the College.

13. NON PAYMENT OF FEES AND CHARGES

- 13.1. Learners retain ultimate responsibility for the payment of their fees and any other charges owed to the College, regardless of arrangements with third parties such as Student Finance England or any sponsors. If a third party is paying amounts on your behalf, you must ensure that these payments are duly made.
- 13.2. The College will pursue all unpaid fees and charges, and this could result in the following action being taken:
- Withdrawal of library borrowing rights;
 - Withdrawal of IT rights/access;
 - Suspension or withdrawal from a course/study programme;
 - Awards may be withheld and/or graduation deferred;
 - Exclusion from Awards Ceremonies;
 - Referral of debt to an external debt collection agency; or
 - Legal action through the courts which may affect a person's credit rating.
- 13.3. For Higher Education Students action will be taken making reference to the Academic Regulations.
- 13.4. If a learner is suspended or withdrawn from a course for non-payment, they will remain liable for all fees and charges.
- 13.5. Any debt collection, legal or court fees incurred in the pursuance of outstanding fees and/or charges may be added to the amount owed.
- 13.6. Learners will not be permitted to enrol on any further courses if there are outstanding fees or charges.

Appendix 1

Fees Matrix - 2017/18

College fee applies to all students, regardless of learner being fully funded or co-funded but tiered according to Level of **PARENT** course.

Course Fee	Learning Aim Type	GLH (Non Regulated Provision)	Fully Funded Rate	Co-Funded Rate*
£0	Award (1)	<= 12	£56	£30
£25	Award (2)	13-20	£112	£59
£25	Award (3)	21-44	£169	£87
£25	Award (6)	45-68	£337	£176
£25	Award (9)	69-92	£506	£264
£25	Award (12)	93-100	£675	£351
£50	Certificate (13 - 24)	101-196	£814	£424
£50	Certificate (25 - 36)	197-292	£1,423	£740
£100	Diploma (37 - 48)	293-388	£2,235	£1,163
£100	Diploma (49 - 72)	389-580	£2,894	£1,505
£100	Access to HE		£3,399	£1,768
£100	Diploma (73 - 132)	580-1060	£4,691	£2,439
£100	Diploma (133+)	1061+	£7,426	£3,866

ACL Fees 17/18

GLH	PRICE BAND	Price
3		15.50
1-5	A	24.00
6-10	B	44.00
11-15	C	64.00
16-20	D	77.50
21-25	E	95.50

* The co-funded rate is $FFR - ((FFR * 50\%)/PWF)$

College Fee 2017-18

Diploma	100
Certificate	50
Award	25

Appendix 2

Apprenticeship funding from May 2017
For all apprenticeship starts from 1st May 2017:

Digital Account
Government
Government Incentive Payments

	Employer: Levy Payer	Employer: Non Levy Payer (> 50 employees)	Employer: Non Levy Payer (< 50 employees)	Provider
Digital Account	Digital account funding Monthly levy (0.5% paybill over £3m) x % UK employees + 10% government top-up Duration Lasts 24 months (first in, first out) Flexibility From 2018, 10% can be transferred to another employer	No digital account	No digital account	Payment profile 80% throughout apprenticeship 20% on achievement Payment made 1 month in arrears

LEARNER				PRICING	
16-18	Funded by digital account	Govt pays 90% Employer pays 10% (co-investment)	Govt pays 100%	Govt adds 20% of max funding band	Based on banding (max price)
	Govt adds £1,000 per apprentice for employer (paid to training provider in month 3 and 12, passed on to employer)	Govt adds £1,000 per apprentice for employer (paid to training provider in month 3 and 12, passed on to employer)	Govt adds £1,000 per apprentice for employer (paid to training provider in month 3 and 12, passed on to employer)	Govt adds £1,000 per apprentice for provider (paid to training provider in month 3 and 12, passed on to employer)	
19+	Funded by digital account	Govt pays 90% Employer pays 10% (co-investment)	Govt pays 90% Employer pays 10% (co-investment)		Based on banding (max price)
19-24 Formerly in care or EHCP	Funded by digital account	Govt pays 90% Employer pays 10% (co-investment)	Govt pays 100%	Govt adds 20% of max funding band	Based on banding (max price)
	Govt adds £1,000 per apprentice for employer (paid to training provider in month 3 and 12, passed on to employer)	Govt adds £1,000 per apprentice for employer (paid to training provider in month 3 and 12, passed on to employer)	Govt adds £1,000 per apprentice for employer (paid to training provider in month 3 and 12, passed on to employer)	Govt adds £1,000 per apprentice for provider (paid to training provider in month 3 and 12, passed on to employer)	

Additional support					
English / Maths levels 1 or 2				£471 flat rate per qualification	
Additional learning support				Up to £150 per apprentice	
Apprentice from Disadvantaged areas				Payable to provider direct from Govt £600 £300 £200	Disadvantaged area funding Top 10% 10%-20% 20%-27%

Notes
 Employers can register for Digital Accounts from Jan 2017
 The employer's Uk v Non UK split will be based upon HMRC data - available from March 2017
 Levy comes in effect from 6 April 2017
 Funds will appear in digital accounts by end May 2017

DRAFT – subject to change pending formal approval July 2017