

Learner Fees Policy 2025/26

This is confirmation that The Thrive Tribe Collective Ltd abides by Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority (GLCCA) funded Adult Skills Fund funding rules and Learner Fees Policy 2026/27. A copy is below for reference.

Adult Education Budget funding – non-qualification courses

All Adult Learning Providers must adhere to the Learner Fees Policy

Introduction:

In line with the Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority (GLCCA) funded Adult Skills Fund funding rules, and to support Lincolnshire County Council's (LCC) widening participation policy, the purpose of the Adult Learning Programme's Fees Policy 2026/27 is to:

- Maximise access to Adult Learning course 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 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.

Background Information:

Adult Learning provision for adult learners (aged 19+) is paid for by a combination of government funding via the GLCCA and the fee paid by the learner (where applicable). The tuition fee is the fee charged by the Learning Provider 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 paid for with grants from central government.

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 Learner Support Fund for assistance to pay for resources (please see Learner Support Fund below)

To support local needs, and LCC's policy, target groups of learners are able to access concessions on the tuition fee, as detailed in concessions below.

In 2026/27, in order to focus public funding on people who are disadvantaged and least likely to participate in Adult Skills programmes, fee concessions are available for learners on benefit in skills training only. The definition of courses that deliver skills training is at the discretion of the Learning Provider.

Fee Paying Provision

The GLCCA 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. For example, where appropriate, Providers could consider full cost recovery for repeat learners who register for similar courses over a period of several years.

To comply with the guidelines, and to support GLCCA Policy Providers are required to collect fee income, where appropriate. Fee income collected is to be utilised, by the fee collecting Provider, to extend provision and widen participation, including funding learner support to remove barriers to participation (e.g. subsidise childcare). Evidence will be available on request, along with an annual summary of utilisation of fee income. Failure to comply will result in fees collected by the Provider being forwarded to the Adult Learning Programme team for re-distribution in line with this principle.

Fees

Fees are based on an hourly rate. Fees are payable at the beginning of each course as part of the enrolment process.

Learners will be charged a fee for the learning they receive. There are three fee rates:

1. Full Fee
2. Reduced Fee
3. Fee Exempt

Fees can be charged up to £5.00 per guided learning hour (GLH) (maximum) **

** The aim of the Fees Policy is to standardise the levying of fees for learning provision across the county in a way that is fair and transparent so that adults within Lincolnshire are treated equitably by each delivery partner within the Adult Learning Provider Network. However, it is recognised that there will be regional constraints and differing course content due to the needs of learners and the locality.

In order to ensure Providers are able to meet the needs of their community they have a certain amount of discretion when applying the Fees Policy. Providers can charge up to £5.00/hour for some Adult Skills provision that will support learners into work. However, it is anticipated that some provision will be charged at a lower rate in order to meet the needs of the curriculum. Providers will outline in their own Fees Policy what fees will be charged to best meet the needs of their local community.

Provision In Areas Of Deprivation/Rural Areas

In order to support learners in deprived/rural areas, targeted courses in these areas aimed at improving job prospects and learner confidence may be delivered free of charge. Areas in Lincolnshire that apply are detailed below.

Boston Fenside	Mablethorpe	Lincoln Park
Boston Staniland	Lincoln Abbey	Sutton Bridge
Boston Witham	Lincoln Birchwood	Grantham Earlsfield
Chapel St. Leonards	Lincoln Castle	Grantham Harrowby
Ingoldmells	Lincoln Glebe	Gainsborough East
Scarborough & Seacroft	Lincoln Hartsholme	Gainsborough North

Skegness St. Clements	Lincoln Minster	Gainsborough South East
Wainfleet	Lincoln Moorland	

Fee Exempt Provision

These courses are paid for by government funding through the GLCCA. There are no fees and charges for these courses.

- Courses specifically for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LLDD)
- The Course Proposal must state that the course is LLDD and the course must be only eligible to learners who have a learning difficulty or disability
- Courses where the main learning aim is English (excluding ESOL) or maths
- Digital Skills courses
- Family English, maths and language courses
- Wider/other Family Learning courses

Learners in receipt of the following income based state benefits are Fee Exempt:

- Active Benefits:
 - Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) (including receiving National Insurance Credits only)
 - Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
 - Universal Credit where their annual income is less than £26,800.
 - An offender released on a temporary licence, studying outside a prison environment, and not funded by the Ministry of Justice
 - An individual who is Economically Inactive because they are unable to claim income related state benefits
 - An individual who earns less than £26,800 annual gross salary, and on the assumption of a 37.5hr contract with paid statutory holiday entitlement
- To confirm eligibility Providers must:
 - see and keep supporting evidence in the learner file, for example, this could be Learner Fees Policy (non-qualification courses) 2026-27 a wage slip within 3-months of the learner's learning start date,

Providers may also use their discretion to fully fund other learners if both of the following apply: the learner:

- Receives other state benefits (not listed above) and their total income is less than £26,800
- Wants to be employed or progress into more sustainable employment, and the Provider is satisfied identified learning is directly relevant to their employment prospects and the local labour market needs.

Evidencing Fee Exemption

- To be eligible for fee exemption learners must provide appropriate written evidence. Providers should retain copies of the evidence and make them available for audit.

- Learner evidence which is inappropriate will result in the learner being charged a Full Fee rate.

General Concessions:

- Concessions will also be available for learners aged 65 or over on 31st August 2026 (at 25%)
- Concessions will also be available for ex-service personnel disabled in service (50%)

Discretionary Remissions:

There are some categories of learners, for example but not exclusively travellers, the homeless and hostel dwellers who, whilst not necessarily in receipt of benefits, are clearly unable to contribute to the cost of their learning. In such instances, the Adult Skills & Family Learning Service may agree discretionary fee remission to groups of learners or individual learners without the prior consent of the DFE. Records of all such discretionary remissions will be retained.

Refunds

A full refund of course fees will only be given if the Learning Provider cancels the course. If the learner withdraws from a course which has already started, depending on their circumstances, learners may be offered a pro-rata refund. A £5 administration charge is applicable.

Learner Support Fund

The Learner Support Fund aims to remove financial barriers to learning. Financial support is available for learners who would otherwise not be able to access the learning provision offered. This fund can help pay for specialist equipment, transport assistance, childcare and course resources. Please contact the Customer Service Centre on 01522 782011 for information on the Learner Support Fund.

Review and Evaluation

This document is revised on an annual basis, but is subject to LCC, key stakeholders and DFE policy in-year updates which may require further publication. The revised document will be published in July 2026 at: [Key Documents - 2aspire Lincolnshire](#).

All Adult Learning Providers delivering non-qualification courses from Lincolnshire County Council's ASF funding must adhere to this Learner Fees Policy and abide by the DFE funding guidance: [GLCCA Funding Rules](#).

To be disseminated to: All staff / Service users / Subcontractors		
Authorised by: Director	Issue Date: August 2026	Review Due: August 2027
Amendments:		

