

Policy & Procedure	2018-19 Fee and Pricing Policy
Policy Area	Finance
Version Number	03
Approving Committee	SMT
Date of Approval	June 2018
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Date of Review	May 2019
Responsible Senior Manager	Director of Finance and Estates

History of Amendments

Date	Version/Pages/Sections Affected	Summary of changes
6 July 2017	5.3 Fee Determination	To reflect SG rule change on domiciled students with introduction of 'long residency rule'
1 June 2018	5.3 Fee Determination; 5.4 Funding; 6.3 Refunds; Fee Table	To reflect SG allowing eligible Afghan interpreters to apply for tuition fee and study support; includes ITA, timing of refunds and revised fee levels.

1. Policy Statement

This document details West College Scotland's policy on fees and the methodology for setting fees.

All fees are payable in advance unless

- Funded by the Student Awards Agency for Scotland (SAAS) or
- Funded by Student Funding for National Certificate (NC) courses (England, Northern Ireland and Wales) or
- They are eligible for Fee Waiver.

The student is responsible for the payment and/or provides documentation in support of any funding they may be eligible for.

2. Equality Statement

The College is committed to providing equal opportunities to ensure its students, staff, customers and visitors are treated equally regardless of gender reassignment, race, religion or belief; disability; age; marriage and civil partnerships; pregnancy and maternity; sexual orientation; sex.

Please note this document is available in other formats, to request another format please email info@wcs.ac.uk

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3. Purpose

This Policy details the College's approach to:

- Fee setting
- Determination of students fee status
- Fee waiver and concessionary fees
- International fees and refunds
- Payment Plans/Instalments
- Refund of fees

4. Scope

The College must ensure that the policy for fees, including refunds, represents fair and reasonable consideration towards students and at the same time protects the College from financial loss.

The refund policy does not apply to fees paid by SAAS, as these refunds are covered under separate specific terms and conditions.

5. Fees

5.1 Fee Setting

The College will set fees annually taking consideration of inflation, Scottish Funding Council (SFC) fee rates, anticipated demand and other business imperatives.

Fees will only be set by:

- Finance
- Business and Enterprise (Commercial Courses); or
- Innovative Learning (Distance Learning Courses)

The fee table for 2018/19 is attached in Appendix 1.

5.2 Fee Status

Tuition fees are charged at one of the rates below depending on the student meeting residency criteria:

- Home – Scottish/EU
- Rest of the UK (RUK) - (England, Wales and Northern Ireland); or
- International – Resident out with EU

5.3 Fee Determination

The fee which students are charged will depend on their nationality, immigration status, where they have been living and what they have been doing prior to the start of their course.

The Home Rate is set by Scottish Funding Council (SFC) unlike the RUK and International fee which will be set by the College.

The following table summarises the classifications:

Home Rate	Students who have been resident in Scotland or EU member country (except England, Wales or Northern Ireland) for more than 1 year.
RUK	Student whose main residence is in England, Wales or Northern Ireland. They have relocated to Scotland for educational purposes.
International	Students who are resident in all other countries out with the EU member countries.

To claim residency in Scotland the student must have been resident for more than 3 years on the start date of the course, this excludes any previous period of residency for educational purposes.

Even if the student has been living in the EU they are unlikely to qualify for fees at the Home Rate if they need a time limited visa to live in the UK.

From 1 August 2017 the Scottish Government have introduced a new provision for student support for Scottish domiciled students meeting a new 'long residence rule'. Students who are not regarded as being settled in the UK in line with the current residency criteria but have been resident in the UK for a significant period of their lives, are to be assessed as 'home' students for fee purposes.

These students are now able to apply to the appropriate funding body for tuition fee and/or living-cost support assuming they meet the other eligibility requirements (listed below).

The student should be:

- (i) Settled in the United Kingdom within the meaning given by section 33(2A) of the Immigration Act 1971 on the relevant date
- (ii) Under the age of 18 and has lived in the United Kingdom throughout the 7 year period preceding the relevant date
- (iii) Aged 18 years old or above and, preceding the relevant date, has lived in the United Kingdom throughout either half his or her life or a period of twenty years.

5.4 Funding

Students may be eligible to have their fees covered in full or partially by external funding:

- **Fee Waiver**
 - Please refer to our Fee Waiver Policy for eligible criteria and required supporting documentation.
 - If a student fails to qualify for a fee waiver they will be regarded as a self-financing student.

- **Individual Training Account (ITA)**
 - ITA funding is only available on certain courses that meet the criteria and there will only be one instance of funding per learner year.
 - ITA funding is subject to a maximum of £200.

- **Student Support Funding**
 - Students studying NC courses may apply for funding from the College if they meet the eligibility criteria.
 - All applications must be received by 31 March for consideration.

- **SAAS**
 - The student must apply to SAAS. This is only available to full time HN courses. Note that funding will only be granted once at each level of study.
 - If a student chooses to withdraw from the course after 1 December, he/she will not be eligible for SAAS again as the funds from the first application are then non-refundable.

- **Part Time Fee Grant**
 - The student must apply to SAAS. This may be available for some part time courses that meet the criteria.
 - The maximum credits being achieved cannot exceed 14 credits (119 SCQF credits) in a single academic year.

- **Employer/Sponsor**
 - A letter is required from the employer/sponsor on headed paper accepting liability for all fees for the student.
 - An invoice for fees will be processed to the employer instead of the student.

- **Any combination of the above**
 - In certain situations, a combination of funding methods may be available details of which can be obtained from Finance.

- **Self-Financing**
 - If the student or course are not eligible for any of the above funding, the student will be liable for all fees.
 - To ease this burden, payment by instalments may be available (refer to note 'Instalments')

5.5 Fee Waiver and concessionary fee

Please refer to the College Fee Waiver Policy for details of fee waiver eligibility criteria and supporting documentation that is required as set by SFC guidelines.

There are no concessionary rates or discounts available for any of our courses.

6 Fee Payment and Collection

6.1 Invoicing and Payments

Course fee invoices will be issued to students and fees are payable in advance of the course start date.

For students who have applied for funding to cover course fees e.g. SAAS or Student Support Funding, invoices will be issued to the student until such times as the necessary paperwork has been provided to finance to allow the fee record to change from 'self-financing' to 'funded'.

Any student studying full-time HN courses, who withdraws from the course before 1 December, will have their invoice for course fees credited.

Where fees are not paid in accordance with this policy, the College will send reminder letters, failing which, the College reserves the right to initiate debt recover action.

The College reserves the right to withdraw the student from class for non-payment and/or to withhold Certificates and results of Students who have not paid their fees in full by the end of the respective academic session.

6.1.2 International Students

For International Students requiring a student visa, tuition fees must be **paid in full** in advance in order to receive the Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies / Unconditional Offer Letter required for the visa application.

For International Students not requiring a student visa, tuition fees must be paid in full prior to enrolment on the course. International students will not be permitted to pay their fees by instalments.

Funds will not be transferred from one year to next should a student decide to change courses during the year.

6.2 Instalments

The option to pay by instalments is available for fees of £200 or more and only available to Home and RUK students.

Students should contact Finance to set up an instalment plan by way of a standing order mandate. A minimum monthly payment of £50 is required and full payment must be completed no later than one month prior to the end of the course.

International students are required to pay their fees in full before the start of their course.

6.3 Refunds

The refund of course fees are granted where either:

- a) the College cancels the course; or
- b) a student withdraws from a course in line with the withdrawals general practice

Refunds will be paid by BACS.

For **Self Financing and Sponsored students** (i.e. where the employer is paying their fees) the amount of the fee to be refunded will depend on when the student withdraws as set out below:

Full time and part time courses

If withdrawal is in the period up to 1 December	Full refund
Withdrawal after 1 December and up to end of March inclusive	1/2 of the fees
Withdrawal post March	No refund

Part time courses where courses are not over full academic session

If withdrawal is in the first 1/3 of course	2/3 of the fees
Withdrawal between 1/3 and 2/3 course completion	1/3 of the fees
Withdrawal after 2/3 course completed	No refund

Short Commercial Course refunds

As is the Policy with all fees, as set out in Section 1, fees should be paid in advance. Any short course (commercial) refunds will fall into the following categories

Single Day Courses

College cancels the course	Student offered an alternative date, or Receive a full refund
Student does not attend the course and does not give notice (48 hours notice is required as a minimum)	No refund given
Student does not attend the course and at least 48 hours notice has been given	Full refund
In exceptional circumstances, the Head of Sector will have discretion to award a refund, even if the student has not attended. For all refunds, the Head of Sector must approve the documentation to be provided to Finance.	

Short Commercial Courses > 1 day

College cancels the course	Student offered an alternative date, or Receive a full refund
Student does not attend the course and does not give notice (48 hours notice is required as a minimum)	Refund is given but is subject to a deduction of an administration fee of £20
Student does not attend the course and at least 48 hours notice has been given	Full refund
Student attends only part of the course and decides they do not want to continue	Student is offered a pro-rata refund depending on how many classes attended and also has a deduction of an administration fee of £20; Eg, Student attends only 1 class of 4 scheduled Cost of course £80 Refund of ($\frac{3}{4} \times £80$) - £20 = £40
In exceptional circumstances, the Head of Sector will have discretion to award a full refund e.g. sickness. For all refunds, the Head of Sector must approve the documentation to be provided to Finance.	

7 Responsibilities

The Principal has devolved authority to set the College fee policy.

The Senior Management Team will agree the fee levels annually in advance of the following year/academic session.

All staff with a remit to provide advice to students and prospective students have a responsibility for the issue of proper guidance under this policy.

All enquiries in regard to the application of this Policy can in the first instance be directed to the Finance Manager.

8 Discretionary Arrangements

In exceptional circumstances this Policy can be overridden at the discretion of the Director of Finance and Estates.

9 Appeals

Students have the ability to appeal in accordance with the Student Appeals Policy and procedure.

10 Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, in advance of the start of each academic year.

West College Scotland

Tuition Fee Table 2018/19 Session

<u>Full Time Fees</u>	£
Full time Degree (BA)	1,820
Full time HE	1,285
Full time FE	1,008
Full time International Fee- HE	6,000
Full time International Fee- FE	5,000
Full time Rest of UK Fee- HE	6,000
Full time Rest of UK Fee- FE	5,000
Full time FE Jan Starts	600

Part Time Fees

Day Release - HE Course	690
Day Release - FE Course	510
Day Release International Fee - HE	2,500
Day Release International Fee -FE	2,000
Day Release Rest of UK Fee - HE	2,500
Day Release Rest of UK Fee - FE	2,000

Single Credit – HE	115
Part time course (per credit) – HE	87
Single Credit - FE	110
Part time course (per credit) – FE	56
Single Credit International Fee HE	405
Single Credit International Fee FE	300

Highers - 3 hours teaching per week	280
Highers - 5.5 hours teaching per week	280
National 4	300
National 5	300

SVQ's

SVQ Level 2	1,035
SVQ Level 3	1,200
SVQ Level 4	2,300

Non Vocational Courses

Non Vocational per hour	£ 4
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Equality Impact Assessment

Name of policy/procedure/decision: Fee Policy

Date: 27 August 2015

1. What information is readily available to measure the effect this policy/procedure/decision has on people who share protected characteristics? What data is not available or not reliable?

There is reliable, comprehensive information available regarding age, sex, disability, and race data with reference to students at WCS. There is little quantitative information available with reference to religion or belief, sexual orientation and gender reassignment.

As a preliminary point, it should be noted that the decision as to whether or not an applicant receives funding is not taken by West College Scotland. This decision is made by organisations such as SAAS or Student Finance. This policy only applies to applicants who are not entitled to receive external funding. It is recognised that there can be barriers to eligibility for funding which are experienced by some groups more than others, for example, older people. However it is submitted that for the purposes of this equality impact assessment the relevant issue for people who share protected characteristics is whether the information which WCS supplies about tuition fees and the support available from the college is accessible for all groups.

2. What does this information indicate about positive, neutral and negative impacts on people who share protected characteristics? Please detail below.

Protected Characteristic	Description of Impact
Age	Tuition fee information will be made available through a range of media, eg the website, leaflets and through enquiries on the phone or through Student Admissions. This should make this information accessible to all age groups (there is evidence that older people are less likely to use the internet and/or access College information through the website)
Disability	WCS will ensure that the information provided regarding the tuition fees is accessible. In particular, the information will be based on good practice in accessibility Guidelines. The College uses software on its website which enables text to speech. This can assist people with dyslexia, literacy difference, visual impairments as well as people who do not speak English as a first language.
Sex	It is submitted that this protected characteristic is not directly relevant with regards to this policy.
Gender Re-assignment	It is submitted that this protected characteristic is not directly relevant with regards to this policy.
Sexual Orientation	It is submitted that this protected characteristic is not directly relevant with regards to this policy.
Race	Given that domicile is relevant for funding decisions, there may be more ethnic minority students who have to pay tuition fees. It is therefore important that the information available is provided in clear and plain English so that it is easy for people who do not speak English as a first language to understand. There is specialist training available for Staff who support students in the application process in communication skills, and anecdotal evidence shows that staff are happy to take extra time with ethnic minority students to explain College processes where required.

Religion or belief	It is submitted that this protected characteristic is not directly relevant with regards to this policy.
Pregnancy or Maternity	It is submitted that this protected characteristic is not directly relevant with regards to this policy.

3. What arrangements could be implemented to reduce or mitigate any potential adverse or negative impacts identified above?

No negative impacts have been identified.

4. Has there been consultation/is consultation planned with stakeholders/ learners/ staff who will be affected by this policy/project/decision? Please detail below how this has affected your decision making.

WCS uses regular student surveys to understand student preferences and will continue to do so.

5. How will the policy/project/decision be monitored and evaluated?

Through student surveys and surveys carried out by the Communications and Marketing departments. Complaints will also be monitored.