

Fee Policy

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Approved by: Audit and Risk Committee

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Version	Date	Author	Status	Comment
1	July 2024	Director of Governance and Purpose	Policy Review / approval	Policy draft
2.	June 2025	Director of Learning and Contract Performance and Relationships	Policy Review	Updated Policy for 25-26
3.	June 2025	Policy Development Partner	Revised	Policy review – format changes, standardisation of policy draft, amended front page.

This policy and its annexes will be reviewed by the Audit & Risk Committee yearly.

1. Policy Overview

This document sets out the 2025-26 fee policy for learners on WEA courses (including branch provision).

WEA is dedicated to ensuring all adults can access high quality education in an affordable and flexible way. Our course fee structure is designed to meet Department for Education (“DfE”) rules but still allow for locally driven course fee decisions and provision of a financial support package.

WEA charges a course fee to learners where their personal circumstances don’t meet the Education & Skills Funding Agency’s or their respective Mayoral Combined Authority criteria for funding rules which support full fee remission. Charging a course fee is not only a requirement of our funders but also an important way for WEA to generate income to enable continued delivery of its educational mission and maintain financial sustainability.

2. Adult Skills Fund (ASF) Courses

This section applies to all courses which are funded through either the Department for Education (DfE) or Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA) grants and contracts.

The DfE and each MCA maintain a list of eligibility criteria for fee remission or reduction, and these sometimes differ between funders. Learners will be asked to provide suitable evidence matched to the relevant criteria.

For the latest eligibility criteria please visit [Low income & fee remissions | WEA](#).

Where the learner doesn’t meet the criteria for a funded course, DfE or the MCA will provide approximately 50% of the course cost and the learner will be required to pay course fees for the remaining balance. These fees are set out in the course information. In exceptional circumstances, we will be able to use funding from our hardship fund to assist with course fees for learners who need financial support to start or stay in learning.

Due to the devolution of Adult Skills Fund to MCAs, some additional restrictions on free courses may also apply. Please check with the Learner Support team for further information.

The minimum hourly rate a learner will pay for WEA courses in 2025/26 will be £8.00/hour which will be capped at 50% of the total funding available for the course where appropriate. This minimum rate applies to all courses.

Principles for fee setting:

- Course fees are set at the *hourly rate multiplied by the number of course hours. Any additional costs associated with the course must be specified (i.e., materials that the learners need to purchase and bring to the course) and clearly communicated to learners prior to enrolment.
- All fee-paying learners must be charged the minimum hourly rate set.
- Learners should be offered the option of paying above the hourly rate if they wish to do so and they can do this by making a donation using the link provided below: <http://www.wea.org.uk/get-involved/donate>

Late joiners

The full course fee is payable by late joiners, except where a place was unavailable to a learner at the course start date due to circumstances solely and exclusively within the WEA's control. In this case a pro-rata fee is payable based on the remaining course hours at the learner's joining date

Places for carers accompanying learners

Carers accompanying learners attend courses in a carer capacity not a learner one. Carers must not be asked to complete an enrolment form, included in the course register, counted in course learner numbers, or charged a course fee.

Refund Policy

If a learner has paid for a course or programme, refunds will be considered in the following circumstances:

1. Cancellation by the WEA due to:
 - a) Insufficient numbers of enrolled/paid learners for a course to run.
 - b) Tutor absence, where a substitute tutor cannot be found to cover the session(s) or the session(s) cannot be rescheduled.
2. If a learner has paid for a course or programme but cannot begin it because:
 - a) They have commenced paid employment that clashes with the time of the course or programme.
 - b) The learner has become sick, and the period of sickness is expected to last for the majority of the course or programme.
 - c) The learner has moved away from the area.

For the above circumstances, full refunds will be given on production of the receipt and evidence of the circumstance.

3. If a learner has paid for a course or programme but does not attend for other reasons, pro rata refunds will only be given to cover the remainder of the course in exceptional circumstances. Learners should submit a request stating the exceptional circumstance(s) to the Learner Support team.

Note: If a learner requests a refund because the course does not meet their needs, refunds will only be considered if the course information was misleading or inaccurate in any way. With a learner in this category, a meeting will be arranged to ensure that the learner's grievance is legitimate.