

Board of Management

Finance & Physical Resources Committee

Date of Meeting	Wednesday 2 June 2021
Paper No.	FPRC4-B
Agenda Item	3.2
Subject of Paper	Refund of Course Fee Policy Update
FOISA Status	Disclosable
Primary Contact	Stuart Thompson ~ Vice Principal Corporate Services
Date of Production	Tuesday 1 June 2021
Action	For approval

Recommendations

The Committee is asked to approve the updated College Refund of Course Fee Policy.

1. Purpose of report

The purpose of this paper is seek approval by the Committee for the updated on the College Refund of Course Fee Policy

2. Context

The current College Refund of Course Fee Policy was due for review in November 2020. The policy has operated well since 2017 and we are not proposing any changes to the current policy. The format of the policy has been amended.

3. Impact & Implications

As we are not proposing any changes to the current policy there are no new implications.



Refund of Course Fee Policy

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Charity Number: SC036198

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Refund of Course Fee Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Policy has been developed to give guidance regarding requests for refunds of course fees where a student or employer has a paid a course fee.

2. Purpose and Aims

- 2.1. The College will offer you fair treatment whilst protecting the College's finances.
- 2.2. Your request for a course fee refund should be submitted in writing to the Finance Department. If you need assistance in completing a request, then please contact the Finance Department.
- 2.3. If you are eligible to have your fee refunded in full or in part, then the refund will normally be made within 15 working days of receiving your written request.

3. Scope

- 3.1. The College Refund of Course Fee Policy will be applied to all courses.
- 3.2. The burden of proof is on the student to satisfy the college with evidence of their eligibility status.

4. Policy Statement

- 4.1. The following table sets out the circumstance under which the College will consider whether or not to accept your request for a refund.

CIRCUMSTANCE	REFUND
1. College has cancelled your course due to lack of numbers/over enrolment/any other reason.	Full refund
2. You have paid your fees prior to course commencement but the College withdraws your offer of a place on the course.	Full refund
3. The College has altered the course timetable significantly and you, therefore, are unable to attend.	Full refund
4. You were unaware of your eligibility for a fee waiver at the time of enrolment.	Full refund
5. You paid your fees pending confirmation of a bursary/SAAS award.	Full refund When documentary evidence of award is produced.
6. You or your dependent suffers a serious illness/accident that prevents you from completing your course (doctor's certificate may be required).	Proportional refund
7. If you are in full-time employment and a change in your work pattern makes course attendance impossible.	Proportional refund
8. You were advised to leave the course by a senior member of staff for educational reasons (provided your attendance and/or conduct was satisfactory).	Proportional refund
9. You enrolled on a part-time course and have paid your course fee but were subsequently made compulsory redundant and are unable to continue to attend the course.	Proportional refund
10. An international student is unable to obtain a visa to study in the UK and this has been through no fault of their own i.e. the College has no reason to believe they have been involved in fraudulent activity.	Full refund less £100 administration fee upon provision of Visa refusal notice.
11. An international student is unable to obtain a visa to study in the UK due to fraudulent activity.	£1,000 will be retained by the College and the balance of the course fee refunded.
12. An international student is unable to travel to the UK to attend the course for a reason other than visa refusal.	£1,000 will be retained by the College and the balance of the course fee will be refunded.
13. An international student decides to leave the course once in the UK (irrespective of how long they have been attending)	If eligible for a refund based any of the above criteria, a refund will only be processed once proof has been received that the student has returned to their home country.
14. No request is made for a refund of fees within 3 years of payment being received.	No refund

4.2 SFC fundable courses

If you are required to pay a course fee and accept a place on a course but subsequently cancel your booking in advance of the course commencement, then you will normally receive a refund less an administration fee. Administration fee will be 20% of the course fee (up to a maximum fee of £100 for SFC fundable courses).

4.3 Non SFC fundable courses (Commercial)

If you are required to pay a course fee and accept a place on a course but subsequently cancel your booking in advance of the course commencement, then you will receive a refund based on the following

0-5 working days notice – No Refund

6-25 working days notice – 20% of course fee payable

Over 25 working days notice – Full Refund

Proportional refunds will be calculated based on the official last date of attendance and with the deduction of the administration fee. Therefore no refunds will be made if 80% of the course duration has elapsed.

4.4 Discretionary Refunds

In exceptional circumstances the refund policy can be over-ridden at the College's discretion with prior approval of a member of the College Executive Leadership Team.

5. Definitions

SFC	Scottish Funding Council (SFC) is the funding body for Scotland's Colleges
Fundable course	SFC has strict eligibility rules to access grant funding to support the delivery of a course. Courses eligible for funding are categorised as Fundable courses.

6. Responsibilities

6.1. COMPLAINTS

If you or your employer wishes to complain about a refund decision or the process, then please follow the College's normal complaint procedure.

Information on the complaint procedure is available on the College's website, from the Student Services Department or from the Finance Department.

6.2. DATA PROTECTION ACT

The personal data provided by you will be kept in a manual filing system. In addition some of the information may also be transferred into the College's computerised student record system. Personal information will be used by College staff to process your application. The information will also be used to compile College grant claims and the preparation of statistical information. The information will be available to a range of external auditors who carry out audits on the College's financial and student records systems.

7. References

7.1. Policy Framework

Associated Policies and Procedures	Title

7.2. Other College Policies and Procedures

Policy / Procedure	Title

7.3. External References

Source	Title
Financial Memorandum	SFC Financial Memorandum for Scotland's Colleges.

8. Document Control and Review

Approval Status							
Approved by	Finance & Physical Resources Committee						
Date Approved							
EQIA Status	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Initial Screening Conducted?</td> <td>Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td> <td>No: <input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Full EQIA Conducted?</td> <td>Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td> <td>No: <input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>	Initial Screening Conducted?	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No: <input type="checkbox"/>	Full EQIA Conducted?	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No: <input type="checkbox"/>
Initial Screening Conducted?	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No: <input type="checkbox"/>					
Full EQIA Conducted?	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No: <input type="checkbox"/>					
Proposed Review Date	June 2024						
Lead Department	Finance						
Lead Officer(s)	Vice Principal Corporate Services						
Board Committee	Finance & Physical Resources Committee						
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9. Revision Log

Version Date	Section of Document	Description of Revision
V1		Initial post merger policy
V2		General update
V3		4.3 Amendment for commercial courses
V4	4	Update to refund criteria
V5	various	Format update