



FEES POLICY 2017/18

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Fees Policy 2017/18

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Fees Policy 2017/18

1 Introduction

This policy outlines the tuition and other fees chargeable to students by Birmingham Metropolitan College, based upon fee rates as outlined by the Skills Funding Agency (SFA), Education Funding Agency (EFA) and HEFCE for courses commencing in the academic year 2017/18.

The college will take into consideration market analysis regarding demand for provision and the market rate for fees when setting individual course fees, and will set the fee suggested by the funding body, unless there is a specific reason to vary the fees. For example, where local providers are charging a reduced fee, it may be sensible to reduce the fee to remain competitive.

This policy acknowledges that Birmingham Metropolitan College adopts this approach in order to generate optimum tuition fee income in line with funding regulations and market conditions.

The policy includes the following fees for tuition and other expenses for students for the 2017-18 academic year:

- Full time tuition;
- Fees for registration and examinations;
- Fees for materials, trips and equipment;
- Part time tuition fees, including registration and examination fees;
- Concessionary policies for all home students; and
- Fees for external school or college students.

2 Funding sources for 2017/18

In 2017/18 the college is funded in the following way.

| Type of Provision | Funding Model |
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| 16 - 18 year old students | EFA 16 - 18 Study Programme Model SFA 16-18 Apprenticeships |
| Adult students undertaking FE courses Levels 1 and 2 and adults aged 19-23 undertaking Level 3 courses | Adult Skills Budget (SFA) including 19+ apprenticeships |
| Adult students aged 24 and over undertaking FE Courses Level 3 | No longer funded. Students are liable for all the course fees, they are eligible to apply for a Advanced Learning Loan |
| Employer Led Provision for Adults (including part time) delivered in the work place | Adult Skills Budget (SFA) with a fee element payable by employers |

In line with previous years, the college can continue to claim funding for students undertaking approved provision across the college.

In terms of tuition fees, the funding methodologies continue to make provision for adult students to be eligible for free tuition under the established fee remission categories. The exception to this is the Advanced Learning Loan scheme, where there is no funding and therefore no remission.

3 Tuition Fees for Home Students (Aged 16-18)

The college will continue to offer free tuition to all full and part time eligible students aged 18 and under on 31 August 2017 studying through the EFA funding route.

The college reserves the right to charge fees to students aged 16–18 where no EFA funding is available for the course. This may include courses such as first aid or full cost recovery courses. In addition the college will charge for examinations and assessments fees for industry recognised qualifications that do not form part of their study programmes.

4 Tuition Fees for Home Students (Adults)

4.1 Tuition Fees for Adults (Aged 19-23)

All SFA funded full time courses will be charged at a minimum tuition fee of £2,800 per student per year unless otherwise advertised. Tuition fees may exceed £2,800 for the course dependent upon SFA funding available for the student.

Part time courses which are delivered with SFA funding will have a basic fee attached, which is set by the college in accordance with market factors, to stimulate recruitment or to ensure that group sizes are large enough to make running courses viable.

Additional fees in relation to examinations, registrations, materials, residential, uniform or other such fees may be chargeable above the tuition fee stated.

Remission Factors for students aged 19-23

- Statutory concessions are available for tuition fees for those students who are eligible and who can provide valid supporting evidence, as described in the SFA Funding Rules 2017-18. This includes appropriate state benefits and also students who have not previously achieved qualifications.
- Students claiming remission are required to complete a self-declaration of their status and to provide appropriate evidence.
- Students who are eligible for fee remission on their programme of study are not required to pay the registration and examination fee (Financial Contribution Section of the 2017-18 Funding Rules).
- Students who turn 19 during the course of their full time study with the college will not have to pay fees for the remainder of their study programme.
- Students who progress from a Level 3 programme of study to further level 3 study, for example an extended diploma or A Levels, and who have turned 19 during their second year of study will not have to pay the appropriate fees, as

although they are no longer co-funded by the SFA, the college understands the importance of this progression route.

- All other adult students, including those who were 19 or older at the start of their Level 3 studies will be required to pay the appropriate fees for their course.
- Tuition fees refunds will only be available in line with the refunds section of this policy.
- Access to HE courses will attract a minimum of £800 charge.

4.2 Tuition Fees for Home Students aged 24 and over, studying up to Level 2

Funding is available for adult students aged 24 and over who study on full time programmes **up to Level 2 and for apprenticeships at any level.**

All SFA funded full time courses will be charged at a minimum tuition fee of £2,800 per student per year unless otherwise advertised. Tuition Fees may exceed £2,800 for the course dependent upon SFA funding available for the student.

Part time courses which are delivered with SFA funding will have a basic fee attached, which is set by the college in accordance with market factors, to stimulate recruitment or to ensure that group sizes are large enough to make running courses viable.

Additional fees in relation to examinations, registrations, materials, residential, uniform or other such fees may be chargeable above the tuition fee stated.

Remission Factors for full time home students aged 24 and over, studying up to Level 2

- Statutory concessions are available for tuition fees for those students who are eligible and who can provide valid supporting evidence, as described in the SFA Funding Rules for 2017-18, this includes appropriate state benefits.
- Students who are eligible for fee remission on their programme of study are not required to pay the registration and examination fee (Financial Contribution Section of the 2017-18 Funding Rules).
- Students claiming remission are required to complete a self-declaration of their status and to provide appropriate evidence.
- Tuition Fees refunds will only be available in line with the refunds, section 13, of this policy.

4.3 Tuition Fees for Home Students aged 24 and over, studying at Level 3 and above

There is no government funding for adult students aged 24 or over, who study Level 3 or higher programmes. Students are generally eligible to apply for loans from the Student Loan Company.

The SFA allows colleges to charge up to a maximum allowable fee, with this limit listed within the learning aims reference service (LARS) database.

Under this scheme, the college receives tuition fees monthly from the Student Loan Company (SLC), rather than from the student. It should be noted that SLC payments stop being paid for a student as soon as they withdraw, and the student becomes responsible for paying the remaining fees owed to the college.

In 2017/18 the college set the fees for students in this category at the maximum loan fee for each course as specified in the Learning Aims system, in some cases the fee charged is slightly more and requires the student to top-up at the point of enrolment. This information is clearly stated in the prospectus and course information.

Students can choose to self-finance their courses, instead of taking out the loan with the Student Loan Company; the college offers instalments for these courses.

Remission Factors for students aged 24 and over, studying at Level 3 and above

There are no remission factors for this group as it is self-funded.

5 Tuition Fees for Non Funded Programmes (Full Cost Recovery)

The college will charge a tuition fee for Full Cost Recovery (FCR) courses. This may include some courses that were traditionally funded by the SFA, but do not now form the approved LARS listing.

In terms of setting appropriate fee structures to support the delivery of these courses, the college takes the following elements into consideration:

- Maintenance of fees based on marginal costs and standard group sizes.
- Maintenance of minimum group sizes to achieve a 50% contribution per group.
- Rationalisation of the delivery of courses to ensure that the offer remains robust.

6 Tuition Fees for Overseas Students (non EU)

Fees will be charged at a rate as prescribed by the partner Higher Education Institution and as detailed in the International Fees brochure.

Other specific additions to the above include:

- International or overseas students are expected to pay fees in full prior to the commencement of their course, in line with UK Border Agency guidelines.
- An administrative fee of up to £750 will be levied for international students where visa applications have been refused by the United Kingdom Border Agency (UKBA).
- The college may apply the full international fee to the student, should the student leave their course prior to the completion of the course.

- Fees paid by an international student may not be deferred to a further academic year unless in circumstances where the college has cancelled the course.
- Tuition fee refunds will only be available in line with the refunds section 13, of this policy.

7 Summary of Fees for Registration and Examinations

7.1 Students aged 16-18

Registration and examination fees will not be charged to students aged 18 and under on 31st August 2017 in the first year of their course. The college will, however, charge students aged 16-18, the equivalent cost of registration and examinations, if they choose not to sit examinations, which are taken as part of their programme of study, including functional skills exams.

This will mainly apply to any additional learning goals undertaken by full time students and part time courses.

The college reserves the right to charge fees to students aged 16–18 where no EFA funding is available for a course. This may include courses such as first aid and other additional learning goals.

7.2 Students aged 19 and over

Registration and examination fees will be added to the tuition fee for students aged between 19 and 23 for all level courses and those aged 24 and over studying up to level 2. Ages are calculated on the first day of study within the academic year 2017-18. This will include their main programme and any functional skills undertaken, but may not include any other additional learning goals. The college reserves the right to charge adult students the cost of any additional learning goals.

7.3 Overseas Students

Registration and examination fees on enrolment will be incorporated into the overseas tuition fee.

8. Fees for Materials, Trips, Equipment and Other Fees

Fees can be charged on various courses in accordance to guidance received from the funding agencies. Details of the applicable fees are available on the course information sheet.

Some courses have field trips as part of the educational case for the course. These trips are self-financing and the costs will be clearly identified as part of the course information.

In 2017/18 the college will continue to implement “charge per print” costs for photocopying rather than a flat charge for all students.

9. Higher Education Fees

The individual fees for Higher Education courses are stated within the course documentation, the fee will not exceed £9,250 per annum.

9.1 Franchised Provision

Some Higher Education courses are delivered in partnership with other institutions; in these circumstances the fees will be chargeable in accordance with the validating institution's tuition fees policy, likewise refunds will be granted as prescribed in the respective HE institution's tuition fee policy.

10 Collection of Fees

Fees are payable upon enrolment, depending on the value of the fee and the length of the course, the fee can be paid in instalments as prescribed in the college's instalment agreement with the student at enrolment. 20% of the listed tuition fees and all exams and costs listed in the course information are payable at enrolment and the remainder payable throughout the period of study as stipulated.

Instalments will usually cover four payments but can be extended to seven however all fees should be collected prior to the end of the programme. Fees will be collected by bank debit or credit card or by on-line payment (where available).

Interest will not be charged to the student, provided the fees are paid in accordance with the instalment plan. The college reserves the right to charge interest where the instalments are not paid within the agreed instalment plan at the rates set in the Late Payment of Commercial Debt 1998.

Sponsored students must provide a valid purchase order from their sponsoring organisation before their enrolment can be completed or in exceptional circumstances, a letter of sponsorship (on headed paper) may be accepted. Should the student's sponsor fail to pay all or part of the fees due, these will become the responsibility of the individual student. All fees and debts are collectable by the college and the college will issue reminders to pay periodically. The college will engage debt collecting agencies to collect fees outstanding where all other recovery options have been exhausted.

The college reserves the right to take legal action where all other attempts to collect outstanding debts have failed.

11 Financial Fee Support

This policy complies with the college's Equality and Diversity Policy. For students with financial hardship various fee support routes may be available to fund their tuition and other fees. Currently the main alternatives are as follows:

- Discretionary learner support funds (please see the college's Discretionary Learner Support Fund and Financial Hardship Policy)
- Adult learning grants
- FE and HE Student loans
- Hardship fund – exceptional cases that do not meet the usual criteria

- Adult bursary scheme
- 16-19 bursary scheme (EMA replacement)
- College bursary where available
- International scholarships
- Any applicable government scheme

Students applying to the Discretionary Learner Support Fund for help towards fees may be expected to make a contribution.

12 Refunds

Students will only be eligible for refunds if:

- Withdrawal from a course is supported by a valid medical certificate;
- The college has cancelled the course.

Beyond this rule, all refund requests will be reviewed on an individual basis, after the student has discussed the circumstances regarding the withdrawal from the course with the relevant Department Director, if withdrawal from the course is appropriate:

- A refund form must be completed and signed by the student.
- Refund forms will be approved by the Department Director and the Director of Finance, and then processed by the Finance Office in line with the following criteria.
- The college may refund a percentage or fixed sum of fees charged as part of any college incentive initiative.
- Any refund will take into account the length of time the student has been on their chosen programme.

12.1 Refunds of Courses Twelve Weeks and Under

The college will not provide any refund for courses less than twelve weeks unless the course is cancelled by the college.

Where a student has taken a loan from the Student Loan Company and decides to withdraw, the balance of the fees outstanding will be payable by the student.

12.2 Refunds of Cancelled Courses

Once confirmation of a course cancellation has been received students can claim a full refund. A full refund is issued only where the college has cancelled the course.

Where an alternative course has been offered and accepted by the student, fees paid will be transferred to the new course. Overpaid fees will be refunded at the time of course transfer.

Where a student has taken a loan from the Student Loan Company the balance of the fees refundable may be returned to the Student Loan Company or if verified in writing from the Student Loan Company, the individual student.

12.3 HE Students

HE students who withdraw from their course and are paying their fees via a student loan will not be liable for the remaining fees in respect of their course from the date they withdraw. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that they follow the correct process for withdrawal.

12.4 Employer refunds with respect to apprentices from 1 May 2017

The College's general principle that refunds are not given continues to apply. However, it is recognised that there may be circumstances when it is appropriate to award a refund.

The Finance Director may authorise a refund to an employer if there is an appropriate reason to do so. The Finance Director will review each claim on a case by case basis and will take into account the recommendations of the Director of Sales.

Additionally, if the Director of Sales recommends that, for commercial reasons, the College includes a refund provision in a contract with an employer, then Finance Director may authorise such a clause.

12.5 Appeals

Students have the right of appeal on refund decisions and this should be made in writing to the Head of Quality at Birmingham Metropolitan College.