

Introduction

This document provides guidance on the levels, application and collection of fees for Thurrock Adult Community College (TACC) for the period **1 August 2023 to 31 July 2024**.

Central government funding through the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) supports the majority of our courses.

Section 1 (pg 2-4) - details fee levels for the 2023/24 academic year.

Section 2 (pg 4-5) - describes the Fees Policy for the 2023/24 academic year.

Section 3 (pg 5-6) - describes the Payment Options & Learner Support Funds for the 2023/24 academic year.

Section 4 (pg 6) - provides Refund Guidelines for the 2023/24 academic year

Section 5 (pg 6-7) - deals with non-payment of fees.

Please note:

TACC reserves the right to amend any part of this Fees Policy, without notice, in response to changes in central government funding policy and guidance

SECTION 1: FEE LEVELS FOR LEARNERS ELIGIBLE FOR SUBSIDISED FEE RATES IN THE 2023/24

ACADEMIC YEAR - These fee levels are set annually and approved by Thurrock Adult Community College's governors and the fees and charges scrutiny committee.

To access learning at TACC individuals need to be aged 19 or older on the 31st August at the beginning of the academic year (eg. 19 or older on 31st August 2023 for 2023/24 academic year). The table below summarises when an adult learner will receive a fully funded (where no fees or costs are payable by the learner) place on a course or a co-funded place (where a % of fees or costs are payable by the learner).

Provision	19-23 year olds	24+Unemployed	24+ Other
English and Maths up to and including Level 2	Fully funded*	Fully funded*	Fully funded*
Level 2	Fully funded*+ (first & full or unemployed) Co-funded	Fully funded	Co-funded+ Fully funded+
Learning to progress to Level 2	Fully funded	Fully funded	Co-funded+ Fully funded+
Level 3	Fully funded* ^+ (first & full / low wage)	Fully funded^	Loan-funded
	Loan-funded** (previously achieved full Level 3 or above)		Fully funded ^+ (first & full)
English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) learning up to and including Level 2	Co-funded	Fully funded	Co-funded+ Fully 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+
	Fully funded+ – unemployed		

Based on guidance from the ESFA and performance-management Rules for 2023/24 (may be subject to changes and updates)

*Subject to change and availability - Must be delivered as one of the qualifications required for the legal entitlement.

^If delivered as part of the L3 entitlement under the [National Skills Fund](#) initiative from April 2020. Employed Learners **must not** already hold a full qualification at L3 or above. Unemployed learners are eligible if they meet the unemployed definition stated within the Adult Education Budget Funding Rules & Guidelines. +Low wage flexibility may apply - see Learners in receipt of low wage statement below.

#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

Learners in receipt of low wage (*subject to criteria, change and availability)

Learners who are employed or self-employed might be entitled to support with funding, subject to eligibility and based on total annual gross household income amount. See our Discretionary Learner Support Fund (DLSF) & Loans Bursary Fund Policy for details.

Based on guidance from the ESFA and performance-management Rules for 23/24 (may be subject to changes and updates)

Co-funded learners will pay a fee based on the information in the tables below:

	Qualification Courses for learners aged 19+ only (subject to meeting residency eligibility)	Hourly Rate
1	Adult Learners not in full time education elsewhere, standard rate course Adult Learners not in full time education elsewhere, weighed rate course	£5.56 £7.42
2	Adult learners in receipt of JSA, ESA, receive Universal Credit and earn less than £343* per month (single claim) or £549* per month (joint claim) or Adult learners who meet eligibility criteria, as set out above, for low wage funding	Free (Fully Funded)
3	Adult learners in receipt of other state benefits and who earn less than £343* a month (single claims) or £549* (joint claims), who want to be employed and the learning is directly relevant to their employment prospects and local labour market needs	Free (Fully Funded)
4 a	Adult Learners joining courses at Level 3 and above – if first and a full L3 qualification; aged 19-23 - fully funded through AEB allocation aged 24+ - fully funded if meets criteria to be eligible under National Skills Fund initiative	Free (Fully Funded)
4 b	Adult Learners joining courses at Level 3 and above – already hold a qualification at L3 or higher unemployed / low wage aged 19-23 - fully funded if meet the definition of unemployed or eligible for low wage aged 24+ -fully funded if meet the definition of unemployed or eligible for low wage	Free (Fully Funded)
4 c	Adult Learners joining courses at Level 3 and above – already hold a qualification at L3 or higher; employed and over low wage threshold aged 19-23 - no government subsidy available, may apply for an Advanced Learning Loan, if applicable, or pay a full course fee aged 24+ - no government subsidy available, may apply for an Advanced Learning Loan, if applicable, or pay a full course fee	varies according to course
5	Adult learners aged 19+ and in full time education elsewhere under ESFA funding (no government subsidy available), or who do not meet residency eligibility requirements	£14.42 per hour plus other costs (eg. exam fees)
	Community Learning for learners aged 19+ only (subject to residency eligibility)	Hourly
1	Tuition fee standard rate course (some courses may have an additional resources fee applied, please see the course information for further details) Concessionary rate (adults in receipt of other state benefits, not listed below and those in receipt of Guarantee Pension Credit) Adult learners in receipt of JSA, ESA, receive Universal Credit and earn less than £343* per month (single claim) or £549* per month (joint claim).	£5.56 £3.71 Free (Fully Funded)
2	Family Learning	Free
3	Tuition Fee taster course	£17.20 per course
4	Community Led Learning Targeted Provision Community Engagement programmes up to 12 hours	Free
5	Non - eligible learners	£14.42 per hour plus other costs (eg. resources)

***based on 22/23 figures; subject to change upon release of 23/24 funding guidance**

Commercial Offer	Hourly
Courses that do not target priority learners	£7.42
Concessionary rate (adults in receipt of a state benefit, over 65s and SEN learners)	£4.53

Accreditation Fees	
Fee as charged by awarding body	Variable

Resource Costs for Learners
Learners are expected to provide their own resources or, where available, purchase them from their tutor. The course tuition fee and government subsidy cover the cost of resources used by tutors in the classroom.

Recruitment Drives – New Learners/Community Engagement

At such times when it is necessary to recruit to a range of specific courses, such as targeted provision, or a Summer Term programme, the college may devise an income based offer to attract new learners (in this instance a new learner is someone who has not already enrolled onto a programme in the current academic year).

SECTION 2: FEES POLICY FOR 2023/24 ACADEMIC YEAR - This section provides information about a learner's eligibility for a subsidised fee rate and explains the regulations surrounding fees for different learners and different types of learning.

Fees and Charges

Many learners are able to access courses free of charge. These courses are paid for with grants received from central government.

Where fees are charged, these represent only a proportion of the full cost of the course, with the remainder being paid for with grants from central government with the exception of full cost recovery courses, which are not subsidised.

Learners joining a qualification course at Level 3 (full) or above who are not eligible for grant funding (under the National Skills Fund scheme), may be eligible to apply for an Advanced Learning Loan to cover the cost of their course.

Eligible learners may apply for a concession or financial support to help meet the fees for their course.

General Eligibility Criteria

TACC needs to establish a learner's eligibility either for funding from its central government grants, or for an Advanced Learning Loan for courses at Level 3 and above, before the start of their programme. TACC must also be satisfied that there is a reasonable likelihood that the learner will be able to complete their programme of study.

- The fee structure outlined in Section 1 of this policy outlines fees available to learners who are eligible for central government funding to support the costs of their course.
- Learners joining a qualification course at Level 3 and above who are not eligible for central government funding, but who may apply for an Advanced Learning Loan.

Learners who are full-time students elsewhere

If a learner of any age is attending a fully funded full-time course of study elsewhere, they might not be eligible to access funding to subsidise the cost of additional programmes of study with TACC, please contact a member of the Learner Services team on

TACC@thurrock.gov.uk for more information. For example, a full-time school sixth form learner or a learner taking a full-time course at a college might not be eligible to take an additional funded course with TACC if funding is drawn down from the same pot, unless their full time provider pays for their course or the learner is willing to pay the full cost recovery hourly rate.

Please note: If a learner aged 19+ who is attending a full-time course of study elsewhere wishes to join one of our courses, and their full time provider is not willing to pay for the course, the learner can pay a full cost fee to join the course.

Eligibility and Residency

Individuals will be eligible for funding if they:

- Are aged 19+ as at 31st August (except where stated otherwise)
- Are a UK citizen
- Are a citizen of a country within the EU or European Economic Area (EAA) or other countries determined within the EEA including Switzerland and Turkey and have pre-settled or settled status, or
- Have the Right of Abode in the UK granted by the Home Office (evidence required) eg. asylum seekers, refugees etc
- Live in a non-devolved area (see below)

and:

- Have been ordinarily resident in the UK/EEA for at least the previous 3 years on the first day of learning (except where learners have an immigration status that exempts them from this, eg. Asylum Seekers, Refugee Status)

TACC cannot use government funds for an individual if any of the below apply:

- They are here illegally
- They have overstayed their immigration or visitor visa
- Their immigration status restricts access to government funding (this does not apply to no recourse to public funds)

Learners from Devolved areas and Greater London Authority (GLA)

Due to the devolution of AEB funding to the Greater London Authority, learners that reside in postcodes in the GLA are no longer eligible for the ESFA funding that the college operates under. In these instances, we will signpost learners to the provision that they are eligible to access. If they prefer to attend TACC, full cost recoverable charges will apply.

This also applies to learners resident in any other devolved area as deemed so by the ESFA. More information about eligibility can be found in the Education and Skills Funding Agency's Funding Rules and Guidance for the 2023 to 2024 Funding Year.

SECTION 3: PAYMENT & LEARNER SUPPORT FUNDS

Early Payment Incentive

For courses that are 16 weeks and over or 32 hours and above, learners will receive a discount of 10% from tuition fees if payment is made in full at the time of enrolment. This discount is not available online.

Instalments Proposal

Payment by instalments are available to learners who find their financial circumstances a barrier to enrol and pay in full at the point of enrolment. Our Learner Services Team can advise and support, taking each individual's circumstances into account.

Financial hardship

A learner, enrolled on and attending an Adult Skills Budget course, if not receiving an income-based benefit but subject to and able to demonstrate financial hardship, may be able to apply for support from the Discretionary Learner Support Fund (DLSF). Such funds are limited and decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis upon application.

SECTION 4: COURSE CANCELLATIONS, REFUNDS AND TRANSFERS - This section outlines our cancellation, and refunds policies.

It is not the policy of Thurrock Adult Community College to refund fees automatically when a change in circumstances prevents or discourages a learner from continuing with a particular class. Once you have started your course, if you change your mind or personal circumstances prevent you from continuing with the course you will need to pay any unpaid course fees. Alternatively, you can arrange a transfer to another available course, within the same academic year, subject to a transfer fee. You can claim a refund if you withdraw from your course before it has started and the College is notified 7 days before the scheduled start date.

Refunds will be allowed as below:

1. If a course is withdrawn from the programme then TACC will offer a full refund or a transfer
2. If a learner wishes to cancel (as per above)/transfer from a course before it starts **or** on the first session a transfer can be arranged and any additional costs paid can be refunded. If however a learner wishes to transfer thereafter, a charge of £20 will be administered.
3. If a learner has booked their course online within 14 days of the cancellation request.

SECTION 5: NON-PAYMENT OF FEES - This section is intended to assist staff collect fees fairly and effectively and outlines TACC policy toward learners who accrue a fee debt.

5.1 No entitlement to enrol

Learners will not be permitted to enrol on a course until either the course fees have been paid in full, or a payment plan agreement has been made.

TACC reserves the right to refuse enrolment to learners with outstanding fee debts.

5.2 Extension of time to pay

A learner that is unable to pay the course fees must inform the Business Support Manager at the earliest opportunity. It is at the discretion of the Business Support Manager that an extension of time to pay be granted, but the circumstances shall have to be exceptional to justify an extension.

5.3 Failure to pay

Formal notification is sent to the learner requesting payment within 7 working days of the date of the request. Failure to pay instigates action from the college finance team instructing the Debt Recovery Team to take action to recover the debt.

5.4 Advanced Learner Loans (accredited courses L3+ only)

Learners must apply for a loan to cover part or all of their tuition fees, where applicable, within one month of starting their programme of learning. Failure to pay will result in an invoice from Thurrock Council and/or instigation of debt recovery procedures and learners may be subject to the actions described in paragraph 5.3