

# FEES POLICY 2023/24



## **1 Policy Objectives**

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- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework within which The Link Training Academy's fee setting and fee refund processes will be devised and operated. The policy also sets a framework for ensuring that comprehensive guidance and information regarding fees for courses subsidised is available and accessible to customers, staff and Governors.
- 1.2 The policy has been written in accordance with established funding guidance. The intent of the policy is to ensure transparency for all with regards funding, how we collect funds and how we reimburse funds.
- 1.3 The policy also aims to ensure that all staff involved in the recruitment and delivery of learning programmes will understand:
- The national funding policy context
  - The different elements of our fees
  - When and how fees are payable.

## **2 Approval of Fees Policy**

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- 2.1 Our Fees Policy and any subsequent amendments to this policy will require the approval of our Governing Body.
- 2.2 Our Fees Policy will be reviewed annually and any changes recommended will be referred for approval to the Governing Body.

## **3 Policy Statement**

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- 3.1 The Link Training Academy reserves the right to cancel any course or change its charging policy where its costs may result in financial loss; cancel any course where there is lack of appropriate resource; and/or refuse entry to a course on any non-discriminatory grounds.
- 3.2 This policy may change in line with changes in Government or more locally devolved Strategy.

## **4 Fee Guidelines for Adults aged 19 and above**

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- 4.1 The Link Training Academy receives funding from:
- Adult Learning Loans provided by the Student Loans Company (SLC) for some adults studying Level 3 programmes.
  - The ESFA for non-levy funded apprenticeships (plus an employer fee contribution)
  - Employer levy payments for levy funded apprenticeships.
  - Student fees for commercial courses which are not funded and on loan funded courses who do not take out a loan.
- 4.2 For Apprenticeship programmes, The Link Training Academy will abide by the Apprenticeships charging guidance published by the ESFA.

In any circumstances where a student is not eligible for funding on an ESFA/WYCA course, they will be charged fees at the equivalent of the full rates plus registration and examination fees.

#### Non-fundable adult learners

Students aged 19 or over at the course start date wishing to undertake a second level 3 or higher programme are ineligible for funding from the ESFA. The students are liable for the full costs of their programme.

In many cases, students will be eligible for a fee loan from Student Finance England within the total envelope of funding made available to The Link Training Academy learners for this purpose. This will be repayable through the PAYE system once the student begins to earn above the published annual threshold.

The costs of these programmes will be in line with published loan amounts. More detailed guidance can be found in the detailed procedures for adult learning loans.

## **5 Apprenticeship Provision**

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- 5.1 Fees charged to Employers for Apprenticeship provision will be in line with guidance published by the ESFA and relevant to the size of the employer and age of the Apprentice. A table summarising this is at Appendix C.
- 5.2 Where a fee is applicable, it will be derived from the maximum of the price band to which the Apprentice standard has been attached and adjusted to a 'total negotiated price'. This will reflect for example, any recognised prior learning.
- 5.3 All employers will be required to be registered on the Digital Apprentice Service and the agreed funding will be paid on a monthly basis by the Digital Apprentice Service. Where funding is provided on a co-investment model, or where remaining levy funds are insufficient and a cash payment applies, employers will be invoiced and are expected to pay fees due within 30 days.
- 5.4 Where employers fail to adhere to their agreed payment plan, The Link Training Academy reserves the right to suspend their apprentice's studies until payment is received, and the employer will still remain liable for the fees.
- 5.5 The apprentice will not be asked to contribute financially to the eligible costs of training, on-programme or end-point assessment. This includes both where the individual has completed the programme successfully or has left the programme early. Costs include any co-investment or additional training and assessment costs above the funding band, that the employer has paid directly to us where this is part of the agreed apprenticeship

## **6 Staff and Governors**

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- 6.1 All staff and Governors are eligible to be considered for enrolment on one funded course free of tuition fees per year outside of working hours. Adult basic skills or teacher training courses may however be completed within the working day at the discretion of the relevant manager. This will be permitted providing the course is already viable with funded/fee paying students. Further guidance should be obtained through the staff development process prior to enrolment.
- 6.2 Staff undertaking an approved programme of study as an apprentice funded via ESFA and co investment, will be given time to complete their 20% 'Off the Job' study during their normal working hours.

## **7 Full cost provision**

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- 7.1 Fees for commercial courses or cost recovery will be priced at a level to reflect the full cost to the academy, with cognisance of the market.
- 7.2 Full cost fees should be set on achieving at a minimum the contribution rate of 48%. As a rule of thumb however, a minimum tuition fee rate of £20 per learner hour or £200 per group hour should be applied.

## **8 Fee waivers**

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- 8.1 Only with the express permission of a director may fees be waived.
- 8.2 The academy cannot waive exam, registration or certification fees where these apply.

## 9 Payment of fees

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- 9.1 All fees become due in full at enrolment, but the academy recognises that some students may be unable to pay their fees in full at that time. The academy offers a staged payment plan, the thresholds for which can be found at Appendix B.
- 9.2 Where an employer has agreed to pay fees for one of their employees, the learner will be required to produce a letter or purchase order from their employer at the time of enrolment confirming that they will cover the full cost of the course.
- 9.3 With the exception of programmes funded by advanced learning loans and apprenticeships, fees quoted are for one year only. Where a programme runs over more than one year, second year fees will apply.
- 9.4 Any student who has not paid their tuition or exam fees in full at the end of the academic year:
- May have exam certificates withheld;
  - May not have assessed work marked and returned;
  - May not be permitted to progress to the next year of study or enrol on another course;
  - May not receive references for employment beyond confirmation of dates and courses attended; and
  - Where students fall significantly behind with their payment plans and the academy has failed to secure payments, the debt may be referred to a debt collection agency for recovery. A £25 charge will be added to the debt to cover costs incurred by the academy in pursuing the debt.

## 10 Examination fees

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- 10.1 All adult learners with the exception of those who have fees waived will be charged their examination/registration fees.
- 10.2 All learners retaking examinations will be charged the examination retake fee, which is payable prior to examination entry.
- 10.3 The learner should be offered a **maximum of two re-sits per year** (subject to availability of the exam windows). Exceptions are made to this allowing the exams department to ensure that a revision period is provided.
- 10.4 All learners (including 16-18-year olds) who have been entered for an exam but do not attend on the day will be charged a minimum fee of £10.
- 10.5 Anyone wishing to obtain past results who has not been enrolled with the college for the present or previous academic year, may be required to pay a fee of £10 to cover the administration costs incurred.
- 10.6 If a currently enrolled learner wishes to sit an exam for which they are not enrolled, they may be able to sit the exam, but will be subject to an additional fee. (See Appendix A).
- 10.7 If a person who is not enrolled at the college wishes to sit an exam, they may be able to sit the exam, but will be subject to an external candidate fee. (see Appendix A).
- 10.8 Centre fees of either £10 fixed fee or £3 per exam unit, will be added to exam registrations/entries (including re-sits) to assist with Invigilator fees, exam paper printing, printing of result slips, postage of coursework and notification of certificate collection, candidate exam schedules, etc.

- 10.9 If internal examination registration and/or entry deadlines are missed, a fixed fee of £10 will be charged either directly to the student or the college department depending on responsibility for the late submission.
- 10.10 If late submission of an examination registration and/or entry causes the college to miss the awarding body deadlines, the resulting fees will be recharged either directly to the student or the college department depending on the responsibility for the late submission.

## **11 Refunds**

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- 11.1 Where a course has been cancelled by the academy, refunds/credits will be made to learners in full.
- 11.2 In cases where a learner has withdrawn as a result of personal circumstances, or where a learner can demonstrate that the academy has failed to deliver what could have reasonably been expected, then an application for a refund or credit should be made in writing to the relevant Head of Faculty. The college may require provision of evidence to justify any request for refund on compassionate grounds.
- 11.3 Where a student has registered three or more attendances, no refund will be given. Fees for full cost provision are due in full regardless of attendance.
- 11.4 Examination fees/registration fees may only be refunded if the entry/registration has not been processed at the time of refund application.
- 11.5 Where students wish to transfer from one course to another, any tuition fees paid will be counted against the revised enrolment.
- 11.6 Where a student is required to leave their programme by the academy, e.g. as a result of disciplinary proceedings, the student will remain liable for fees due up to the point of exclusion.
- 11.7 Any refunds processed with the exception of course closure will be subject to a £20 administration fee.

## **12 Student additional learning support**

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- 12.1 Students enrolled on ESFA/WYCA funded learner responsive and Apprenticeship provision are eligible for additional learner support to enable them to complete their programme.
- 12.2 Students enrolled on provision funded through an advanced learning loan or HE loan are eligible to apply for additional learner support through associated bursaries.

**TUITION FEE CHARGES 2023/24****FE PROVISION**

16-18 Learners	£0	No fee
19+ L3+ learners where no agency funds are available	Variable by programme – see separate academy published rates	

**FULL COST FEES**

Full cost fees will be locally determined to achieve a minimum 48% contribution. As a rule of thumb however a typical full cost tuition fee will be a minimum of: £20 per learner hour, or £200 per group hour.

**OTHER FEES**

Students enrolled on existing courses will be charged £50, plus the examination fee, to sit an examination for which they are not enrolled. External candidate exam fees are calculated based on the specific requirements of each candidate. The current fees list is available from Examination Services.

**PAYMENT TERMS**

The academy understands that students often find it difficult to pay all their tuition fees in advance. For this reason, the academy offers staged payments for fees, subject to completion of an instalment agreement.

The thresholds currently applied are:

Fees under £50	No instalment offers available
Fees £51 to £100	2 monthly instalments available
Fees £101 to £250	Up to 4 monthly instalments available
Fees £250 to £400	Up to 6 monthly instalments available
Fees over £401	Up to 8 monthly instalments available

If any agreed instalments are missed, the full fee becomes due.

If instalments are agreed, students will be expected to set up an automatic recurring card payment via our online payment service.

**EMPLOYER APPRENTICESHIP FEES**

<b>Age of Apprentice</b>		
	<b>16-18</b>	<b>Adult</b>
Levy Payer – digital funds available	100% through digital account	100% through digital account
Levy Payer – digital funds exhausted	5% of TNP*	5% of TNP*
Non-Levy Payer – large employer	5% of TNP*	5% of TNP*
Non-Levy Payer – small employer	No fee	5% of TNP* if not an 'eligible' 19-24-year-old

\*TNP Total Negotiated Price