



## **FEES POLICY 2016/2017**

### **1 Policy Objectives**

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework within which BL Training's fee setting and fee refund processes will be devised and operated. The policy also sets a framework for ensuring that comprehensive guidance and information regarding fees for courses subsidised etc. is available and accessible to customers and learners, staff and Directors. The policy has been written in accordance with guidance from our funding bodies.

The fees policy has been written in accordance to funding guidelines applicable to the company's partnership arrangements with the SFA/EFA/ESF guidelines. BL Training Ltd are a registered training provider on the ROTO register. BL Training produce and annually revise a document which outlines learner eligibility for courses and funding support/fee descriptors; please refer to the **ASS 016B 'Recruitment and Eligibility Guide'**

### **2 Approval of company fees policy**

2.1 The Fees Policy and any subsequent amendments to this policy will require the approval of the Directors.

2.2 The Policy will be reviewed annually and any changes recommended will be referred for approval to the Directors.

### **3 Policy Statement**

3.1 The company reserves the right to cancel any course or change its charging policy where its costs may result in financial loss; cancel any course where there is lack of appropriate resources; and/or refuse entry to a course on any non-discriminatory grounds.

### **4 External Funding Agencies**

4.1 The Skills Funding Agency/ESF provides funding for learners who: Are on Apprenticeships:

- Are aged 15 or above and have left compulsory education for apprenticeships
- Are aged 16-18 at 31 August in the start year of their programme;
- Are aged 19 or above on 31 August within the funding year in question (co-funded)
- ASB allocation for 'other than' apprenticeship training as described in SFA contract value
- Are on a 16-18 Traineeships

## **5 National Fee Guidelines**

- 5.1 BLT follows the SFA Funding rules to identify all learners who are eligible for fee remission or part funded at 50% of the funding value for the learning aim (based on eligibility).
- 5.2 If we offer a qualification that the SFA would fund through grant funding or would be eligible to be funded through a Loan, but have decided to offer the qualification only as a commercial 'full-cost' opportunity, we would tell the learner this and that other providers may offer alternative funding routes. This will enable the learner to make an informed decision on how they wish to proceed.
- 5.3 The values of Skills Funding Agency (SFA) and Education Funding Agency (EFA) approved courses are published on the Learning Aim Reference Service (LARS). BL Training Ltd fees for such courses are set in accordance with these published values. BL Training summarise these costs/values on a spreadsheet named '**BL Course Costs and funding Information**' to identify the fees charged for private delivery.
- 5.4 The EFA and SFA publish the criteria against which learners are assessed for eligibility to public funding for approved further education courses. These criteria can be found at appendix Annex /link to funding rules.
- 5.5 Learners who are continuing on learning aim which they enrolled to in 2014/15 will continue to be entitled to the same remission conditions that were operational at the time of their commencement of their study on that learning aim.
- 5.6 Enrolments to new learning aims starting in 2015/16 will be subject to the relevant funding body's eligibility criteria for 2015/16.
- 5.7 If the learner is 24 or over when they start their learning, and provision is at level 3 or 4, and not part of an advanced-level or higher Apprenticeship, the provision is not supported by the Adult Skills Budget but may be supported by a Loan.

## **6 24+ Advanced Learning Loans**

- 6.1 From 2013/14 public funding of Level 3 and 4 courses for those aged 24 and above at the start of their programme will be replaced by loans. Learners will be issued with a 'Learning funding and Information letter' to support application and help establish eligibility for loan application including minimum loan threshold.
- 6.2 Applications for 24+ Advanced Learning Loans must be made to the Student Loan Company.
- 6.3 Learners not wishing to enter into a loan agreement will be liable for payment of the relevant course fee or any up-front fees not covered by loans pre payable at the time of enrolment.
- 6.4 The maximum loan which will be awarded will be the lower of:
- The provider fee
  - The published funding rate per the LARA
  - The amount requested by the learner
- 6.5 The minimum value of a loan is £300.
- 6.6 Fees funded by Loans are paid to BL Training Ltd, directly by the Student Loan Company. Payments are made on a monthly basis for each month when the learner is still active on their course on the first day of the month. The value of the loan for which the learner becomes liable will increase with each monthly payment made to BL Training. **It is therefore in the learner's best interest to inform the BL Training of any change to their circumstances as early as possible.**

## **7 Young People aged 16-18**

- 7.1 In accordance with EFA/SFA regulations, if the programme is fully funded we will not make compulsory charges relating to the direct costs of delivering a learning aim. By direct costs we mean administration, registration, assessment, materials or examination costs. We may however, charge

for identification passes, uniforms, tools and materials where the learner cannot achieve their learning aim without them but this will be agreed in advance with the learner.

7.2 Materials fees, reflecting actual costs, may also be charged if appropriate and agreed with learner in advance. Any additional trips, external events which we may promote to support the learning experience will be charged for but will be an optional element of the programme and not compulsory to attend.

## **8 Adult Learners (those aged 19 and above)**

8.1 As a general principle, (excluding provision covered by 24+ Advanced Learning Loans) the default fee level will be 50% of the standard course fee.

8.2 If applicable, we may pass on subscription charges, made by professional bodies to become a member of that organisation, to the learner or their employer if the learner is aged 19 or over. If achieving the learning aim relies on membership, this payment will become a requirement of enrolling. If eligible, we may be able to use DLS funding to pay professional fees. In the case of a learner funded through a Loan, this would be from the Loans Bursary Fund, however this will be based on the application and decision made by SFA/EFA.

## **9 Apprenticeships (work based learning)**

9.1 Government policy is that Apprenticeships are the preferred work based learning (WBL) route for all young people aged 16 to 24 who are capable of achieving NVQs at levels 2 and 3.

- Employers are not expected to contribute to the training costs of 16-18-year-old learners.
- For learners aged 19 or over, employers are expected to contribute to the cost of training balance of the LARS fee less an SFA subsidy or amount funded by a 24+ Advanced Learning Loan. This may be amended at the discretionary agreement of the Directors and Employer Engagement. If the employer is providing additional training support which will contribute to the cost of delivery.

## **10 Managing Agents and Partnership Agreements**

10.1 This relates to fees paid to BL Training by other organisations in receipt of SFA/EFA funding, for education provided by the company. Directors are responsible for negotiating these with the recipient organisations in accordance with agreed company protocols. Fees are to be approved by the Directors and are to be reviewed annually.

10.2 Where courses are delivered by partners on behalf of BL Training, the company will agree with the partner whether the company or the partner will collect fees and the two parties will account between each other for the fees collected.

## **11 Full cost and enhanced fee courses**

11.1 Fees for commercial courses or cost recovery will be priced at a level to reflect the full price to the company, with cognisance of the market. Any new courses are subject to a 'Sales strategy' being completed and submitted to Directors for approval.

11.2 Fees are based on the recovery of full costs including overheads and therefore will differ between courses. All commercial courses need to achieve the target financial contribution unless otherwise agreed by Directors. Methods of payment: The payment methods that we accept are cash, cheque, bank transfer and PayPal. The admin fees for using PayPal as a method of payment are 3.4% of invoiced amount plus a 20p transaction fee. The PayPal method allows the fee payer the additional option of paying by credit card as well as by BACCs transfer and cheque. The PayPal fees are deducted directly from the monies we receive via PayPal so this 'admin fee' will be added to the course fees total and deducted from the learners account.

11.3 Learners who, through their own volition, have failed to complete their learning programme, within the agreed contract period will be required to pay any additional costs associated with this extension. Charges will be made to cover any resource, materials or travel costs; tuition will be charged £65 per contact hour. This may be amended at the discretion of the Directors.

11.4 If learners do not attend any fee paying workshops / courses, they will not automatically be reimbursed, as the company reserves the right to cover staff and training arrangement costs, which may have been taken up by another learner.

## **12 Fees waived/Discounts**

12.1 Only with the express permission of the Directors should fees be waived.

12.2 Where the fee charged by the company is considered not to be competitive with other providers, evidence of this should be presented to the company and if a reduction in the fee is considered necessary, agreement should be sought from the Directors however this may not always be granted based on the particulars of each case.

12.3 Where an external company has contracted with BL Training to deliver a privately funded programme, we may offer a discount if the company has a group of learners.

## **13 Refunds**

13.1 If a learner has paid their fees and is successful in obtaining a loan via the Student Loan Company a full refund will be made to the learner, if no learning has taken place. If funded via a student loan the SLC will only pay BL training what has been delivered year to date based on evidence from attendance. (As directed in SFA funding guidelines)

13.2 If a learner pays privately then leaves their course once inducted and delivery has started but does not complete the course, no refund will be given as the company reserve the right to keep funds to cover course running costs.

13.3 if a learner does not attend a one-day workshop previously booked and paid for, a refund will not be automatically being given.

Funded by

