FEE POLICY 2020-21

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POLICY STATEMENT

City College Plymouth is a not for profit organisation; however, to achieve the College's aim of ensuring excellence in delivery of learning, training or services to individuals and employers, fees are set to ensure that when public funding subsidies are taken into account the College is able to at least cover the full costs of delivery, make a contribution to College overheads for the environment in which the activities take place, and the sustained investment in resources that is required. It is also a Government requirement for certain learning aims that fees are charged.

POLICY OBJECTIVES

The policy seeks to ensure that:

- the College has a fees policy that is fair, equitable and clear;
- tuition fees and associated charges are calculated and applied consistently across the entire curriculum offer of the College;
- any barriers to participation presented by tuition fees and associated charges are mitigated by providing flexible payment options and/or assisting learners to access appropriate financial support to meet the cost of these;
- the College can respond flexibly to market forces and government policy, including fee guidance issued by relevant funding bodies;
- the College generates an increasing proportion of overall income from non publicly funded sources, particularly as central funding for 19+ further education provision is reduced; and
- the College develops appropriate and effective targets relating to fee income generation, and reviews performance against these regularly, and in relation to sector benchmarks.

POLICY

1. General Principles

- All elements of the policy are to be reviewed annually.
- No change to the policy is to disadvantage any individual learner part way through an agreed programme of study (e.g. where a learner is under 19 at the start of a FE funded programme of study, they will benefit from the free tuition/exam fee policy all through their programme of study, even if in a subsequent academic year of study continuing that programme they are over 19).
- College fees are to comply with ESFA (Education and Skills Funding Agency) or other College adopted Government funding initiatives.

2. Fees

- All course fees must be paid before or at enrolment, or an instalment arrangement made, to secure a place on a course.
- There are some courses where ALL learners have to pay full fees. For more information about this, please contact the College on 01752 305300 for guidance or visit the website www.cityplym.ac.uk
- There are some courses where additional fees such as Ancillary Fee, and Vocational Resource Fees are charged, these have to be paid by all students, in full, before or at enrolment. This equipment, material, etc. becomes the property of the learner at the end of the course.
- In addition to these, some courses require students to attend Educational Visits. Details of the visit costs and dates will be given by the tutor. Payment of these fees must be made before attendance on the visit is permitted.
- For courses which last for more than one year, fees are payable separately for each year of study.
- Learners aged between 16 - 18 years do not have to pay tuition or exam fees.

- Learners aged 19-24 with a learning difficulty or disability and who have an EHC plan will be funded in line with the 16-18 funding methodology and will not be required to pay tuition or exam fees (see below).
- Learners aged 19 or over, will have to pay all course fees, unless eligible for free tuition fees (see below).
- Learners who are aged 19 or over at the start of the course may be eligible for an advanced learning loan to cover the fees (see below)
- All fees due must be paid before the learner can be entered for any examination or awarded any qualification.
- The College sets specific fees for non EU learners, on funded further and higher education courses, which are higher due to the lack of government funding.
- The College sets specific fees for all learners on non-government funded courses, within the general aims of this policy.
- Pre 16 - School partnership and jump start school programmes– costs are invoiced direct to schools based on an hourly rate and minimum class size.
- The College reserves the right not to accept applicants or enrolments from individuals or sponsors where fees or other costs from previous courses remain outstanding until such time as all outstanding fees or other costs are paid.

Where the college refers to a learner's age being 19 (an adult learner) this relates to the learner being aged 19 on the 31 August within the funding year they start a learning aim. For all other purposes, the age of the learner is at the start of each learning aim.

3. Payment of Fees and Instalments

- Payment of fees may be made by cash, credit or debit card, cheque, direct bank transfer, via the College's online payments facility (e-pay or the online store) and in the case of instalments by Recurring Card Payment (RCP) or Direct Debit.
- Fees under £100 must be paid in full at the time of enrolment, without exception.
- Where the total fee is £100 or more (including the instalment fee), learners can pay in up to three monthly instalments, subject to length of course. Instalments can be made by card payment using the recurring card payment (RCP) facility on the e-pay system or by Direct Debit on completion of a Direct Debit form. For all instalment arrangements, 25% of the total fee due must be paid before, or at, the time of enrolment. For September enrolments, the first instalment payment will be due in November followed by instalments in December and February. Alternative instalment arrangements will be considered for short courses and courses commencing later in the academic year. Instalments are not available for courses of less than 10 weeks duration or courses that do not exceed more than 1 term.
- Students who wish to pay fees by way of a loan (HE tuition loan or advanced learning loan) will need to provide evidence of the loan approval at time of enrolment. Students who are unable to provide such evidence will be required to pay the fees in accordance with the policy outlined above. Students who can evidence that they have applied for a loan but the loan has not yet been approved by the Student Loan Company will be issued with an invoice for the full fee amount. Students should refer to the 'non-payment of tuition fees' section for further details. Students who opt to take a loan for less than the full course cost will be required to pay the difference in full at enrolment.

- If the employer pays the fees then on enrolment, the learners will need to provide either
    - A formal letter on headed paper detailing the costs covered or
    - A completed Employer Undertaking

Employer fees are payable in full on receipt of an invoice. Instalment plans are not available to employers or sponsors who may agree to pay on a learner's behalf. The College will take all reasonable steps to invoice and follow up on invoice payments, however if an invoice remains unpaid, the learner will be required to pay any outstanding fees, membership fee or other amounts due in full. If a learner withdraws from a course, the balance of any unpaid fees are then payable in full.

- When enrolling on a course all students shall be made aware of any fees due from them in respect of the course for which they are applying. Where student courses are fully funded by grant funding bodies the student shall have no liability for tuition fees, as long as accurate information has been provided by the student which is relevant to the fee concession received. Where information provided to the College is inaccurate and as a result the student's enrolment does not attract grant funding, the College reserves the right to charge a fee.

- Where a student enrols on an ESFA accredited apprenticeship programme and where the student's employer is paying for course fees via the apprenticeship levy or by co-investment directly to the College, then the employer and not the student is liable for course fees due in respect of the course.

4. **Government Contribution for Adult Learners *(may be subject to change once Government funding rules for the year are published)***

The level of government contribution available for courses is as follows.

Provision	**19-23 year-olds**	**24+ unemployed**	**24+ Other**
English and Maths up to and including Level 2	Fully Funded* (up to and including Level 2)	Fully Funded*	Fully Funded*
Level 2	Fully Funded* (first and full)	Fully Funded	Co-Funded+
Learning to progress to Level 2	Fully Funded^ (up to and including Level 1)	Fully Funded	Co-Funded+
Level 3	Fully Funded* (first and full)	Loan Funded	Loan Funded
	Loan Funded** (previously achieved full Level 3 or above)		
Traineeship#	Fully Funded (including 16-24 year-olds##)	N/A	N/A
English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) learning up to and including Level 2	Co-Funded+	Fully Funded	Co-Funded+
	Fully Funded – unemployed		
Learning aims up to and including Level 2, where the learner has already achieved at Level 2 or above	Co-Funded +	Fully Funded	Co-Funded+
	Fully Funded – unemployed		

Provision	19-23 year-olds	24+ unemployed	24+ Other
Learning aims up to and including Level 2, where the learner has not achieved a first full Level 2 or above	N/A	Fully Funded	Co-Funded+
* - Must be delivered as one of the qualifications required for the legal entitlement ^ - Must be delivered as entry or level one provision from local flexibility. # - Excludes flexible element where funding depends on age and level ## - 16- to 18-year-old learners must be eligible under the EFA's residency requirements Excludes flexible element where funding depends on age and level ** - Availability of loans at Level 3 does not replace the legal entitlement to full funding for learners aged 19 to 23 undertaking their first full Level 3. + - Low wage flexibility may apply – see below.			

Definition of Unemployed

For funding purposes a learner is defined as unemployed if one or more of the following apply:

- They receive Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA), including those receiving National Insurance credits only.
- They receive Employment and Support Allowance (ESA).
- They receive Universal Credit, and their earned income from employment (disregarding benefits) is less than £338 a month (learner is sole adult in their benefit claim) or £541 a month (learner has a joint benefit claim with their partner).
- They are released on temporary licence (RoTL) and studying outside a prison environment and not funded by the Ministry of Justice.

Discretion policy

The College employs its discretion and will fully fund learners where both of the following conditions apply:

- The learner receives other state benefits (listed below) and their earned income (disregarding benefits) is less than £338 a month (learner is sole adult in their benefit claim) or £541 a month (learner has a joint benefit claim with their partner), and
- The learner wants to be employed, or progress into more sustainable employment, and their earned income (disregarding benefits) is less than £338 a month (learner is sole adult in their benefit claim) or £541 a month (learner has a joint benefit claim with their partner), and the College is satisfied identified learning is directly relevant to their employment prospects and the local labour market needs

College Discretionary Waivers

Listed below are examples of the benefits the College will accept for Fee Remission on funded courses in 2019/20

- Carers Allowance
- Child Benefit
- Child's Special Allowance
- Child Tax Credit
- Council Tax Benefit, administered by local authorities
- Disability Living Allowance
- Employment and Support Allowance (non WRAG)
- Guardians Allowance
- Housing Benefit
- Income Support
- Working Tax Credit

- Evidence of the benefit must be provided at enrolment, and be dated within six weeks of the course start date or clearly indicate that the student remains in receipt.
- The College will make learners aware of any financial support that may be available to them from the College to assist in meeting Course Fees.
- For more information, please contact the College on 01752 305300 for guidance or visit the website www.cityplym.ac.uk

Low Wage Waiver

- Individuals who are employed, or self employed, and would normally be co-funded for provision up to level 2 but who earn less than £16,009.50 annual gross salary. To qualify for this waiver you must provide evidence of your gross annual wage which may be a wage slip or universal credit statement dated within 3 months of your learning start date. Self-employed Learners who wish to use this waiver will need to provide their latest financial accounts, (company) bank statements, tax self-assessment, or other such evidence as agreed with the Head of Finance.

Full Level 2 Definition

- Level 2 is the level of attainment which, is demonstrated by:
    - the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) in five subjects, each at grade C or above, or grade 4 or above, or
    - Technical Certificate at Level 2 which meets the requirements for the 2018, 2019, 2020 16 to 19 performance tables.
- If a learner aged 19 to 23 has achieved a Level 2 qualification that was, at the time they started, or still is, classed as a full Level 2, then any subsequent Level 2 qualifications will be co-funded.

Full Level 3 Definition

- Level 3 is the level of attainment which, is demonstrated by:
    - the General Certificate of Education at the advanced level in two subjects, or
    - the General Certificate of Education at the AS level in four subjects, or
    - a QAA Access to Higher Education (HE) Diploma at Level 3, or
    - a Tech Level; or Applied General qualification at Level 3 which meets the requirements for the 2019, 2020 16 to 19 performance tables.
    - certain tech levels; or applied general qualification in the 2017 16-19 performance tables.
- If a learner aged 19 to 23 has achieved a Level 3 qualification, that was, at the time they started, or still is, classed as a full Level 3, and wants to enrol on any subsequent Level 3 qualification, of any size, they will have to either apply for an advanced learner loan or pay for their own learning.
- No government funding is available for any learning aim delivered at an employee's workplace and relevant to either their job or their employer's business, unless:
    - the learner has an entitlement to full funding as described above, or
    - the ESFA have confirmed a national level concession that responds to a significant negative economic impact for a specific industry, or work placement or work experience, unless it is delivered as part of a traineeship programme, or the Prince's Trust Team programme.

5. Advanced Learning Loans

- Advanced Learning Loans will cover the cost of tuition and all costs and charges for items without which a learner cannot complete their course.

- The Advanced Learning Loans are available for anyone who is:
    - aged 19 and above at the start of the course
    - studying at level 3 to level 6 in further education or training
    - resident in the UK
- The availability of loans at Level 3 does not replace an individual aged 19 to 23's legal entitlement to full funding for a first full Level 3.
- Loans may be used to fund the following types of provision regardless of the mode of study:
    - A-levels and AS-levels (up to a maximum of four full A-levels)
    - Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Access to Higher Education Diplomas.
    - Vocational qualifications including technical and professional qualifications at Levels 3, 4, 5 and 6
- Students funding their learning through Advanced Learner Loans should be aware that, in the event that they cease to attend their course, amounts due in respect of tuition fees cease to be paid by Student Finance to the College on behalf of the student. In the event that the student withdraws or does not resume attendance of their course within an acceptable period the outstanding balance of tuition fees not paid by Student Finance will become immediately payable to the College by the student.
- Withdrawal or Termination of Study: Students who withdraw from their studies, or where the College terminates their enrolment as a result of a disciplinary hearing, will be charged the amount that the College should have received from Student Finance England/Student Loans Company at the date they terminate their studies. This is applicable for all modes, length of attendance and method of payment.

6. Higher Education Course Fees

- Fees for a full-time foundation degree, HNC or HND at the College in 2019/20 will be £7,450 per year.
- Fees for part-time foundation degrees depend on the course intensity:
    - part-time Foundation Degree studied/lasting over two years - £4,300 per year
    - part-time Foundation Degree studied/lasting over three years - £3,700 per year
    - part time HNC - £3,700 per year
- Fees for the top up to a Bachelor degree studied full-time/lasting in one year will be £8,450 per year.
- Fees for the top up to a Bachelor degree studied part-time/lasting over two years will be £4,225 per year.
- Where a learner withdraws from the course the following fees will be payable:
    - If a student attends for any part of term 1 (excluding a 2 week settling in period) 25% of the full fee is payable
    - If a student attends for any part of term 2, 50% of the full fee is payable
    - If a student attends for any part of term 3, the full 100% of the fee is payable
- This remains in line with the Student Loans Company Policy.

7. Learners with learning difficulties or disabilities

Learners aged 19 to 24, who have an EHC plan and require provision and support costs will be treated as if they are under 19 for funding purposes and no tuition fee will be payable.

The learner must:

- have an EHC plan that confirms their needs could only be met by the training organisation they are, or were, attending
- continue to make progress on the programme of learning as set out in their EHC plan

Costs in excess of £10,000 must be funded by the relevant local authority.

There is no funding for learners whose EHC plan is extended by the local authority beyond their 25th birthday. The local authority must continue to provide top-up funding and contract directly with the College.

Students aged 19-24 who have a learning difficult or disability but do not have an EHC plan will be subject to the standard funding arrangements. The College may agree on an exception basis to waive fees due.

8. Community Learning

The purpose of Community Learning is to develop the skills, confidence, motivation and resilience of adults of different ages and backgrounds in order to:

- improve their health and well-being, including mental health and/or
- progress towards formal learning or employment, and/or
- develop stronger communities.

Through the 'Pound Plus' and local fee remissions approaches the College will invest fee income and provide savings for the people who most need, and can least afford, community learning provision.

Pound Plus – the 'Pound' represents the public pound, the 'Plus' is everything else that the College generates in addition to the community learning funding allocation, such as fee income, funding from other sources, resources in kind and other sources of revenue / sponsorship / volunteering.

The College operates a fair and transparent community learning local fee remission policy that requires individuals to pay a course / tuition / joining fee, but which also sets out clear eligibility criteria for those individuals who, due to their circumstances, qualify for either partial or total fee remission.

9. Schools Partnership and Jump Start School Programmes

All Pre 16 courses are costed at an hourly rate, have a minimum group size and adhere to the following conditions:

- Registration and examination costs, including re-sits, will be paid by the school.
- Pupils withdrawing from their course prior to the completion of the autumn term in year 10 or 11 will be charged at the pro-rata rate for the number of weeks attended up to, and including, the final date of attendance.
- Pupils withdrawing in either the spring or summer term of year 10 or 11 will be charged for the full academic year.
- The rate per hour relates to the College minimum group size. If the viability of any group becomes uncertain due to group size falling below the minimum number, the College will issue the school with an 'early warning' and explore possible solutions, which may include a fee increase.
- Payment will be made whether or not students attend on a regular basis.
- Invoices will be raised on a termly basis.
- Ad hoc transition programmes will follow the principles above.

10. Resits and Repeats

The College reserves the right to charge for resits and for non-attendance at an examination. The fees charged will be at the rate determined by the relevant awarding body.

Repeating the same programme year and level is charged at the standard fee rates.

11. Examination Fee

Where appropriate, an Examination Fee will be payable for a learner to undertake an examination or assessment to enable the completion of any qualification. This may also include, where necessary, an element that is payable for a learner to register with an Awarding Body or Professional Body to enable the award of any qualification.

An Examination Fee will not be payable where a learner is fully funded by the ESFA.

12. Refunds/Transfer (excluding HE/Advanced Learning Loans/International)

- Fee refunds or waivers will only be approved where the College has cancelled a course, where there is a justified complaint, or in **exceptional** personal circumstances.
- The full fee for a course is payable even if the learner decides not to complete the course.
- If a learner wishes to withdraw from a course prior to its commencement, and informs the College in writing or by email before the start date, a refund may be considered. All refunds are subject to a deduction of £10 administration costs.
- Refunds will not be approved for full cost courses.
- Learners who attend a course which is scheduled to last no more than ten weeks will not be entitled to a refund.
- Where a learner attends for more than two weeks, the full fee applies unless there is a proven significant change in an individual's circumstances.
- Where a customer wishes to claim a refund on the grounds of quality they must follow the Talkback / Complaints Procedure for any such consideration.
- Where the course is cancelled by the College, prior to the start date, a full refund will be made.
- In the event of a learner transferring between courses, there will be no financial penalty, or refund, but if the course transferred into has a higher Course Fee, the learner must pay the difference at the point of transfer.

13. Fees waived

- Only with the express permission of the Chief Finance Officer should fees be waived.
- Where the fee charged by the College is considered not to be competitive with other providers and a reduction in the fee is considered necessary agreement should be sought from the Chief finance Officer.

14. International Fees

- All international students will be required to pay an initial fee of £2,000 on application with the remainder of the fee being paid on enrolment.
- The administration fee for international students is £200 and this will be deducted from any refund where a student is unsuccessful in obtaining a visa.
- The instalment option is not available to international students.

15. Non Payment of Tuition Fees

<u>Non loan funded students</u>

Students who undertake to pay fees by instalment arrangements but subsequently the card payment (RCP facility) is declined or Direct Debit instalment payments are rejected by the bank, will be removed from the instalment arrangement, full payment of fees will become due immediately and the student will be suspended from their studies until such time as the full payment has been made.

HE and Advanced Learning Loans

Where a student is unable to provide evidence of an approved HE or Advance Learning loan at time of enrolment, the College reserves the right to refuse enrolment until such time as the loan is approved or the student commences payment by instalment. Interim payments will be refunded in full once the loan is agreed.

Sanctions

The College will follow a standard credit control policy to seek recovery of fees due, including contacting the learner by email, telephone or in person to secure settlement. In the event that a learner fails pay the fees due after such follow up, the College will apply the following sanctions, progressively:

- withdraw a learner's IT and library access
- suspend access to the College
- prevent progression to the next year/session
- exclude the learner from the College.

In addition the College may refer the debt to a third party agency for collection.

The College reserves the right to add interest and collection fees to debts placed with a collection agency. Interest will be at the rate of 4% per annum above the bank of England base rate. Interest will accrue daily from the due date (30 days after invoice) until the date of actual payment of the overdue amount, whether before or after judgement. An additional fixed penalty charge of up to £100 may also be levied.

In exceptional circumstances the College will proceed with an online 'money claim' application through the County Court.

16. Learner Support Funds

Learners who are on a means tested or low combined family income benefit may be eligible for support with their course fees, travel, equipment/uniform costs and childcare costs through the discretionary Learner Support Fund and / or bursary scheme. They will be interviewed and assessed by the Student Funding Officer. For more information, please contact a member of the Student Funding team on 01752 305381 / 305110 for guidance or visit the website www.cityplym.ac.uk

17. Disclaimer

The College reserves the right to amend the information set out in this Policy.

Whilst every effort has been made to ensure the information in this Policy is correct at the time of publication, funding agencies may alter arrangements at short notice and this may result in additional fees and charges being incurred by the learner.