

DOCUMENT DETAILS

Document Name:	Nottingham College Fees Policy 2020/21
Document reference	CX/COP/190114
Version	1.5
Issue Date:	24.02.20
Review Date:	31.12.20
Document Author	Director of Funding & MIS
Document Owner	Principal Finance
Applicability	All staff, volunteers and Governors of Nottingham College
Summary	The purpose of this document is to set out the College's fees structure for the academic year 2020/21

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Version history			
Version	Date	Reason for release/version update	Issued by
1.0	13.12.19	Initial draft	Rich Williams
1.1	16.12.19	Updated for international	Rich Williams
1.2	22.01/20	Updated for under 16	Rich Williams
1.3	30/01/20	Updated for Customer Operations & Adult/Community Learning	Rich Williams
1.4	10/02/20	SLT Review	Jo Clifford
1.5	13/02/20	Updated for international post Ofsted.	Rich Williams

DOCUMENT APPROVAL

Approving person/body	Job Role (where applicable)	Date Approved
Governing Body	n/a	

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Nottingham College Fees Policy sets out the general framework under which the College operates all aspects of the management of fees, including fee setting, collection, charges and refunds for the academic year 2020-21.
- 1.2. The fees that the College charges for the courses it provides take into account the requirements of government legislation, funding agencies, college sustainability and the affordability to students.
- 1.3. The policy will be reviewed and updated with recommendations by a wide group of staff which will include both curriculum and business support including the executive leadership team.
- 1.4. This policy sits alongside the Nottingham College Higher Education Terms and Conditions policy and Higher Education Fees Policy which describes the Fees for Higher Education and the Nottingham College Bursary Policy which describes the financial support available to students.
- 1.5. This policy will be approved by the corporation on an annual basis.

2. Policy Objectives

- 2.1. This policy is intended to:
 - 2.1.1. Provide customers with accurate information on when fees are payable or remission can be obtained when enquiring about a course with Nottingham College including how support may be provided by the college where fees are a barrier to participation.
 - 2.1.2. Ensure that the College operates accurate monitoring and receipt of programme costs, charges and refunds which is compliant with the guidance outlined by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and the Office for Students (OfS).
 - 2.1.3. Support planning and delivery of enrolment activity across the College.

3. Responsibilities

- 3.1. Governing Body
 - 3.1.1. The Governing Body is required to set a policy by which the tuition and other fees payable to the College are determined, subject to any terms and conditions attached to grants, loans or other payments paid or made by the Funding bodies.
- 3.2. Director of Funding and MIS
 - 3.2.1. The Director of Funding and MIS is responsible for annually ensuring this policy is consistent with funding guidance at the time of writing, and any revisions following funding updates. This policy will be regularly reviewed to ensure it is in line with local and national policies
 - 3.2.2. The Director of Funding and MIS will ensure appropriate and prompt implementation of the policy and any related procedures.

3.3. Director of HR and OD

3.3.1. The Director of HR and OD is responsible for ensuring that the policy and its associated procedures are equality impact assessed.

3.4. College staff

3.4.1. All College staff are expected to adhere to the policy and ensure appropriate advice and support are provided to students, parents and employers in line with the policy.

4. Fee Principles

4.1. Nottingham College will comply with the terms of its funding agreements where they stipulate conditions regarding fees and charges including the assumptions about contributions to fees and charges by students and employers made by the funding bodies.

4.2. When setting fees, Nottingham College will recognise the fees prevailing in the market place to ensure that prices are competitive – this does not mean that prices will be the lowest but will represent good value in relation to the quality of the product.

4.3. Wherever possible, enable and facilitate students to access other funds available to contribute to the fees and charges of those students who would otherwise have difficulty in paying these costs.

4.4. Students and other interested stakeholders such as parents and employers will be given clear information about fees and charges before the student has committed to the course.

4.5. The following fees and other expenses are chargeable unless appropriate remission or financial support is available:

4.5.1. A tuition fee which includes:

4.5.1.1. The cost of consumable items necessary to complete the course.

4.5.1.2. The cost of tools and equipment necessary to complete the course.

4.5.1.3. Access to relevant study materials to complete the course.

4.5.1.4. Access to College study facilities.

4.5.1.5. Access to the internet relevant to their course of study.

4.5.1.6. Careers advice, wellbeing and pastoral advice.

4.5.2. Awarding organisation fees for registration and examination.

4.5.3. The cost of any materials, tools and equipment retained by the students.

4.5.4. “Charge per print” costs for photocopying and printing.

4.5.5. Exam re-sit costs, or retake costs for course modules.

4.5.6. The costs of educational trips and visits.

- 4.5.7. Travel to and from College.
- 4.5.8. Meals and refreshments while at College.
- 4.5.9. The costs of any licenses or disclosure and barring (DBS) checks necessary to achieve the qualification.
- 4.5.10. The cost of overdue, lost or damaged items borrowed from college.
- 4.5.11. Concessionary policies for home students.
- 4.5.12. Fees for external school or college students.
- 4.5.13. Replacement ID cards, locker keys or other equipment that are fully refundable except in cases of damage or theft.
- 4.5.14. The recreational use of leisure and other non-academic facilities where the activity taking place is not a requirement of a course syllabus or not part of a student union membership free entitlement.
- 4.5.15. Optional extra activities where the activity is taking place outside a required part of an agreed study programme. In this case charging is at the discretion of the College that would otherwise meet the cost of provision. Examples of optional extra activities include theatre, cinema or museum visits or other day or residential visits that are not a requirement of course syllabuses.
- 4.5.16. The provision of replacement certificates.

5. Payment Principles

- 5.1. For students without remission fees are payable upon enrolment.
 - 5.1.1. If the course fee is £200 or less or the course duration is 10 weeks or less then the full course fee including all exams and costs is payable at enrolment.
 - 5.1.2. Course fees for courses over £200 and more than 10 weeks in duration can be paid in instalments as prescribed in the college's instalment agreement with the student at enrolment. The first payment will be taken at enrolment.
 - 5.1.2.1. If the course costs more than £200 but less than £500 and is 10 weeks or more in duration an instalment plan of up to four months is available, but this must not exceed the duration of the course.
 - 5.1.2.2. If a course costs more than £500 and is 10 weeks or more in duration an instalment plan of up to 6 months is available, but this must not exceed the duration of the course.
- 5.2. Where an Advanced Learner Loan or Loan for Higher Education is being used to fund a course it is the responsibility of the student to ensure that this is approved in a timely fashion and the application must be begun before the start of the course.
 - 5.2.1. Where a loan is at the status of approved awaiting signature, the student must provide the Loan declaration form to the College before they will be allowed to enrol and attend the course.

- 5.2.2. Students applying for a loan remain liable for the full cost of fees until the loan is fully approved by the Student Loan Company (SLC) and the college, and payments have been authorised by the SLC.
- 5.2.3. If a student has applied for an Advanced Learner Loan, but has not yet received confirmation of the approved loan, then they will be allowed to enrol and commence learning only if they set up an instalment plan and make a deposit payment of £250 at the time of enrolment along with an instalment plan and Direct Debit (in line with general FE instalment policy payment dates). The student must then provide the College with the confirmation of the approved loan within two weeks, at which point the deposit will be refunded and the loan arrangements will be set up against the students account. If this is not provided the student will be expected to pay a further £250 at this point and the College will then continue to gather payments by direct debit at the agreed monthly points.
- 5.2.4. It should be noted that SLC payments stop being paid for a student as soon as they withdraw, and the student then becomes responsible for paying the remaining fees owed to the college.
- 5.3. Sponsored students must provide a valid purchase order from their sponsoring organisation before their enrolment can be completed or in exceptional circumstances, a letter of sponsorship (on headed paper) may be accepted. Should the student's sponsor fail to pay all or part of the fees due, these will become the responsibility of the individual student.
- 5.4. The student must complete a direct debit mandate at the time of enrolment for all instalment plans. If a direct debit instalment defaults then the debt immediately becomes liable in full from the student.
- 5.5. Interest will not be charged to the student, provided the fees are paid in accordance with the instalment plan. The college reserves the right to charge interest where the instalments are not paid within the agreed instalment plan at the rates set in the Late Payment of Commercial Debt Act 1998.
- 5.6. Nottingham College and the student can agree to suspend a learning aim while the student takes a break from learning. This allows the student to continue learning at a later date with the same eligibility that applied when they first started their learning aim. The College must have evidence that the student agrees to return and continue with the same learning aim to qualify for funding.
- 5.7. It should be noted that for adults, ESFA payments stop being paid for a student as soon as they withdraw. The student then becomes responsible for paying the remaining fees owed to the college.
- 5.8. All fees and debts are collectable by the college and the college will issue reminders to pay. The college will engage debt collecting agencies to collect fees outstanding where all other recovery options have been exhausted.
- 5.9. The college reserves the right to take legal action where all other attempts to collect outstanding debts have failed.
- 5.10. All fees must be settled prior to entry to an examination.

- 5.11. Students with outstanding fees may not receive their college certificates, attend graduation ceremonies and may not enrol on new courses until these are settled.
- 5.12. Any student that is in financial hardship should contact the College as soon as possible so that any support the College may be able to provide through its discretionary learner support fund can be explored.

6. Fee Remission

- 6.1. For the purposes of fee remission age is calculated as defined by the ESFA as the age on the 31st August in the academic year in which the course starts. However, there are two exceptions to this:
 - 6.1.1. Some level 3 courses are not eligible for fee remission, but are only fundable by loans if the student is 19+ on the first day of learning of the course.
 - 6.1.2. An apprentice's age is calculated as age on the first day of learning and may impact certain incentive payments to the employer.
- 6.2. Those that are aged 14 to 16 and meet the funding criteria as set out in the latest ESFA funding regulations are subject to full remission for all elements necessary to achieve the course outcome.
- 6.3. Students aged 16-18, or 19-24 with an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP), who meet the ESFA residency eligibility requirements on ESFA funded courses are subject to full remission for all elements necessary to achieve the course outcome.
- 6.4. Adult students studying up to level 3 who are eligible have statutory concessions for tuition fees if they can provide valid supporting evidence, as described in the ESFA Funding Rules (a summary table of these is shown in Appendix 1). Examples of such evidence is included in the appendix to this document. This includes appropriate state benefits and also students who have not previously achieved qualifications. This may provide:
 - 6.4.1. Full fee remission.
 - 6.4.2. Co-funding fee remission. This may be further remitted if the student is on a low wage as defined by the ESFA, or is able to apply for financial support as defined in the Nottingham College Bursary Policy.
 - 6.4.3. Up to four advanced learning loans during the lifetime of the student. (See the advanced learner loan website for more details)
- 6.5. All students of all ages regardless of remission may still be charged for the following:
 - 6.5.1. "Charge per print" costs for photocopying.
 - 6.5.2. Exam costs and subsequent resits where no valid reason is provided for non-attendance at a notified exam.
 - 6.5.3. Optional trips and visits for those who choose to attend.
 - 6.5.4. Costs of equipment, tools, materials or uniforms which will be retained by the student following completion of the course. These costs will be made clear at enrolment.

- 6.5.5. Courses outside the main study programme or course where no ESFA funding is available.
- 6.5.6. Exam fees or assessment costs for industry qualifications outside the study programme or course.
- 6.5.7. Repeating the same regulated qualification.
- 6.5.8. Resitting a GCSE Maths or English where a grade 4 or C or higher have already been achieved.

7. Apprenticeships

- 7.1. Prior to the commencement of an apprenticeship programme Nottingham College will enter into a contract with the employer. This contract will:
 - 7.1.1. Detail any fees and associated payment schedules that have been agreed between both parties.
 - 7.1.2. Detail what happens in the event of the student failing to complete the apprenticeship in terms of payments and incentives.
 - 7.1.3. Comply with ESFA funding rules for apprenticeships.

8. Fee Rates

- 8.1. All adult ESFA funded full time courses, including access to HE, will be charged at a minimum tuition fee of £3,000 per student per year unless otherwise advertised. Tuition fees may exceed £3,000 for the course dependent upon ESFA funding available for the student. The co-funded rate will be a minimum fee of £1,500.
- 8.2. Part time adult courses which are delivered with ESFA funding will have a basic fee attached, which is set by the college in accordance with market factors, to stimulate recruitment or to ensure that group sizes are large enough to make running courses viable.
- 8.3. For Advanced Learner Loans the college sets the fees at the maximum loan fee for each course as specified in the Learning Aims system. In some cases the fee charged is slightly more and requires the student to top-up at the point of enrolment. This information is clearly stated in the prospectus, course information and Learning and Funding Information Letter.
- 8.4. For Full Cost courses the college will set the fees taking the following elements into consideration:
 - 8.4.1. Maintenance of fees based on marginal costs and standard group sizes.
 - 8.4.2. Maintenance of minimum group sizes to achieve an appropriate contribution per group.
 - 8.4.3. Rationalisation of the delivery of courses to ensure that the offer remains robust.
 - 8.4.4. Market rates.
- 8.5. Community Learning & Pound Plus Policy

8.5.1. In line with the latest funding guidance the table below illustrates the fees chargeable for community provision:

Course	Unemployed	Low Waged	All other students
First community course	No charge	No charge	No charge
Subsequent community courses	No charge	No charge	Charged at £4.50/delivery hour

8.5.2. All students would be required to pay for materials as required.

8.5.3. Students enrolling on community learning courses are subject to the same eligibility criteria as stated above.

8.6. The following summarises the charges in the academic year 2020/21 for all chargeable eligible students and individual programme cost details can be found on the College website:

Full Time Further Education Programme Fees for students who are not fully funded by the ESFA or Student Loan	
Category of student	Minimum Tuition fee per year
19+ olds	Minimum £3,000 or minimum £1,500 if co-funded.
Pre 16 Full cost provision	Minimum £7.50 per student per hour £75.00 per discrete group per hour £5,000 per annum for Year 11 infill (Additional costs are incurred for PPE and qualification certification and registration)
Part Time Further education course cost minimum £3.25 per hour	
Full Cost Part Time courses minimum cost £6.50 per hour (no government funding)	

9. Financial Fee Support

9.1. This policy complies with the College's Diversity and Inclusion Policy. For students with financial hardship various fee support routes may be available to fund their tuition and other fees. These are described in detail in the Nottingham College Bursary Policy. Currently the main alternatives are as follows:

9.1.1. Discretionary Learner Support Funds for example for help with travel, course materials and equipment or childcare costs (please see the College's Bursary Policy for eligibility).

9.1.2. Advanced Learner Loan Bursary

9.1.3. FE and HE Student loans.

9.1.4. International scholarships.

9.1.5. Any applicable government scheme.

- 9.2. Students applying to the Discretionary Learner Support Fund for help towards fees may still be expected to make a contribution.

10. Withdrawals and Refunds

- 10.1. When a student enrolls onto a full time programme at Nottingham College, they are committing to completing that programme of study. Appropriate advice and guidance will have been provided to the student to enable them to make an appropriate decision to enrol with the College. Further support will be provided by the College to ensure that the student succeeds and completes their chosen course.
- 10.2. The College endeavours to maximise staff utilisation in order for it to operate efficiently and this is achieved by maximising class sizes.
- 10.3. When a student withdraws from one of its courses this puts at risk the College's operating efficiency and as such it is essential that the income generated from a student's place on the course is not lost. Therefore the College will pursue all fees associated with that student where possible.
- 10.4. Therefore, if a student withdraws from a course then all outstanding fees will be chased. This may result in the student's future credit score being negatively impacted upon, should the fees remain outstanding.
- 10.5. Refunds can only be given in the following circumstance:
- 10.5.1. Withdrawal from a course is supported by a valid medical certificate.
 - 10.5.2. Course Cancellation: If the College cancels the course, the College will refund the course fee and there will be no administration charge applied.
- 10.6. Once confirmation of a course cancellation has been received students can claim a full refund except in the following cases:
- 10.6.1. Where an alternative course has been offered and accepted by the student, fees paid will be transferred to the new course. Overpaid fees will be refunded at the time of course transfer.
 - 10.6.2. Where a student has taken a loan from the Student Loan Company the SLC will clawback any appropriate fees.
- 10.7. Costs that have been incurred by the College in enrolling a student, e.g. Examination costs, registration fees and purchased materials cannot be reclaimed by the student, even if they withdraw from the course prior to the start, unless the course is cancelled by the College.
- 10.8. If a student transfers course, the student will need to sign to confirm their transfer. Where there is a subsequent additional cost, a discussion must take place with the student and Nottingham College staff to confirm payment methods. Once this has been confirmed they can be enrolled onto the new course. Where there is a reduction in course costs then a refund of these costs may take place.
- 10.9. Beyond this rule, all refund requests may be reviewed on an individual basis, after the student has discussed the circumstances regarding the withdrawal from the course with the relevant Head of Faculty, if withdrawal from the course is appropriate:

- 10.9.1. A refund form must be completed and signed by the student.
- 10.9.2. Refund forms must be supported by the Head of Faculty in writing and submitted, along with any evidence, to the Director of Finance for approval. If approved the refund will be processed by the Finance Office in line with the following criteria.
 - 10.9.2.1. The college may refund a percentage or fixed sum of fees charged as part of any college incentive initiative.
 - 10.9.2.2. Any refund will take into account the length of time the student has been on their chosen programme.
- 10.10. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that they follow the correct process for withdrawal.
- 10.11. Employer refunds with respect to apprentices:
 - 10.11.1. The College's general principle that refunds are not given continues to apply. However, it is recognised that there may be circumstances when it is appropriate to award a refund.
 - 10.11.2. The Director of Finance may authorise a refund to an employer if there is an appropriate reason to do so. The Director of Finance will review each claim on a case by case basis and will take into account the recommendations of the Vice Principal Partnerships, Apprenticeships & Enterprise.
 - 10.11.3. Additionally, if the Vice Principal Partnerships, Apprenticeships & Enterprise recommends that, for commercial reasons, the College includes a refund provision in a contract with an employer, the Director of Finance must authorise such a clause.
- 10.12. Students have the right of appeal on refund decisions and this should be made in writing as per the College's Complaints & Compliments Policy.

1. International Provision

1.1. The fees stated relate solely to the cost of the Colleges tuition and do not include any additional fees that may be incurred in the development of International programmes. These programmes are negotiated through commercial contracts with recruitment agents and will be variable as they are dependent on International market forces.

1.2. International course costs for 2020-21 are below:

Course Type	International fee per year
English Language Courses including Summer School	Minimum £180 per week
IELTS preparation courses	Minimum £65 per week

1.3. The remaining fees are due on enrolment at the start of the full time course. The only exception to this is students who are fully sponsored by their government or organisation, who must submit a valid “financial guarantee letter” in place of their deposit. The letter must clearly state the College name, student name, course being funded, total tuition fee and accommodation fee (if applicable).

1.4. Refunds will be offered on the 60% deposit, less a £250 administration fee, if the following circumstances apply:

1.4.1. The student holds a conditional offer and fails to meet the conditions specified

1.4.2. Their visa application has been refused

1.4.3. The student can demonstrate that exceptional circumstances have prevented them from taking up their place on the course.

1.5. Students who wish to withdraw from the course after they have enrolled will only be eligible for a refund on the grounds of exceptional circumstances. The nature of the refund offered will take into account the period already studied and any costs associated with processing and administration.

Appendix 1 – Government Funding for Adult Education

Provision	19-23 year olds	24+ unemployed	24+ Other
English and maths, up to and including Level 2 (Must be delivered as part of legal entitlement)	Fully Funded*	Fully Funded*	Fully Funded*
Level 2 (excluding English and maths) (First full level 2 must be delivered as part of the legal entitlement)	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 (First full level 3 must be delivered as part of the legal entitlement)	Fully Funded* (first and full)	Loan-funded	Loan-funded
	Loan-funded** (previously achieved full level 3 or above)		
Traineeship#	Fully Funded (including 16- to 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 student has already achieved a first full level 2, or above	Co-funded+	Fully Funded	Co-funded+
	Fully Funded – unemployed		
Learning aims up to and including level 2, where the student has not achieved a first full level 2, or above	N/A	Fully Funded	Co-funded+
<p>*Must be delivered as one of the English and maths, and/or first full level 2 or first full level 3 qualifications required as part of the legal entitlements. ^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 students must be eligible under the ESFA's young people's residency requirements. ** Availability of loans at level 3 does not replace the legal entitlement to full funding for students aged 19 to 23 undertaking their first full level 3. + Low wage flexibility may apply where student is eligible for co-funding and annual gross salary is less than £17,004.00. In addition the college offers fee support beyond this which can be found in the Nottingham College Bursary Policy.</p>			

Appendix 2 – Student identification and residency

All students must provide personal Identification in order to prove existence.

All students' residency status must be verified before enrolment can be completed. This process may take place prior to enrolment.

Students will be informed of what types of identification or fee remission evidence the College will accept prior to enrolment taking place.

Personal Identification

- Passport
- Birth certificate
- Driving licence – this can be full or provisional
- National Insurance card or letter
- National identity card
- Bank, credit or debit card
- Exam certificates
- UK naturalisation/citizenship certificate
- Utility bill which clearly states your name
- Benefit letter which states your name
- Your Advanced Learner Loan letter
- Adoption certificate
- Residence permit card
- Home Office letter
- HM Forces card

Residency

- Passport
- Visa Stamp
- Residence permit
- Home office letter

Appendix 3 – Fee remission categories accepted by Nottingham College

Fee remission is available to students on some FE courses in the following circumstances:

- those aged 16-18;
- adults aged 19+ years taking specific English and Maths qualifications;
- adults aged 19+ years in receipt of specific income related benefits on level 1 and level 2 courses only (see below);
- eligible adults aged 19 -23 taking Entry or Level 1 qualifications excluding English, Maths and ESOL
- eligible adults aged 19-23 taking their first full level 2 qualification or first full level 3 qualification; any such qualifications must meet legal entitlement criteria
- Adults aged 19-24 who have a (EHCP) Education Health and Care Plan.
- Adults in receipt of a low wage, if they are eligible for co-funding and earn less than £17,004.00 annual gross salary. In addition the college offers fee support beyond this which can be found in the Nottingham College Bursary Policy.

19+ years old FE students studying funded courses at level 2 and below who are unemployed and wishing to enter employment and needing skills training will be eligible for full fee remission - where the learning is directly relevant to both the individual's employment prospects and the needs of the local labour market.

For fee remission purposes a student 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 £343 a month (student is sole adult in their benefit claim) or £549 a month (student 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.

Nottingham College will use their discretion to fund other students:

- They are in receipt of other state benefits (list of eligible benefits below) and their earned income (disregarding benefits) is less than £343 a month (student is sole adult in their benefit claim) or £549 a month (student has a joint benefit claim with their partner).
- Want to be employed, or progress into more sustainable employment, and their earned income (disregarding benefits) is less than £338 a month (student is sole adult in their benefit claim) or £549 a month (student has a joint benefit claim with their partner), and you are satisfied identified learning is directly relevant to their employment prospects and the local labour market needs.

Other state benefits:

- Income support.
- Housing benefit.
- Council Tax benefit (not single person's allowance).
- Pension Guarantee Credit.
- Disability Living Allowance.
- Personal Independence payments.
- Dependents of individuals in receipt of any of the above benefits – must be named on the benefit evidence.
- Asylum seekers on the equivalent of a means tested benefit – NASS – with the last 2 months post office receipts, AZURE card, Aspen Card and issue letter with the students name on, Local authority support under section S23C or S23CA of the children's act 1989, S21 national assistance ACT 1948 and those with section 4 support).
- Dependents of individuals in receipt of Working Tax credit who are themselves unemployed – must be named on the award letter.

Appendix 4 – Fee remission evidence

A student will be required to sign a self-declaration (on the enrolment form/ learning agreement) which states that the course satisfies the JSA/ESFA regulations in terms of guided learning hours of study and that they wish to enter employment and require skills training provided by this course to do so. This declaration will also state that if they have declared false information, that the College may take action to reclaim the tuition fees and any support costs provided.

Changes in students' eligibility for fee remission will only be considered within 6 weeks of starting a Full Time course and 14 days for a Part Time course. Students in this circumstance must appeal to the customer operations team in writing and evidence of changes to employment status must be evidenced.

For those continuing to study the same learning aim (2nd year of a continuous programme of study) in their subsequent academic year a new signed self-declaration is not required, neither is the requirement to see updated benefit evidence for fee remission purposes – the status applied at the start of the learning aim will continue.

Acceptable evidence for fee remission must be from within the last 3 months and includes but is not limited to:

- Evidence of receipt of universal credit, either online statement or bank statement
- Benefit letter must evidence the student is receipt of benefit at point of enrolment
- ESA, JSA, income support, universal credit letter
- PIP, and DLA letter (issued yearly)
- Council tax or housing benefit award notice/ bill for 19/20.
- Tax credit award notice for 19/20 to include all pages – for dependents and ESOL students only.