



Student Fee Charging Policy

2026-27

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Student Fee Charging Policy 2025-26

Introduction and Policy Statement

This policy sets out the College's approach to charging fees and related costs, ensuring compliance with the Department for Education (DfE) guidance, the 16–19 Funding Regulations, the College Handbook (Managing Public Money), and other relevant public sector financial frameworks.

The College is committed to the appropriate stewardship of public funds and will ensure that all charges are:

- Lawful and in line with DfE funding rules
- Transparent and clearly communicated to students and stakeholders
- Fair, equitable and consistently applied
- Subject to appropriate governance, approval and review

This policy is approved by the Governing Body and reviewed annually. Interim updates may be implemented where required by changes in legislation or funding rules, subject to appropriate approval.

Scope and Principles

The College adheres to the following key principles derived from Managing Public Money:

- **Regularity:** All charges must comply with statutory and regulatory requirements
- **Propriety:** Decisions must meet high standards of conduct and fairness
- **Value for Money:** Charges should reflect efficient and effective use of resources
- **Transparency:** Students must be fully informed of any costs in advance

Charging practices will not act as a barrier to education for eligible students, particularly those aged 16–18

ID Badges

All students will be issued with an ID badge. A fee of £5.00 will be charged for any replacement badges.

Students must always wear their ID badge while on campus. The badge is also required for identification purposes during all College examinations. Please note that students will not be allowed to sit an examination or access their results without presenting a valid ID badge.

Student Entitlements (Free of Charge)

In line with DfE funding guidance, the following are provided free of charge to eligible 16–18 students:

- Tuition for funded study programmes
- First examination entry fees
- Access to teaching, learning materials and facilities
- Learning support assessment where required
- Careers education, information, advice and guidance

Additionally, the College provides:

- Contracted bus services (Warrington Westbrook, Widnes, Rainhill, Liverpool University routes only)
- Merseytravel bus pass (where eligibility criteria are met) Lost/replacement passes incur a fee of £11
- Initial print credit allocation
- Access to IT systems, internet and email
- £10 print credit at the start of the academic year
- Students studying BTEC and equivalent vocational courses receive £16 print credit at the start of the year (print charges are 4p per mono and 18p per colour A4 print)

Fees

Tuition Fees

All students, except full-time home students aged 16–18 with residency status, and those in exempt categories as defined by Department for Education legislation (see the Department for Education website for details) will be required to pay tuition fees.

- For international students or those not entitled to state-funded education aged 19 or over on 31 August 2026 they will be liable for tuition fees for each year of study. For the 2026/27 academic year, the annual fee is £5,882. Fees for part-time programmes will be charged on a pro rata basis.
- Tuition fees must be paid one calendar month prior to the course start date, unless otherwise agreed.
- Overseas students are required to pay their fees termly in advance, in three equal instalments.
- Alternative instalment arrangements may be made where agreed in advance with the Finance Department.

Fees are determined annually and approved through College governance arrangements. Part-time courses will be charged on a pro rata basis.

Payment Terms

- Fees are payable in advance of the course start date unless otherwise agreed
- Instalment plans may be approved in exceptional circumstances
- The College reserves the right to withdraw access to learning where fees remain unpaid, subject to safeguarding considerations

Fee Waivers

Fee remission or exemption will be applied strictly in accordance with DfE rules. Any discretionary waivers will:

- Be exceptional
- Require documented approval
- Be consistent with public sector accountability

Examination and Certification Fees

- First examination entry is funded for 16–18 students
- Charges may apply for re-sits or where eligibility conditions are not met
- The College may recover costs where:
 - Attendance or coursework requirements have not been fulfilled
 - A student fails to attend an examination without valid reason
 - A re-sit is requested

For students aged 19+, examination costs are normally included in tuition fees unless stated otherwise.

Educational Trips and Visits

Where trips are a required as a component of the programme:

- The College may charge for non-funded elements (e.g. travel, accommodation)
- Costs will be communicated clearly in advance

Optional activities outside programme requirements will be fully chargeable.

Financial support may be available through bursary or hardship funds to ensure equitable access

Work Placements

The College will fund mandatory compliance costs such as Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks where required for study programmes.

Books, Materials and Equipment

- Students may be required to purchase personal textbooks or specialist materials (e.g. art supplies)
- Loaned materials must be returned in good condition

Charges may be applied for loss or damage.

Refunds

- Full refunds will be provided where the College cancels a course
- Refunds will not normally be issued where a student withdraws after commencement
- Any exceptions must be approved in line with financial control procedures

Additional Charges (Non-Fee Items)

The College may recover costs for:

- Damage to property
- Replacement ID cards
- Printing and photocopying beyond allocated credit
- Other incidental services

All such charges will be reasonable, proportionate, and clearly communicated.

Late or Non-Payment

The College will:

- Apply proportionate processes for debt recovery
- Offer support and payment plans where appropriate
- Ensure actions taken are consistent with safeguarding and student welfare responsibilities

Penalty charges, if applied, must be reasonable and consistent with public sector guidance.

Overseas Students and Residency Rules

Eligibility for public funding is determined by DfE residency criteria. Students not meeting these criteria will:

- Be classified as fee-paying
- Be charged full-cost recovery fees

The College does not sponsor student visas and will not enrol students requiring a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS).

Bursary and Financial Support

The College administers the 16–19 Bursary Fund in line with DfE guidance:

- Awards are based on eligibility criteria
- Support is typically provided in-kind or through payments to third parties
- Additional hardship support may be available through discretionary funds

This ensures that financial barriers do not prevent participation.

Commercial and Non-Government Funded Provision

Courses may be delivered on a full-cost basis will:

- Be priced to achieve cost recovery (including overheads)
- Be approved through appropriate financial governance processes

Transport

The College provides subsidised or free transport where possible. Any paid services will be:

- Competitively priced
- Supported by College subsidy where appropriate
- Clearly communicated in advance

Governance and Publication

- This policy is published on the College website
- Implementation is overseen by senior leadership and the Governing Body
- Compliance is monitored through internal controls and audit

Equality and Accessibility

The College will ensure that its charging practices:

- Do not disadvantage protected groups
- Are consistent with the Equality Act 2010
- Support widening participation and inclusion

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if required by changes to legislation or DfE funding rules.