



Fees Policy

Lead officer	Rachael Crawford – Quality & Compliance Manager
Author	Rachael Crawford
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Fees Policy

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1. What this policy is about

The purpose of the adult skills fund (ASF) is to support adult learners in non-devolved areas to gain skills. These skills will lead them to meaningful, sustained, and relevant employment, or enable them to progress to further learning which will deliver that outcome.

It places a strong priority on supporting young people who are aged 19+ and not in education, employment or training (NEET). This includes those at risk of becoming NEET, by equipping them with the skills they need to progress into further learning or sustainable employment.

Within ASF, further provision for tailored learning is available that supports wider outcomes such as to improve health and wellbeing, equip parents or carers to support their child's learning, and develop stronger communities.

Responsibility for Adult Skills Funding has transferred from the Department for Education (DfE) to the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) on 16 September 2025. The DfE continues to implement the ASF on behalf of the DWP.

This policy and associated procedures apply to Acis Group and group of companies (including Riverside, CLIP, Skills Centre Plus and Abbey Access) learners, and it is expected that it will be applied within all our education delivery areas. This is referred to as 'The Group' throughout.

1.2 Why we need it

The purpose of our Fees Policy for 2026-2027 is to:

- Maximise access to learning programmes.
- Focus public funding on people who are disadvantaged and least likely to participate, including in rural areas 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.
- Ensure learning is affordable for all – particularly with current cost of living challenges.
- Ensure we deliver to the funding rules as set out by our various funders.

2. Who this policy applies to

Any adult learners, or young people within our education and skills service areas attending courses. It is also applicable to our people, volunteers, tenants, wider customers and Board members.

These rules apply in relation to all learners starting new ASF learning aims on or after 1 August 2026 and continuing learners as referenced in the below Who We Fund section.

3. Who we fund

We will fund:

- Continuing learners who are resident in devolved authority areas, who have not completed their learning by 31 July 2026, but started their learning before the authorities' devolution date with providers who have an Education and Skills funding agreement (grant)/accountability agreement only
- Residency – that the learner is eligible depending on where they reside at the start of each learning aim.
- Age - On the first day of learning a learner must be aged 19 or older on 31 August within funding year 2026 to 2027 to be DWP funded. The age of the learner on 31 August in the funding year determines whether the learner is funded for individuals aged 19 and over, or 19 and those aged 19 to 24 with an education health and care plan.
- Duration - Learners will be eligible for ASF for the whole of the learning aim or programme if they are eligible for funding at the start, even if the duration is for over one year. We will reassess the learner for any further learning they start.

Potential issues

If an individual starts a learning aim or programme and is not eligible for funding, we will not fund their learning while they remain ineligible.

Individuals who are not eligible for funding

We will not claim funding for individuals who do not meet the eligibility criteria set out in the residency eligibility section. Examples of individuals who do not meet the eligibility criteria include those:

- who are here without authority or lawful status
- who are resident in the UK on a student or graduate visa
- who are in the UK on holiday, with or without a visa
- who are in the UK on a sponsorship visa, including skilled worker visas and seasonal worker visas
- whose biometric residence permit or residence permit imposes a study prohibition or restriction on the individual

This list is not exhaustive.

4. Government Contribution Table

ASF funding is only available for eligible individuals residing in areas of England outside of devolved authority areas, which is determined by the learner's home postcode at the start of their qualification. Individuals resident in a devolved authority area cannot be funded by the ASF. The level of government contribution for funded ASF is as follows:

Table 1: 19 to 23-year-olds

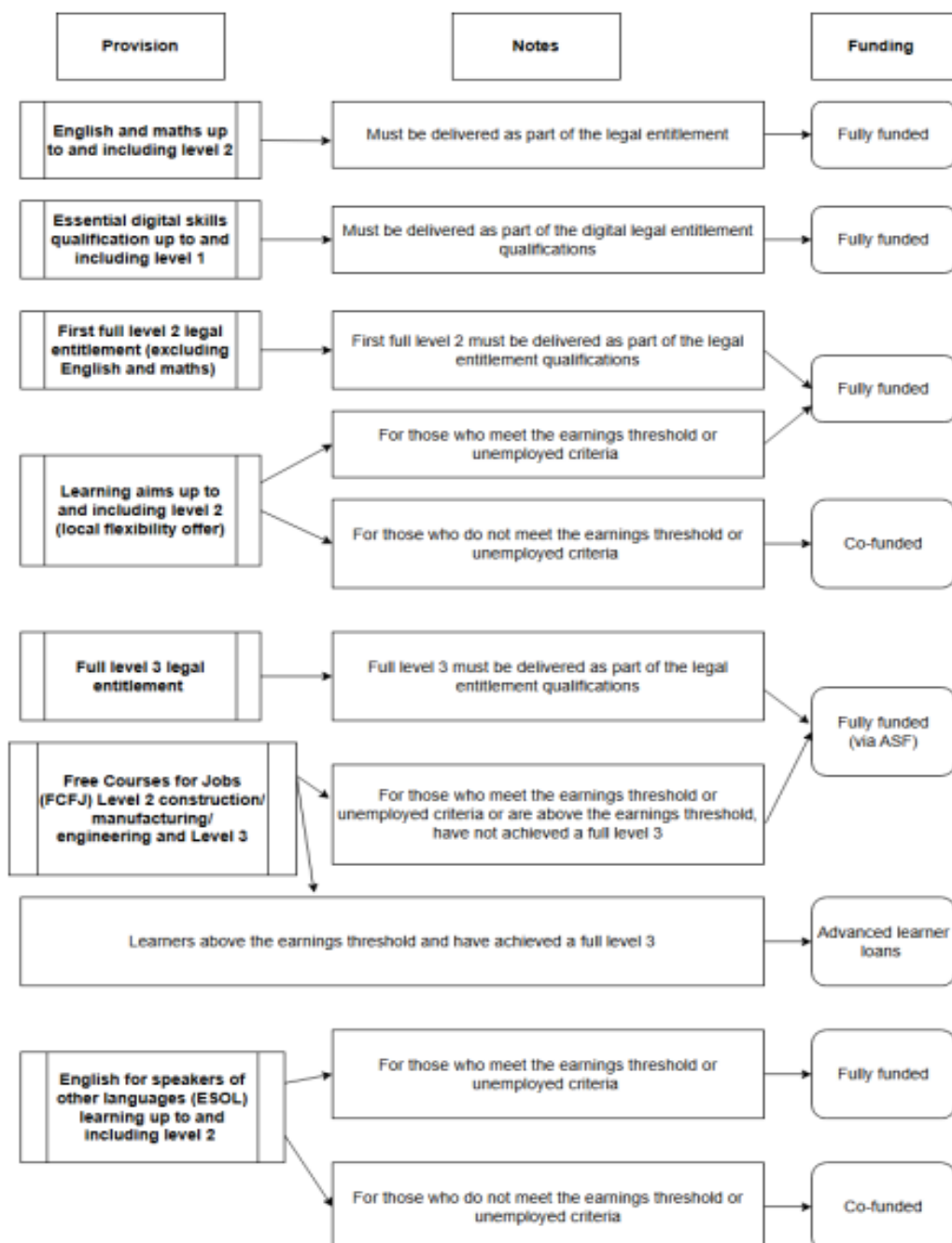
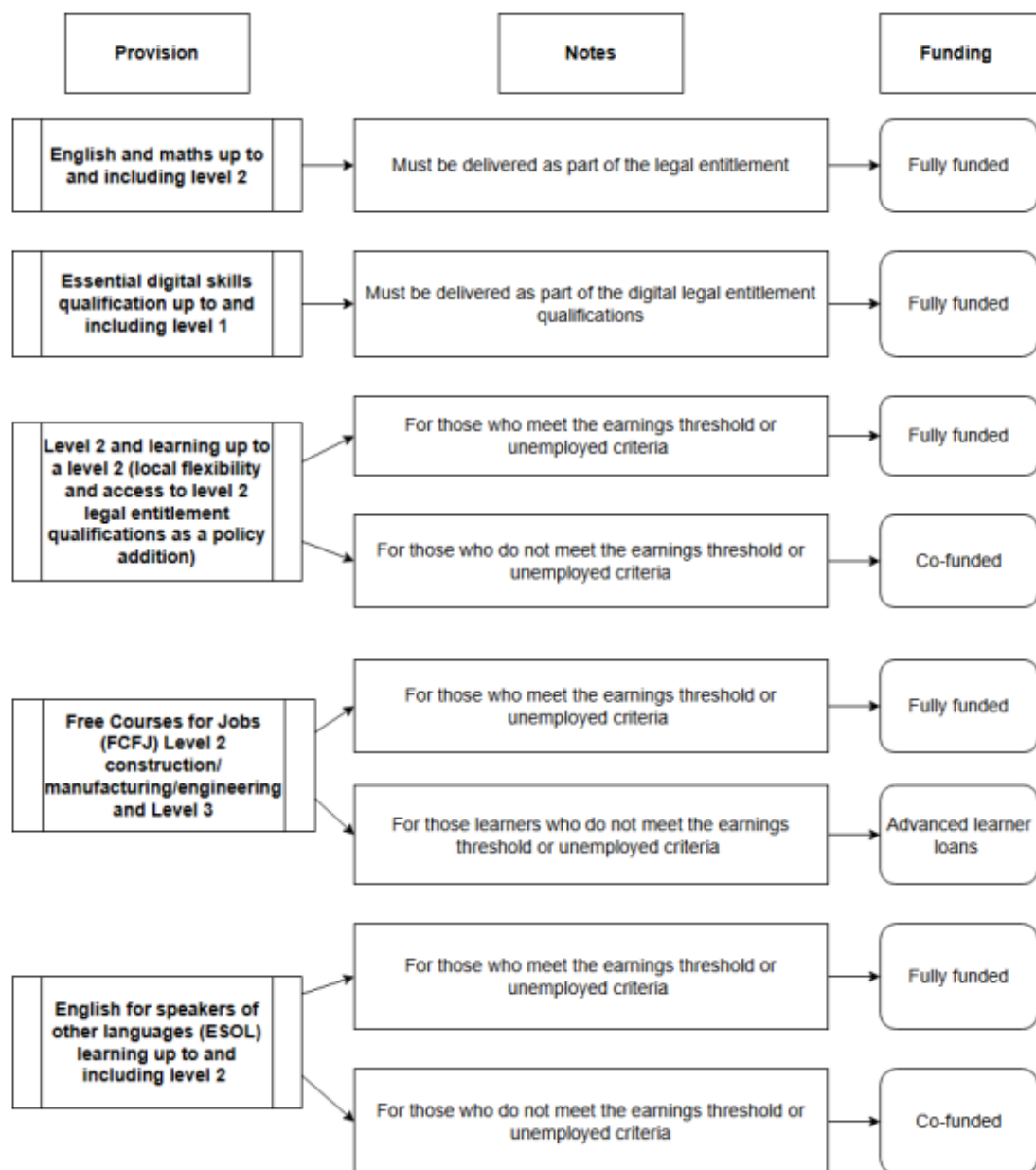


Table 2: 24+



Notes: Definitions used in the adult skills budget (ASF):

5. Earnings threshold

Eligibility for full funding is based on an earnings threshold. Learners who earn below **£26,800** will be fully funded. The policy entitlement includes learners who are unemployed, employed or self-employed. Learners can be funded up to and including Level 2 and the Level 3 offers.

Evidence must be seen of the learner's gross annual wages in these circumstances. This could be a wage slip or a UC statement within 3 months of the learner's learning start date,

or a current employment contract which states gross monthly/annual wages. Please note this is not an exhaustive list, but the decision to award full funding to an individual who would normally be eligible for co-funding must be evidenced.

Unemployed

The eligibility criteria for ASF funding includes having earnings below the threshold of £26,800. This includes individuals with no earnings, such as those who are unemployed or economically inactive.

The 4 legal entitlements

DWP funded ASF includes support for 4 legal entitlements to full funding for eligible adult learners.

These entitlements are set out in the Apprenticeships, Skills and Children Learning Act 2009, and enable eligible learners to be fully funded for the following qualifications:

- English and maths up to and including level 2 for individuals aged 19 and over who have not previously achieved a GCSE grade A* to C or grade 4 or higher, or have been assessed as having an existing skill level lower than grade 4 (even if they have previously achieved a GCSE or equivalent qualification in English or maths) • first full qualification at level 2 for individuals aged 19 to 23
- first full qualification at level 3 for individuals aged 19 to 23
- EDSQs or DFSQs, up to and including Level 1, for individuals aged 19 and over, who have digital skills assessed at below Level 1

The legal entitlements for Level 2 and Level 3 follow the definition of fullness in the full Level 2 and full Level 3 sections respectively. A learner can only be fully funded for one vocational qualification from the entitlement qualifications list when exercising their legal entitlement.

For fees for advanced learner loans no additional charges will be made for materials, examinations or any supplementary qualifications that support the main programme.

Note:

- (a) Where examination and registration fees are chargeable, those for supplementary (additional) subjects will be charged at full cost.
- (b) Where a full-time learner with a NIL tuition fee enrolls on a part-time course which is relevant to the full-time course, the part-time course will also attract a NIL fee.
- (c) The minimum tuition, examination or materials fee is £15.

Tailored Learning

As part of the Adult Skills Fund (ASF), tailored learning brings together what was AEB Community Learning, formula funded AEB non-regulated learning (previously delivered through adult skills) and any new employer facing innovative provision that is not qualification based.

Learners must be eligible for Adult Skills funding to be enrolled onto a Tailored Learning Programme.

The Primary purpose of tailored learning is to support learners into employment and to progress to further learning, in line with the overall purpose of the ASF. It will, however, also support wider outcomes including using it to improve health and wellbeing, equip parents / carers to support their child's learning and develop stronger communities.

Tailored Learning funding must not be used for learning that is: £26,800 will be used to determine whether learners will pay a fee.

Infill Onto Full-Time Courses

Where a learner needs to infill onto a unit or a module of a course which is fulltime, they should be charged for the element that they are undertaking.

Withdrawals

Course fees are still chargeable for learners who withdraw from a course for reasons not listed below.

Refunds

Due to risks of money laundering under the Proceeds of Crime Act refunds, when agreed, will only be made to the account holder and by the same payment method as the original payment was made, except where the original payment was made in cash or cheque, whereby the refund will be made by BACS.

Refunds will only be paid under the following basis:

- The organisation cancels the course:
 - A full refund is due.
- Learner withdrawal from a course in non-exceptional circumstances:
 - Courses of 24 weeks or longer (full-time and part-time) - If withdrawal is within the first six weeks, a full refund is due, subject to a £30 administration charge. After this time no refunds will be made.
 - Courses of more than 2 weeks but less than 24 weeks - If withdrawal is within the first two weeks, a full refund is due subject to a £30 administration charge. After this time no refunds will be made.
 - Courses of less than 2 weeks, if no more than one attendance, a full refund is due subject to a £30 administration charge. After this time no refunds will be made.
- The waiving of the £30 administration charge is at the discretion of the Delivery Manager.
- Learner withdrawal from a course in exceptional circumstances:
 - If a refund is deemed to be due for one of the reasons detailed in this section, the following rules are to be applied in calculating the amount:
 - Courses of 24 weeks or longer (full-time and part-time)
 - If withdrawal is within the first six weeks, a full refund is due.
 - If withdrawal is after six weeks, a part refund is due based on the proportion of the course completed.
 - Courses of more than 2 weeks but less than 24 weeks
 - If withdrawal is within the first two weeks, a full refund is due.
 - If withdrawal is after two weeks, a part refund is due based on the proportion of the course completed.
 - Courses of less than 2 weeks
 - If withdrawal is after one attendance, a full refund is due.

- If withdrawal is after more than one attendance, a part refund is due based on the proportion of the course completed.
- Exceptional circumstances where refunds can be considered are:
 - The student transferring to another course where the difference in fee can be refunded or becomes due under the authority of the Delivery Manager.
 - Serious illness or hospitalisation evidenced by a medical certificate under the authority of the Delivery Manager.
 - Serious illness or hospitalisation of a partner, parent or child necessitating full-time care by the learner evidenced by a medical certificate under the authority of the Delivery Manager.
 - Misinformation about course fees and costs if the learner can demonstrate this clearly to the Delivery Manager.
 - Poor quality of service if a complaint has been upheld through the Organisation's complaints procedure. Under the authority of the Delivery Manager if appropriate.
 - Other exceptional circumstances can be considered at the discretion of the Delivery Manager.

Private Candidates – GCSE Examination Fees

- £150 per subject – Covers non-refundable exam registration and access to sit the examination(s).
- £300 – Additional charge for late registrations received after 31st January 2027.
- Private candidates who withdraw from an examination will be eligible for a refund, subject to a £30 administration fee per cancellation, if the request is made before entries close.

Private Candidates – Functional Skills Examination Fees

- £58 for maths functional skills
- £118 for English
- £30 Partial refunds can be given if at least 2 weeks before the exam; less £30 administration fee.

6. Commercial Course Fees

Course Fees/Charges to Abbey Access Training will make the following charges for its range of Commercial Programmes per person:

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| • Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS)
Training, Test and card | £260.00 |
| • Fire Safety Awareness | £50.00 |
| • Manual Handling Awareness | £50.00 |
| • Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) | £50.00 |
| • Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) | £50.00 |
| • Working at Height Awareness | £50.00 |
| • UKATA Asbestos Awareness | £50.00 |
| • Level 2 Food Safety Awareness | £50.00 |