
LIFELONG LEARNING CHARGES 2011/12

**Responsible Cabinet Member – Councillor Cyndi Hughes,
Children and Young People Portfolio**

Responsible Director – Murray Rose, Director of People

REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To request approval to amend Appendix 9 of the Revenue Budget 2011-12.

Summary

2. The Medium Term Financial Plan 2011-2015 and the Revenue Budget 2011-12 were approved by Council on 3 March 2011. Part of that Budget (**Appendix 9**) included a Schedule of Charges for Lifelong Learning.
3. The basis for some of those charges is determined by the Skills Funding Agency and in particular their Learner Eligibility and Contribution Rules. These rules have seen some changes for Academic Year 2011/2012. These changes were made after the 3 March.
4. The significant change is that previously anyone on a means-tested benefit such as housing benefit or income support would have been eligible for free courses. From 1 August 2011 this will no longer be the case and only those individuals on ‘active employability benefits’, that is, Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) or Employment and Support Allowance in the Work Related Activity Group (ESA (WRAG)) will be eligible for free courses.
5. The remainder of the groups eligible for full fee remission are relatively unchanged, although the wording has been changed to reflect the new guidance.

Outcome of Consultation

6. No consultation has been carried out in relation to the specific content of this report

Recommendation

7. It is recommended that Cabinet approves the amendment to Appendix 9 of the 2011-12 MTFP.

Reasons

8. The recommendation is supported as should the decision be made not to approve this proposal it will result in reduced income to the Council. This is due to the fact that where the Skills Funding Agency determines a course should be free for a particular priority group the Council can draw down 100% of the course funding, but for those that are not declared as priority groups the Skills Funding Agency only pays 50% of the costs and the Council is expected to recover the remaining 50% from the learner.

Murray Rose
Director of People

Background Papers

- (i) Skills Funding Agency Learner Eligibility and Contribution Rules 2011/12
- (ii) The Medium Term Financial Plan 2011-2015 and the Revenue Budget 2011-12 Appendix 9

Paul Richardson Extension 6015

S17 Crime and Disorder	This decision does not have an impact
Health and Well Being	This decision does not have an impact
Carbon Impact	This decision will not have an impact
Diversity	This decision will not have an impact
Wards Affected	All wards as this change impacts at a national level
Groups Affected	Those aged 19+ and on means tested benefits
Budget and Policy Framework	This report proposes changes to the planned revenue budget.
Key Decision	This is a key decision due to the impact on vulnerable adults across all wards
Urgent Decision	This is no an urgent decision
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	These changes will impact on the work of Prosperous Darlington in that is reduces the number of adults seeking up-skilling who will be eligible for free courses and will only target those on active employability benefits.
Efficiency	This decision will not have an impact

SCHEDULE OF CHARGES 2011/12

CHILDREN'S SERVICES DEPARTMENT – SCHEDULE OF CHARGES 2011/12

LIFELONG LEARNING

Current

Description	Existing Charge (01/04/10) £	New Charge (01/04/11) £	Financial Effect £
Adult and Community Learning (incl. NVQs)			
Adult per hour	2.00	2.50	
OAP per hour	1.00	2.50	
Differential Rates apply if you are in receipt of the following:			
Income Based Job Seekers Allowance Unwaged dependant (as defined by Job Centre Plus) Offenders serving sentence in the community	£10 Course Fee + 50% Accreditation Costs	£10 Course Fee + 50% Accreditation Costs	
Income Support Contribution Based Job Seekers Allowance Income Related Employment & Support Allowance (ESA) Housing Benefit Council Tax Benefit (excl. Single Person reduction) Working Tax Credits 60+ and in receipt of Pension Credits (Guarantee Credit Only)	50% Reduction in Course Fee + 50% of Accreditation Fee	50% Reduction in Course Fee + 50% of Accreditation Fee	
16-18 Year Old enrolling for an unrelated part-time course whilst in full-time education at school or college	No Fee	No Fee	
Studying first level 2 qualification identified on Learning Aims Database	No Fee	No Fee	
19-25 years of age and studying first full level 3 qualification without having a full level 2	No Fee	No Fee	
Certain learners participating in Skills Funding Agency funded projects where identified in project specifications	No Fee	No Fee	
NVQs – Certification and Accreditation charges apply – Unit dependant	Certification & Accreditation fees – course specific charges	Certification & Accreditation fees – course specific charges	
Room Hire – per hour	10.00	15.00	
Total financial effect for Lifelong Learning			Minimal

Proposed charges to reflect requirements in Skills Funding Agency's Learner Eligibility and Contribution Rules [Academic Year] 2011/12

Description	Existing Charge (01/04/2011) £	New Charge (01/08/2011) £	Financial Effect £
Adult and Community Learning			
Adult per hour	2.50	2.50	
OAP per hour	2.50	2.50	
All other courses (with the exception of the groups listed below)		DBC Listed Course Rate	
16-18 Year Olds		No Fee	
Individuals on Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) or Employment and Support Allowance in the Work Related Activity Group (ESA (WRAG))		No Fee	
Learners (of all ages) studying their first full Level 2 qualification		No Fee	
Learners (of all ages) taking a full Level 3 qualification without having obtained a full Level 2 qualification)		No Fee	
19-24 year olds studying their first full Level 3 qualification		No Fee	
Learners studying aims that are Adult Basic Skills and Functional Skills in literacy or numeracy, excluding Skills for Life English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)		No Fee	
Individuals studying Trade Union Congress (TUC) learning aims.		No Fee	
NVQs – Certification and Accreditation charges apply – Unit dependant	Certification & Accreditation fees – course specific charges	Certification & Accreditation fees – course specific charges	
Room Hire – per hour	15.00	15.00	
Total financial effect for Lifelong Learning			Minimal