



Adult Learning Fees Policy 2023-24

Southampton City Council Adult Learning

Southampton City Council uses a commissioning model across its services, and subcontracts its Adult Education Budget (AEB) budget provision to:

- Ensure value for money in line with our Procurement Strategy and Contract Procurement Rules, and Pound Plus;
- Provide a responsive and flexible service to learners, and
- Offer a wide range of courses and venues to utilise the experience and expertise of many different Subcontractors.

Around 65% of provision (in terms of enrolments – 93% by funding) is delivered via external sub-contractors who are appointed via a four year framework running from July 2019 – July 2024. The rest is delivered by internal delivery partners. All subcontractors have formal contractual agreements which clearly lay out the rights and responsibilities on both sides of the subcontracting agreement for the full length of the framework. Call-off contracts are entered into each academic year which detail delivery for that year.

Subcontractors Fee Policies

It is a contractual requirement that all SCC commissioned Subcontractors must have a written fees policy for their clients. A written template for this can be supplied if requested but the Service will accept the Subcontractor's own policy as long as it meets the stated requirements detailed below as set out by the ESFA.

1. Compulsory Charges

The Adult Education Budget Funding and Performance Management Rules require that Subcontractors must not make compulsory charges relating to the direct costs of delivering a learning aim to learners they fully fund, including those with a statutory entitlement to full funding for their learning. Direct costs include any essential activities or materials without which the learner could not complete and achieve their learning.

If a fully funded learner needs a Disclosure and Barring Service check to participate in learning, Subcontractors cannot charge them for this.

2. Local Fee Remission Policy

Subcontractors must have in place and operate a fair and transparent community learning local fee remission policy that requires individuals to pay a course / tuition / joining fee, but also sets out clear eligibility criteria for those individuals who, due to their circumstances, qualify for either partial or total fee remission.

3. Learner Support

Learner support relates to discretionary support for learners on courses that are expected to enhance their skills, competence or personal development, so as to contribute to their future training, education, employability or self-employment, e.g. transport; assistance toward crèche facilities. It is likely that were such support not available, some learners may be excluded from the provision.

Subcontractors should request funding for learner support via email to Southampton City Council Adult learning team, outlining specific details of the level of support required. The funding is allocated on an individual learner basis, according to the resource available. As the Service does not receive any funding to support this, the learner need would have to be exceptional for any support to be given.

4. Learning Support

Learning support refers to arrangements that are required to provide direct additional support for learning by individual learners, over and above that which is normally provided in a standard learning programme. The additional learning support is required to help learners progress towards and successfully achieve, their learning goals.

The need for additional support may arise from a learning difficulty or disability, or from literacy, numeracy or language support requirements, e.g. specialist computer keyboard or mouse for a disabled learner; specialist software for a blind student; or additional / specialist advice and guidance at the end of a course to enable progression.

Subcontractors should request funding for learning support, outlining specific details of level of support required. The funding is allocated on an individual learner basis.

Evidence of expenditure for learner and learning support will be required for audit purposes. Any learning support equipment purchased will remain the property of Southampton Council.

5. Crèche Support on Family Programmes

Family programmes aim to encourage family members to learn together and the funding includes an element to cover the costs for the children enrolled on the course. As such, no claims for crèche costs should be made relating to the children on the course. Learner support relating to crèche facilities for children that are not enrolled on the course, for example younger siblings, may be requested but a clear distinction needs to be made between those children on the course and those for which a crèche is required. All appropriate crèche costs should be included in the initial funding bid made as part of the annual mini-competition. Crèche costs cannot be claimed separately once the funding for the course have been agreed.