

**Northamptonshire County Council**  
**Adult Learning Service (NCCALS)**  
**Fees Policy 2019-20**

## 1. Introduction

NCCALS is funded by a grant from the Education and Skills Funding Agency and in accordance with the conditions of this grant the service is expected to:

- Maximize access to adult skills and community learning for adults, bringing new opportunities and improving lives, whatever people's circumstances
- Focus public funding on people who are disadvantaged and least likely to participate, including in deprived communities and people on low income with low skills
- Collect fee income from people who can afford to pay and use where possible to extend provision to those who cannot
- Formally recognise 'Pound Plus' income
- Provide a service that maximises value for money and maintains the quality of the provision.

**Note:**

Pound Plus refers to the additional income and savings generated by providers over and above the core income contribution from the Adult Education budget. The Adult Learning Service receives a grant from the Education and Skills Funding Agency, which subsidises the majority of its provision, and the fees policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with any variations in the funding regulations and to support the service's strategic objectives, as outlined in the Adult Learning Service's strategy.

## 2. Background information

Programmes offered by the NCCALS provide opportunities for learners to gain skills and improve their wellbeing. The wellbeing benefits manifest themselves in personal development outcomes such as increased confidence, social and employability skills, and improved physical and emotional health.

The Adult Learning Service offers programmes within four thematic areas:

- **Learning for Wellbeing and Work**- Neighbourhood Learning, Learn2b, Here4u and Pathway2b
- **Learning for Life** – English, Maths and IT Functional Skills Programme, Family Learning, Essential Skills
- **Learning for Personal Development** - Personal Community Development Learning (PCDL).

Adult Skills and Community Learning provision for adult learners (aged 19+) is paid for by a combination of central government funding through the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and the fee paid by the learner (where applicable). The tuition fee is the fee charged by NCCALS to learners for the delivery of the learning activity. This tuition fee represents only a proportion of the full cost of the course, with the remainder being funded by the Adult Education Budget.

Learners will be expected to provide their own resources or, where available, purchase them from their tutor. Some learners will be eligible to apply for funding from the Bursary Fund for assistance to pay for resources (please see Bursary Fund below).

### 3. Fee paying provision

The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), through its Funding Rules, requires providers to seek fees from those who can afford to pay in order to ensure that the maximum amount of public funding can be focused on supporting and maximising the number of disadvantaged learners. Northamptonshire County Council makes charges to learners in universal (PCDL) provision.

The purpose of the PCDL programme is to provide learning for personal and community development, cultural enrichment, intellectual or creative stimulation and for enjoyment. These courses may offer limited opportunities for formal qualifications but their primary purpose is for learners to build confidence, gain skills to help them at home and at work and improve their mental and physical health.

### 4. Fees and charges 2019 - 2020:

Description of Charge	VAT Rating (Standard 20%)	2017 18 Fee £	2018 19 Fee £	2019 20 Fee £	Additional Notes/Supporting Information
<b>Hourly rate</b>	Exempt	5.50	5.50	5.50	One day courses (or longer) - £5.50 per hour plus £5 registration fee (courses with life models have an additional fee of £10 per learner)
<b>Two hour courses</b>	Exempt	11.00	11.00	11.00	Two hour courses - £5.50 per hour with registration fee waiver
<b>One hour courses</b>	Exempt	5.50	5.50	5.50	One hour courses - £5.50 with registration fee waiver
<b>Hourly rate</b>	Exempt	1.65	1.65	1.65	Calculated at 30% of the full fee (£5.50 per hour) plus a £5 registration fee
<b>Two hour courses</b>	Exempt	8.30	8.30	8.30	Two hour courses – 30% of full fee plus £5 registration fee

#### **Remitted fees:**

Concessions of 70% are available for those learners who are in receipt of the following benefit entitlements.

- Universal Credit
- Contribution-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Contribution-based Employment and Support Allowance
- Incapacity Benefit
- Guaranteed Pension Credits
- Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payment (PIP)
- Carers Allowance
- War Pension Credit

Adult learning will continue to accept the benefits listed below until Universal Credit is rolled out across the country:

- Working Tax Credit
- Child Tax Credit
- Housing Benefit
- Council Tax Benefit
- Income Support
- Income-based
- Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-based Employment
- Support Allowance

**Additional course costs:**

Many resources or accreditation costs are detailed in the course information provided. Eligible learners may be able to get support from the Learner Support Fund to assist with additional costs that they are unable to meet.

**Learners not eligible for ESFA funding:**

Learners who are not eligible for ESFA funding (see SFA Eligibility Rules) can join courses where places are available but priority will be given to eligible learners. Ineligible learners will pay the full cost recovery rate of £8.20 per hour, plus any additional courses costs, and are not eligible for Learner Support Funds, so must pay all exam and registration fees.

**Staff and Volunteer PCDL fee remission:**

The scheme is open to all staff employed by the Adult Learning Service for up to 40 free hours. To be eligible, tutors must be teaching in the current academic year. It is invaluable for associated staff to be able to experience our courses in order for them to have a better understanding of our service offers and this is offered as a CPD opportunity.

All eligible staff are:

- Entitled to a maximum number of free tuition hours during one academic year on viable courses that have spare places
- May book courses that are advertised in the brochure
- Are responsible for all other costs associated with their chosen course (where applicable, materials, and examination fees etc.)
- Can book on the understanding that if all of the courses that are allocated to them to teach are cancelled by Adult Learning, due to viability issues, their booking for that term will be honoured. Subsequent bookings made will be considered on an individual basis

However if the course becomes full with learners enrolled onto the waiting list, we will contact you to ask the tutor if they would like to pay for their place on the course, or use their staff hours to book onto another course. Staff cannot take up a paying place on a course using their staff hours if there is a waiting list.

**5. Learner Support Fund:**

The Adult Learning learner support fund is a non-repayable grant that can reduce the level of fees or contribute towards other expenses incurred such as childcare, course resources or transport.

These funds are available to all learners who have additional circumstances or are experiencing temporary financial hardship. Learner support fund is available to learners on ESFA/ASB funded courses.

The level of learner support fund awarded will vary from person to person depending on individual circumstances.

These funds are discretionary and are subject to the availability of learner support funds.

## **6. Refunds**

### **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 your course occurs during the cooling off period you 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.