



Adult Skills Fund Provision - Tuition Fee Guidance

Most recent update: 16 September 2025

Within the Adult Skills Fund (ASF), there are two streams of learning provision:

- Formula funded regulated accredited provision – these are accredited learning aims (either qualifications or units), with a learning aim reference marked as fundable, registered on the government's Learning Aims database.
- Tailored learning – this replaces grant funded non-accredited Community learning and formula funded non-regulated provision. The primary purpose of tailored learning is to support learners into employment and to progress to further learning. Multiple enrolments on similar level courses should be avoided, or a repeat of similar learning aims where this does not benefit the learner's development. This provision includes non-accredited Family Learning which the council delivers directly.

For further guidance on these funding streams, please consult the [ASF funding rules 2025 to 2026](#).

Adult education provision commissioned via the local authority will be largely targeted at meeting local employment priorities as part of our overall engagement and progression strategy. It will therefore primarily consist of Entry level to level 2 provision for adults aged 19+ and actively seeking employment or to progress in work.

There are three possible levels of funding available for learners within the Adult Skills Fund:

- Full funding – in line with the qualification rates detailed in the Learning Aim Reference Service (LARS) or Single Activity Matrix for regulated and non-regulated provision, or Community Learning allocation.
- Co-funding – the funding is shared between the Skills Funding Agency and the individual learner.
- No funding – There is no contribution to the costs of learning where the learner is ineligible. See eligibility guidance for further information.

Definitions Used In The Commissioning Of The Adult Education Budget

Unemployed

For funding purposes, a learner is defined unemployed if one or more of the following apply:

- The learner is in receipt of Universal Credit and earn less than £952 per month (individual claims) or £1,534 a month (household claims) and are in a DWP categorised work-related group or they are on Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) including those receiving National Insurance credits only. Learners in receipt of Employment Support Allowance (ESA) and are in the work-related activity group (WRAG)
- It is at your discretion to fund other learners if they earn less than £952 per month (individual claims) or £1,534 (household claims) and are in receipt of other state benefits and the learner wants to be employed *and* you are satisfied that the learning is directly relevant to their employment prospects and the local labour market needs. Some





qualifications that are considered mandatory for certain job roles are only eligible for funding if the previous bullet point applies.

Full Funding

100% fee remissions for Adult Skills Fund, for provision up to level 2

Tuition fees will be 100% remitted for learners aged 19+ who meet the following criteria:

- Are 19 or over on 31st August 2025 and meet residency eligibility
- Are starting GCSE English or maths delivered through classroom learning, where they do not currently have grades A*-C.
- Are progressing towards GCSE English or maths at grade C or above using prescribed 'stepping stones' qualifications and are starting English or maths at a level above that at which they have previously been assessed.
- Are aged 19+ and are enrolling on courses up to level 2 who are unemployed according to the definition given previously.
- Are aged 19+ and are enrolling on a targeted Community Learning course commissioned by the Local Authority under its health and wellbeing agenda.
- Are aged 19 to 23 on an entry level or level 1 qualification where the learner does not have a full level 2 qualification.
- Individuals who are eligible for co-funding as set out below and earn less than £20,319 annual gross salary* (see Low Pay Information below).

NB Learners who receive full funding ie 100% tuition fee remitted should not be charged any additional costs including awarding body costs

Co-funding

Tuition Fees to be charged for AEB provision, known as co-funded provision

For adults eligible for co-funded learning AEB provision, the hourly tuition fee is to be determined locally by the commissioned provider. National guidance states that the learner would be expected to contribute 50% of the un-weighted base rate of the learning aim as listed on LARS or the Single Activity Matrix. However, if a provider wishes to charge a lower amount they may do so with the agreement of the council's Senior Officer with responsibility for MIS and performance. Awarding body costs can be charged on top of this amount for co-funded fee-paying learners, again with the agreement of the senior officer overseeing learner fee policy.

Unit provision is not available for co-funding. Therefore, the learner must meet the criteria for full funding if they enrol on individual units.

Tuition fees for AEB provision set by the provider must be agreed with the Council prior to the commissioning of the programme.



The following learners are entitled to co-funding for their learning unless they qualify for full funding:

Aged 19*-23 on the day they start the learning

**must be 19 by 31 August 2025*

If the learner has already achieved a Level 2 or above, they are entitled to co-funding up to and including a Level 2

Aged 24 or older (excluding English, maths and ESOL)

Provision up to and including Level 2

One Year – Low Pay Trial

Entitlement to full funding

The eligibility requirements for learners to receive full funding through low wage funding:

- Those that are currently eligible for co-funding, and
- Earn less than £25,750 annual gross salary

To confirm learner eligibility, providers must see supporting evidence in the learner file eg a wage slip within 3 months of the learner's learning start date or a current employment contract which states gross monthly/annual wages.

No Funding

Individuals not specified in the full-funding and co-funding sections above will not* be eligible to be funded through the Adult Education Budget. This includes any learning aim relevant to their job that is delivered at an employee's workplace or their employer's business. Work placements and work experience will not be funded.

**Note: There are some other groups eligible for full and/or co-funding but they are not priority learners for CW&C's Adult Education provision so will not form part of our contracted provision and therefore not detailed here. For full eligibility rules, please see link to ESFA Funding Rules or speak to the CW&C Senior Officer for Intelligence, Commissioning and Performance.*

Eligibility For Public Funding

It is the commissioned provider's responsibility to ensure enrolled learners are eligible for either full or co-funding for their learning provision in accordance with [ASF funding rules 2025 to 2026](#). Learners must be aged 19 or above on 31 August 2025.

Eligibility must be ascertained on the day they start learning, not from the date of enrolment. Eligibility cannot be backdated; a learner whose circumstances change so that they meet the eligibility criteria part way through a course could not be counted as eligible for funding. However, if a learner is eligible at the beginning of their course, they remain eligible until they have finished their course.



Most individuals will be eligible for AEB funding if:

- they are 19 or above on 31 August 2025 regardless of when they start the learning within the 2025/26 academic year,
- they are a citizen of the UK or a country within the European Economic Area (EEA), or other countries determined within the EEA, or have the Right of Abode in the UK,
- they have previously been ordinarily resident in the EEA (including UK) for at least the previous three years on the first day of learning, and
- the learning is taking place in England.

All CW&C's adult education provision is targeted at learners within our local authority geographical boundary.

Learner Support Funding

Learner Support is available to provide financial support for learners with a specific financial hardship preventing them from taking part in or continuing learning.

See CW&C's Learner Support Policy for further guidance and full details in the [ASF funding rules 2025 to 2026](#).

For further guidance regarding tuition fees and eligibility for AEB provision, email skillsandemployment@cheshirewest.gov.uk

Further information can be found on [our website](#) in the following related documents:

- Learner Support Policy