

Policy Name:

Adult Learning Service Course Fee and Pound Plus Information

Date of Issue

22nd August 2023

Contact:

**Andy Mawby (andrew.mawby@suffolk.gov.uk)
Adult Learning Service Manager**

Version No:

2023 V1

Date of Review:

22nd August 2024



**Education & Skills
Funding Agency**

**Children and Young People's Services
Directorate**

1. Introduction

Suffolk County Council Adult Learning Service is grant funded from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and in accordance with the conditions of this grant the service will:

- Maximise access to adult skills and community learning for adults.
- Focus public funding on people who are disadvantaged and least likely to participate.
- Collect fee income from people who can afford to pay and use where possible to extend provision to those who cannot.
- Recognise and value 'Pound Plus'
- Provide a service that maximises value for money and maintains the high quality.

2. Pound Plus Statement

Pound Plus is used by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) to describe the added value required to supplement the existing community learning income streams to widen the offer to people who are disadvantaged and cannot afford to pay fees.

The aim of SCC Adult Learning Service is to maximise the value of public funding and secure increasing levels of added value to enable it to deliver a quality community learning programme that meets the needs of Suffolk communities.

There is an expectation that SCC as the grant recipient will add value to this funding pot by attracting extra income, ensure commissioned funding is value for money and reinvest to widen the learning offer to people who are disadvantaged and or vulnerable.

Sub-contractors are encouraged to investigate ways of securing added value and investment to supplement existing community learning streams. Sub-contractors are requested to collate data and submit returns to SCC each year on spend and where applicable provide details of how it has created and utilised added value to widen participation.

Measures of added value include but are not limited to:

Direct Income examples:

- Fee income from learners
- Additional grants and tenders
- Sales from products or services

Cost Savings examples:

- Savings in accommodation / shared services
- Use of volunteers
- Savings in staffing through partnerships

Value for Money examples:

- Efficiency and avoiding duplicated provision
- Effective progression opportunities leading to increased learner participation

Results will be recorded in the Self-Assessment Report 2023-2024.

This fees contributions policy applies to all learning provided by our main sub-contractor Realise Futures Learning and Development under all funding streams for learning starting on or after 1st August 2023. Other subcontractors follow this model.

Fee/Contribution Category	Learner Status	Fee/Contribution Payable
Fee Banding Code: D Description and Example Learning Aims: Get Ready for English, Maths and/or ESOL		
<i>Full Cost #</i>	<i>All Learners</i>	<i>No fee</i>
Fee Banding Code: E Description and Example Learning Aims: ESOL		
<i>Fully Funded †</i>	<i>Learner receives Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA), (including NI credits only)</i>	<i>No course or accreditation fee, subject to evidence of salary where required. We also reserve the right to request evidence of benefits</i>
	<i>Learner receives Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)</i>	
	<i>Learner receives Universal Credit, and their take-home pay from employment (disregarding benefits) is less than:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £617 a month (learner is sole adult in their benefit claim) or • £988 a month (learner has a joint benefit claim with their partner) 	
<i>Fully Funded (provider discretion) †</i>	<i>Learner receives a relevant state benefit</i>	
	<i>AND learner wants to be employed or progress into more sustainable employment</i> <i>AND the learning is directly relevant to their employment prospects</i> <i>AND learner's take-home pay from employment (disregarding benefits) is less than:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £617 a month (learner is sole adult in their benefit claim) or • £988 a month (learner has a joint benefit claim with their partner) 	
<i>Fully Funded (low wage) †</i>	<i>Learner is employed, or self-employed</i> <i>AND is eligible for co-funding</i> <i>AND earns less than £20,319.00 annual gross salary</i> <i>AND shows proof of their low wage</i>	
<i>Co-funded †</i>	<i>All other eligible learners, who do not meet the criteria for full funding above, including:</i> <i>Learner is working and earns above the threshold amounts listed above</i> <i>Learner is not working but is not claiming a relevant state benefit</i>	<i>Learner pays a contribution of £4.50 per hour towards the cost of their learning plus any accreditation fee</i>

Full Cost #	Any learner not eligible for ESFA funding	£10 per hour plus any accreditation fee
-------------	---	---

Fee Banding Code: G <i>Description and Example Learning Aims: English and Maths – accredited and non-accredited aims (not ESOL or Get Ready)</i>		
Fully Funded †	Applies to any learner eligible for ESFA funding without a GCSE grade 4 (C) or higher in the relevant subject	No course or accreditation fee charged
Full Cost #	Any learner not eligible for ESFA funding	£10 per hour plus any accreditation fee

Fee/Contribution Category	Learner Status	Fee/Contribution Payable
Fee Banding Code: H <i>Description and Example Learning Aims: Level 2 Awards in Food Safety, Health & Safety</i>		
Fully Funded †	Please see fee banding code K – funding rules are the same.	
Fully Funded (provider discretion) †		
Fully Funded (low wage) †		
Co-funded †		
Full Cost #		

Fee Banding Code: J <i>Description and Example Learning Aims: Courses based on the EDSQ, including Computer Skills for Beginners – Get Going and Computer Skills for Beginners – Moving Ahead</i>		
J coded courses include the Gateway Essential Digital Skills Qualification (EDSQ) at either E3 or L1. They may also include an NCFE Functional Skills qualification at E3.		
<u>Learners entitled to ESFA funding will not be charged for a J coded course.</u>		
Learning Administrators: (If learner would be co-funded for the NCFE aim, their fee will automatically be waived.) Even though no fee will be charged, you must determine the correct fee category to apply to the NCFE aim for MIS purposes.		

Fully Funded †	Essential Digital Skills Qualifications	No course or accreditation fee. We reserve the right to request evidence of benefits or earnings
	Learner receives Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA), (including NI credits only)	
	Learner receives Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)	
	Learner receives Universal Credit, and their take-home pay from employment (disregarding benefits) is less than: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> £617 a month (learner is sole adult in their benefit claim) or £988 a month (learner has a joint benefit claim with their partner) 	
Learner is 19-23 years old and does not yet have a full level 2 qualification		
Fully Funded (provider discretion) †	Learner receives a relevant state benefit AND learner wants to be employed or progress into more sustainable employment AND the learning is directly relevant to their employment prospects AND learner's take-home pay from employment (disregarding benefits) is less than: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> £617 a month (learner is sole adult in their benefit claim) or 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £988 a month (learner has a joint benefit claim with their partner) 	
Fully Funded (low wage) †	<p>Learner is employed, or self-employed AND is eligible for co-funding AND earns less than £20,319.00 annual gross salary AND shows proof of their low wage</p>	
Co-funded †	<p>All other eligible learners, who do not meet the criteria for full funding above, including: Learner is working and earns above the threshold amounts listed above Learner is not working but is not claiming a relevant state benefit</p>	No course or accreditation fee.
Full Cost #	Any learner not entitled to full funding	£10 per hour plus accreditation fee

Fee/Contribution Category	Learner Status	Fee/Contribution Payable
Fee Banding Code: K Description and Example Learning Aims: All other ASF Funded Learning		
Fully Funded †	Learner receives Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA), (including NI credits only)	No course or accreditation fee, subject to evidence of salary where required. We also reserve the right to request evidence of benefits
	Learner receives Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)	
	<p>Learner receives Universal Credit, and their take-home pay from employment (disregarding benefits) is less than:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> £617 a month (learner is sole adult in their benefit claim) or £988 a month (learner has a joint benefit claim with their partner) 	
	Learner is 19-23 years old and does not yet have a full level 2 qualification	
Fully Funded (provider discretion) †	<p>Learner receives a relevant state benefit AND learner wants to be employed or progress into more sustainable employment AND the learning is directly relevant to their employment prospects AND learner's take-home pay from employment (disregarding benefits) is less than:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> £617 a month (learner is sole adult in their benefit claim) or £988 a month (learner has a joint benefit claim with their partner) 	
Fully Funded (low wage) †	<p>Learner is employed, or self-employed AND is eligible for co-funding AND earns less than £20,319.00 annual gross salary AND shows proof of their low wage</p>	
Co-funded †	<p>All other eligible learners, who do not meet the criteria for full funding above, including: Learner is working and earns above the threshold amounts listed above Learner is not working but is not claiming a relevant state benefit</p>	Learner pays a contribution of £4.50 per hour towards the cost of their learning plus any accreditation fee
Full Cost #	Any learner not eligible for ESFA funding	£10 per hour plus any accreditation fee
Fee Banding Code: L Description and Example Learning Aims: All other CLF Funded Learning		
Not Applicable †	Learner receives Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA), (including NI credits only)	No course or accreditation fee, subject to evidence of salary where required. We also reserve the right to request evidence of benefits
	Learner receives Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)	
	Learner receives Universal Credit, Income Support, Child Tax Credit, Housing Benefit, Personal Independence Payment (replacing Disability Living Allowance), Carer's Allowance, Pension Credit,	

	<p>AND, if applicable, their take-home pay from employment (disregarding benefits) is less than:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £617 a month (learner is sole adult in their benefit claim) or • £988 a month (learner has a joint benefit claim with their partner) 	
	Learner is 19-23 years old and does not yet have a full level 2 qualification	
	Learner is employed, or self employed AND earns less than £20,319.00 annual gross salary	
	All other eligible learners, including: Learner is working and earns above the threshold amounts listed above Learner is not working but is not claiming a relevant state benefit	Learner pays a contribution of £4.50 per hour towards the cost of their learning plus any accreditation fee
Full Cost #	Any learner not eligible for ESFA funding	£10 per hour plus any accreditation fee
Fee Banding Code: M	Description and Example Learning Aims: Costed Courses (no remissions) – Any learning aim which does not attract ESFA funding	
Full Cost #	All learners	Course fee set by Learning Manager specific to each course.

Please also refer to the explanatory notes set out below

2023-24 Course Fees Contribution Policy – Notes

Eligibility: Learners not eligible for ESFA funding will pay the full cost rate of £10 per hour + accreditation. Most individuals will be eligible for funding if they were born on or before 31 August 2004 AND are UK National or have Right of Abode in the UK AND have been ordinarily resident in the UK or EEA for at least the previous three years.

Note that we are funded to provide learning to the residents of Suffolk. Learners with a residential address in Cambridgeshire cannot be ESFA funded. Learners living in the border area with Norfolk and Suffolk must be approved before enrolment.

Additional Learner Support Fund: † indicates Discretionary Financial Learner Support may be available for courses over 4 hours.
indicates Discretionary Financial Learner Support not available.

Instalments, Refunds, etc.: All refunds and any non-standard instalment patterns must be agreed with the relevant Learning Manager.

Relevant State Benefits: Income Support, Child Tax Credit, Housing Benefit, Personal Independence Payment (replacing Disability Living Allowance), Carer's Allowance, Pension Credit.

Full Level 2 Qualification: A full level two qualification is deemed to be GCSEs in five subjects, each at grade C or above, or grade 4 or above, or equivalent. Some examples of equivalent qualifications include: 2 or 3 AS Levels, CSE Grade 1 (5 or more), 1 A Level, NVQ Level 2, GNVQ Intermediate, QCF Certificate Level 2 with 15 or more credits

Evidence of Entitlement to Concessions: For courses which carry a fee, learners may be asked to provide relevant evidence of their entitlement to a remission of that fee. The evidence required will be evidence of benefits such as a benefit award letter or universal credit statement or evidence of salary, such as a payslip or contract of employment. We do not require evidence where the learner has been placed to the course by their Job Centre Plus advisor unless proof of low wage is required.

Accreditation Fees: Each accredited course has an accreditation fee, details can be found on 2023-24 Public Offer Price List on SharePoint or can be provided by the Learning Manager.

Clarification: Learners may be working and on JSA. These learners may claim full funding. Equally, any learner not earning and on ESA or UC is automatically fully funded.

Partnership Working:

Targeted provision for those learners who are most disadvantaged in our target groups may be provided free of charge through partnership arrangements. This is at the discretion of the Learning Manager. The standard fee band will be applied to the course but fees are waived for all learners.

All other partnership arrangements will be agreed with the partner and will be charged to the partner through standard invoicing arrangements based on the above fees contribution policy, putting the emphasis on the partner to recruit suitable learners who pay them to cover their costs. Partnership courses will be clearly flagged as not for public bookings.