

## **Learner Financial Support**

To: All Staff  
From: Bernard Dainton  
Date: 01 September 08  
Reviewed: Anthony Harmer  
Date: 15<sup>th</sup> November 08  
**NOTE:** The November review was necessitated by confirmation from the LSC that have special authority to use the dLSF to help learners in some cases with tuition fees

### **Policy**

ELATT is committed to a policy of clearly and consistently promoting learner support funds at both IAG and Induction stages of courses in order to ensure that our learners claim their financial entitlement so as to help them achieve on their learning programme and ensure full equality of opportunity and access to our services.

### **Procedure**

#### **TRAVEL PAYMENTS**

The maximum payment per learner per day is £4 for eligible attendance and placements. Learners must give us their tickets as evidence of travel expenses before we can pay them. Learners who use an Oyster Card should still buy tickets when coming to ELATT as we only pay on production of tickets.

#### **ELIGIBILITY FOR TRAVEL PAYMENTS:**

Learners who live inside a one mile radius from their place of learning will not be eligible for help with travel costs, unless in the instance of a health condition or disability which requires the learner to incur expenses to reach the centre subject to other eligibility requirements.

The one-mile radius is defined as the distance between the learner's home and their training site.

#### **CHILDCARE**

ELATT will make a maximum contribution of £100 per learner per week towards the cost of registered childcare only. This contribution is subject to the amount of money available from the hardship funds per course and the number of learners that apply. This amount will be set at the beginning of each term according to project budgets.

**There is no guarantee that any applicant will be successful or receive the maximum contribution of £100 per week. Support will be awarded on a first come first served basis.**

#### **ELIGIBILITY FOR CHILDCARE PAYMENT:**

Help towards childcare will only be available to learners who can show evidence that they are in receipt of state benefit. This may be housing benefit, working people tax credit, income support, job seekers allowance etc.

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### Supporting notes

Please note that support is not provided equally across all projects. For example, LSC Learner Support Funding does not prioritise Train to Gain learners as this contract is fundamentally geared towards employed learners.

Where this is the case, learners will be informed at Initial Assessment and Induction on a project-by-project basis.

### Learners Under Disciplinary Proceedings

Please note that financial support is dependent on attendance and learners who are under Disciplinary due to repeated non-attendance, or who are suspended, will not usually receive financial support during that period.

### **HARDSHIP FUND (See Appendix B)**

The Hardship Fund is a dedicated fund provided by the Learning and Skills Council for learners on Further Education provision.

The Fund serves to help 'learners who are economically or socially disadvantaged and are facing financial difficulty' (LSC Funding Guidance 2007-2008), including:

- 1) Groups identified by the Social Exclusion Unit as potentially excluded from further education.
- 2) Individuals who need to increase their skills to meet the Leitch challenges.

ELATT has special authorisation in 0809 to use the Hardship Fund to pay tuition fees for learners working towards local skills priorities of full L2 in Information Technology and Skills for Life to access provision, in particular those who live in areas eligible for disadvantage uplift and those who may not meet automatic fee remission requirements, being:

- economically inactive learners, who therefore do not meet conditions of Fully Funded Learning (FFL) criteria 04
- those who follow a Skills for Life learning aim secondary to their primary learning aim of IT and therefore did not meet FFL criteria 09
- those who may have previously completed a full L2, perhaps several years ago, which is no longer relevant to today's labour market, and who therefore may not meet FFL criteria 22

### Maximum funding per individual:

Where a learner has special learning support needs ELATT will endeavour to source reasonable and appropriate support to help them achieve.

In order to ensure that the highest possible amount of learners can access this support, ELATT will limit the entitlement of **any one individual during the academic year to 5%** of our total ALS/dLSF budget.

In 2008-2009 this breaks down as follows:

ALS: £17,000

dLSF: £107,000 (Note: increased from £103,000 in February 2009)

**TOTAL: £124,000**

Maximum entitlement per individual per year @ 5%: **£6,200**

Please see document '[Support for Learners with Disabilities](#)' for help with sourcing support.

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Appendix A:

### **APPLICATION FOR CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS TRAVEL OR CHILD CARE COSTS**

Learners may obtain application forms from the Finance Department or during IAG and induction to apply for financial assistance towards the cost of travel and/or child care.

The completed application forms should be returned to the Administration Manager for consideration.

**NB: It is important we let potential learners know at enrolment that help towards childcare is not guaranteed.**

Appendix B:

### **PROCEDURE FOR ACCESSING THE HARDSHIP FUND**

1. At IAG stage the IAG adviser will carry out an individual assessment of the learner's status in order to determine whether the learner is eligible for full remission.
2. If the learner is not eligible for full remission, the IAG adviser will complete the [Application for Hardship Funds](#) form in order to assess whether the learner:
  - a. lives in areas eligible for disadvantage uplift (to be checked against LSC data)
  - b. is working towards full level 2 in ICT, including L1 NVQ with a view to progressing to L2 NVQ
  - c. is working towards Literacy and Numeracy at Entry 3 or above alongside their ICT NVQ
  - d. is economically inactive and therefore does not meet conditions of Fully Funded Learning (FFL) criteria 04
  - e. follows a Skills for Life learning aim secondary to their primary learning aim of IT and therefore does not meet FFL criteria 09
  - f. has previously completed a full L2, perhaps several years ago, which is no longer relevant to today's labour market, and therefore may not meet FFL criteria 22
  - g. is working part-time or earning less than the London Living Wage for 2008-2009 ((£7.45 p/hr) and not able to access Train to Gain provision due to lack of employer support or other eligibility criteria.
3. For eligibility the advisor must ensure that the learner is 19 years old or over; is working towards a full L2 ICT qualification (or has the intention to progress to L2); and lives in an area eligible for disadvantage uplift (Section one in the pro forma).
4. As well as fulfilling all three answers from Section 1, the learner must answer 'yes' to at least one question in Section 2 or 3.
5. If the learner fulfils the above criteria, the IAG adviser will advise the learner that they are eligible for Hardship funding at a rate of 42.5% of their total course fees including Literacy or Numeracy where this is a secondary learning aim to ICT.

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6. A copy of the form will be sent to the Finance Manager.
7. The Finance Manager will audit each application at the beginning of each month, and then raise an invoice or create a batch invoice for each eligible application from ELATT to the Hardship Fund, and then the Hardship Fund will pay the fees to ELATT (in the same way it would to any other supplier of services, such as childcare, travel costs etc)
8. The details of Hardship Fund entitlement will then be entered on the learner's ILR through Maytas
9. A letter will be sent to the beneficiary of the Hardship Fund to confirm the portion of their tuition fees that has been provided for through the Hardship Fund, with the value being 42.5% of their total course fees.
10. A copy of this letter will be kept in the learner's file, with any other relevant documentary gathered during the process.

### Notes from the 0809 guidance:

'5.3: ...Hardship funds cannot be used to subsidise tuition fees with the exception of learners in a priority group not currently supported through LSC fee remission policy, or the learning has been identified as responding to local skills priorities. In both instances these groups should be agreed with your area LSC, and agreement recorded for audit requirements.'

### The 2008 London Living Wage:

[http://www.london.gov.uk/mayor/economic\\_unit/docs/living-wage-2008.pdf](http://www.london.gov.uk/mayor/economic_unit/docs/living-wage-2008.pdf)

'A Fairer London: The 2008 Living Wage in London', GLA

The London living wage of £7.45 gives an annual salary of £13,559 based on 7 hours a day for 5 days per week over 52 weeks.

### Typical Breakdown of ALS and dLSF funding on the LSC FE (ALR/16-18) programme:

Childcare (20+):	£30,000
Travel costs:	£25,000
Tuition fees:	£30,000 (mainly for economically inactive learners)
Administration:	£6,000
ALS (SfL):	£5,000
ALS (Employability):	£5,000
Food/drink:	£3,000
Special needs:	£20,000
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>£124,000</b>