

Course Fees Policy 2026/27

Review Cycle:	Annually
Next Review Date:	March 2027
Person Responsible:	Executive Director of Finance and Resources
Approving Body:	Finance & Resources Committee

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Heart of Yorkshire Group's approach to setting and collecting course fees and associated charges is reviewed on an annual basis. The course fees policy has a major impact on the educational character of the Group and is therefore approved by the Governing Body.
- 1.2. The approach of the Group to recovering fees for further education courses is largely dictated by the Department for Education (DfE), West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) and York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority (YNYCA).
- 1.3. The approach of the Group to setting fees and bursaries for Higher Education courses is subject to the approval of the Office for Students (OfS).

2. Objectives

- 2.1. This policy seeks to ensure that:
 - the Group's approach to course and additional fees is fair, equitable and clear;
 - any barriers to participation presented by course fees and associated charges are mitigated by providing flexible payment options and/or by assisting learners to access appropriate financial support;
 - the Group can respond flexibly to market forces and government policy, including fee guidance issued by the DfE, WYCA, YNYCA and the OfS;
 - the Group generates a proportion of overall income from non-publicly funded sources
 - all obligations in respect of payment of fees are clearly shown.

3. General Principles

- 3.1. Learners or their sponsors, unless they qualify for exemptions or waivers, are to be charged:
 - a course fee.
 - the cost of any equipment necessary to undertake their programme of study if

this equipment will remain the property of the learner once the course has been completed.

- the cost of any trips or visits associated with the programme of study.
- the cost of any examination re-sits, where appropriate.
- the cost of any charges imposed by awarding organisations (e.g. re-marking, requests for scripts).

- 3.2. Learners are ultimately responsible for ensuring that their fees are paid, even when a third party (e.g. an employer, SLC) intends to pay on their behalf.
- 3.3. All course fees (or deposits and payment plans) are due upon completion of enrolment.
- 3.4. Instalment arrangements are available, if certain criteria are met, and payments are made by Direct Debit.
- 3.5. No course fees are payable by 16–18-year-old FE learners, including those on part time programmes, or by adult learners who meet the specified criteria in Appendix 1. All other fees would be payable if applicable.
- 3.6. Where courses are for more than one-year, published course fees are for the full duration of the course. HE courses are the exceptions as they are charged annually, or as otherwise stated.
- 3.7. Some of our courses are not subsidised by our funding bodies; therefore, course fees are payable as published in the prospectus/ online for these courses, regardless of age or circumstances of learner.
- 3.8. Fee concessions and the fee rate payable may be subject to learner age, previous qualifications, residency status in the UK and the course. Further details can be found here [Fees & Money Matters](#)
- 3.9. Learners seeking a reduction or waiver of course fees under these policies must produce documentary evidence of their entitlement, at enrolment.
- 3.10. The learner must have the legal right to be resident in the UK at the start of their programme, to be eligible for Government Funding on their Learning Programme. There should also be a reasonable likelihood that the learner will be able to complete their programme of study.
- 3.11. A learner's course fee status at enrolment (e.g. employed, in receipt of eligible benefit) applies throughout the duration of the learning aim.
- 3.12. Learners are directly responsible for registration with (and payment to) any relevant Professional Bodies.
- 3.13. The full course fee may still be payable even if the learner decides not to complete the course.
- 3.14. Fees for courses 13 weeks and over in duration, both FE and HE, include a 14-day cooling off period. If a learner withdraws within 14 days of the course start date no fee will be charged. Please note this may include any induction activities.

- 3.15. Fees for Tailored Learning courses are charged at a flat rate of £3 per planned guided learning hour and applied to all Tailored Learning courses.

4. Further Education Course Fees: Learner Aged Under 16

- 4.1. The Group does not receive funding for learners aged under 16 who are on a school roll and participate in part-time School Link (Step Up) programmes or the full time Early College Transfer (ECT) scheme. Schools pay the Group directly for this provision.

5. Further Education Course Fees: Learner Aged 16-18

- 5.1. Although the Group is prohibited from charging 16–18-year-old learners any course fees in respect of funded FE courses, other costs will be charged as detailed in section 3.1.

6. Funding eligibility on FE Courses

- 6.1. Whether the group receives funding from the DfE, WYCA, YNYCA or other appropriate funding body, is dependent on several different rules. Funding may be available for learners depending on their circumstances at the start of a course. Full details of funding eligibility are contained within the relevant funding regulations.
- 6.2. Each learner will be individually accessed for their funding eligibility when an application is submitted and informed of potential options before enrolment.

7. Advanced Learner Loans – Classroom Based Learners

- 7.1. Learners aged 19 or over by 31 August 2026 can apply for an Advanced Learner Loan, via Student Finance England, to pay their course fees. The loan is available for eligible courses only.
- 7.2. All learners who wish to apply for an Advanced Learner Loan will need to apply for the full value of the loan they require for the duration of their course.
- 7.3. Where a learner elects to pay course fees via an Advanced Learner Loan and then withdraws early from the course, their monthly loan payments to the Group will cease. In addition to the learner being liable to the Student Loan Company (SLC) for the amount of loan payment made, the balance of course fees also remains due and payable by the learner directly to the Group.
- 7.4. Learners will be informed prior to their enrolment of their course fee obligations upon withdrawal via their 'Learning and Funding Information' letter.
- 7.5. Advanced Learner Loans are available to pay course fees only. Any additional fees that are not mandatory for the course (e.g. visits) or any materials that the student chooses to retain (e.g. hair and beauty equipment) will be charged directly to the learner during the year as necessary.
- 7.6. Advanced Learner Loan students may be able to access the Group's bursary fund for support with additional costs such as travel. Students' applications are considered on an individual basis by the Group's Financial Support Team.

- 7.7 Any learner without an approved loan at enrolment will be allowed 35 days from their course start date to obtain their loan. If their loan is not fully approved as this point, their place on the course will be reviewed by the Executive Director of Finance and Resources.
- 7.8 Any student who has not been successful in obtaining a loan, on an eligible course, who then fails to or is unable to make alternative payment arrangements, will not be permitted to continue with the course. They will also be held liable for the full course fee.
- 7.9 Early withdrawals: students who withdraw from their course early will enter 'repayment status' with SLC from the 6 April following their withdrawal date. This means that they may be required to commence repayment of their loan to the SLC from this date.
- 7.10 Students on 'Access to HE' courses are only able to secure a loan **once**. Early withdrawal on these courses may prevent any further loan opportunity and prevent access to Higher Education in the future.

8. Advanced Learner Loans – Distance Learners

- 8.1 Learners aged 19 or over by 31 August 2026 can apply for an Advanced Learner Loan, via Student Finance England, to pay their course fees. The loan is available for eligible courses only.
- 8.2 Learners choosing to study via Distance Learning will not be enrolled onto their course until their Advanced Learner Loan is approved.
- 8.3 Where a learner withdraws early from the course, their monthly loan payments to the Group will cease. Any remaining balance of their course fee will be cancelled.
- 8.4 Students who withdraw from their course early will enter 'repayment status' with SLC from the 6th April following their withdrawal date. This means that they may be required to commence repayment of their loan to the SLC from this date.
- 8.5 Students on 'Access to HE' courses are only able to secure a loan **once**. Early withdrawal on these courses may prevent any further loan opportunity and prevent access to Higher Education in the future.

9. Higher Education Student Finance (HESF)

- 9.1 Continuing students and new entrants, up to 31st December 2026, can apply for a HE loan via HESF to pay their course fees. The loan is available to eligible students studying Higher Education.
- 9.2 Loan funds will be paid to the Group in termly instalments, as attendance is confirmed, as 25% Term 1, 25% Term 2 and 50% Term 3.
- 9.3 For early withdrawal, the student's Fee liability will reduce in line with the instalments paid via HESF, with remaining balance being cancelled

10. Lifelong Learning Entitlement (LLE)

- 10.1 New learners applying for loan funding from 1st January 2027, to support tuition, will apply for a Lifelong Learning Entitlement.

- 10.2 Loan funds will be paid to the Group in termly instalments, as attendance is confirmed, as 25% Term 1, 25% Term 2 and 50% Term 3.
- 10.3 For early withdrawal the student's Fee liability will reduce in line with credits studied and payments received from SLC, with remaining balance being cancelled.

11. Progressing Students

- 11.1 Continuing learners who are under 19 on 31 August will normally have their course fee automatically remitted by the DFE. Where this is not the case, the learner will be expected to pay the full course fee.

12. Group Discretionary Fee Remission

- 12.1 The Group holds a limited fund for discretionary course fee remission and may offer support to learners who are on low incomes but do not qualify for automatic fee remission. Household income thresholds apply.
- 12.2 Student applications are considered on an individual basis by the Group's Financial Support Team.

13. Bespoke Employer Courses

- 13.1 Payment for such courses is due in advance.

14. Apprenticeships

- 14.1 Course fees and payment terms for apprentices are as contracted with Individual employers (SMEs and Apprenticeship Levy payers).
- 14.2 The Employer pays course fees to the Group, as detailed in the agreed Contract.
- 14.3 Invoices will be issued individually for each apprentice.
- 14.4 For employers with funds in their digital account, funds will be paid to the Group on a monthly basis after the employer has registered the apprentice on the Digital Apprentice Service (DAS).
- 14.5 Where there are insufficient DAS funds available to pay any fees due, the employer will pay a 5% contribution through the period of shortfall.
- 14.6 For employers paying a contribution towards DFE funded training costs, the following payment options are available:
- Course fees can be paid in full on receipt of invoice.
 - For course fees up to and including £499, payment must be in full on receipt of invoice.
 - For course fees £500 or greater, payment can be made over a maximum of 12 monthly Direct Debits. The final instalment must be received at least 3 months before the planned end date of the course.

15. Higher Education Course Fees

- 15.1 The Group receives no funding to cover the costs of HE teaching and will recover the cost of teaching through setting an appropriate course fee which will be charged to the student.
- 15.2 The Group offers Higher Education learners the facility to pay by instalments, although most learners elect to apply for a student loan to cover their course fees.
- 15.3 The Group has a separate HE Compensation Policy. Which should be referred to in a case-by-case basis, as required.

16. Higher Education Full Time and Part Time Fees for Students

- 16.1 Both returning students and new entrants in 2026 will be charged £7,400 per 120 credits full time and pro-rata of the equivalent full time course fee for part time (based on academic credits studied).
- 16.2 The fees detailed may be subject to review in exceptional circumstances by reference to the Executive Director Finance & Resources.
- 16.3 Subject to Office for Students (OfS) agreement, the Group will be awarding scholarships and bursaries to eligible students starting in academic year 2026/27.

17. Overseas Fees

- 17.1. If a student does not meet DFE criteria for Residency eligibility they will be charged £20.00 per hour for an FE course or £30.00 per hour for an HE course. The minimum course fees charged to an overseas student should be the course fees for a home student and the maximum fees should be the course fees for an International student.

18. Payment of Course Fees and Instalments

- 18.1. All Course fees become payable on the completion of an enrolment, either by the learner or by a sponsor, unless the learner is entitled to full fee remission. Payment of course fees may be done by cash, card, and in the case of instalments, by deposit and monthly direct debit.
- 18.2. Where the total course fee is less than £150 learners must pay in full at the time of enrolment.
- 18.3. Where the course duration is 10 weeks or fewer (i.e. short courses), learners must pay in full at the time of enrolment.
- 18.4. Where the total course fee is £150 or more, and the course is 10 weeks or more in duration, learners can pay a deposit at enrolment followed by equal monthly instalments. The amount of the deposit and the number of instalments available will vary depending on the value of the course:

Course Duration	Value of the course	Payable at enrolment (first instalment)	Payable by Direct Debit (additional instalments)
Note – course duration must be 10 weeks or more for instalments to be available			
Less than 10 weeks	Any value	100%	N/A
10 – 20 weeks	£150 to £999	40%	2
	£1000 +	30%	5
21 weeks +	£150 to £999	20%	5
	£1000 +	15%	8
HE Courses		15%	8

- 18.5. Instalments may span academic years, depending on the start date of the course. The instalment option is not available to international students, employers or sponsors.
- 18.6. Some courses are only funded in part by a loan. In these cases, an instalment plan and completed Direct Debit form would be needed to cover fees that remain payable by the student after deducting loan amount.
- 18.7. Where fees are solely for visits, alternative payment plans can be considered based on Group costs incurred to date and dates of departure.

19. Payment Incentives

- 19.1. The Group offer a 10% prompt payment discount.
- 19.2. The discount is available to students enrolling on an FE course (over £150 and ten weeks or more in duration) where the learner makes payment in full, at the time of enrolment.
- 19.3. The discount is available on the course fee only.
- 19.4. The discount is not available to sponsors, international students or to student who choose to pay fees by an Advance Learner Loan.
- 19.5. The discount applies to FE course fees only and is not available on HE courses.

20. Unpaid Fees

- 20.1. The Group will use appropriate debt recovery procedures where learners breach the terms of their payment agreement and may exclude such learners from the Group. The Group will also seek to recover any legal and other costs it incurs in recovering unpaid fees.
- 20.2. Learners undertaking a two-year programme will not be allowed to progress to the second year of the course where fees relating to the first year remain unpaid, and learners who complete a programme of study but have fees outstanding will not be allowed to enrol on further programmes of study until any outstanding debt has been cleared.
- 20.3. Learners who fail to make direct debit / instalment payments in line with their agreement, have 5 working days to contact the finance team to discuss this matter. Failure to do so may result in escalation of debt chasing procedures.

21. Fee Refunds (General Principles)

- 21.1. Course fee refunds will be approved where the Group has had to cancel a course.
- 21.2. Non-attendance if a learner withdraws from a course prior to its commencement, a refund will normally be given on request, but the Group reserves the right to recover fees if the refund would affect the course's continuing viability. This includes long courses but excludes 'short' and bespoke courses.
- 21.3. In the case of early withdrawal from a Classroom based FE course, if a learner withdraws after the 14 Day Cooling off period, full fees remain payable.
- 21.4. Should the Group be unable to complete the provision, once started, students who have had fees paid on their behalf by the Student Loans Company will have their loan obligation reduced to zero.
- 21.5. The Group will not refund fees if it is unable to perform any of its obligations due to causes beyond its reasonable control. This may include but is not limited to: fire, flood, windstorm or other natural disaster, closure due to adverse weather conditions, interruption to or failure of electric power, gas or water, strike, collapse of building structures, failure of machinery, computers or vehicles.

22. Course Fee Refunds (HE)

- 22.1. Where an HE learner elects to pay course fees via a student loan, the SLC will make payments to the Group in line with the appropriate funding stream (HESF or LLE).
- 22.2. HE loan students, who withdraw from their course early, will have their loan liability reduced in line with the SLC payment schedule.
- 22.3. HE students paying their own course fees directly, who withdraw from their course early, will have their course fee liability reduced in line with the SLC payment schedule.
- 22.4. Where HE course fees are paid by a sponsor, in the event of learner withdrawal, full fees remain payable after the cooling off period has elapsed.

22.5. In this paragraph, the following definitions apply:

Withdraw/withdrawal: means the formal process by which a student terminates their enrolment in a course before completion. A withdrawal is deemed to have occurred on the date the student submits a written notice of withdrawal to the organisation. This date is used to determine fee liability.

Term: means a specific period defined in advance by the Group. The start and end dates of each term are communicated to learners before the commencement of each academic year and via the official academic calendar. Each term represents a billing period for tuition fees.

Withdrawal before a term starts: If a learner withdraws before the published start date of the upcoming term, no tuition fees will be charged for that term. Any fees already paid for the term will be refunded to the learner in full (or, in the case of fees received by the Group via a student loan, to the loan provider).

Withdrawal after a term has started: If a learner withdraws on or after the start date of a term, the following shall apply:
If the learner withdraws before start of week three of that term, the learner will not be liable for tuition fees for the term, and any fees already paid for the term will be refunded in accordance with paragraph 0.
If the learner withdraws after the start of week three, the student will be liable for the full tuition fees for that term. No refund will be given to the learners for that term.

Exceptional circumstances: Learners who withdraw due to serious illness, bereavement, or other unforeseen events, may apply for a partial or full refund. Each case will be reviewed individually and supporting evidence may be required.

23. Course Fee Refunds (Apprenticeships)

23.1. Full course fee credit will be approved where a learner has attended between one and five weeks. Attendance in the sixth week will normally incur the full year's course fees. Any apprentice related refunds are approved in accordance with the College Financial Regulations.

24. Deferrals/ Break in Learning

- 24.1. Where a learner is obliged to withdraw from a course, it may be possible to defer course fees for up to twelve months (if the Head of Curriculum considers this academically appropriate). After this specified period, no further deferral will be considered. All deferrals will be at the discretion of the Director of Finance.
- 24.2. If a deferred student fails to enrol during the following academic year, the previous year's course fee balance becomes payable in full.
- 24.3. Any remaining Course Fees at point of Break in Learning, will remain on the learner's account until the point of them returning. At the point of return the learner will either resume studies, so commence payment or not resume studies so arrange payment of the deferred fee.

25. Interpretation of the Policy

- 25.1. The Group recognises that there may be exceptional circumstances in which a certain level of discretion may need to be exercised.
- 25.2. The Executive Director of Finance and Resources has the discretion to waive or reduce course fees and/or deposits payable under instalment arrangements having regard to the personal circumstances of individual learners. However, waivers and reductions are unlikely to be given to learners with a previous poor payment history.
- 25.3. This policy sets out the minimum course fee to be charged for different aspects of the Group curriculum offer. Where appropriate, a higher course fee can be charged at the discretion of the relevant Executive Director.

26. Monitoring of the Policy

- 26.1. The policy has been through the Group's Equality Assessment process. The table below explains how this policy will be monitored.

What will be monitored?	How?	By Whom?
Complaints about fees	Analysis of complaints log, by ethnicity, age, gender and disability	Executive Director of Finance and Resources
Fee refunds	Number and value of refunds, by ethnicity, age, gender and disability	Finance on request

27. Minor Policy Amendments

- 27.1. If there is a need to make minor amendments to this Policy during the year, the Executive Director Finance & Resources has delegated authority to do so in conjunction with the CEO/Principal and Chair of Finance, People & Resources Committee.
- 27.2. Any such amendments would be noted to Board as part of the Finance update at the next meeting.