

Adult Learning and Skills

Course fees statement

Wigan Adult Learning and Skills aims to provide as much free provision for as many residents of the borough as possible, where there is an education or skills gap. Our funding is received from Greater Manchester Combined Authority, who expect us to set fees for some courses, the government view being that adults who can afford to pay for learning should pay, and public subsidy should be targeted at the most disadvantaged learners.

English, maths, and digital courses are offered free for all adults who need them, at level 2 or below.

Any income generated from fees will be used to fund more courses and growth. The fee policy is based on a rate comparable to other local providers who run similar courses.

Wigan Adult Learning and Skills - Fees Statement

- Adult Learners who are on an Income-based benefit, or who earn less than £25,000 annual gross salary, will not pay course fees. When we say 'earn' we mean through either employment or through a pension.
- Further fee exemptions apply to Adult Learners depending upon their prior learning attainments – please phone our admin team on 01942 489758 for details if you have been asked to pay a fee but wish to find out if you may be exempt.
- Skills for Life / Functional Skills - Adult literacy and numeracy / Family Learning literacy, numeracy courses & Digital Skills courses are free (this is a national Adult Learning policy)
- Very short tasters or workshops, comprising of one session, can be free, as a tool to encourage learners to progress to further learning.
- Courses targeting specific vulnerable groups are often free for learners.
- We do not charge an 'Admin', 'Joining' or registration fee.

For specialist courses and courses commissioned by another organisation or with sponsorship from employers, a higher fee should be charged to cover costs.



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Wigan Adult Learning and Skills – Fee Remission Policy

Remission of Fees

Courses are free to learners in receipt of an income based / means tested benefit. Courses are also free for all learners who individually earn less than £25,000 annual gross salary.

Fee Remission categories

If you are...	Tuition & exam fees	What to bring as proof of entitlement
In receipt of an income-based benefit such as Universal Credit or ESA	No charge to learner	Letter or official document
In receipt of an individual income of no more than £25,000 before deductions	No charge to learner	Wage slip or P60 etc
In receipt of Pension Credits (Guarantee Credit only)	No charge to learner	Award notice or letter etc
Offender serving a sentence in the community	No charge to learner	Letter from Probation service
Taking an English, Maths or Digital Skills course	No charge to learner	Subject to status of course
Unwaged dependants of those listed above*	No charge to learner	Evidence of partner's entitlement
Registered unemployed, but not in receipt of benefit	No charge to learner	Letter from Job Centre Plus

Evidence

- All proof of entitlement must be produced at the time of enrolment and by the 2nd teaching session.
- Proof of entitlement must be current or dated within the last 3 months.

Failure to supply required evidence may result in the relevant course fee being charged to the learner.



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Examination, registration and certification costs

Exam and certification will be absorbed by the Adult Learning and Skills team, for most adult learners, in the 2024-25 academic year, exceptions being:

- where a learner is an employee of or is a client of another organisation, and costs can be recovered from that organisation by way of invoicing.
- where the course lies outside of the funded provision, for example, Equality and Diversity Training
- where learners cannot evidence fee remission category as detailed above

Refund of fees

We know that sometimes there is a genuine reason to ask for a refund. Refunds can be offered for the following reasons:

- where the course closes as a result of lack of numbers to make the class viable
- where a class is cancelled by the service for any reason
- the meeting times, venue or day of the class are changed so that it is no longer possible for an individual to attend.
- a learner enrolls in advance of the course starting and pays a fee but prior to the course starting their circumstances change so that they are entitled to a free class. Note this would not apply once the course has started.
- in addition, a refund may be offered where personal circumstances change so that it is impossible to attend the class.

Appeals

In exceptional circumstances learners who are not eligible for fee remission can appeal, in writing for the attention of the Contracts and Performance Manager, to be considered for fee remission. Contact is adultlearning@wigan.gov.uk

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually considering national changes in funding for adults.



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