

Fees and Charges Policy

Document Title	Date of Previous review	Date of Review	Responsibility of	Due date of next review
Fees and Charges Policy	January 2020	January 2021	Patrick McKeown	January 2022

<i>Approved by Governing Body</i>	<i>23 February 2021</i>
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Policy Statement

The College will provide this policy in alternative formats on request where reasonably practicable, eg, Braille, Large Print, Computer Disk, Audio formats, etc, and/or alternative language.

The College is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and good relations in accordance with Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. This policy should be interpreted in a manner consistent with the aforementioned legislation.

1. Policy Aim

- 1.1 To operate fees and charges for the provision of appropriate educational facilities and services so as to recoup a reasonable proportion of expenditure while acting in a fair and equitable manner towards existing and prospective students and other customers.
- 1.2 The policy is restricted to those facilities and services where the College is able to operate some discretion in the levying of charges. Therefore the policy does not relate to the following:
 - Any subsidies, bursaries or exemptions as offered by the Department for the Economy (DfE), any other government agency or private benefactor;
 - Examination fees as charged by Awarding Bodies;
 - Financial support packages for students;
 - Loans and grants as made available from the Student Loan Company or Education Authorities.

2. Background

- 2.1 The College is not fully funded from the DfE for all its education programmes and training activities. The shortfall in income to fund its recurrent expenditure and capital investment programme is recovered by levying appropriate fees and charges payable by students, customers and users of its business services. Fees and charges are therefore an important source of income to the College, without which it would not be able to deliver the range of programmes, attract and retain high quality staff and invest in new equipment and buildings to facilitate learning.

3. Definitions

In this policy the following definitions apply:

Home Student	<p>A home student is one complying with the residency criteria laid down by the Department for the Economy as per Circular FE 14/12 "<i>Further Education residency and funding requirements</i>".</p> <p>For the purposes of Higher Education fees, a home student is a resident of either NI or another EU country, excluding England & Wales and Scotland.</p>
International Student	<p>An 'international' student is one who does not satisfy the conditions for consideration as a 'home' student laid down by the Department for the Economy as per Circular FE 14/12 "<i>Further Education residency and funding requirements</i>".</p>
Accredited Course	<p>Courses as defined on the Register of Regulated Qualifications (RRQ) and the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) and the Prescribed List of Accredited Qualifications (PLAQ) as defined by the Department for the Economy (DfE), or other courses approved by DfE including university validated courses.</p>

4. Fees Setting

- 4.1 The process of setting fees and charges takes into account DfE Policy, market forces, the College Development Plan, target market, competitor analysis, skill shortages and other relevant factors such as equality issues. Through the setting of fees and charges the College seeks to widen access to all of its provision.
- 4.2 Fees are chargeable in each year of study.
- 4.3 The College has the power to set its own fees as laid out in the College's Management Statement and Financial Memorandum with DfE.
- 4.4 Tuition fees are set each year by the Resources Committee of the Governing Body and apply to the academic year beginning 1 August and ending on 31 July.
- 4.5 In reaching a decision as to appropriate fees and charges, the Committee strives to ensure the financial viability of each course or programme, set against other sources of funding.
- 4.6 The College reserves the right to vary the price charged and the concessions applied from course to course in the financial year.

5. Fees

- 5.1 The fees for 2021/22 are included in the annual fees structure (See Appendix 1). Fees for franchise courses (i.e. awarded by another external institution) are set by the external body and do not attract concessionary rates or staff discount. The fee takes into account the number of taught hours, cost of materials and other direct costs associated with the programme.
- 5.2 Part-time course fees for accredited and non-accredited programmes are derived from the number of taught hours and may include other costs such as examination/registration/assessment/residential/materials and appropriate overhead costs. Part-time franchise courses are as per agreement with the external institution. The fees for part-time accredited courses will be payable at the time of enrolment.
- 5.3 Fees for all other courses are based on the number of taught hours, cost of materials and other direct and indirect costs associated with the programme.
- 5.4 Staff discount is provided to all permanent, temporary and part-time staff (see Appendix 1, section 10).

6. Hire Charges

- 6.1 Charges for the hire and use of College premises are as set out in the Fees Structure at Appendix 1, Section 9.

7. Concessions

- 7.1 Concessions are made available by the College for a range of accredited courses (Appendix 1- Section 4). The schedule of those who currently qualify for concessionary rates is shown in Appendix 2. Evidence of entitlement will be required at the time of enrolment.

8. Payment of Fees

- 8.1 Fees are collected at time of enrolment.
- 8.2 **For all fees other than Full-Time HE & International**
- For fees of £200 or less, the full amount must be paid on enrolment.
 - £201 - £400 – a minimum deposit of £100 with the balance paid over a maximum of 3 instalments.
 - For fees greater than £400 – a minimum deposit of 25% with the balance paid over a maximum of 4 instalments.
- 8.3 Full-Time Higher Education

- Students who have applied for a Tuition Fee Loan must provide a letter from the Student Loan Company (SLC) confirming that an application for a Tuition Fee Loan has been received. You will be liable for payment of the full fee if this letter is not provided. Please note that if you are awarded a tuition fee loan from the SLC, but withdraw before completing your course, the SLC will not pay your tuition fees in full. In these circumstances, you will be liable for any unpaid amount and expected to repay this outstanding balance to the College.
- If you have not received funding for your tuition fees from the SLC then your fee must be paid on enrolment however, Direct Debit/Instalment arrangements are available for students to pay their fees on a monthly basis, no more than 4 monthly payment/instalments. These will begin on the 15th (or nearest working day) of the month following the date of enrolment.
- Students who wish to avail of the Direct Debit/Instalment facility must pay an initial deposit of at least £400 on enrolment with the remaining balance being paid over a maximum of 4 instalments.

Fees must be paid in full on or before 28th February 2022

- 8.4 If the student is sponsored by any organisation, the Employer to Pay (ETP) section of the enrolment form must be completed.

9. Collection of Student Debt

- 9.1 Letters of reminder will be sent to students and organisations who owe money to the College. Late payers may be charged interest and legal proceedings may be taken to recover the outstanding fees together with any administrative costs.
- 9.2 Students who fail to pay the required Tuition Fees (and other associated costs such as Exam Fees) may result in one or more of the following sanctions applied:
- You may be withdrawn from your course.
 - You may not be able to sit exams for any NWRC course you are enrolled on.
 - You may not be able to access any College facilities or our computer network.
 - You may not be able to progress to the next year of your course or enrol on an alternative NWRC course.
 - Your name will not be included on any pass or graduation list.

10. Refunds

- 10.1 The College will make every effort to run courses and programmes which are advertised. However, all courses are required to have a minimum number of students. In some circumstances classes may be combined to achieve viability. The College reserves the right to cancel classes due to lack of demand.
- 10.2 For any course cancelled by NWRC, a full refund of the total fee paid to date will be issued to the student (or their sponsoring organisation), unless other exceptional circumstances prevail (e.g. transfer of course or outstanding fees for other courses).
- 10.3 As a general rule the College does not offer refunds, although there is some discretion in exceptional circumstances such as medical reasons. In such circumstance medical evidence from your GP/Doctor will be required.
- 10.4 If the time or date of the class has been changed and the student is unable to continue attending because of these changes, a refund will be considered.

APPENDIX 1 – FEES SCHEDULE 2021/22

Please note that fees quoted are payable in each year of study. The rate for year one students progressing to year two will not be increased.

The following amounts represent the minimum fee to be charged

1. ACCREDITED COURSES

FULL TIME COURSES (HOME STUDENTS INCLUDING ROI)

Full Time Courses		Fee
Higher Education	Specified Courses (Degree, Foundation Degree, HND and HNC)	£2,500 per year (Full Fee incl Tuition Fee & Exam/Reg)
Further Education	Further Education Course	Nil

Note:

Situations arise where students wish to infill to a full-time HE course on a part-time basis. In such circumstances, the following will be used to calculate the fee:

<u>Weekly Hours (infill)</u>	<u>Basis for Fee Calculation</u>
1 - 7	Pro-Rata the Part-Time HE Fee
8 - 11	£3.30 per hour
12 - 14	Pro-Rata the Full-Time HE Fee

PART TIME COURSES (HOME STUDENTS INCLUDING ROI)

Part Time Courses		Fee
Higher Education	Specified Courses (Degree, Foundation Degree, HND and HNC)	£500.00 Note: This fee may vary for particular courses (see prospectus). Students wishing to infill to part of a part-time HE course, the fee will be pro-rata the annual fee.
Further Education	Accredited Further Education Courses	Minimum fee of £1.60 per hour Note: The minimum course fee will be £30.00

2. INTERNATIONAL STUDENT

International Students - Higher Education		Fee
Full Time	Full Fee (including tuition, exam and registration)	£6,500
Part Time	All courses [including administration fee]	£12.00 per hour

International Students - Further Education		Fee
Full Time	Full Fee (including tuition, exam and registration)	£6,000
Part Time	All courses (excluding ESOL) [including administration fee]	£10.00 per hour

3. NON-ACCREDITED COURSES

	Fee
Non-Accredited courses*	Hourly Rate £3.125

* The Head of Department in conjunction with the Director of Finance will retain the right to vary the price of a non-accredited course when it is considered appropriate.

4. CONCESSIONS

Concession applicable – 60%. The minimum concessionary fee will be £30.00.

Concessions are only applicable to tuition fees of part time accredited courses. Concessions are not applicable to examination or other costs included in the overall course fee. Students enrolled on non-accredited courses are not entitled to concessions. International students will not qualify for concession.

Concessions are made available by the College to individual self-paying students. Organisations and employers who sponsor students are not entitled to concessions. There are two exceptions to this: i). the payment of part time tuition fees by Student Finance NI which by regulation is only liable to pay the reduced tuition fee if applicable, and ii). the payment of part time tuition fees by The Prince's Trust.

5. BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT

Self-financing courses should be based on a number of factors including:

- (i) Lecturer Costs
- (ii) Premises Costs
- (iii) Materials and Administration
- (iv) Special Services
- (v) Market Factor
- (vi) Overhead absorption

The hourly rate for this type of work is likely to be in the region of £80/hr although it is accepted that rates may vary considerably depending on the market.

6. SCHOOL PROVISION

Fee	
Entitlement Framework	£70.00 per teaching hour

7. ASYLUM SEEKERS, REFUGEES AND SYRIAN REFUGEES RESETTLED IN NORTHERN IRELAND

Asylum seekers, refugees (including NIRRS participants) and those granted humanitarian protection, are entitled to immediate access to all FE provision on relocation.

Asylum seekers, refugees (including NIRRS participants) and those granted humanitarian protection are eligible for free ESOL provision. However, if they wish to access other further education provision, normal fees policy will apply (i.e. Home Student Rate).

The spouse/civil partner of an asylum seeker, who has been so since the date of application for refugee status, and the child/children of the asylum seeker or of the spouse/partner of an asylum seeker, who was under 18 when the application for refugee status was made, will also be eligible. The spouse/civil partner and children of a Syrian refugee will also be eligible for provision.

Full details are available from the DfE Circular FE 12/15 and FE 12/15 Addendum No.1 and No. 2.

8. USE OF PREMISES

Minimum Charges are as follows:

(i)	Foyle Theatre	per hour	£70.00
(ii)	Lecture Theatre /Assembly Hall	per hour	£40.00
(iii)	Conference Room	per hour	£25.00
(iv)	IT Rooms	per hour	£40.00
(v)	General Classroom	per hour	£20.00
(ix)	Meeting Room	per hour	£15.00

Beyond normal working hours (9am-5pm Monday-Friday), all day Saturday and Sunday and Bank Holidays there will be additional staff costs.

9. STAFF DISCOUNT

Course Type	Discount
Accredited courses at all levels (subject to maximum of 50% of staff per class)	60%
Non Accredited courses Discount is only applicable provided that the minimum class size (paying full fee) has already been enrolled.	60%

Note:

Discounts are only applicable to tuition fees. Discounts are not applicable to examination or other costs included in the overall course fee.

10. FEE WAIVER

The Principal and Chief Executive has the discretion to waive fees in exceptional circumstances.

11. DEFERRED ENTRY

The College will consider deferred entry until September 2022 for students who wish to take a gap year in the 2021/22 academic year. In order to be considered students must apply and have an unconditional acceptance offer by 31 August 2021.

12. SPECIALIST COURSES

The Directorate may determine, as appropriate, the fees to be charged for specialist courses.

13. STUDENT PRINTING CHARGES

On Enrolment, students are provided with a Student ID card that includes a one off £5.00 credit for printing/photocopying. Students may purchase additional top ups using their student ID card.

14. EXAMINATION RE-SITS

Examination re-sits will not be paid by the College unless in exceptional circumstances agreed by the Course Coordinator. One re-sit for Essential Skills will be paid by the College, provided the student sat the initial exam.

APPENDIX 2

SCHEDULE OF THOSE WHO QUALIFY FOR CONCESSIONARY RATES

Concessionary fees are available for the following categories:

- In receipt of Income Based Jobseeker's Allowance or dependent spouse / partner of a recipient;
- In receipt of Income Support; or Working Tax Credit (Depending on Gross income), or dependent spouse / partner of a recipient;
- Income based Employment Support Allowance;
- In receipt of Universal Credit (The WTC income threshold will apply to those in receipt of UC and who are working)
- Aged 16 but Under 19 years of age on 1 July of current academic year;
- Over 19 years of age on 1 July of current academic year who are in full-time Further/Higher education;
- Senior Citizen aged 60 and over and in receipt of Pension Credit or Relief under the Rate Relief Scheme;

CROSS BORDER CONCESSIONARY FEES

Provided that students can produce evidence of status at the time of enrolment, concessionary fees are available for the following categories:

- State Pension (Non-Contributory);
- Carer's Allowance;
- One Parent Family Payment;
- Widow's or Widower's (Non-Contributory) Pension;
- Unemployment Assistance;
- Pre-Retirement Allowance (PRETA);
- Disability Allowance;
- Supplementary Welfare Allowance.
- Under 19 years of age on 1 July of current academic year;
- Over 19 years of age on 1 July of current academic year who are in full-time Further/Higher education;

SUBJECT: ADDENDUM TO THE FEES POLICY

Coronavirus impact on the Fees Policy – Section 9, Refunds

The coronavirus and the resulting College lockdown of late March 2020 has resulted in the need to revisit the College's Fees and Charges Policy and specifically the Refunds section within that policy. In certain cases the College will be unable to complete courses (or part thereof) that commenced prior to the lockdown.

Students or their employers will have paid Fees (Tuition and Exam/Reg fees) for such courses and so may request a refund.

Whilst Section 9 of the current policy does give some direction on how refunds should be handled it does not consider the scenario, from the fall out of the pandemic that we are now dealing with.

The purpose of this addendum is to ensure fairness and consistency in the application of the refunds process.

Before a refund is considered the Head of Department must investigate other options, for example;

1. Can the remainder of the programme be delivered and certified on line.
2. The issuing of a credit note for use by the student, for example;
 - To be used to complete the course at a later date (early in the new academic year),
 - To be used on another course in the new academic year,
 - To be used to infill into another course in the new academic year.

Consideration should also be given to how much of the course was delivered before the College closed.

If the request progresses to a refund the College will aim to recover all Exam/Registration fees from the awarding body. This element of the fee will not be refunded to the student if the awarding body does not repay the College. Given the current climate refunds will be brought to the LMT for final decision.