



1 Wirral Met Logo

Further Education Fees, Discounts & Payment Policy 2025-2026

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1. Policy aim and scope

1.1 This Policy aims to set out how the College will:

- adhere to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) funding rules and regulations
- adhere to the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) funding rules and regulations
- be clear and transparent with regard to the setting of fees and charges
- be fair and consistent when charging fees to students and employers

1.2 This document is intended to act as a reference source and guide for fees, fee waivers, payment arrangements and other charges for the academic year 2025/26. It should be used in conjunction with the latest ESFA/LCRCA funding rules which ultimately determine whether a student is eligible to receive funding.

1.3 This policy is subject to potential further amendments and clarifications.

1.4 The range of people that this Policy applies to are:

- Students funded by the ESFA
- Students funded by the LCRCA
- Students or employers paying direct

1.5 Throughout this policy, reference is made to “home” students. Unless stated differently, “home” is defined as being normally resident for 3 years in the UK, including EU/EEA nationals with “settled status” before 1 January 2021.

1.6 This policy does not cover prescribed Higher Education (HE) provision. The College has a separate tuition fee policy for prescribed HE provision.

1.7 This policy does not cover Advanced Learner Loan. The College has a separate policy for tuition fees paid by Advanced Learner Loan

1.8 This policy does not cover Apprenticeship provision. The College will adhere to government funding policy and guidelines for all apprentices.

2. Classroom Learning – students aged 16-18 or 19-24 with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

- 2.1. Students who are aged 16, 17 or 18 years old on the 31 August 2025 and are “home” students are eligible for full funding by the ESFA. These students will not be charged tuition or awarding body registration fees.
- 2.2. Students with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan), who are aged 19-24 years old on the 31 August 2025 and are “home” students are eligible for full funding by the ESFA. These students will not be charged tuition or awarding body registration fees.
- 2.3. Where there are examinations included in a course, students will not be charged for their first entry. Students may be charged to re-sit an examination. The College also reserves the right to charge students entry fees for non-attendance at examinations.
- 2.4. Depending upon the requirements of the programme, students may be required to pay for specialist course materials, clothing/equipment they wish to retain for use outside of the course, photocopying, printing, or trips/visits that are not an integral part of their study programme.
- 2.5. Students are also ineligible for funding if they are already enrolled on either full time ESFA funded provision or are full time HE students at another institution. In most cases Students should only be funded at one institution at a time.

3. Classroom learning – students aged 19+ (not covered in section 2)

- 3.1. Students who are aged 19 or over on the day they start their qualification and who are “home” students may be eligible for funding by either the ESFA or LCRCA, depending on their individual circumstances and the qualification they wish to study.
- 3.2. The College will maintain fee assessment documentation that follows the latest versions of the funding rules in assessing eligibility for fee waivers and to determine an individual’s circumstances.
- 3.3. The eligibility for a fee waiver will be checked at the start of each qualification or programme.
- 3.4. Students aged 19 or over on the day they start their qualification and who wish to study a Level 3 or above qualification have the option to apply for an Advanced Learning Loan (see section 7), or self-fund, depending on their individual circumstances and the qualification they wish to study.
- 3.5. Students will only receive funding for qualifications approved by the ESFA or LCRCA.
- 3.6. Students who are continuing a qualification that started in the previous academic year will continue to receive the fee remission as established in the preceding year, even if their circumstances have since changed.
- 3.7. Where there are examinations included in a course, funded students will not be charged for their first entry. Students may be charged to re-sit an examination.

- 3.8. Students who are fee-paying (full cost / commercial, see section 9) will be required to pay all course-related costs, including tuition, registration, examination fees and re-sits.
- 3.9. The College reserves the right to charge all students entry fees for non-attendance at examinations.
- 3.10. Depending upon the requirements of the programme, students may be required to pay for specialist course materials, clothing/equipment they wish to retain for use outside of the course, or photocopying, printing, or trips/visits that are not an integral part of their Study Programme.

4. Full cost and commercial provision

- 4.1. Students who are not eligible to public funding can choose to pay all associated course costs themselves, or a third party may choose to pay on their behalf. The College will provide details of the fees due in these instances.
- 4.2. The College will also work with employers to develop bespoke programmes that can be delivered to individuals or a workforce. In these cases, the College will provide details of the fees due.

5. Re-taking a qualification

- 5.1 With the exception of study under the maths and English legal entitlement, students are not funded to re-take qualifications to improve a grade. Students may wish to self-fund in these instances.

6. Reduction in fees in recognition of prior learning

- 6.1. Students may qualify for a reduction in tuition fee costs where they have already achieved an element of the qualification or transferable credits for Qualification and Credit Framework (QCF) qualifications on the QCF. These cases must be referred to the Assistant Principal – Planning & Funding, for consideration.
- 6.2. A reduction will be applied, apportioned based on units fully completed e.g. for 3 completed units out of 9 in total, the fee is set at 66% of the standard fee

7. Payment of fees

- 7.1. Students must demonstrate that satisfactory arrangements are in place for the payment of fees at enrolment
- 7.2. Students can choose to pay fees either in full or by instalments.
- 7.3 At the point of enrolment, the full amount due, or the first instalment, must be paid, otherwise the course cannot be commenced.

7.4 Instalment payments are as follows:

Course Duration (in weeks)	Initial Payment	Number of Monthly Instalments
1-10	Fees Payable in full at enrolment	Fees Payable in full at enrolment
11-16	25% of course fee	3 instalments
17-23	25% of course fee	4 instalments
24 or more	25% of course fee	6 instalments

- 7.5 Failure to meet an instalment payment will result in the full balance of fees becoming due immediately.
- 7.6 Students whose fees are sponsored by employers, Student Loans Company, agents, local authorities or other organisations must provide written evidence of this at enrolment. The written evidence (e.g. letter or email) must contain contact details of who will pay the fees, and the address to which the invoice will be sent. In the absence of this evidence, the enrolling student will be liable for fees.
- 7.7 In the event that the College cancels a course, any monies paid by students will be refunded.
- 7.8 A student who is removed from their programme due to disciplinary matters or lack of engagement, will be refunded fees paid for the proportion of the programme they have not yet completed. This proportion will be determined based on records of attendance, work completed, and other input provided by college staff.
- 7.9 If a student withdraws from a course, for short courses (less than 3 months in planned duration), the full course fee is payable in advance with no refund.
For courses, no fee is payable for withdrawal within 2 weeks, 25% is payable for withdrawal after 2 weeks but within 2 months, 50% is payable for withdrawal between 2 months and 4 months and 100% is payable for withdrawal after 4 months of the start date of the course.

8. Failure to pay fees

- 8.1 Once an enrolment has been processed the student is liable for fees and payment is expected
- 8.2 Continued attendance on a programme of study is dependent upon payment of fees.
- 8.3 Non-payment of fees or failure to agree acceptable terms of payment will result in one or more of the following:
- Examination entries not being processed
 - Access to the course being denied
 - Withdrawal from the programme
 - Qualification withheld
 - Future enrolment on courses at Wirral Met refused

- 8.4 All outstanding fees will be subject to debt recovery processes with an external provider
- 8.5 Once outstanding fees have been referred to debt recovery, an administration charge of 16% is applied and any right of appeal against the debt is forfeited.

9. Debt recovery cycle

9.1 Debt recovery for course duration of less than 12 weeks

Course cannot be commenced unless the full amount due is paid

9.2 Debt recovery cycle for course duration of more than 11 weeks

Week 4	reminder letter sent
Week 6	final notice sent
Week 8	Examination entries not processed
Week 10	Access to course denied (IT / Library restrictions)
Week 12	Withdrawal from course
Week 12	Send to debt recovery
Week 12	Qualification held

- 9.3 Where students are experiencing difficulties in making payments, or wish to enquire about fees they should contact Student Services either in person or by email to wmc.enquiries@wmc.ac.uk where they will be referred to the relevant department.

10. Fee Appeals and Requests for Refunds

- 10.1 If students have mitigating circumstances for non-attendance which they feel warrant a refund, they should write to the Fee Appeals Unit at the address below. A reduction in fees will be considered, but is not guaranteed, by a panel of managers on a case by case basis.

*The Fee Appeals Unit
Wirral Met College
Wirral Waters Campus
Tower Road
Birkenhead
CH41 1AA*

- 10.2 Refund requests due to ill health must be supported by medical evidence.
- 10.3 Requests for refunds will only be considered within 12 months of the courses scheduled end date
- 10.4 Complaints regarding any aspect of a course should be referred through the College's Comments, compliments and complaints procedure not the Fee Appeals process.

12. Financial support for students

- 12.1 A range of bursaries and other financial support is available to students. Details can be found on the College website or from the Student Financial Support team.