

Policy & Procedure	Fee Policy 2024-25
Policy Area	Finance
Version Number	01
Approving Committee	SMT
Date of Approval	
Date of Equality Impact Assessment	August 2020
Date of Next Review	November 2024
Responsible Senior Manager	Director of Finance and Estates

History of Amendments

Date	Sections	Summary of changes
3 June 2019	5.2 Fee Status; 5.3 Fee Determination; 5.4 Funding; 6.1 Invoice and Payment; 6.2. Instalments; 6.3 Refunds; Fee Table	To reflect description of course levels, Rest of UK (RUK) fee implications, revision of instalment and revised fee levels.
31 July 2020	3. Fees	Updated for 2020-21 fees; To reflect a caveat of 'pending Brexit outcome'
9 August 2021	3. Fees; 4. Fee Payment and Collection; Fee Table	To reflect EU Settled/Pre-settled status; To reflect options for payment portal; Updated for PT fee pricing;
December 2021	4.11 Refunds;	To include refunds for overpayment of fees
June 2022	3.5 Home rate & International	Updated to status definitions
June 2022	4.2 Payments and collections ;4.9 Instalments; 4.11 Refunds	To reflect eligibility for payment options, instalment plans and refunds
June 2022	Appendix A & B	To update table with fees post Brexit for EU settled/Pre settled status; and include Highers and Nat 4/5 fees for all categories
Feb 2023	4. Fee Payment and Collection; Appendix C	To reflect 25% deposit for fee paying students and associated changes to Refunds model
Feb 2024	4. Appendix A, B & C	Remove reference to EU students (now refer to residency)

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 providing documentation in support of any funding they may be eligible for.

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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1. Purpose

1.1 This Policy details the College's approach to:

- Fee setting
- Determination of student's fee status
- Concessionary fees
- International fees and refunds
- Payment plans/instalments
- Refund of fees

2. Scope

2.1 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.

2.2 The section on refunds does not apply to fees paid by SAAS, as these refunds are covered under SAAS own specific terms and conditions.

3. Fees

Fee Setting

3.1 The College will set fees annually taking consideration of inflation, Scottish Funding Council (SFC) and Student Awards Agency for Scotland (SAAS) fee rates, anticipated demand, and other business imperatives.

3.2 Fees will only be set by:

- Finance; or

Enterprise and Skills;

3.3 The 2024-25 fee table is attached in Appendix A.

Fee Status and Determination

3.4 Tuition fees are charged at rates depending on student residency, nationality, and immigration status. Determination of status is complex, but students can check this by accessing the Scottish Government, Student Information Scotland (SIS) Portal at <https://www.studentinformation.gov.scot> along with a whole range of information for students on funding and finance.

3.5 Students will be charged fees based on status classifications with the following broad definitions:

Scottish (Home Rate)	Students who have been ordinary resident in Scotland on the relevant date *Relevant dates as applicable are: 1 August for courses that start between 1 August and 31 December 1 January for courses that start between 1 January and 31 March 1 April for courses that start between 1 April and 30 June 1 July for courses that start between 1 July and 31 July
Rest of UK (RUK)	Student whose main residence is in England, Wales, or Northern Ireland
International	Students who are resident in all other countries (in the past 3 years)

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

- 3.7 Ukrainians who fall under one of the 3 immigration routes (see SFC Residency Guidance) are eligible for funding in the same way as Scottish home rate student.

Note that students from the Rest of the UK are charged the same Further Education (FE) fee rate as Scottish students, even though they are not eligible for support. A higher rate of fees can only be charged to Rest of UK students studying Higher Education (HE) courses.

Funding

- 3.8 There are no concessionary rates or discounts available for any of our courses. Appendix B sets out a comprehensive schedule of funding criteria where students may be eligible to have their fees covered in full or partially by external funding.

These are summarised below:

- **Student Support Funding**
 - Students studying full time NC equivalent courses may apply to have their fees funded by the College if they meet the eligibility criteria.
 - For courses commencing in August these fee applications must be received by 31 October for consideration.
 - For all other courses applications must be received by 31st March.

- **Fee Waiver**
 - Please refer to the Fee Waiver Policy for eligibility criteria and the supporting documentation required as set out in SFC guidelines.

- **SAAS**
 - This is only available to full time/short full time HN/BA courses and the student must apply to SAAS. Note that funding will only be granted once at each level of study.
 - If a student chooses to withdraw from a course after 30 November, he/she may not be eligible for future SAAS funding as the funds from the first application are then non-refundable. In these circumstances' students are advised to contact SAAS directly for help and assistance.

- **Part Time Fee Grant (PTFG)**
 - The student must apply to SAAS. This may be available for some part time courses that meet the criteria.
 - The minimum credits being achieved must be 4 (32 SCQF credits) and the maximum credits being achieved cannot exceed 14 (112 SCQF credits) in a single academic year.

- **Employer/Sponsor**
 - An official confirmation in writing is required from the employer/sponsor 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. (See Section 4.9 below)

4. Fee Payment and Collection

Invoicing and Payments

- 4.1 Course fee invoices will be issued to students and fees and must be fully paid in line with the schedule of fees as set out in Appendix A.
- 4.2 During the course enrolment process, students who select they are Self-Financing will have the option to pay immediately in full or pay by regular instalments, which will require a 25% deposit on enrolment. Pay later options do not apply to commercial courses nor to international students where full payment is required on enrolment.
- 4.3 Alternatively, during the course enrolment process, students can select that they are SAAS or Student Support Funded (see para 3.8 on Funding above); students must apply to the respective body for funding to cover course fee; failure to apply or where the student is ineligible will result in invoices being issued to the student and being liable for the fees.
- 4.4 Any student studying full-time HN courses, commencing August, who withdraw from the course by 30 November, will have their invoice for course fees cancelled.
- 4.5 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 recovery action via a Debt Collection Agency.
- 4.6 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.

International Students

- 4.7 For all international students, fees must be paid in full prior to enrolment on the course. International students will not be permitted to pay their fees by instalments.
- 4.8 Funds will not be transferred from one year to next should a student decide to change courses during the year.

Instalments

- 4.9 The option to pay by instalments is available where course fees are £200 or more and where the course is longer than 8 weeks; this option is not available for International Students or commercial course (see para 4.7 above).
- 4.10 Students should contact Finance at sales.ledger@wcs.ac.uk to set up an instalment plan.

Refunds

- 4.11 The refund of fees is granted where either:
- a) the College cancels the course; or
 - b) a student has paid and withdraws from a course in line with the withdrawal's guidance; or
 - c) has overpaid their fees.
- 4.12 Course refunds will be paid in accordance with criteria outlined in Appendix C and amounts will be credited back to the debit / credit card used for payment or by bank transfer.

5. Responsibilities

- 5.1 The Principal has devolved authority to set the College Fee Policy.
- 5.2 The Senior Management Team will agree any changes to the fee levels in advance of the academic session.
- 5.3 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.
- 5.4 All enquiries regarding the application of this Policy can, in the first instance, be directed to the Head of Finance and Student Funding.

6. Discretionary Arrangements

- 6.1 In exceptional circumstances this Policy can be overridden at the discretion of the Director of Finance.

7. Review

- 7.1 This Policy will be reviewed annually in advance of the start of each academic session.

Appendix A – Tuition Fees 2024-25

FULL TIME FEES	INFILL CREDIT/UNIT	Short FT	FE	HE including PDA/SVQ L3 & L4	Degree
Home/	£110 – FE £115 – HE	£600	£1,008	£1,285	£1,820
Rest of UK	£110 – FE £400 - HE	£600	£1,008	£6,000	£9,000
International	£312 – FE £400 – HE	£3,000	£5,000	£6,000	£9,000

PART TIME FEES Calculated on a pro-rata bases depending on SFC Credits level	FE	HE
Home/	£63	£86 (this in turn is based on 8 SCQF credits per 1 SFC Credit up to a max of 120 SCQF credits)
Rest of UK	£63	£400
International	£312	£400

Other Course	Fee
Highers Home	£280
Highers International	£1,400
National 5 Home	£300
National 5 International	£1,500 (1/2 *3,000 for short FT)
SCQF Level 5/6 (previously SVQ Level 2)	£1,035
SCQF Level 6/7 (previously SVQ Level 3)	£1,200
SCQF Level 8/9 (previously SVQ Level 4)	£2,300

Appendix B – Funding Criteria for Fees

	FE Full-Time (NC, NQ,)	FE Part-Time (NC, NQ, , Highers, National 5)	HE Full-Time (HNC HND, Degree)	HE Part-Time (HNC HND)
	Apply to College for Full Time Fee Waiver by contacting WCS Student Funding by 31 October for August start courses. For all other courses apply by 31 March EXCLUDES INTERATIONAL/RUK STUDENTS and COMMERCIAL COURSES	Apply to College for Part Time Fee Waiver, providing proof of eligibility by uploading documents to: feewaiver@wcs.ac.uk EXCLUDES INTERATIONAL/RUK STUDENTS and COMMERCIAL COURSES	Apply to SAAS: https://www.saas.gov.uk/ by 31 March EXCLUDES INTERATIONAL/RUK STUDENTS and COMMERCIAL COURSES	Apply to SAAS for Part Time Fee Grant: https://www.saas.gov.uk/ by 31 March. Apply to College for Part time fee waiver, providing proof of eligibility by upload documents to: feewaiver@wcs.ac.uk EXCLUDES INTERATIONAL/RUK STUDENTS and COMMERCIAL COURSES
HOME STUDENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £1,008 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £63 per credit £110 per infill credit £280 Higher £300 National 5 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £1,285 HNC/HND £1,820 Degree 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £86 per credit £115 per infill credit
RUK STUDENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £1,008 self-financing £1,008 Apply to local education authority for fee loan. £110 per infill credit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £63 per credit £110 per infill credit £280 Higher £300 National 5 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £6,000 Self-financing £6,000 Apply to local education authority for fee loan. £400 per infill credit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £400 per credit
INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £5,000 £312 per infill credit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £312 per credit £1,395 Higher £1,500 National 5 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £6,000 HNC/HND £9,000 Degree 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £400 per credit
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Official confirmation from your employer stating they will be liable for your fees should be sent to: sales.ledger@wcs.ac.uk Purchase Order number from employer should be sent to: sales.ledger@wcs.ac.uk 			

Distance learning Courses	Check our website for Distance Learning courses and fee information or contact the team: onlinelearning@wcs.ac.uk
Commercial Course	Contact the relevant Curriculum department for fee information

Appendix C – Refund Schedule

Short Full/Part-Time Courses	
Withdrawal date	Refund
Within first 1/3 of course	2/3 of fee
Withdrawn between 1/3 and 2/3 course completion	1/3 of fee
Withdrawn after 2/3 course completed	No refund

Full/Part-time Courses over Full Academic Year				
Course Level	Student Category	Refund due if withdrawal before: 1 Dec for Aug start courses 1 Feb for Nov start courses 1 Mar for Jan start courses	Refund due if withdrawal after: 1 Dec but before 31 March 1 Feb but before 31 March 1 Mar but before 31 March	Refund if withdrawn after 31 March
FE Full-Time (NC, NQ,)	Home/RUK/International	In full N/A	50% of Fee N/A	No refund due No refund due
FE Part-Time (NC, NQ,)	Home/RUK/International	In full N/A	50% of Fee N/A	No refund due No refund due
FE Part-Time (Highers National 4 & 5)	All	In full	50% of Fee	No refund due
HE Full-Time (HNC HND, Degree)	Home/RUK/ International	In full No refund due	50% of Fee No refund due	No refund due No refund due

Single Day Courses	
Cancellation	Refund
College cancels the course	Full refund, or alternative date offered
Student/Client does not attend and has not given at least 48 hours notice	No refund
Student/Client does not attend but has given at least 48 hours notice	Full refund
In exceptional circumstances, the Head of Sector will have discretion to award a refund, even if the student/client has not attended. For all refunds, the Head of Sector must approve the documentation to be provided to Finance.	

Short Commercial > 1 Day	
Cancellation	Refund
College cancels the course	Full refund, or alternative date offered
Student/Client does not attend and has not given at least 10 working days' notice	No refund
Student/Client does not attend but has given at least 10 working days' notice	Full refund
Student/Client attended only part of the course and decided they do not want to continue	Student/Client offered a pro-rata refund less £20 administration fee

Appendix D - Equality Impact Assessment

Name of policy/procedure/decision: Fee Policy 2024-25

Provide a brief summary of the aims of the policy/procedure/decision and main activities:

This Policy details the College's approach to fee setting, including fee waiver and concessionary fees, instalments, refunds and withdrawals, and international fees.

As a preliminary point, it should be noted that the decision as to whether or not an applicant receives support towards their tuition fees is not taken by West College Scotland. This decision is made by external organisations such as SAAS. 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.

Assessed By: EDI Manager

Date: 28 August 2020

This stage establishes whether a policy, procedure or decision will have a differential impact from an equality perspective on people who share protected characteristics or whether it is "equality neutral" (i.e., have no effect either positive or negative).

The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion, or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

1. Who will benefit from this (students/staff/stakeholders)? Is there likely to be a positive impact on people who share protected characteristics, and if so, how? Or is it clear at this stage that it will be equality “neutral”? i.e. will not have a differential impact on any equality group/s?

This Policy has been developed to clearly set out fee and pricing arrangements. Such clarity should be of benefit to all stakeholders. The College will assist students who require further clarification or support in understanding fee and pricing arrangements. For example, 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 staff will explain College processes where required to assist groups who need further support.

2. Is there likely to be an adverse impact on people who share protected characteristics? If so, who may be affected and why? Or is it clear at this stage that it will be equality “neutral”?

There is no indication that this Policy will result in an adverse impact on people who share protected characteristics.

3. What action will you take to ensure that you are monitoring the impact of this Policy?

Student Complaints and Student Surveys will be used to monitor the impact of this Policy.