



TITLE	REF	VERSION
Student Fees Procedure	FINPRO003	V1

  

DEPARTMENT	Finance		
DATE	July 2020	REVIEW DATE	July 2021

## STUDENT FEES PROCEDURE

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## Procedure Statement

The Student Fees Policy refers to the key principles to follow. This procedure offers further help and guidance in relation to how to apply the Student Fees Policy.

## How to use this document

- ✓ If marked with a tick there is no change compared with the “Student Fees Policy”.
- ❖ If marked with this symbol there is additional guidance in relation to the “Student Fees Policy”.

Abbreviations used throughout this document are:

- AL - Activate Learning
- DD - Direct Debit
- ESFA - Education and Skills Funding Agency
- FE - Further Education
- HE - Higher Education
- OFS – Office for Students
- SLC - Student Loans Company (relates to Further Education)

## Scope

- ❖ The Student Fees Policy encompasses all fees and charges associated with courses offered by Activate Learning including those for:
  - ESFA funded students
  - Non-government funded students
  - Higher education students
  - Students who are under 16 year old
  - Advanced Learner Loans (19+ year olds)
  - International Students
  - Apprenticeships
  - Cycle Academy
- ✓ Fees in scope of this policy are:
  - Tuition fees
  - Registration and examination fees
  - Trip fees
  - Kit and Material fees
  - Travel contributions
  - Student Accommodation
  - Administration Fees

## Student Fees and Charges

- ✓ See Course Fee Setting Process ([here](#))

## Education and Skills Funding Agency Fees

- ✓ Students not funded by the ESFA will be charged according to the Funding Guidelines.
- ❖ Students will be made aware if they are eligible for an Advanced Learner Loan. Fees for courses subject to Advanced Learner Loans will be charged at the maximum loans value as advised by the ESFA.
- ❖ The total fees charged to a student will depend on their age, previous qualifications and financial circumstances. The below table gives further breakdown:

<b>Student type</b>	<b>Charges for</b>	<b>No charges for</b>
16-18 Year Old	Mandatory visits and residential trips Optional materials and equipment that can be retained Optional residential trips	Tuition fees First sitting of examinations Consumables and the use of equipment
19-24 with learning difficulties/disabilities	Mandatory visits and residential trips Optional materials and equipment that can be retained Optional residential trips	Tuition fees First sitting of examinations Consumables and the use of equipment
19+ without fee remission	Tuition fees First sitting of examinations Materials, consumables and the use of equipment Mandatory visits and residential Optional residential trips	
19+ on fee remission	Optional materials and equipment that can be Retained Optional residential trips	Tuition fees First sitting of examinations Consumables and the use of equipment Mandatory visits and residential trips
19+ Advanced Learner Loans	Tuition fees Optional residential trips	First sitting of examinations Materials and consumables Mandatory visits and residential trips
Higher Education Students	Tuition fees Material fees, equipment or clothing (the cost of which will be published to the student prior to enrolment) Optional activities and visits, where the indicative cost will be published to students in advance of enrolment	First sitting of examinations Mandatory visits or trips
Non-Government funded Students	Tuition fees First sitting of examinations Materials, consumables and the use of equipment Mandatory visits and residential trips Optional residential trips	

- ✓ If a student changes courses, the student may be liable for additional fees in relation to the new course.
- ❖ Courses covering multiple years will be charged annually, with the exception of Apprenticeships.
- ✓ It is the responsibility of the student to provide the correct information for fee assessment purposes. Incorrect data given at point of enrolment may give rise to further charges.

## Higher Education Fees

- ✓ The OFS provides a national framework in which tuition fee levels are agreed.
- ✓ HE students are not entitled to any fee remission.
- ✓ HE Students studying Apprenticeship programme will be managed through both the ESFA and OFS frameworks.
- ✓ Higher level qualifications supported through the Apprenticeship programme are to be funded through Apprenticeship eligible funding routes only.

## International Students

- ✓ International students require a visa, prior to studying in the UK.
- ✓ The International department will manage the visa application process on behalf of students. Fees in relation to this are required to be paid in advance by the student.
- ✓ Students must pay 50% of fees to reserve their place on the course. The remaining balance must be paid prior to or at enrolment.
- ❖ If the visa application is rejected, fees will be refunded subject to an administration fee. Administration fee is usually £200.00 plus the CAS fee (approx. £21.00) if applicable.

## Students under 16 Years Old Students Under 16 Year Old

- ✓ Fees incurred for students who are under 16 and enrolled at a school, will be paid directly by the student's school.
- ✓ Fees incurred for students who are not on a school roll (including international), will be funded by the local Education Authority, or other statutorily funded body.

## Apprenticeships

- ✓ All fees related to Apprenticeship programmes are subject to contracting terms and ESFA funding requirements.
- ❖ Apprenticeships are funded via either of two government funding routes  
Levy\*,  
Non-Levy\*\*, which may require employer contributions.
- ❖ A **levy** employer has a payroll of a minimum of £3mil and pays a monthly contribution into an approved Apprenticeship funding scheme.
- ❖ A **non-levy** employer has a payroll of less than £3mil and is required to pay a contribution towards their Apprentice where the remaining funding is provided by the ESFA.
- ❖ A levy employer must authorise the release of levy funds, through the Government Apprenticeship Service website to pay Activate Learning for their services. Generally, 80% divided throughout the duration of the course, and the remaining 20% once the course is completed.
- ✓ If a Levy employer incurs apprenticeship fees in excess of their "Pot" value they will be invoiced for fees

not recovered, in accordance with the governments apprentice levy rules.

- ❖ A non-levy employer, will be liable for a proportion of the apprenticeship fees, the remainder being government funded. Unless they have 49 or less employees and their Apprentice is under the age of 19 at the start of their programme. This is subject to change in line with Government funding requirements.
- ❖ The employer contribution can be paid via an instalment plan or in full by invoice:
  - Instalment plans will be collected via direct debit, in equal amounts where possible:
    - Course duration 12-22 months will be taken in 10 instalments
    - Course duration 23-35 months will be 20 instalments
    - Course duration 36+ months will be 30 instalments
  - Instalments will be taken in equal amounts, or as close to equal as possible.
- ❖ Where the employer is invoiced for their contribution, the invoice will be raised for the full amount, with 30 day standard payment terms applied to the invoice.
- ✓ If an employer fails to pay their apprenticeship contribution within agreed timescales AL reserves the right to suspend the Apprentice. This may lead to the student being unable to obtain their qualification.
- ✓ If an apprentice withdraws or changes employer, fees will be prorated accordingly.

### **Awarding Body Registrations and Examinations**

- ✓ External applicants who are not enrolled at AL will not be entered for examinations.
- ❖ Student entered for re-sit examinations are liable for the examination fees regardless of age. Unless through an Apprenticeship where the contract with their employer details re-sit charges.
- ❖ In exceptional circumstances, an appropriate Faculty Director will decide whether a re-sit charge should be waived.
- ❖ Some students are required to register with professional awarding bodies as part of their course. This must be done directly with the awarding body and may incur additional costs. The courses that are subject to these conditions are mainly professional courses, such as AAT, IPD and CIM.
- ❖ When examination and registration costs are payable direct to the examining body, it will be made clear in the Activate Learning prospectuses and/or course fact sheets.

### **Amendment to fees**

- ✓ All fees are reviewed and charged on an annual basis.
- ❖ Apprenticeship funding bands are updated by the Institute for Apprenticeships.
- ❖ If it is found that information provided at enrolment was incorrect, fees will be amended based on the corrected information.
- ✓ AL will endeavor to not change course fees from those which are published however. AL does however, reserve the right to do so prior to the commencement of the course.

### **Payment of fees**

- ✓ Full fees become due at point of enrolment Payment of student fees are the responsibility of the student, as laid out in the "Fees" section under "Learning Agreement" of the enrolment form.

❖ Payment plans may be arranged:

In most instances students are expected to settle all sums due at the point of enrolment. The following exceptions have been agreed to help students who wish to spread the cost of their course:

- **Students applying for a Bursary** must pay 40% of their course fees at enrolment and submit a completed DD mandate for future payments to be collected should a bursary application be denied. A bursary towards a course will generally be 50% of the total course fee.
  - **Students paying by payment plan** must pay 40% of their course fees at enrolment and submit a completed DD mandate for future payments to be taken in monthly installments (DD criteria must be met – see [here](#)).
  - **Students Applying for a loan to fund their course** must provide evidence that a loan has been approved of that a loan application is pending (from SLC for HE; or Advanced Learner Loan for FE). Further information can be found [here](#).
  - **Students who are being funded by their employer** are required to provide a signed letter of sponsorship for settlement of fees at point of enrollment (see guidance [here](#)).
  - **AL Staff whose course is being internally funded** must provide a copy of their approved “Learning and Development Request form or a signed letter of sponsorship from the budget holder paying for the course.
- ✓ If a student withdraws from the course, they will remain liable for any outstanding balance.
- ❖ All students studying on a **Higher National** programme may request to pay course fees in instalments subject to the following conditions:
- The student must have a U.K. bank account
  - The course must be delivered over 10 weeks or more
  - The course fee must be over £150.00
  - Fees must be paid in three instalments in line with Student Finance England payments; one third on enrolment, one third in January and final third in April
  - In line with Government guidelines, no administrative fee will be charged for students paying by installments
- ❖ Higher level qualifications supported through the Apprenticeship programme are to be funded through Apprenticeship eligible funding routes only.
- ❖ All payments are to be collected by Advice and Admissions, the Contact Centre, or Finance and recorded on the students account within REMS. Under no circumstances should other departments take payment. Failure to adhere to this may result in disciplinary action.
- ❖ All fees for cycle academy are payable in advance of the course date.

### Direct Debit Guidance

Students may request to pay course fees by Direct Debit instalments, subject to the following conditions:

- 40% of the course fee is paid at enrolment
- A £10 direct debit administration fee is payable at enrolment
- A direct debit mandate is completed at point of enrolment and given to the enrolment personnel.
- The student must have a U.K. bank account
- The course must be delivered over 15 weeks or more
- The course fee must be
  - £250.00 or over for a short plan, or
  - £500.00 or over for a long plan.

- The remaining 60% of the course fee is paid over
  - 6 equal instalments of 10% each for long plan, or
  - 2 equal instalments of 30% each for short plan
- These instalment plans can only be offered if the full course fees will be paid in full prior to the course end date.

Please refer to Appendices 1, for schedule of monthly instalments for the academic year.

If a direct debit is cancelled by a student a £20 administration fee will be applied to the students account, and all outstanding fees will become payable immediately.

If a direct debit is rejected due to a lack of funds, a £20 administration fee will be payable to cover the extra administration involved. In these cases a student will be provided a 7 day grace period to settle the instalment and continue with the instalment plan. If the installment value remains outstanding, all fees will become payable immediately.

If a direct debit payment is refused more than twice, then the option for the student to pay via an instalment plan will be withdrawn and any outstanding amount will become payable immediately in full.

### **Student Loan Guidance**

Students are responsible for their Loan application, and ensuring their Loan has been approved. Loans are provided through a 3<sup>rd</sup> party, not Activate Learning.

- If a student chooses to take out Loan they will be subject to the terms and conditions laid down by the Student Loan Company.
- If a loan is not approved within 4 weeks, of the start date of the course, the student will become liable and must arrange a direct debit plan for the fees to be paid.
- If / when the loan is approved the fees paid by the student will be refunded to them, providing they do not owe other money to the college for which the fees will then be applied to.

### **Sponsorship Guidance**

Students are responsible to obtain a letter of sponsor. However, should the sponsor default on payment, the student will be liable for the fees.

Where a sponsor letter is being provided (i.e. employer paying), the following information is required on company headed paper (this includes AL Group Service staff):

- Learners name
- Course name
- Academic year
- Value being contributed
- Invoice address
- Email address for submission of invoice
- Signed by manager (or for AL Group Staff, a budget holder)

Invoice terms are 30 days from date of invoice, and full invoice value must be paid. Instalment options are not available (except apprenticeship courses).

### **Bursaries**

- ✓ Students may be eligible for a grant to contribute towards their study through the bursary scheme. Advice and Admissions can advise on eligibility, or the HELP office team for HE
- ❖ Bursary fund applications should be submitted to the Advice and Admissions team, or HELP office team for Higher Education.



## Methods of Payment

- ❖ The accepted methods of payment are:
  - Most major Debit or Credit Cards (excluding American Express).
  - Bank transfer. Please use Learner ID as reference.
  - Online payment via portal or enrolments site.
  - Loan (via Student Loan Company for HE; or Advanced Learner Loan for FE)
  - Direct Debit, if eligible (see [here](#))
- ❖ In certain circumstances, other payment methods can be used including:
  - Cash up to the value of £100.00. Each payment must be 30 days apart.
  - Cheques
  - International students without a U.K. bank account may pay their full ESOL course fees in cash

## Non-payment of Fees

- ✓ A student will not be enrolled if they have any unpaid amounts remaining from previous academic years or from a previous course.
- ✓ In the event of non-payment AL may exclude the student from their course.
- ✓ AL reserves the right to refer outstanding amounts to its approved 3rd party debt collectors, which may result in further cost to the student and possible legal action.

## Student Withdrawals

### Full-time Courses

- ✓ Students are entitled to withdraw from a course within two weeks of the course start date, and receive a refund of fees paid.
- ✓ If a student withdraws after more than two weeks, there is no entitlement to a refund unless there are extenuating circumstances. This is at the discretion of Faculty Director.
- ✓ If a student withdraws from a course funded through Advanced Learner Loans, the fees will be adjusted to reflect the correct apportionment in relation to the time attended, as outlined by the ESFA and Student Finance England.
- ✓ Application for withdrawal must be applied for via Student Services.

### Part-time Courses (15 weeks or less)

- ✓ Students enrolled on a part time course are able to withdraw from a course up to two weeks prior to the course start date. A refund of fees paid will be given less an administration charge.
- ✓ Student's withdrawing after this date are not entitled to a refund. However in extenuating circumstances, this may be reviewed by an appropriate Faculty Director.
- ❖ In all cases an administration fee will be charged at 20% of the course fee (subject to a minimum charge of £10.00).

## Fee Refunds

- ❖ The table below details the circumstances when a student can request a fee refund:

Reason	Value of Refund	Evidence Required
Withdrawing for a serious medical reason	The refund will be calculated, pro rata, according to the number of weeks attended	A doctor's certificate needs to be submitted with the application for a refund on medical grounds



The student has never attended the course or withdraws within two weeks ( <b>courses longer than 15 weeks</b> )	A full refund will be processed	The student should request the refund in writing
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- ✓ In the event that AL cancels a course, which is yet to start, fees paid will be refunded.
- ❖ Refunds will be given to a student where it is agreed payment will come from another source; i.e. employer, bursary award or student loan. This is providing the student does not owe other money to the college for which the value paid will then be applied to first. This is to occur only after appropriate evidence is received prior to the refund. Refunds will only be made once a completed refund form signed by the department budget holder has been received.
- ❖ Costs will be deducted from refunds to cover any costs and registration fees.
- ❖ Refunds will be processed weekly via BACs or by web payment (if refund is requested within 90 days of fee's being paid). Therefore bank details must be obtained and provided to finance.
- ❖ ESOL students who paid their fees by cash can be refunded in cash however, finance will need 10 days notice to arrange this as cash is not held on site at any campus.
- ❖ Application for refunds must be applied for via Student Services and provide beneficiary's bank details.

### Complaints

- ✓ Complaints will be dealt with in accordance with AL's [Customer Comments, Suggestions and Complaints Policy](#).
- ❖ Disputes in relation to Apprenticeships will be handled as outlined within the employer contract.

### References

This procedure should be used in conjunction with the [Student Fees Policy](#).

The Course Fee Setting Process can be found [here](#).

Reference is also made to the [Customer Comments, Suggestions and Complaints Policy](#).

Here are links to the most useful Further and Higher Education information.

- ESFA funding guidance for 16 to 18 year olds <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/16-to-19-education-funding-guidance>
- ESFA funding guidance for students aged 19+ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/sfa-funding-rules>
- Student Finance England for Higher Education courses <https://www.gov.uk/student-finance>
- Student Loan Company website <http://www.slc.co.uk/>
- Apprenticeship levy guidance <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeship-levy-how-it-will-work/apprenticeship-levy-how-it-will-work#pay-apprenticeship-levy>

## Appendix 1. – Fee Instalment Plans for the Academic Year

Instalments commence from the month of enrolment not the course start date

All payments (except initial payment) will be taken on the first working day on or after the 1st of each month

	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Months to pay
Sept Long	40%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%													7
Sept Short	40%	30%	30%																	3
Oct Long		40%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%												7
Oct Short		40%	30%	30%																3
Nov Long			40%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%											7
Nov Short			40%	30%	30%															3
Dec Long				40%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%										7
Dec Short				40%	30%	30%														3
Jan Long					40%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%									7
Jan Short					40%	30%	30%													3
Feb Long						40%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%								7
Feb Short						40%	30%	30%												3
Mar Long							40%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%							7
Mar Short							40%	30%	30%											3
Apr Long								40%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%						7
Apr Short								40%	30%	30%										3
May Long									40%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%					7
May Short									40%	30%	30%									3
June Long										40%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%				7
June Short										40%	30%	30%								3
July Long											40%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%			7
July Short											40%	30%	30%							3
Aug Long												40%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%		7
Aug Short												40%	30%	30%						3