



South Gloucestershire and Stroud College

Further Education Fees & Refunds Policy 2024/25

If you would like this document in an alternate format

Please contact the Finance Department

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Job Title/Role:	Director of Operational Finance
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Approved by:	Corporation
Date:	21 March 2024

MANDATORY INITIAL IMPACT SCREENING



I have read the guidance document: Completing a Policy Impact Assessment?	✓
If this policy raises equality, diversity or inclusion concerns, the Inclusion Committee has been consulted?	<input type="checkbox"/>
If this policy raises environmental or sustainability issues, the Estates Team have been consulted?	<input type="checkbox"/>
If this policy has been up-dated, please tick to confirm that the initial impact screening has also been reviewed:	✓

Please list each College Strategic Priority that this policy is designed to address/implement:		
EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION IMPACT ASSESSMENT		
Characteristic	This policy seeks to:	
Age	Remove arbitrary age barriers to educational access and to the realisation of individual potential and success	
Disability	Choose an item.	
Faith or Belief	Choose an item.	
Gender	Choose an item.	
Race or Ethnicity	Choose an item.	
Orientation	Choose an item.	
Gender reassignment	Choose an item.	
Economic disadvantage	Use available resources to identify and address any issues of inequality as a result of social and economic factors. Supporting learners and staff, both academically and pastorally in order for all to be successful	
Rural isolation	Use available resources to identify and address any issues of inequality as a result of rural isolation. Supporting learners and staff, both academically and pastorally in order to access College services and be successful.	
Marriage	Choose an item.	
Pregnancy & maternity	Choose an item.	
Carers & care leavers	Use available resources to identify and address any issues of inequality as a result of being in care or a care leaver. Supporting learners both academically and pastorally in order to be successful.	
Vulnerable persons	Choose an item.	
Please identify any sections of the policy that specifically seek to maximise opportunities to improve diversity within any of the College's stakeholder groups:		
Please identify any sections of the policy that specifically seek to improve equality of opportunity within any of the College's stakeholder groups:		
Is there any possibility that this policy could operate in a discriminatory way?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<div style="display: flex; align-items: center; gap: 10px;"> <div style="background-color: red; width: 20px; height: 20px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;">✘</div> <div style="background-color: green; width: 20px; height: 20px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;">✘</div> </div> If you have ticked yes (red), which characteristic will be most affected? Choose an item.
If yes please confirm that the Policy has been sent for a full Equality & Diversity Impact Assessment, and note the date:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click or tap to enter a date.

Note: if the policy does not seek to increase diversity or improve equality you should go back and review it before submitting it for approval.

MAPPING OF FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

Which United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), Right does this policy most protect:	Art. 17 Access to information Art. 28 Right to education Art. 42 Right to know your rights
Which Human Right (HRA) does this policy most protect:	Art. 2 Right o life Choose an item.

DATA PROTECTION & PRIVACY BY DESIGN SCREENING

Tick to confirm that you have considered any data protection issues as part of the design and implementation of this policy; and, that implementing this policy will <u>not</u> result in the collection, storage or processing of personal data outside of official College systems:		✓	
Tick to indicated that this policy has or requires a Data Privacy Impact Assessment:		<input type="checkbox"/>	
ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACT ASSESSMENT			
Does this policy relate directly or indirectly to any legal, regulatory environmental or sustainability standard(s)?		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
If so, please list them:			
Will any aspects of this policy result in:			
Reduced miles travelled or provide / improve / promote alternatives to car based transport (e.g. public transport, walking and cycling car sharing, the use of low emission vehicles, community transport, environmentally friendly fuels and/or technologies)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Reduced waste, environmental hazards and/or toxic materials for example by reducing PVC, photocopier and printer use, air pollution, noise pollution, mining or deforestation? Or increase the amount of College waste that is recycled or composted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Reduced water consumption?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Reduced instances of single use plastic?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Reduced use of natural resources such as raw materials and energy to promote a circular economy?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Improved resource efficiency of new or refurbished buildings (water, energy, density, use of existing buildings, designing for a longer lifespan)?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Will this policy improve green space or access to green space?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Please list the sections of this policy which specifically target an improved environment:			
Will any aspects of this policy result in:			
The promotion of healthy working lives (including health and safety at work, work-life/home-life balance and family friendly practices)?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Greater employment opportunities for local people?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
The promotion of ethical purchasing of goods or services for example by increasing transparency of modern slavery in our supply chain?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Greater support for the local economy through the use of local suppliers, SMEs or engagement with third sector or community groups?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
The promotion of better health, increased community resilience, social cohesion, reduced social isolation or support for sustainable development?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Mitigation of the likely effects of climate change (e.g. identifying proactive and community support for vulnerable groups; contingency planning for flood/snow, heatwaves and other weather extremes)?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
The promotion of better awareness of sustainability, healthy behaviours, mental wellbeing, living independently or self-management?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Please list the sections of this policy which specifically target improved sustainability:			
What is the *estimated* carbon impact of this policy (in terms of tCO2e)	Increased (+tCO2e) <input type="checkbox"/>	Decreased (-tCO2e) <input type="checkbox"/>	Net Zero CO2 <input type="checkbox"/>
Mandatory initial impact screening completed by:	Rich Aitken		
Date	01/03/2024		
Initial impact screening supported by (Please list each individual)			

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1. General

1.1 Introduction

This policy established a framework for maintaining the availability and accessibility of comprehensive guidance and information regarding fees for courses, except Higher Education courses which are covered within the Higher Education Fee and Bursary Policy.

1.2 Statement

The South Gloucestershire and Stroud College (“the College”) Further Education Fees and Refunds Policy is that:

- 1.2.1 Fees will be set at a level to ensure that the College remains self-sustaining. This requirement can only be varied with the agreement of the Group Chief Financial Officer or the College Principal.
- 1.2.2 All printed College marketing material will aim to publish the full cost of each course/programme including tuition fees, exam/registration fees, material fees and any additional fees relating to each course or provide this information online (subject to the College’s published disclaimer: <https://www.sgscol.ac.uk/disclaimer>).
- 1.2.3 Fee concessions and fee remission will be agreed and published annually. These will be set in accordance with funding body guidelines and in line with specific College requirements.
- 1.2.4 The College will endeavour to provide prospective learners with all relevant information to help inform their decisions. In addition to preserving learners’ statutory rights, this policy ensures that all learners are treated fairly and equipped to resolve problems if things go wrong (for example via the College’s Complaints Policy).
- 1.2.5 The refund process will be agreed and published annually (see section 5.7).
- 1.2.6 The College Fees & Refunds Policy will be reviewed annually and any changes recommended will be referred for approval to the Corporation.

1.3 Objectives

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework within which the College’s charges, fee setting and fee refunds processes will be designed and implemented. The policy has been written in accordance with the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) funding guidance, Office for Students regulations, and any available West of England Combined Authority (WECA) guidance.

1.4 Implementation

All College staff are responsible for raising awareness of this policy with prospective learners (prior to their enrolment) and current learners.

1.5 Responsibilities

The Director of Operational Finance has responsibility for ensuring the policy is reviewed, updated and disseminated on an annual basis.

1.6 Related Policies, Procedures, Guidelines and Regulations

1.6.1 Financial Regulations.

1.6.2 Financial Procedures.

1.6.3 Applications, Admissions and Enrolments Policy and Procedure.

1.6.4 Compliments, Suggestions and Complaints Policy and Procedure.

1.6.5 Funding Bodies Guidelines.

1.6.6 Policy and Procedures for the Disbursement of Bursary funds and Financial support services.

1.6.7 Exams Access Arrangements Policy.

1.6.8 Trips Policy and Procedure.

2 Basis of Charge

2.1 The Corporation has set fees on the basis:

- a) Continuing to ensure the College's financial viability
- b) Terms and conditions of ESFA funding;
- c) Guidance from CMA (Competition and Markets; Authority) reflected in all fees. Consumer rights are not affected;
- d) Directives from the ESFA or WECA in respect of Adult Education and Skills courses;
- e) Market conditions.

2.2 All fees should be rounded up to the nearest £1.

2.3 Tuition fees may be reduced proportionately for late enrolment with the agreement of the Group Chief Financial Officer or College Principal.

3 Payment of fees

3.1 Enrolment

- 3.1.1 Full-time fees (including any exam, registration or material fees), if relevant, will be communicated via email and available to pay via the Payment Portal once an online enrolment is completed. Payment is due no later than the first day of the course starting at College.
- 3.1.2 Fees will be outlined as part of the online enrolment process, and will cover the following criteria. This may result in the learner being exempt from paying fees:
- a) They are remitted from paying fees under ESFA or WECA policy;
 - b) They agree to pay in instalments (including an administration fee) and complete documentation as appropriate (see 3.2);
 - c) They have evidence of a successful application for Learner Support Funds to cover the cost of any outstanding fees;
 - d) They have evidence in writing from an approved sponsor that the sponsor will pay their fees in full;
 - f) They agree to apply, or have already applied, for the Advanced Learner loan.
- 3.1.3 For under 18s, a parent, guardian or other guarantor is responsible for any relevant fees.

3.2 Instalments

- 3.2.1 Learners may apply to pay course fees in monthly instalments. The final instalment must be paid 30 days before the end of their course, this is to ensure the learner is still attending College in the event that the debt chasing process becomes required. The College does not create or enter into Consumer Credit Agreements and payment plans are offered to assist learners to budget appropriately. The College is not able to provide financial advice.
- 3.2.2 Instalments will be paid through the College's 3rd party provider, FlexPay, which includes a monthly administration charge to be paid up front. In exceptional circumstances payments by instalments will be arranged through the Finance department. The learner, parent, guardian or guarantor is responsible for ensuring instalments are set up and paid on time.

- 3.2.3 The learner will enter into an agreement with the College which states that the learner, parent, guardian or guarantor understands that, should any instalment be declined or cancelled, the whole amount will become due immediately and may result in legal action to recover the debt.
- 3.2.4 In the event that a learner withdraws or is withdrawn from the course, all applicable fees will be payable immediately.
- 3.2.5 Where a learner who is financed by an Advanced Learner Loan withdraws, the loan ceases from the point of withdrawal and any outstanding applicable course fees become payable immediately to the College. As stated in the Student Finance England (“SFE”) guidance, the learner must advise SFE if they change their course of study, have a change to the start or end dates of the course, don’t begin their course of study, leave the course or suspend their studies.

3.3 Sundry Fees

- 3.3.1 Additional fees may be levied for the cost of trips, travel to sports fixtures, or other activities/costs.
- 3.3.2 Course material fees and exam fees, where chargeable from the College to the learner will be included in the maximum loan cost charged to a learner aged 19 and above on an approved Level 3 programme. Trips will be charged as an optional extra.

3.4 Exam re-sit fees

- 3.4.1 An exam fee will be set in line with the Exam Fee Policy; if the exam fee for the Academic year is not published by the awarding body within the timescales required by the College, the exam fee will be set as the previous year’s awarding body fee plus an inflationary increase agreed by the Group Chief Financial Officer or College Principal.
- 3.4.2 Examination fees will not be charged to 16-18 year olds, except in the following circumstances:
- a) In the absence of extenuating circumstances, assessment work must be up-to-date and attendance must be at least **87%** in order to qualify for free examination entry;
 - b) If a learner fails, without good reason, to sit a scheduled examination they will be charged a re-sit fee;
 - c) Following a second attempt at an examination, resulting from an initial examination failure, learners will be required to pay the full re-sit fee for each subsequent attempt;

- d) If a learner chooses to re-sit an examination (with the aim of achieving marginal improvements in their grades) they will be required to pay a re-sit fee;
- e) Qualifications leading to a GSCE grade 4 to 9 in English or mathematics will not be treated as retakes where the learner has not yet achieved either a grade 4 to 9 or A* to C in these subjects;

3.4.3 No exams fees are charged to Apprentices.

3.4.4 Adult learners will be charged for exam fees and exam re-sit fees.

3.4.5 Exams re-sit fees are charged to learners as advertised and these are payable no later than the first day of a course starting. Exam fees are charged at the awarding organisation's published price per unit plus a 15% processing fee.

3.4.6 Agreed late enrolments may incur a late registration fee and learners will be advised if there are any additional fees as a result of the late enrolment.

3.5 Professional Development

3.5.1 Staff may only enrol on a course agreed as part of their staff development with the approval of both their Line Manager and the Head of Professional Development.

3.5.2 Staff may request an annual £250 staff voucher, which may be used towards the tuition fees for any course offered by the College. Fees in excess of £250 must be paid by the relevant staff member. Material and exam fees still apply and must be paid by the staff member. The voucher may only be used once in an academic year. The discount is repayable if staff either fail to complete the course or leave the College within the duration of the course. The voucher will only be issued to staff who have completed all their required mandatory training in the previous academic year.

4 FE Learners

4.1 Full Time Tuition Fees for Further Education Programmes

To ensure consistency of approach in respect of learner residence and eligibility for funding support, please refer to the 'Applications, Admissions and Enrolments Policy and Procedure', especially to paras 7.3 and 7.4 and sub-paragraphs therein.

4.1.1 Under 16's

- a) Eligible under 16 learners may only be enrolled on College programmes following the approval of the Vice Principal

responsible for Education Programmes for Young People, at a rate agreed by the Group Chief Financial Officer or College Principal.

- b) Where courses have a restriction in number, the College is entitled to refuse entry to an under 16 year-old.
- c) Some courses include a materials fee. Any materials fee will be invoiced and must be paid after enrolment and by the first day of study.
- d) Learners who have previously been Home Educated for a period of 6 months prior to enrolment may qualify for funding via the ESFA and may therefore not be subject to tuition fees.

4.1.2 16–18 (Including home educated 14-15 year olds)

No tuition fees are charged to any home learner, aged 16-18 years at 31 August 2024 and learners in the second year of a two-year programme of study, who were aged 16-18 years at 31 August 2023.

4.1.3 19+

A tuition fee which is equal to or less than 50% of the unweighted rate for individual qualifications as shown on the '[Find a learning aim](#)' website is charged to all learners aged 19 years or above at 31 August 2024 at the start of Year 1 programmes unless they fall into one of the categories below in which case there will be no fees payable. Learners continuing onto the second year of a 2-year course will be charged the prior year's rate for their course.

- a) Learners aged 19 to 24 with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), are funded by the ESFA as 16-18 learners (paragraph 5.1.2).
- b) Learners aged 19-23 years taking a traineeship or a supported internship.
- c) Adults starting classroom based functional skills and GCSEs in English or maths where they do not currently have these qualifications at either A*-C or grades 4-9.
- d) Learners who already hold a GCSE qualification at A*-C or grade 4 or above in English or maths will not be eligible for ESFA funding on any English or maths learning aim and will be charged the full funding rate for the qualification, as stated on the Learning Aims Reference Service (LARS).

- e) Learners aged 19+ who live in a WECA postcode area and are completing a regulated English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) qualification up to and including level 2.
- f) In line with ESFA and WECA guidelines*, where the course qualifies for funding, (as defined by ESFA Learning Aims Reference Service [LARS]), and the learner meets the eligibility requirements (as defined by ESFA/WECA guidance), full remission of all fees is given in respect of the following categories of home learner studying on FE provision. This remission is subject to the learner meeting the qualifying period for funding (as defined by Adult Education Budget [AEB] Funding Rules).

It should be noted that learners must apply for the following entitlements via the Money Management Service (MMS) online application system and sign a college declaration to qualify for these remissions.

- g) ESFA or WECA funded learners aged 19-23 years taking their first full eligible level 2 or level 3 programme, Legal Entitlement.
- h) ESFA and WECA funded learners who are employed or self-employed, earning a low wage and are either aged 19-23, already hold a full level 2 (or higher) and are completing a course up to and including level 2, aged 19-23 and taking a funded course up to and including level 1 to support their progression to a first full level 2 programme, or aged 24+ and taking a funded course up to and including level 2.
 - o ESFA defines learners in receipt of a low income as those whose residential address is within an ESFA area and are earning an annual gross salary of less than £20,319.
 - o WECA defines learners in receipt of a low income as those whose residential address is within the WECA area and are earning an annual gross salary of less than £23,400.
- i) ESFA and WECA funded learners, who are 'unemployed' and are either aged 19-23, already hold a full level 2 (or higher) and are completing a course up to and including level 2, or are aged 19-23 and taking a funded course up to and including level 1 to support their progression to a first full level 2 programme, or are aged 24+ and taking a funded course up to and including level 2.
 - o For the purposes of funding ESFA/WECA define learners as 'unemployed' if one or more of the following apply:

- Learner receives Job Seekers Allowance (JSA); including those receiving National Insurance credits only.
 - Learner receives Employment Support Allowance (ESA).
 - Learner is in receipt of Universal Credit their take home pay is less than £617 a month (if learner is sole adult in their benefit claim) or £988 a month (if learner has a joint benefit claim with their partner).
 - Learner is released on a temporary licence, studying outside a prison environment, and not funded by the Ministry of Justice.
 - Learner is in receipt of other state benefits (not listed above) and their take home pay (disregarding benefits) is less than £617 a month (if learner is sole adult in their benefit claim) or £988 a month (if learner has a joint benefit claim with their partner) and, wants to be employed (or progress into sustainable employment) and the College is satisfied that the learning is directly relevant to the learner's employment prospects and the local market needs.
 - Learners aged 19+ and living in an ESFA postcode area, who are completing a regulated English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) qualification up to and including level 2 who have applied for and are eligible for a Low Income or Benefit Fee Waiver.
- j) For ESFA funded learners aged 24 or above (For WECA area learners aged 26 to 49, also see (h) below) and ESFA funded Learners aged 19-23 who have previously achieved level 3 or above, who are undertaking qualifications at level 3 or above, will be charged the full funding rate (as stated on the 'Find A Learning Aim' website) unless they qualify for the Level 3 free courses for jobs initiative, or unless the Head of Faculty has agreed a reduced rate in line with market conditions. Eligible learners will be able to access an Advanced Learner Loan if the course is funded by this scheme. However, see below for details of the ESFA Level 3 free courses for jobs offer.
- k) The level 3 free courses for jobs (previously known as the National Skills Fund level 3 offer) is available to support adults aged 24 and above without an existing full level 3 or equivalent qualification. This offer is also available to adults aged 19 to 23 alongside the 19 to 23 legal entitlement offer and include all adults who meet the definition of 'low wage' or 'unemployed' outlined in the WECA or ESFA Funding Guidance who already have a full level 3 or higher achieved prior to 1 April 2021, or who have achieved a short qualification after 1 April 2021. Full details of the offer can be found in the [Free courses for jobs guidance](#).

- l) The following flexibilities (m to n inclusive) apply only to learners whose residential address is located in the WECA area.
- m) Retraining (level 2): For WECA resident learners aged 50 and above; a single additional full level 2 qualification (or non-full level 2 qualification) for WECA residents who are already qualified at full level 2 but are not already qualified at level 3 or above.
- n) Retraining (level 3): For WECA resident learners aged 19-25 or 50 and above: A single additional full level 3 qualification which is included on either the Level 3 Legal Entitlement list or, the Level 3 Free Courses for Jobs list (or a non-full level 3 qualification which is on the Level 3 Free Courses for Jobs List) for WECA residents) who are already qualified at full level 3 but are not already qualified at level 4 or above.

** Information based on ESFA and WECA Guidance available at the time of going to print.*

4.2 Part-Time Tuition Fees for Further Education Programmes

4.2.1 ESFA Funded FE Courses:

- a) Learners will be charged fees based on an agreed course contribution to be agreed by the appropriate Assistant Principal and through the curriculum planning process. To align with the WECA fee charging policy in operation in 2024/25 academic year, ESFA co-funded learners will be charged the same amount as WECA co-funded learners, i.e. a maximum of 50% of the unweighted rate for each individual qualification.
- b) Fees may be altered to reflect the full market value subject to approval by the Assistant Principal plus College Principal or Group Chief Financial Officer.
- c) For dedicated employer provision, fees are charged in line with Full Cost Pricing Matrix, which is subject to change. Prices will differ by course.
- d) Learners may be eligible for remission of fees in respect of the categories of home Learners studying on full time provision as detailed in 5.1.2.

4.2.2 14-16 Link/Infill Learners:

School link funded infill Learners may be admitted to the College if this is deemed appropriate by their school and if, in the judgement of the College, the learner would benefit from the learning opportunity, has the necessary resilience and can meet College requirements. Fees are as advertised on the website and will be agreed prior to starting the course, as per the funding agreement. Fees may be altered with the agreement of the College Principal or Group Chief Financial Officer.

4.3 **International Learners**

4.3.1 International Learners (including those from the EU who do not have pre-settled or settled status) on Further Education Programmes are charged the following annual tuition as follows:

Level: Level 3 (A Levels, BTEC)
Fees: £9,000.

4.3.3 Full tuition fee payment is required in advance of the course start to secure a place. If a visa is refused the course fees will be refunded, less a £250 administration charge.

4.4 **College Materials Fee**

Materials fees will be set annually with agreement of the appropriate Assistant Principal as part of the annual curriculum planning process.

4.4.1 The materials fee will include a charge for course materials in line with ESFA requirements shown in 5.4.4.

4.4.2 The fee charge must cover the full cost to the College of acquiring the materials, including VAT and an allowance for purchasing, processing and delivery costs, etc., estimated at 15% of the total materials cost.

4.4.3 The materials fee must not include any costs for trips.

Please note that all materials that are purchased by the College are subject to non-recoverable VAT.

4.4.4 ESFA Funding conditions in respect of charges to Learners

Institutions may choose to charge learners aged 16 to 18 in full time or part-time education, or 19+ learners for other elements of their study programme as set out here. There is no requirement to charge for optional extras. The institution funding the activity is free

to determine whether any charge should be made for it and, if so, how much should be charged and to whom.

- a) Where clothing or equipment is necessary for the learner's health or safety, a charge may be made for clothing and equipment that the learner retains, but only if the learner also has the option of borrowing the clothing or equipment free of charge;
- b) A charge for the sale of learning materials in bookshops, or similar facilities in institutions, that enables learners to secure discounts on books, stationery or similar materials;
- c) Fines for the late return of library books or other disciplinary fines (provided such penalties have been made known in advance); and deposits on lockers, ID cards, keys, library cards or smartcards and equipment that are fully refundable except in cases of damage or theft. Fines and deposits are not fees;
- d) Photocopying and printing, including computer printouts, are not fees as long as they are not course-specific, are optional and there are alternative sources for these services;
- e) A charge for the recreational use of leisure and other non-academic facilities where the activity taking place is not a requirement of a course syllabus or not part of a learner union membership free entitlement;
- f) Travel, board and lodging and other additional costs, including any tuition costs, associated with field trips and similar activities that may form part of or be outside the requirement of the course syllabus or agreed study programme;
- g) Optional extra activities where the activity is taking place outside a required part of an agreed study programme, and charging is at the discretion of the institution that would otherwise meet the cost of provision. Examples of optional extra activities include theatre, cinema or museum visits or other day or residential visits that are not a requirement of course syllabuses;
- h) **For ESFA and WECA funded AEB provision the following applies:** Learners must not be subject to compulsory charges relating to the direct costs of delivering a learning aim to fully funded learners, including those with a legal entitlement to full funding for their learning. Direct costs include any essential activities or materials without which the learner could not complete and achieve their learning;

- i) Where a fully-funded learner needs a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check to participate in learning, no charge will be made to them for this. If the learning is associated with the learner's employment, their employer is responsible for carrying out and paying for this check;
- j) For WECA area learners the following applies: When charging a fee to co-funded learners, the sum of the government contribution and the learner's fee must not exceed the fully funded weighted rate for the learning aim, and the learner should not have to pay more than 50% of the unweighted rate.

4.5 Sports Academies Annual Membership Fee

Fees for annual membership of sports academies are charged in addition to any academic course material fees.

The annual academy membership fee contributes towards:

- Sports injury clinic (not applicable to the development squad)
- Strength and conditioning (not applicable to the development squad)
- An annual Gym membership
- High level coaching, training and competition (including officials)
- Transport costs to away games (excluding additional trips/tours)
- Access to the SGS WISE campus training facilities
- Replacement and maintenance of equipment and facilities
- College team playing kit & laundry services.

All sports academies fees are payable at the start of the academic year and are non-refundable. Where academies have pre-season training/events, a non-refundable deposit is payable before initial participation.

The level of fee is set by each individual academy and may include additional special competition event costs, external club membership and kit fee.

If a sports academy attends a special event or a tour an additional payment by learners may be required.

In addition to the annual membership fee, a personal sports kit package will need to be purchased by each individual Learner directly from our sports kit supplier. This is the learner's personal property and responsibility and **the College will not accept any responsibility for its storage and/or supervision**. All communication regarding delivery and returns must be communicated directly with the supplier. The kit supplier's terms and condition apply and can be found on <https://customathletics.com/ca-terms-and-conditions>

4.6 Bristol Academy of Media Annual Membership Fee

Fees for annual membership of the Bristol Academy of Media (BAM) will be charged in addition to any academic course material fees, for the recreational use of equipment and other academic and non-academic facilities where the activity taking place is not a requirement of a course syllabus.

The membership fee contributes towards:

- a) Technical Support.
- b) Professional Studio access.
- c) Replacement and maintenance of equipment and facilities. Additional charges may be incurred for certain BAM provision. All applicants will be sent a letter from the learning area providing them details of the membership fee for BAM.

All BAM fees are payable at the start of the Academic year and are non-refundable.

4.7 Withdrawals

4.7.1 If learners of any age withdraw at any point during the academic year, material fees for any provided or utilised materials are non-refundable.

4.7.2 Learners aged 19 and above who enrol onto a course and subsequently withdraw will be liable for the full fee.

4.7.3 In exceptional cases learners on a course lasting a year or more may be charged a tuition fee in line with the length of their attendance as determined by the following scale. All reductions to fees must be approved by the Group Chief Financial Officer or College Principal.

- a) 50% of the full fee to be charged if exit occurs before the first half term of the academic year (usually in October);
- b) 75% of the full fee to be charged if exit occurs before the second half term of the academic year (usually Christmas), but after the first half term;
- c) 100% of the full fee to be charged if exit occurs before the third half term of the academic year (usually in February), but after the second half term.

4.7.4 In exceptional cases where learners withdraw from a course commencing partway through a year and lasting a year or longer, tuition fees may be charged in line with the above scale, adjusting half terms to align with the course start dates.

- 4.7.5 Part-Time learners who withdraw or leave a course of less than a year will be liable for the full fee. In exceptional cases a request for a reduction in fee must be approved by the Group Chief Financial Officer or College Principal and should be calculated based on weeks in attendance.

4.8 Refunds

- 4.8.1 In exceptional cases requests for refunds must be approved by the Group Chief Financial Officer or College Principal. Credit notes can only be processed by a member of the Finance department or those authorised to do so by either the Group Chief Financial Officer, Director of Operational Finance or Finance Operations Manager.
- 4.8.2 Refunds will be considered if the College has closed, or materially reduced the content of a learner's learning programme, or if the advice given at the time of enrolment is deemed by the College to be inaccurate. Refunds will not be considered should a learning programme have to be substantially altered due to circumstances beyond the College's control.
- 4.8.3 If a learner requests a refund due to a complaint about the content or teaching of a course then the learner should be advised of the College's complaints procedure and provided with the necessary information in order to make a complaint.
- 4.8.4 If a visa is refused for an international student who has paid the course fees in advance, they will be refunded, less a £250 administration charge.

4.9 Transfers

A full-time transfer is defined as the movement of a learner from one full time study programme "the old study programme" and associated core qualification(s), to a different full-time study programme or apprenticeship "the new study programme" within the College.

4.9.1 Full-time transfers within the first term of the full-time academic year

Full-time transfers that are authorised during the first term of the academic year (until the Christmas break) will be charged the full year fee(s) of the new study programme. Any fee payments relating to the old study programme will be transferred to the new study programme. Any relevant fee remission will be transferred to the new study programme.

Learners who have been granted bursary payments will have their bursary amended to reflect changes in fees.

4.9.2 Full-time transfers in terms two or three of the full-time academic year

Full time transfers that are authorised after the first term of the academic year will be charged an agreed proportion of the fees from the old study programme plus an agreed proportion of the fees of the new study programme. These fees will be agreed by the Assistant Principals for both relevant study programmes.

4.9.3 Transfers for learners who are paying course fees with an Advanced Learner Loan

If a Learner is paying for their course via an Advanced Learner Loan and they wish to transfer onto a different course with a different learning aim, please refer to the MMS Policy.

4.9.4 Part-time Transfers

Part-time transfers/deferrals will be at the discretion of the Assistant Principal. A fee will be charged to cover costs incurred on the original part-time course and similarly a proportionate fee may be charged for the new course. These fees will be determined and agreed by the relevant Assistant Principals. Any registration/exam costs incurred by the College on the original part-time course must be charged.

5 Apprenticeship Learners

5.1 Apprenticeships

5.1.1 The College will agree a contract of services with the employer prior to commencement of the apprenticeship and this will include a price for the total cost of each apprenticeship (including the cost of end-point assessment). This cost will consider any recognised prior learning of the learner and only include costs that relate to the delivery of training and on-programme assessment as per the Apprenticeship Funding Rules 2023 to 2024 (publishing.service.gov.uk), or 2024/25 when published.

5.1.2 The final agreed price will be confirmed on the enrolment form, signed by the College, learner and employer.

5.1.3 Payment from the employer levy account, or co-investment payments from non-levy employers, will be in accordance with the apprenticeship funding rules in place at the commencement of the apprenticeship program.

5.1.4 On request, the College may agree a schedule of instalments with non-levy employers for co-investment payments, which will at least match the ESFA payment profile.

- 5.1.5 If an employer fails to administrate the apprenticeship funds through the Digital Service, the College reserve the right to recover the cost of the training up to the band value of the apprenticeship. Training costs will be evidenced in line with the apprenticeship funding rules.

5.2 Refunds

- 5.2.1 Refunds will only be considered if the College has closed, or materially reduced the content of a learner's learning programme, or if the advice given at the time of enrolment is deemed by the College to be inaccurate.
- 5.2.2 If a learner requests a refund due to a complaint about the content or teaching of a course then the learner should be advised of the College's complaints procedure and provided with the necessary information in order to make a complaint.
- 5.2.3 In exceptional cases a request for refund may be approved by the Group Chief Financial Officer or College Principal. Credit notes can only be processed by a member of the Finance department or those authorised to do so by either the Group Chief Financial Officer, Director of Operational Finance or Finance Operations Manager.

6 Full Cost Recovery

- 6.1 Fees will be set at a level that ensures that the College is able to be self-sustaining. This requirement can only be varied with the agreement of the Group Chief Financial Officer or College Principal.
- 6.2 The fees for all courses offered by the College must ensure that the income for each course covers the full direct delivery cost, as well as an agreed contribution to College indirect costs and overheads.

7 Community Learning Programme Fees Policy and Pound Plus Policy in Support of the Community Learning Programme.

- 7.1 Both the ESFA and WECA Adult Education Allocations include an element of funding which has been identified to deliver the Community Learning Programme in each area.
- 7.2 There is a separate policy document which set out the Fees methodology associated with these programmes, and another document which sets out the Pound Plus Policy in support of the Community Learning Programmes. These documents are separately updated on an annual basis to reflect the relevant funding and performance guidance from each funding body. These documents are published on the SGS College website. For the 23/24 Academic year they can be found at the following links:

https://www.sgscol.ac.uk/repository/documents/policies_and_procedures/2023/south_gloucestershire_and_stroud_college_community_learning_2023_24.pdf

https://www.sgscol.ac.uk/repository/documents/policies_and_procedures/2023/sgs_college_pound_plus_policy_in_support_of_the_cdl_2023_24.pdf