

# TUITION FEES POLICY

## 2025/26

Applicable to all staff and students

<b>Policy Category:</b>	Learners
<b>Approved by:</b>	Policy Review Group on 31 January 2025
<b>Policy Owner:</b>	Head of Funding and Information
<b>Applicable to:</b>	Students and Staff
<b>Effective From:</b>	February 2025
<b>Date of next review:</b>	February 2026
<b>Added to website</b>	Yes

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## 1 Key Principles

1.1 Bridgwater & Taunton College is committed to a fair and transparent policy in respect of charges made to students. As far as possible, the College seeks to:

- Set fees that are in line with funding guidance and other relevant agency policy
- Set fees that are competitive in the different markets in which the College competes
- Ensure coherence in fee levels across different funding streams.

## 2 Fee Principles by Category of Students

2.1 Fees quoted by the College are for the current academic year only except for roll on roll off courses, or for Advanced Learner Loan fees which are for the whole duration of the course.

Category of student	Fee (including exam fees and EPA fees)	Materials or other fees	Basis for calculating fee
14 – 16 year olds	By individual arrangement	None	Schools Link: individual course costing
16-18 year olds and 19-24 year olds with high needs who have been commissioned by the LEA	Free at point of enrolment	Where the learner is charged for materials these will remain the learners property	N/A
FE 19+ students who are fully funded*	Free	Charged at course level for optional additional activities but compulsory items are free	N/A
FE 19+ students who are co-funded**	Fee charged	Charged at course level for compulsory and optional additional activities	Fees are determined by considering market forces and comparison with 50% of ESFA unweighted funding band.
FE 19+ students who are eligible and the qualification is available as a free courses for jobs funded *****	Free	Charged at course level for optional additional activities but compulsory items are free	N/A
FE students who are eligible for a 19+ Advanced Learner Loans***	Fee charged – paid in full by the student, employer or via loan	Charged at course level and included in the Loan amount for compulsory additional activities. Optional	Fees are determined based upon the ESFA weighted funding rate and the maximum loan charged rate

Category of student	Fee (including exam fees and EPA fees)	Materials or other fees	Basis for calculating fee
		activities will be charged in addition to the Loan	
Apprentices	No charge to apprentices.  Employers are charged fees as appropriate	None	Please see section 4
Prescribed HE	Fee charged and paid in full by the student, employer or student loan company	N/A	Set by HEI partner or College as applicable. Refer to the HE Fees Policy for exact fees.
Students on unfunded programmes ****	Fee charged and paid in full by the student or employer	Charged at course level	Fees are set based upon individual course costing
International students	Fee charged and paid in full by the student or employer	Charged at course level	Fees are set based upon individual course costing

All Fees will not be increased more than 2% unless market forces can sustain this. HE fees may be increased in line with the Retail Price Index as approved annually in the HE Fees Policy.

\*Fully funded adult students are defined in the ESFA Adult skills fund: Funding and Performance Management Rules.

\*\*All adult students who do not meet the criteria for full funding are co-funded for ESFA funded courses which are classroom based at level 2 or below unless they are studying a non-legal entitlement at L2 and don't already hold a full level 2. The term co-funding is used to demonstrate that the College receives some funding for such courses from the ESFA and the remainder from the student.

\*\*\*Under current funding rules, learners who are aged 19+ and enrolling on a level 3 or higher level course which is not listed as national skills fund are not funded and are required to pay fees in full or take out a loan where the course is eligible for a loan

\*\*\*\* As identified in the relevant ESFA funding rules

\*\*\*\*\* As identified on the find a learning aim website.

2.2 All materials and other fees are determined at course level and reviewed by the Senior Management Team.

2.3 The College retains the option to 'market price' courses when and where appropriate at the discretion of the Principal or Deputy Principal.

### 3 Payment of Fees, Including Tuition, Materials and Other Fees

3.1 Fees can be paid in one of the following ways:

- Cash – should be paid to the Finance Department and ~~that~~ a receipt should be provided and retained by the student.
- Cheque – made payable to Bridgwater & Taunton College
- Debit or credit card
- Direct BACS transfer
- Online store
- Invoice to employer – a letter on headed paper or purchase order from the employer must be provided at enrolment

- For students paying their own fees by Instalments – the Instalment deposit and Admin Fee must be paid at enrolment. Instalments are only available on courses of 24 weeks or more for students who are not sponsored by their employer and where the tuition fee payable is more than £325
- The first instalment will be £300 or 50% of the fee, whichever is greater, and will be required immediately, with the remaining amount payable in two equal payments. There is an administrative charge of £25 which will be added to the instalment plan. The instalments are collected by Recurring Card payment (RCP).
- Students should not have an outstanding balance from previous years, the Principal and Chief Executive has the right to prevent further attendance if a balance is brought forward
- Students who withdraw from their programme may remain liable for full fees, depending on the circumstances. The relevant Senior Manager will be consulted before a debt is written off.
- Instalment plans are not available to overseas students, employers or students without a UK bank account
- Any payments that are unsuccessful on the prescribed date of the RCP collection will be attempted five working days later and one further time after that. If all payments are unsuccessful, the College will contact the student to arrange payment of the outstanding fees due. Where the College is unable to collect payment, the student may be asked to leave their programme of study but will remain liable for payment of any outstanding fees.

### 3.2 Students may not be permitted to start their course unless they have:

- Paid the full fee OR
- Have provided evidence or self-declared eligibility for fee remission as appropriate OR
- Have proof they have applied for a Student Loan OR
- Completed a payment by instalments plan OR
- Evidence they have been awarded Learner Support Funds to cover all or part of their fees and they have paid any fees not covered.
- In certain circumstances The Director of Finance & Resources may allow a student to start their course without payment or evidence of fee remission.

## 4. Apprenticeship Programmes

### 4.1 Overview of Apprenticeship Funding

Since April 2017, the government has categorised employers as Levy or Non-Levy based on their annual wage bill in England.

Apprenticeship fees include all aspects of the programme, such as tuition, materials, registration, and the End Point Assessment (EPA). If the negotiated fee exceeds the funding band maximum, the employer must pay the additional cost.

Each apprenticeship standard is allocated to a funding band by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).

#### **4.1.1 Funding for Levy Employers**

Employers with an annual wage bill exceeding £3 million can use their Apprenticeship Service Account (via the digital levy fund) to pay for some or all of the apprenticeship costs.

To access these funds, employers must:

- All levy employers can access their Apprenticeship Service Account via the government portal; [manage-apprenticeships.service.gov.uk](https://manage-apprenticeships.service.gov.uk).
- Employers must set up a cohort on the Apprenticeship Service Account prior to the apprentice's start date. Delays in this process may postpone the start of the apprenticeship programme.
- Employers must approve funds by the end of the month following the start date. Failure to do so may result in the employer being invoiced for the full amount by our Finance department.

#### **4.1.2 Funding for Non-Levy Employers**

**From 1 April 2024:**

- Employers not paying the apprenticeship levy will have all apprenticeship training costs covered by the government, up to the funding band maximum, for apprentices aged 16-21 when starting their training.
- For apprentices aged 22 years or older, employers will receive 95% of training costs from the government. The employer is required to pay 5% of training costs to Bridgwater & Taunton College.

**For starts prior to 1 April 2024:**

- **Small employers (0-49 employees):**  
Pay 0% for apprentices aged 16-18, 19-24 care leavers, or those with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).  
Pay a 5% contribution for apprentices aged 19+.
- **Larger employers (50+ employees):**  
Must co-invest 5% of the agreed total price up to the funding band maximum.

General requirements for Non-Levy Employers to access apprenticeship funding:

- All employers must create an Apprenticeship Service Account via the government portal; [manage-apprenticeships.service.gov.uk](https://manage-apprenticeships.service.gov.uk).
- Employers must reserve funds before the apprentice starts the programme.
- Employers must approve funds by the end of the month following the start date. Failure to do so may result in the employer being invoiced for the full amount by our Finance department.

#### **4.2. General requirements for all employers:**

- Bridgwater and Taunton College will ensure support is given to Employers to set up and approve their apprenticeship cohorts on the Apprenticeship Service Account where required.

- The Apprenticeship Service Account will be used to apply and claim any incentive payments the employer may be entitled to. The 16-18 incentive payment will continue to be claimed via Bridgwater & Taunton College and paid directly to eligible employers once received.
- Employers and apprentices will need to ensure all documentation that is issued by Bridgwater and Taunton College is signed and completed to ensure enrolment onto the apprenticeship programme.
- Instalments for employers paying for non-levy apprenticeships can be paid either by:
  - A single up-front payment OR
  - 10 equal instalments paid via direct debit over 10 months.

## **5. Refunds**

- 5.1 If a course is cancelled, the College will aim to contact all enrolled students at least 3 working days before the course is due to start. Refunds in full are automatically issued on cancelled courses.
- 5.2 If a student is unable to attend their course prior to its start and wishes to claim a refund they must ~~write to the finance department~~ contact the relevant area to request a refund three weeks prior to the course start date. Refunds for exceptional circumstances are at the discretion of the Principal or Deputy Principal.
- 5.3 If a student withdraws from their classroom based course after starting, their fee is still due for the whole year. Any tuition fee credits granted are authorised by the relevant SMT lead and completely recorded. Where a HE Student has withdrawn please refer to the HE terms and condition at enrolment document as different rules apply. Credit notes for fees that fall outside of tuition should be authorised by the Head of Department.
- 5.4 If an apprentice withdraws from their apprenticeship training then the fee will be reduced on a pro-rata basis relative to the proportion of the length of the programme already completed. Therefore, depending on the total fees paid at the date of withdrawal, the employer could be liable for any fees still due or be eligible for a refund (less a £25 administration fee) if the fees have been overpaid.

## **6. Exam Resit and Remark Fees**

- 6.1 Remarks and resits, personally requested by students, will be charged for based on the Awarding Organisation fee plus a 5% administration charge. Any monies refunded by the Awarding Organisation following a successful remark will be refunded to the student.
- 6.2 Employers will be charged for End Point Assessment (EPA) resits as described in the contract. Any resit charges responsibility will be agreed between the College and the employer.

## **7. Additional Charges**

- 7.1 There may be additional charges for materials, clothing, visits, residential trips and DBS checks. These may be compulsory or optional, and may be due at the time of enrolment or paid later. Where required, payment for these will be made through the Online Store.

- 7.2 Fees should only be set as compulsory where they are essential for completing the course. If fees are charged to 16-18 students for materials or clothing, students must be able to retain these at the end of the course. Fee remitted students aged 19+ and those paying with an Advanced Learning Loan will not be required to pay for additional compulsory fees. However, they can be charged for optional items which are not essential to the course.

## **8. International Students**

- 8.1 Students who have not been resident in the UK for the last three years will be subject to International student checks prior to enrolment. Please refer to the International Policy for information about fees and charges.

## **9. Review of Policy**

- 9.1 This policy will be reviewed annually but reserves the right to make changes to this policy at any time.