

Northamptonshire Adult Learning Service (NALS)

Adult Learning Fees Policy 2021 / 2022

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Version information

- V1 – updated August 2021 to include updated income threshold amounts.
 V2 – updated September 2021 to include tax credits as eligible benefit as requested by CB.
 V3 – updated 13th October 2021 to include information on piloted courses in section 2.1

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1. CONTEXT

1.1 INFORMATION ABOUT THE COST OF COURSES

Most NALS courses have some form of government funding which is received from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).

Course fees are correct at the time of publication but may change.

1.2 ELIGIBILITY FOR FUNDING

Most people will be eligible for funding if the learning is taking place in England and they are:

- aged 19 or over on 31st August of the funding year.
- a UK nationals and other persons with right of abode
- UK nationals in the EEA
- EEA nationals in the UK
- Other non-UK nationals

2. SKILLS COURSES

2.1 COURSES WHICH LEAD TO A QUALIFICATION (ACCREDITED COURSES)

- Learners who are eligible for full funding from the ESFA will not be charged a fee for any aspect of the course, including exams, resources or awarding organisation registration and fees. NALS will draw down 100% of the fee allocation as set by the ESFA.
- Learners who are eligible for co-funding as specified by the ESFA will be funded at a rate of 50% with a maximum of the other 50% being paid by the learner or employer. At the discretion of NALS, some courses may be charged at less than 50% for the learner.
- Learners who qualify for no funding will pay 100% of the fee as set by the ESFA. In this instance NALS draws down no funding from the ESFA
- Accredited courses that are funded as part of our Community Learning provision, for example, First Aid, will be charged a course fee of £5.50 per hour in line with charges for non accredited courses
- Accredited courses are priced according to the funded rate specified for the qualification in the ESFA funding rules.
- From time to time the service will pilot a new qualification course funded as a CL course. Regardless of whether they meet the criteria to participate free of charge no tuition fees will be charged when a course is being piloted. Learners who meet the criteria to receive the course free will not pay exam costs but all other learners will be required to pay the exam registration and associated costs if they wish to take the qualification at the end of the course.

2.2 ELIGIBILITY FOR A REDUCTION IN FEES ON SKILLS COURSES

Unemployed learners will not be charged for courses leading to a qualification and for funding purposes we define a learner as unemployed if one or more of the following apply and evidence is provided on request:

- 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 £345 a month (learner is sole adult in their benefit claim) or £552 a month (learner has a joint benefit claim with their partner)
- Are released on temporary licence, studying outside a prison environment, and not funded by the Ministry of Justice
- Receives other state benefits and their earned income (disregarding benefits) is less than £345 a month (learner is sole adult in their benefit claim) or £552 a month (learner has a joint benefit claim with their partner) and wants to be employed, or progress into more sustainable employment, and the learning is directly relevant to their employment prospects and the local labour market needs

Learners in receipt of low wage

We will fully fund learners who are employed and cannot contribute towards the cost of co-funding fees, if we are satisfied the following applies

- The learner is eligible for co-funding
- The learner earns less than £17,374.50 annual gross salary
- We have seen evidence of the learner's gross annual wages that supports this. This could be a wage slip within 3 months of the learner's learning start date, or a current employment contract which states gross monthly/annual wages.

3. COURSE FEES – COMMUNITY LEARNING COURSES

3.1 COMMUNITY LEARNING COURSES

Many Community Learning (non- accredited) courses, as detailed below, are fully funded by the ESFA

FAMILY LEARNING

Family Learning courses are free of charge and enable parents, carers and children to learn together. Family Learning courses also enable parents and carers to work towards qualifications up to Level 2 and to find out how to support their child at school and at home.

[Family Learning Webpage](#)

NEIGHBOURHOOD LEARNING

Neighbourhood Learning courses are free of charge and support local voluntary and other third sector organisations to develop their capacity to deliver learning opportunities for their users in community settings.

[Neighbourhood Learning Webpage](#)

LEARN2B

Learn2b courses are free of charge to anyone who lives with (or has experienced) a mental health disorder. Diagnosis is not essential.

[Learn2b Webpage](#)

HERE4U

Here4U courses are free of charge and focus on boosting self-confidence and raising self-esteem and can help break down barriers to learning while learning a new skill.

[Here4u Webpage](#)

INTRODUCTORY COURSES THAT PREPARE LEARNERS FOR ACCREDITED LEARNING

Courses are offered free of charge to support learners who are not sure if they want to commit to a longer qualification bearing course, or if it is right for them.

3.2 COMMUNITY LEARNING COURSES CO FUNDED BY THE ESFA

- The standard fee rate per hour is £5.50
- The remitted rate is 30% of the standard rate i.e. £1.65 per hour

- Non-EU and non-eligible learners will pay £8.20 per hour
- The registration fee of £5.00 is applicable to all courses except courses less than two hours long

3.3 COURSES DELIVERED ONLINE

- Online provision is fully funded or co funded at the same rates as face to face delivery and subject to the same Fees Policy

3.4 ELIGIBILITY FOR REMITTED FEE RATES ON CO FUNDED COMMUNITY LEARNING COURSES

If the non-accredited course is not part of the suite of Community Learning courses that are free of charge learners will pay 30% of the cost of the course 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 £345 a month (learner is sole adult in their benefit claim) or £552 a month (learner has a joint benefit claim with their partner)
- They receive Income support
- They receive Housing Benefit
- They receive Carer's allowance
- They receive a Council Tax reduction
- They receive Child Tax Credit and their household income is below £16,480
- They receive Working Tax Credit and their household income below £16,480
- They are aged 66 or over
- They earn less than £17,374.50 gross salary

Non accredited courses are priced according to a local agreement approved by Northamptonshire County Council

Learners in receipt of a benefit who qualify for a remitted fee or a free course must provide our business support team with suitable evidence to support their claim. Please email Adultlearning@northnorthants.gov.uk attaching a copy or image of your receipt of benefit. A list of accepted forms evidence can be found here ([link](#)). Please note, once suitable proof of benefit has been provided, ALS will not store copies of your evidence once your enrolment is confirmed.

Should learners fail to provide suitable evidence in advance of the course start they will be asked to pay a full fee for the place. Failure to do so will result in learners being asked to leave the course and may affect future enrolment on our courses.

3.5 DISCOUNTS AND INCENTIVES ON COURSES WHICH DO NOT LEAD TO A QUALIFICATION (NO CONCESSIONS)

At the discretion of the Service Manager, specific and targeted discounts or incentives may be agreed and marketed throughout the year.

4 FULL COST COURSES

4.1 FULL COST CLASSES

Full cost programmes are not government funded and will be charged at an hourly rate of £8.20. We reserve the right to amend fees to reflect market rates. There is no concessionary fee on full cost classes. Minimum numbers of learners on courses will apply to ensure these courses remain financially viable.

4.2 BESPOKE COURSES FOR EMPLOYERS AND BUSINESSES

Bespoke courses for employers, businesses and charities offered by NALS will be costed and charged on a case by case basis. Accreditation costs (exam fees) are not included. Refreshments and lunch can be arranged at an additional cost.

5 FINANCIAL SUPPORT

5.1 FINANCIAL HELP FOR SKILLS COURSES

NALS offers limited financial assistance from a Discretionary Learner Support Fund (DLSF) (for those aged 19+) to assist with cases of hardship related to, for example, childcare (for those aged 20+) and transport, according to ESFA regulations. In some cases, the DLSF can also support with fees if the learner does not meet the eligibility criteria to receive the course free of charge.

5.2 FINANCIAL HELP FOR COMMUNITY LEARNING COURSES

A bursary fund will be made available to distribute to learners to assist with learning resources, childcare, tuition fees and travel in cases of exceptional financial hardship.

6 REFUNDS AND COURSE CANCELLATIONS

A refund of course fees will be made on the following basis

- **Minimum Numbers, Cancellations and Refunds**
Decisions to run courses based on learner numbers are made up to 2 weeks before the start date. If numbers are low courses may be cancelled and you will be issued a full refund.
- **Cooling off period cancellations**
There is a 14 day cooling off period which commences the day the learner is enrolled on the system, not from the start date of the course. During this period the learner will have the right to cancel the course and obtain a full refund. Once the cooling off period has expired there is no obligation to make any refund. If the start date of the course occurs during the cooling off period, the learner will not be entitled to a refund.
- **Refunds relating to learner medical condition**



Refunds for leaving a course due to a learner's medical condition will only be given on proof of a doctor's certificate. The learner will receive a proportional refund of the fees paid in relation to the number of classes remaining. The refund will be dealt with from the date the doctor confirms the learner's medical condition.