

Introduction

This document gives guidance on the levels, application, and collection of fees for Thurrock Adult Community College (TACC) from 1 August 2025 to 31 July 2026.

Central government funding through the Department for Education (DfE) supports most of our courses.

Section 1 (pg 2-4) - details fee levels for the 2025/26 academic year.

Section 2 (pg 4-5) - describes the Fees Policy for the 2025/26 academic year.

Section 3 (pg 5-6) - describes the Payment Options & Learner Support Funds for the 2025/26 academic year.

Section 4 (pg 6) - provides Refund Guidelines for the 2025/26 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 2025/26

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 2025 for 2025/26 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	19+ Unemployed / earning < £25,750 gross p.a	19+ Other / earning > £25,750 p.a
English, Maths and Digital Skills up to and including Level 2	Fully funded*	Fully funded*	Fully funded*
Level 2	Fully funded* - first full level 2 (legal entitlement)	Fully funded	Co-funded
Learning to progress to Level 2	Fully funded	Fully funded	Co-funded
Level 3	Fully funded* ^ - first full Level 3 (legal entitlement)	Fully funded^	Loan-funded Self-funded
English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) learning up to and including Level 2	See 19+ Unemployed / earning < £25,750 p.a	Fully funded	Co-funded

Based on guidance from the DfE and performance-management Rules for 2025/26 (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 Free Courses for Jobs Offer.

Definition of Unemployed in relation to the fees table above:

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
- receive Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- receive Universal Credit (UC), and their take-home pay as recorded on their UC statement (disregarding UC payments and other benefits) is less than £952 a month (learner is sole adult in their benefit claim) or £1,534 a month (learner has a joint benefit claim with their partner)
- are released on temporary license, studying outside a prison environment, and not funded by the Ministry of Justice

In addition to the above, under funding rules, we may also use our discretion to fully fund other learners if either of the following applies. The learner:

- receives other state benefits (not included in the list above) and their take-home pay (disregarding UC payments and other benefits) is less than £952 a month (learner is sole adult in their benefit claim) or £1,534 a month (learner has a joint benefit claim with their partner),
- is not receiving any benefits, wants to be employed, and you are satisfied identified learning is directly relevant to their employment prospects and the local labour market needs

Employed/Self-Employed Learners – if earning under £25,750 gross per year, learners are entitled to courses up to Level 3 fully funded (free) where they can evidence their annual income. This does not apply to standalone L2 / L3 units or awards, these must be full qualifications funded by the DfE.

Adult Skills Fund (ASF); Accredited Courses - Learners who are not fully funded (earning above £25,750 pa or course not eligible for DfE funding) will pay a fee based on the information in the table below:

	Qualification Courses for learners aged 19+ (as per age rule) (subject to meeting residency eligibility)	Hourly Rate
1	Courses up to and including level 2; not in full time education elsewhere, standard rate course	£6.70
2	Courses up to and including level 2; in full time education elsewhere under DfE funding (no government subsidy available), or who do not meet residency eligibility requirements (fee per hour does not include other costs such as resources or exams costs)	£17.80 per hour plus other costs
3	Courses up to and including level 3; self-funded or loan funded	Variable
4	Courses up to and including level 3; units or awards	Variable
5	Courses up to and including level 3; in full time education elsewhere under DfE funding (no government subsidy available), or who do not meet residency eligibility requirements (fee per hour does not include other costs such as resources or exams costs)	£17.80 / course fee (whichever is higher)

Accreditation Fees

Fee as charged by awarding body	Variable
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Adult Skills Fund (ASF); Tailored Learning (non-accredited courses) - Learners will pay a fee based on the information in the table below:

	Tailored Learning for learners aged 19+ only (subject to residency and age eligibility)	Hourly
1	Tailored Learning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tuition fee standard rate course (some courses may have an additional resources fee, please see the course information for further details) Concessionary rate (learners in receipt of a state benefit, including Guarantee Pension Credit) Targeted provision 	£6.70 £4.40 Free
2	Family Learning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> English, Maths & Language Wider Family Learning (per session) 	Free Variable
3	Non-eligible learners; those who do not meet residency or age eligibility (fee per hour does not include other costs such as resources)	£17.80 per hour

Leisure Learning (non-accredited and non-fundable courses) - Learners will pay a fee based on the information in the table below:

	Tailored Learning for learners aged 19+ only (subject to residency and age eligibility)	Hourly
1	Tuition fee standard rate course (some courses may have an additional resources fee, please see the course information for further details)	£17.80 per hour (no concessions)

Resource Costs for Learners

In some instances the college will provide resources free of charge, some courses will include a resource cost in the course fee and for some courses learners will be expected to provide their own resources. We will detail this in the course information sheet (CIS).

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 2025/26 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 several types of learning.

Fees and Charges

Many learners can 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 Free Courses for Jobs 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.

Learners who have drawn down full funding through their legal entitlement for English, ESOL, Maths or Digital Skills will not be able to undertake the same subject at the same level again and will be classified as a non-eligible learner who would be required to pay the non-eligible fee.

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 eligible for central government funding to support their course costs.
- 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 Experience Team on TACC@thurrock.gov.uk for more information. For example, 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 were stated otherwise)
- Have the Right of Abode in the UK granted by the Home Office (evidence required) e.g. asylum seekers*, refugees, EU settlement scheme, Afghan/Ukrainian schemes, appropriate visa etc.
- Live in a non-devolved area (see below)

** Asylum seekers need to be resident for 6 months before being eligible for funding.*

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

This also applies to learner residence in any other devolved area as deemed so by the DfE. More information about eligibility can be found in the DfE's Funding Rules and Guidance for the 2025 to 2026 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 installments are available to learners who find their financial circumstances a barrier to enrol and pay in full at the point of enrolment. Our Learner Experience Team can advise and support, taking each individual's circumstances into account.

Financial hardship

A learner enrolled on and attending an Adult Skills funded 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 (about 2 weeks) 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

Any learner unable to pay the course fees must inform the Business Operations Manager as soon as possible. It is at the discretion of the Business Operations 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 recover the debt.

5.4 Advanced Learner Loans (accredited courses L3+ only)

Learners who wish to apply for a loan to cover part or all their tuition fees, where applicable, must do so 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