

Charging & Remissions Policy 2020-22

City of Stoke-on-Trent Sixth Form College



Policy Family	Finance
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Responsible Manager	Chief Financial Officer
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Aim

The City of Stoke-on-Trent Sixth Form College has established a Charging and Remissions Policy with the aim to communicate clearly the principles, philosophy and procedures through which charging and remissions will operate with the College.

Scope

This policy applies to Students of the City of Stoke-on-Trent Sixth Form College

Policy

The City of Stoke-on-Trent Sixth Form College is committed to the general principle of free education and recognises the valuable contribution that a wide range of activities, including educational visits and residential experiences, can make towards all aspects of students' education. It also believes that all our students should have an equal opportunity to benefit from academy activities and visits (curricular and extracurricular) independent of their parent's/carer's financial means.

The 1996 Education Act requires all schools / colleges to have a policy on charging and remissions for school / college activities, which will be kept under regular review.

General Principles of this policy

1. Education will be free at the point of use.
2. All students will have equal access to their programme of study and equal opportunity to achieve the highest outcomes that they are capable of within their programme of study.
3. Students will not be discriminated against by any identified characteristics, age, or socio-economic factors.
4. The College will not charge students for any educational resources or opportunities that are compulsory within their programme of study and/or for which the college receive funding from the ESFA that fund the programme of study.
5. All students, their families, next of kin and relevant carers, will be actively made aware of the opportunity and value of Bursary applications. Students and their carers will be encouraged and supported to make accurate and timely applications. The Bursary Fund will be used to support

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student's access to college organised activities with varying levels of support determined by the Bursary rules and nature of the activity.

6. Optional educational activities and enrichment activities must be wholly funded by the students taking part. Funds will not be transferred from one activity to subsidise another, from one group of students to subsidise another group. College funds will not be used to subsidise optional educational activities or enrichment activities.
7. The College will not make a surplus from any fees and charges applied to students, but for the reasons of fairness and equality must charge the real costs to students. This will include some administrative costs and the costs of cover for staff supervising students for example.
8. The college will organise fees and charges in such a way as to be effective and efficient in its administration, for example [1] charging rounded numbers to reduce the administration costs of fees and charges, and [2] bundling fees together. Teachers and administrators are required to plan for the efficient collection of fees and charges.
9. Fees and charges for educational activities will be clear, transparent and communicated to students at the earliest opportunity.

Students may be charged for the items listed below and similar expenditure that fits within the context/spirit of these items. It is not intended as an exhaustive list;

- Optional educational opportunities that are not a compulsory part of their programme of study, for example foreign residential study visits.
- Optional enrichment and activities to increase their cultural capital.
- Fees and charges related to applications for UCAS, DBS checks and membership of professional associations.
- Personal copies of learning resources that are not compulsory, for example personal copies of textbooks that students may use at home or annotate.
- Use of resources that is beyond reasonable expectations, for example excessive printing beyond that which might be expected within the programme of study.
- Specialist clothing or equipment appropriate to the course or enrichment activities undertaken, for example lab coats, music equipment and team sports kit.

Files and Stationery

Students are expected to provide their own stationary this will include but is not limited to a file to store their lesson materials, an A4 notepad and pens/pencils.

Course specific resources and calculators

Students may purchase personal copies of course specific texts and/or packs of photocopied resources. These will be provided free of charge in classrooms and in electronic formats with the option of purchasing a personal copy (that may be annotated). This should not have a detrimental impact upon the educational opportunities of the student studying that course. Students eligible for college bursary will be encouraged to apply to the bursary fund to provide these resources.

Students in some courses are required to use personal, specific electronic calculators in lessons, during independent study and at home. The Bursary fund will purchase in full the cost of calculators for those students who have successfully applied for college bursary. Students may purchase the make and model

designated by the subject from a vendor of their choice or through the college which may benefit from the reduced cost of bulk purchase. The approximate cost of the calculator will be made clear on the subject leaflet before students apply for the course.

Printing/Photocopying

Each term all students are provided with £5 of printer credits, for reasonable use of printing and copying. If a student runs out they will be expected to top this up. Printing costs are charged at 3p A4 black and white copy and 20p A4 colour copy. Creative subjects may receive more than this. All students are encouraged to use Google drive and classroom/MySFC to minimise the cost and environmental impact of printing.

ID Cards

Students will be provided with an ID card and lanyard upon enrolment. This is a health and safety feature of the college but also allows students to access resources and cashless facilities.

If students lose their ID card and lanyard they will be expected to replace it at a rate of £5, to cover the costs of replacement card, printing, lanyard and administration.

If students are issued with a temporary ID card they will be expected to leave a deposit that is returned when the Temporary ID card is returned at the end of the college day. Deposits that are not returned will be used to replace the card and lanyard not returned by the student.

UCAS Fees

Students are required to pay for their optional applications to university. The Bursary Fund can be used to pay for this. The charges are set directly by UCAS.

Results Queries

Students may want to take the optional choice to appeal their exam results or request access to scripts. These charges will be passed on to students in their entirety, including a small proportion of the administrative cost of processing the application. The fees charged will be a round number to be efficiently collected.

If the appeal is upheld and the application fees are returned to the college, the charges will be returned to the students.

Examination and Registration Fees

Under the terms and conditions of the ESFA funding allocation, no compulsory enrolment, registration or examination fees can be charged to students aged 16–19 in full-time or part-time education.

The College can, however, make charges to students:

- i) If students fail to comply with reasonable conditions of attendance in order to qualify for free examination entry.
- ii) If students fail to turn up for the exam without reasonable cause.
- iii) If students re-sit modules or full examinations in order to improve their grade.

Specialist Tuition-Music

Music tuition is optional for students. The college recognises it is beneficial for A Level Music students and can be difficult for students to organise privately, because of this the College subsidises music tuition for A Level students. If students would like private tuition in college they are asked to pay a termly commitment

to their lessons if they choose to have them this is £50. This is for one instrument and any additional instrumental/vocal lessons will be charged at full cost.

Some students will choose to receive peripatetic tuition outside of college, financial support is not available for this. If a student is taking A Level Music and is receiving a bursary then they will receive lessons for the first instrument free. Other Music students can arrange peripatetic lessons through college but have to pay termly at full cost.

Educational study visits and enrichment activities

- The college organises optional educational activities and opportunities to enhance and enrich the student experience. Students may choose to opt-in or opt-out of the opportunities available – this is the student's responsibility.
- The cost of these optional study visits and enrichment activities must be wholly funded by the students taking part. Funds will not be transferred from one activity to subsidise another, from one group of students to subsidise another group.
- The cost of these opportunities will be shared equally by the students taking part.
- College funds will not be used to subsidise optional educational activities or enrichment activities.
- The bursary fund may be used to pay the contribution of students who have been assessed as eligible to receive college bursary. This may be on a sliding scale depending on the type and nature of the optional educational activity or enrichment. The level of bursary contribution will be assessed and agreed during the planning of the activity, before it is launched to students. Any Bursary contribution will be applied equally to all bursary students.
- The college will not make a surplus from any fees and charges applied to students, but for the reasons of fairness and equality must charge the real costs to students. This will include some administrative costs, appropriate subsistence for staff and the costs of cover for staff supervising students for example.
- All fees and charges will be set at a round number and where possible to multiples of £5.
- Where possible fees and charges will be bundled together to ease the administration of trips and visits and enrichment. For example, a futures programme, multiple Geography study visits within a year, or team sports who play a game every week.
 - a. Bundled activities can use the same consent form for multiple activities provided that this consent is clear and explicit.
 - b. Fees and charges for different elements; travel, accommodation, specialist clothing, staff cover and subsistence will be bundled together.
- Fees and charges for educational activities will be clear, transparent and communicated to students at the earliest opportunity, including where appropriate on course leaflets.
- Where an educational activity or enrichment generates a significant surplus this will be returned to students equally when this is possible to do economically. Surpluses will be returned to students in multiples of £5 only, and after appropriate administrative costs have been taken into account.
- The college must only transfer funds to an outside agent, for example travel company, once all the fees and charges have been collected from students. This is to ensure that college funds are not used to subsidise optional activities.

- Students will be charged a non-refundable deposit to secure their place upon an activity. This is required to ensure the fees and charges are distributed equally among students and to ensure the viability of activities. Deposits will only be returned once the viability of the activity is assessed.

Other Enrichment Activities

Other activities will be provided to students to support their learning and wider skill development. If costs are incurred for materials, equipment, tuition and transport these costs will be split equally between the students taking part.

Insurance

Any insurance costs will be included in charges made for visits or activities.

Voluntary Contributions (Donations)

Separately from the matter of charging, the College may seek voluntary contributions in order to offer a wide variety of experiences to students. All requests for voluntary contributions will emphasise their voluntary nature and the fact that students of parents/carers who do not make such contributions will be treated no differently from those who have.

Definitions

Student	Students will be full time students of the college studying a full time programme of study. They may be 14-16, 16-19 or mature students studying a foundation degree programme.
Compulsory educational activity	Within a programme of study there will be compulsory elements , for example; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Careers advice and guidance. • Examination and awarding body registration fees. • Teaching, tuition, practical work, compulsory fieldwork, curriculum support and guidance for the qualifications contained within the study programme. • Personal, social and health education.
'Education provided during normal hours'	Within the sixth form setting normal hours will be considered to be the funded hours through the programme of study, normally 540 hours for a full time student. It will not be considered to be the college's operating hours.
Optional Educational Activity and opportunities	The college provides a range of optional activities that are not a requirement of the qualifications contained within the study programme but may enhance the study programme, learner experience, skill development and learning outcomes. For example, the futures programme, visiting speakers, work placements, residential study visits. These optional activities will not form part of the 'education provided during normal hours'.
Enrichment	The college provides a range of enriching activities that are optional and will not directly enhance learner outcomes. For example, team sports, recreational sports, sports maker activities, work placements, Young Enterprise, Youth Speaks and Rotary Photography competition, and the Duke of Edinburgh Award. Enrichment activities are optional, available to all students and may enhance a student's learning outcomes indirectly. These optional activities will not form part of the 'education provided during normal hours'.

Sports Maker	The college Sports Maker has secured funding from Sports England for the purpose of 'Tackling inactivity'. The use of this grant is proscribed and audited by Sport England.
Non-refundable deposit	<p>A non-refundable deposit is charged to enrol students onto an optional trip or visit. Students are only registered once this deposit has been paid. If a student withdraws from the study visit of their choice the deposit is not refundable, unless there is sufficient funds available in the trip code to allow this to happen. This decision would be made after the study visit has been concluded and all costs and income accounted for.</p> <p>If the study visit was cancelled by the college due to for example insufficient student take up making the visit unsustainable then the deposits would be returned to students.</p> <p>For foreign residential study visits the appropriate professional body accreditation schemes and travel insurance will protect students from cost incurred by cancellations and similar unforeseen events.</p>

Risk Assessment and impact assessment

Risk	Mitigation and notes.
Low income families are practically or feel excluded from opportunities.	<p>The Bursary Fund is publicised to students and parents and has a high profile within the college.</p> <p>Students are encouraged to apply – and approximately 50% of students receive support.</p> <p>The threshold for household income is regularly reviewed and currently at £27,000 is above the national average wage.</p>
Some families will not have easy access to books at home.	The Bursary provides copies of the textbooks used in the classroom.

Implementation

Implementation of this policy will be the responsibility of the Chief Financial Officer, who will act on behalf of the City of Stoke-on-Trent Sixth Form College in matters relating to charging and remissions.

Communication

This Policy will be circulated to appropriate staff within the College and is available on the City of Stoke-on-Trent Sixth Form College website.

Monitoring

The responsible manager named on the front of this policy is responsible for ensuring that this document is kept up to date and revised as appropriate, seeking management and/or LGB approval in advance of the review date so that a new version can be communicated to staff and stakeholders in a timely fashion.

Associated Information and Guidance

GOV.UK - Bursary Fund Guidance 2020-21

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/16-to-19-bursary-fund-guide-2020-to-2021-academic-year>

City of Stoke-on-Trent Sixth Form College - Supplementary Funding Agreement

<https://www.potteries.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/Supplementary-Funding-Agreement-City-Stoke-on-Trent-Sixth-Form-College.pdf>

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