

Tuition Fee Policy 2021-22

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| Policy/Procedure Title | Tuition Fee Policy |
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| Author (Name/Department) | Mark Lay, Finance Director |
| Approved by | Corporation Board |
| In consultation with | Finance & General Purposes Committee |
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TUITION FEE POLICY 2020-2021

1. Key principles

Abingdon & Witney College is committed to a fair and transparent policy in respect of charges made to students. As far as possible, the college seeks to:

- Set fees that are in line with funding guidance and other relevant agency policy
- Set fees that are competitive in the different markets in which the college competes
- Ensure coherence in fee levels across different funding streams.

2. Fee principles by category of learner

| Category of learner | Fee (including exam fees) | Materials or other fees |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| 14 – 16 year olds | By individual arrangement | None |
| 16 – 18 year olds | Free | Charged at course level for optional additional activities |
| FE 19+ students who are fully funded* | Free | Charged at course level for optional additional activities |
| FE 19+ students who are co-funded** | Fee charged | Charged at course level for optional additional activities |
| FE students who are funded via loans | Fee charged – paid in full by the student or via loan | Charged at course level for optional additional activities |
| Apprentices | No charge to apprentices. Charge to employers made in line with national apprenticeship funding guidelines and agreed with each employer in advance | 19+ professional body fees (eg AAT) to be paid by the learner. |
| HE students | Fee charged (via HEI where appropriate) – paid in full by the student, employer or via loan | Charged at course level |
| Students on unfunded programmes | Fee charged – paid in full by the student | Charged at course level |
| International students | Fee charged – paid in full by the student | Charged at course level |
| Community Learning | Fee charged – paid in full by the student | Charged at course level |

*Fully funded adult learners are those who are unemployed or on certain benefits, those who enrol on entry level or level 1 qualifications that lead to a level 2, and 19 – 23 year olds enrolling on a full level 2 or full level 3 if they don't already hold these qualifications, and the qualification is fundable through entitlements

**The term co-funding is used to demonstrate that the college receives some funding for such courses from the ESFA and the remainder from the student.

3. Calculation of fees and comparison 2020/21 to 2019/20

Fees are reviewed on an annual basis by the Finance Director and approved by the Senior Management Team. Calculations are made on the following basis:

| Category of learner | Basis for calculating fee | Fees 2020/21 | Fees 2021/22 |
|--|--|--|---|
| FE 19+ students who are co-funded | Students pay 50% of the funding banding up to a cap of £1,650. | 50% of the funding banding, to a maximum of £1,250 for full time courses | 50% of the funding banding, to a maximum of £1,650 for full time courses |
| FE students funded via loans | ESFA fully funded rate | As funding band table | As funding band table |
| Apprentices | No charge to apprentices. 19+ co-funded charge made to employers based on market rates. Adjustment made for RPL as required | Based on the maximum funding cap applicable under the new apprenticeship funding rules. 10% employer contribution required by non-levy payers, in line with funding rules. Additional contributions charged as approved by DP/ FD. | Based on the maximum funding cap applicable under the new apprenticeship funding rules. 5% employer contribution required by non-levy payers, in line with funding rules. Additional contributions charged as approved by VP/ FD. |
| HE students on courses run via partner universities | Oxford Brookes courses | Foundation Degrees per year: (new starters) Full time £7,570 Part time £5,050 (3 yrs) Foundation Diploma, Top-up fees: £7,570 BSc Equine: £9,250 | Foundation Degrees per year: (new starters) Full time £7,570 Part time £5,050 (3 yrs) Foundation Diploma, Top-up fees: £7,570 BSc Equine: £9,250 |
| HE students on college HNC and HND courses | Market Rate | HNC Full Time (1 year): £4,500 HNC Part Time (2 years): £3,000 p.a. HND Full Time (2 years): £4,500 p.a. HND Top Up (1 year from HNC) Full Time: £4,500 | HNC Full Time (1 year): £4,500 HNC Part Time (2 years): £3,000 p.a. HND Full Time (2 years): £4,500 p.a. HND Top Up (1 year from HNC) Full Time: £4,500 |
| Students on unfunded programmes | Unfunded hourly rate | £8.75 per hour | £8.75 per hour |
| International FE students | ESFA fully funded rate | As funding band table | As funding band table |
| Community Learning: Standard Enhanced Workshop Engagement Community led learning Family Learning | Hourly rates | £4.90 £5.50 £7.00 £2.70 £0.00 £0.00 | £4.90 £5.50 £7.00 £2.70 £0.00 £0.00 |

All materials and other fees are determined at course level and reviewed annually by the Finance Director.

The college retains the option to 'market price' courses when and where appropriate at the discretion of the Finance Director.

4. Payment of fees, including tuition, materials and other fees.

All fees payable to the college will be due at enrolment, except for trips managed through the Wisepay payments system.

Fees can be paid in one of the following ways:

- During main enrolment fees can be paid by:
 - a. bank card (to the enrolment team)
 - b. cash or cheque to the finance team
 - c. electronically via bank transfer
- After main enrolment, fees can only be paid by bank card to the finance team, or electronically via bank transfer
- No cash or cheques are to be taken after main enrolment, except very exceptionally and as approved by the Head of Finance and paid to the finance team.
- Invoice to employer – a letter from the employer must be provided at enrolment
- Instalments – provided that a standing order or direct debit is in place:
 - Fees between £300 and £599 are paid in 3 equal instalments
 - Fees between £600 and £999 are paid in 4 equal instalments
 - Fees over £1,000 - £10,000 are paid in 5 equal instalments
 - In exceptional circumstances instalment plans will be agreed by the Head of Finance for fees less than £300
 - The first instalment is made on enrolment and the final instalment is made prior to the completion of the course
 - Students must not have an outstanding balance from previous years or have previously defaulted on payment arrangements
 - Students who withdraw from their programme remain liable for full fees
 - Instalment plans are not available to overseas students, employers or students without a UK bank account
 - Instalments will be collected on the first working day of each month. Any payments that are unsuccessful on the prescribed date of collection will still be collected, following a notice period of seven days from the original scheduled date. Where the College is unable to collect payment the student may be asked to leave their programme of study but will remain liable for payment of any outstanding fees
 - Instalment plans outside the above terms must be approved by the Finance Director
 - All instalment plans must be completed within the academic year to which the course relates

Places on a course are not confirmed until payment has been received.

5. Refunds

5.1 Refunds for cancelled courses

The cancelled course refund policy applies to all students who have paid a tuition fee either directly (have funded their own courses) or indirectly to the College (via a sponsor, a bursary or the Student Loans Company for example).

Refunds will be made where it is necessary to close a class due to insufficient numbers. Should this action prove necessary, the College will aim to contact all enrolled students at least 3 working days before the course is due to start.

Refunds in respect of a cancelled course are automatically issued to self-funding students and to sponsors. In the case of student loans/bursaries, the College will inform the student loan company/bursary team that the student will not be attending a programme.

5.2 Refunds for courses impacted due to unforeseen events

If the college is required to physically close because of an issue such as COVID-19, online courses will continue as normal, and physically attended courses will be transferred online wherever possible, or the course will continue when the campus can re-open. Only where this is not possible will refunds will be provided to students for the elements of their course that have been cancelled.

If a student cannot attend some or all of the planned sessions due to an issue such as COVID-19, the College will not offer partial refunds for courses. Course tutors always support all students to catch up with any learning that they have missed. If students are required to self-isolate in relation to COVID-19, we will make every possible effort to support the individual to complete their studies, including offering online support, catch up sessions or transfer to another instance of the same course later in the year.

5.3 Refunds to students no longer attending courses

If a student is unable to begin their course, has paid a tuition fee for that course and wishes to claim a refund, they must write to the finance department to request a refund. Refunds are usually only made for illness and applications for a refund on this basis must be accompanied by a doctor's certificate. Refunds for other special circumstances are at the discretion of the Finance Director.

For self-funding and sponsor paid fees; if a student withdraws after starting the course and has paid a tuition fee, their fee is still due unless a successful application for a refund is approved by the Finance Director.

For fees paid by the Student Loan Company/bursary payments; the loan/bursary amount will still be due for the period of attendance on your course, i.e. if you attend your course from September until December and then withdraw, you will still be liable for tuition fees that period of attendance. For the purpose of this policy, attendance refers to both physical attendance on the course or in the case of remote learning, the submission of coursework/attendance to exams.

5.4 Refunds for materials/exam registrations

Refunds will not be made for any personalised kits or materials which are being retained by the learner or any registration fees which have been paid to another party by the college on behalf of the learner.

5.5 Compensation

Financial compensation may be considered in exceptional circumstances, for example, where the College has made such changes to a programme of study that attendance of learners is made impossible. Examples of this may include; 'loss of opportunity' e.g. failure to complete a placement, apply for a bursary or to seek paid employment where this arises from an act or omission by the College, expenses the student has had to pay or money they have lost as a result of any College/course failings or closure.

When considering whether financial compensation is appropriate, the College will take into account the following:

- Any reasonable steps which have or have not been taken by the student and/or the College to minimise financial loss
- Whether the student has unreasonably refused or rejected an option that was available
- Whether the delays in resolving a matter may have been partly caused by the student

In all cases, the College requires the student to provide evidence of actual financial loss.

5.6 Financial Implications of Refund and Compensation Policy

Refunds and compensation are managed out of College reserves. Our cash availability never falls below £250k which the College feels is sufficient for that eventuality.

6. Procedure for exam resit fees

The college has a procedure for exam resit fees which is available here:

https://awcollege.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/teams/MIS/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B55795970-0EA3-4104-92F2-641F96609DDB%7D&file=Exam%20Procedure%20-%20Resits.docx&action=default&mobileredirect=true

There is also a separate procedure for End Point Assessment (EPA) resits and retakes for Apprentices which can be found here:

https://awcollege.sharepoint.com/:w:/t/EmployerServices/EfpNdx9kQ9BFIMluVfFhRvwBTariwDxMVA_N4tJh1dZMA?e=I9huVu&CID=773A3BE8-9D01-4C01-BD6E-76846471AAFD&wdLOR=c6BC2D50E-0B70-4A91-B204-1D4AC58E9175

7. Review of fee policy and charges

The college will review the fees and policy annually but reserves the right to make changes to this policy at any time.