

The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) contracts with Reading Borough Council to deliver a range of adult learning opportunities and receives an annual funding allocation to support that delivery. The funding allocation is not intended to fully cover delivery costs and with the exception of some English, Maths & IT qualifications and Community Learning delivery, the ESFA expects providers to charge course fees to learners to contribute towards the costs of courses. As well as charging course fees, New Directions receives additional funding from Reading Borough Council to contribute towards running costs.

It is necessary to ensure that all types of learning provision are able to meet their own varying, staffing, resources, materials, exams, premises, and support & back-office costs in order for those courses to remain viable. Course costing calculations have been refined to take greater account of the varying costs to remain viable.

1. Course Fees Calculations

Course fees take account of the following:

- Tutor salary & expenses
- Course materials & resources
- Exam fees & exams administration
- Any additional H&S and PPE requirements
- Any additional staff, support assistants and their costs
- Centre admin staff support
- Course management & monitoring costs
- Premises overheads and any course specific additional premises costs (e.g. The Pottery suite has its own electricity, water & drainage-clearance bills)
- Course development & marketing
- Additional costs for courses with low learner numbers
- Contribution from ESFA funding
- For co-funded Adult Skills Budget (ASB) courses the fee will be the same as specified in the Learning Aims Reference Service (LARS) each being 50% of the total costs
- Level 3 courses for learners aged 19 or over will be charged at the full rate specified in the LARS application and will be available for Student Loan applications
- ESFA Funding Rules and Eligibility Rules

Where course fee calculations result in unusually large variations in final costs whether they are high or low, options for cross-subsidy of course fees will be considered provided the costs of all courses overall are still met.

Consideration may also be taken of the fees charged by local competitors.

2. Publication of Course Fees

- Once course fees have been calculated and revised if necessary, they will be entered into the New Directions database (MIS System) which will generate an electronic course brochure used for the creation of hard copy course guides and other exports which are used to populate various online course directories.
- The MIS system also stores fees for 'Overseas Students' which are higher as they don't include an element of ESFA funding.
- Some courses may specify that exams fees and materials costs are not included in the course fee and that charges will be incurred during the course as the need arises. In these cases, this will be made clear within the published course fees.
- This procedure will be made available to learners on request.

The following is a list with the approved hourly rates for 2018-19 academic year

Adult Safeguarded Learning (ASL)	£7.45
Adult Skills Budget (ASB)	£3.62
Non-funded Learning	£6.70
Overseas fee	£8.95
EXTRAS	
Materials	£1
Materials - Ceramics	£10
Admin	£5

3. Payment of Fees

Learners are required by the ESFA Funding rules to sign a learning agreement prior to the start of learning. This agreement is combined into the course enrolment form and payment agreement. Payment agreement must be made prior to the start of learning.

Learners must pay a minimum of 50% of the course fee prior to the start of learning and sign an agreement to pay the remainder in instalments finishing no later than the end of the course of learning.

Learners may apply for Hardship Funding prior to the start of learning as specified within the Hardship Procedure.

4. Advanced Learner Loans

Advanced Learner Loans are offered by government to support the costs of tuition fees charged by colleges and training organisations. They are available for students aged 19+ (with no upper age limit) studying at Level 3 and above. Loan eligibility does not depend on your income and there are no credit checks.

You will not need to pay back your loan until you are earning over £25,000 a year.

For more information, visit the Government's website:

www.gov.uk/advanced-learner-loan