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| <b>Title:</b>                 | New City College London Fee Policy 2018/19 |   |
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# **New City College**

## **Fee Policy 2018/19**

### **1 Background**

- 1.1 This Policy sets out the requirements for the charging of fees and the rationale behind the College's fee structure.
- 1.2 Fees in some cases are subject to government guidelines, via the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) which provide the statutory framework in which the fees are decided.
- 1.3 The Fees Policy is supplemented by detailed procedures and guidance (together "the Guidance") which is updated annually to reflect the changing requirements from the funding bodies, including rates, eligibility for fee waivers etc.
- 1.4 The Fees Policy, together the Guidance, is designed to provide clear criteria for course charges and to avoid ambiguity and inconsistency.

### **2 Scope**

- 2.1 The Fees Policy encompasses all fees and charges associated with courses offered by New City College including those for:
  - Under 16 year olds
  - 16-18 year olds
  - 19+ year olds
  - 24+ on level 3 or higher programmes
  - Employers
  - International learners
  - Learners on commercial courses
  - Higher Education learners
- 2.2 All fees are charged on an annual basis and reviewed annually unless otherwise stated.

### **3 Intent**

- 3.1 The intent of the Fees Policy is to ensure that the method of calculation of all fees charged to learners and employers is fair and transparent.
- 3.2 The Policy is designed to explain the procedures for setting fees and for deciding on the level of fees.
- 3.3 Learners should be aware from the Policy of how to claim a refund and appeal against refund decisions.
- 3.4 The over-riding principle is that learners should pay fees in accordance with the ESFA policies.

## 4 Payment of Fees

### 4.1 Payment of Fees - General

4.1.1 All learners are expected to pay, or make arrangements for an Advanced Learner Loan or Student Loan to pay, their fees in full at or before enrolment. In exceptional circumstances the College will allow payment by instalment

4.1.2 Fees are payable on or before enrolment or, for courses running over more than one year, at the start of each academic year.

### 4.2 Advanced Learner Loans

4.2.1 The SFA sets out the circumstances in which an adult learner's programme will not be funded. In these circumstances the learner may either pay the fee due in accordance with this policy and the guidance or take out an Advanced Learner Loan from the Student Loan Company (SLC) to fund their course.

4.2.2 At enrolment if a learner can demonstrate that they have applied for an Advanced Learner Loan prior to enrolment and either that their application has been approved or that it is awaiting approval, no further upfront tuition fee is payable.

### 4.3 HEFCE Courses and Student Loans

4.3.1 The College is registered with HEFCE and therefore is in receipt of grant funding from HEFCE for level 4 approved by HEFCE. This also means that learners enrolled on these courses are able to access a tuition fee loan from the Student Loan Company (a Student Loan) instead of paying the tuition fee in full.

### 4.4 Advanced Learner Loan and Student Loan learners

4.4.1 All learners eligible to take out an Advanced Learner Loan will pay an initial amount of £250, which will include the non-refundable College Membership fee. The balance of this amount will be refunded once the loan payment starts.

4.4.2 All learners eligible to take out a Student Loan will pay an initial amount of £250. This amount will be refunded once the loan payment starts.

4.4.3 The learner will be required to pay the full fee **immediately**, unless payment by instalments is agreed, if:

- there is no application for an Advanced Learner Loan or Student Loan; or
- approval is not received within 2 weeks of the first day of learning; or  the loan is subsequently cancelled or withdrawn for any reason

4.4.4 For the avoidance of doubt, if the learner does not comply with 4.4.3, the learner will be withdrawn immediately.

4.4.5 If as a result of 4.4.3, the learner is required to pay the full fee immediately, but subsequently a loan is approved, the College will refund the fees paid up to the amount of the loan approved.

4.4.6 If a learner withdraws from a course after the second week of a full-time or the second class of part-time course, **the learner will be required to pay the difference between the full fee for the course and the amount paid by way of the loan.**

4.4.7 The implications of clauses 4.4.1 to 4.4.6 need to be explained to prospective learners before or during enrolment to reduce the risk of misunderstanding.

#### **4.5 Payment by Instalment**

4.5.1 The College offers instalments plans for Home and EU learners. The operation of these is set out in the Guidance.

4.5.2 For the avoidance of doubt:

- If the learner withdraws from their course they will remain liable for any outstanding balance
- If the learner defaults on any instalment, the balance of the outstanding fee is payable in full immediately
- If the learner defaults on any instalment, they may not be entitled to pay fees for future courses by instalment.

#### **4.6 International Learners**

4.6.1 For International Learners for 2018/19, the Guidance sets out the requirements for paying for a course, including deposits, timing of payment and instalment plans.

### **5 Basis of fees**

5.1 Courses funded by the ESFA will be charged according to the Funding Guidelines given in the current specifications for Further Education Colleges.

5.2 Tuition fees will not be charged to learners aged 16-18 in full-time or part-time education funded through the ESFA. For the purposes of the ESFA Funding Guidance '18' means under 19 on 31 August in the calendar year when the learner commences a programme of study. Certain categories of learners aged 19 and over are also exempt from tuition fees.

5.3 The maximum tuition fee payable for ESFA funded provision will be as stipulated by the relevant funding body.

5.4 The maximum amount for an Advanced Learner Loan will be determined by the funding value as set out in the ESFA Funding Guidance and related documentation.

5.5 The maximum for a HEFCE course will be the maximum permitted by HEFCE before approval from the Office for Fair Access is required.

5.6 The College may vary fees below the maximum levels set out below to reflect market conditions, competition and other factors.

5.7 The elements making up the fees payable and who has to pay are set out in the Guidance.

## **6 Fee Refunds and Cancellations**

- 6.1 The College will only refund fees in exceptional circumstances, details of which are set out in the Guidance.
- 6.2 To receive a refund of fees, learners must put a request in writing to the Finance office or complete and return a Refund of Course Fees form.

## **7 Sanctions**

- 7.1 The College will follow a standard credit control policy to seek recovery of fees due, including contacting the learner by email, telephone or in person to secure settlement.
- 7.2 In the event that a learner fails pay the fees due after such follow up, the College will apply the following sanctions, progressively:
- 7.2.1 withdraw a learner's IT and library access
  - 7.2.2 suspend access to the College
  - 7.2.3 prevent progression to the next year/session
  - 7.2.4 exclude the learner from the College
- 7.3 In addition the College may refer the debt to a third party agency for collection.

## **Annex 1: Fee Policy Guidance Notes 2018/2019**

The New City College Fee policy 2018/19 confirms that all fees are due at the time of enrolment, however there are a number of exceptions to this rule. In exceptional circumstances, learners may pay fees using one of the available instalment plans. On appropriate courses, learners may also fund their studies with either an Advanced Learner Loan or Higher Education Student Loan from the Student Loans Company.

### **College Membership Fee**

- Learners aged 18 and above on the 31<sup>st</sup> August are required to pay a college membership fee of £30 at the time of enrolment
- The membership fee is non-refundable
- LDD learners are not required to pay the membership fee
- Higher Education and Adult Community Education learners are not required to pay the membership fee

### **Instalment Plans**

- Instalment plans are only available on full year courses
- Instalment plans are not available where the fees total less than £300
- Where the annual fees are between £300 and £1600, 4 instalments only are available (October to January)
- Where the annual fees are above £1600, 7 instalments are available (October to April)
- All instalment plans are to be paid via Direct Debit; the Direct Debit mandate must be completed and signed at the time of enrolment
- Learners must pay a deposit at the time of enrolment of 25% (or £300 whichever value is lower)
- If a learner withdraws from a course, the balance of any unpaid fees are then payable in full

### **Advanced Learner Loans**

- Advanced Learner Loans are available to fund most level 3 and above courses.
- All learners aged 24 and over have the option to fund fees with an Advanced Learner Loan (subject to eligibility)
- Learners aged between 19 and 23 may be entitled to claim 'First Full Level 3' funding on eligible courses where the learner has not already obtained a full level 3 qualification. Learners aged between 19 and 23 who already hold a full level 3 qualification may choose to fund their studies with an Advanced Learner Loan (subject to eligibility)
- Loans must be fully approved by the second week of study. Learners with no approved loan after this date will be asked to pay the fees in full or to set up an instalment plan. If a loan is subsequently approved and paid to New City College, then any fees paid by the learner will be refunded up to the amount of the loan subsequently received
- Learners funding with a student loan are required to pay a £250 deposit at the time of enrolment, £220 of which is refundable when the first payment is received by New City College from the Student Loan Company. Refunds are to be made by bank transfer, so bank details will be required at the time of enrolment in order for refunds to be paid
- If a learner withdraws from a course, the balance of any unpaid fees is then payable in full
- Learners taking out an Advanced Learner Loan are not required to pay exam fees

## Higher Education Loans

- Higher Education Student Loans are available for most Higher Education Courses
- Loans must be fully approved by the end of the second week of study. Learners with no approved loan after this date will be asked to pay the fees in full or to set up an instalment plan.
- If a loan is subsequently approved and paid to New City College, then any fees paid by the learner will be refunded up to the amount of the loan subsequently received
- Where the course fees are not paid or the loan not approved than the learner shall be withdrawn from the course. This includes where a student defaults on an instalment.
- Where a learner withdraws after the 14 day cancellation period ends and is paying via monthly installments, no refund of fees paid will be made but no further tuition fees will be charged.
- Where a learner pays annual tuition fees in advance and withdraws from the course then the learner will receive a refund for the remaining months of the course on a pro-rata basis
- Where the fees are paid for by a loan from the Student Loans Company (SLC), the College will inform the SLC that the learner has withdrawn from their course and claim no further funding. Once installments have been paid by the SLC they are non – refundable
- Learners taking out a Student Loan are not required to pay exam fees.

## Employer to Pay

- Where a learner has an employer or sponsor who has agreed to pay fees upon receipt of an invoice, the learner must produce a letter from their Employer/Sponsor requesting that they be invoiced for the value of the fees. The letter must contain the following information:
  - The letter must be on official company headed paper
  - Includes the full name of the learner
  - The value that they require to be invoiced.
  - Include the words 'Please invoice'
  - Must be the original document and not a photocopy/scanned copy.
  - Must be signed by an authorised officer.
- The learner will be required to pay any difference between the invoice value and the value of the fees, membership fee and other amounts due
- New City College will take all reasonable steps to invoice and follow up on invoice payments, however if an invoice remains unpaid, the learner will be required to pay any outstanding fees, membership fee or other amounts due in full
- If a learner withdraws from a course, the balance of any unpaid fees are then payable in full

## GCSE Examination Deposits

- An examination deposit is payable at the time of enrolment by any learner aged 19 and above studying a GCSE subject. Learners must pay £50 for each GCSE subject studied
- Deposit(s) will be refunded once the learner has been confirmed as attending exams for their GCSE course
- Refunds will be paid by bank transfer, so bank details will be required at the time of enrolment in order for refunds to be paid

## Refunds

- Refunds are only payable where the college is at fault (for example where a course is closed)
- If a learner withdraws from a course, no refund of payments already made will be authorised and any outstanding fee balance becomes due
- All refunds must be claimed using the correct refund claim form and authorised by the appropriate Senior Curriculum Manager

### **First Full Level 2 and 3 Entitlement**

- Fees may be remitted for learners aged between 19 and 23 if they have not previously gained a full level 2 or 3 qualification
- Not all qualifications are eligible for Level 2 and 3 entitlement
- Learners who are not eligible for a Level 2 or Level 3 entitlement must pay any fees chargeable for their course, and Advanced Learner Loans are available for most Level 3 courses for learners aged 19+
- The college will be advised of any learners who claim a first full level 2 or 3 entitlement but already hold a full level 2 or 3 qualification. Any learners identified will be required to make full payment for any outstanding fees

### **Low Income Threshold**

- Employed learners on an individual income of less than £15,736.50 a year (approx. £300 a week) may be eligible for full funding on courses up to level 2
- Evidence of proof of family income dated within the prior three months will be required