

Tuition Fee Refund and Withdrawal Procedure Session 2018/19

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| Responsibility for Contents | Director of Information Systems |
| Responsibility for Review | Student Records Manager |
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| Primary Contact | Student Records Manager |

1.0 Procedure Statement

The College will administer tuition fee refunds and withdrawals in a fair, consistent and straightforward manner for all learners.

The default position of the College, as noted in relevant publications, is that **tuition fees are non-refundable**. Refunds will only be made where the impact upon College finances is acceptable and where this has been authorised by the Director of Information Systems or appropriate SMT member.

2.0 Responsibility for the Implementation of this procedure

- Student Records Staff
- Student Records Manager
- Fee Administrator

3.0 Introduction

The purpose of this procedure is to outline the responsibility of administrative staff involved in the assessment and processing of tuition fee refunds or in calculating tuition fees due when a learner withdraws from a course. It is not College policy to refund fees automatically.

Fees must be paid in full in advance of the course starting unless eligible to pay balance by direct debit. Where a learner has paid for course fees and fails to attend, tuition fees are non-refundable.

A request for a refund must be made in writing. Refunds may only be considered under the following exceptional circumstances:

- a) Where the College decides that a course will not be delivered due to lack of learner numbers or for some other reason.
- b) Where the College changes the day/time of a course and the learner is therefore unable to attend.
- c) Where the learner was unaware of his/her eligibility for a tuition fee waiver at time of enrolment.
- d) Where the learner has paid part or all of their tuition fees pending confirmation of bursary/grant. Learners will be advised that a full refund will be made when documentary evidence of award is produced.
- e) Where serious disability/illness/accident to the learner or any dependants (including necessary child-minder where appropriate) results in the learner being unable to continue their studies (doctors certificate required). The refund will be calculated on a proportional basis depending upon how far progressed the course is at the time of notification.
- f) Any other circumstances will be at the discretion of the Director of Information Systems

This procedure does not apply to tuition fees paid by the Student Awards Agency Scotland (SAAS), as there are contractually agreed refund terms in respect of these tuition fees. Applications for refunds from International learners are also out with the scope of this procedure. Refunds in these matters will be at the discretion of the Director of Information Systems, and are outlined in the International process and procedures documentation. Cancellation of Commercial course bookings are covered by the Business and Innovation Cancellation Procedure and are also out with the scope of this procedure.

4. Refund Procedure

Where it has been decided to award a refund, the following rates will apply:

| Circumstance | Refund |
|--|-------------------|
| Course cancelled or altered by College / Fees paid by other source | Full refund |
| Refund where attending up to 25% of course+ | 75% refund |
| Refund where attending up to 50% of course+ | 50% refund |
| Refund where attending more than 50% of course+ | No refund granted |

+The percentage of the course, which has been attended, will be determined based upon the learners last date of attendance as per the College's attendance recording system, against the number of weeks of the course. For full-time advanced learners this will be in proportion to course fee determined by SAAS. This information is held on the College's Student Records Systems and will be calculated by the Fee Administrator.

5. Withdrawals

The College has the right to withdraw a learner from their course for reasons such as lack of attendance, progression, disciplinary action (after any reasonable adjustments because of disability, illness or other protected characteristic) or non-payment of tuition fees as agreed.

Where a learner has been withdrawn from their course and they meet the criteria of section 3.0 they **may** be eligible for a partial refund where tuition fees have been paid in full or where partial fees have been paid via direct debit. Where a learner withdraws prior to payment of any tuition fees, proportional fees will be charged. The following fee rates will apply:

| Circumstance | Fees Due |
|---|--|
| Learner withdraws within 2 weeks of start date | £25 admin fee |
| Thereafter will be charged by weeks attended until end of block 1 | £35 per wk (HNC/HND) £50 per wk (Degree) |
| If Learner has attended in block 2 | Full tuition fee to be charged |

Where a learner withdraws from their course and has used an Individual Training Account (ITA) to pay for all or part of their tuition fees, no re-imburement will be made to the learners ITA account, unless under a) or b) of section 3 above. Where a learner fails to notify the College they no longer wish their course place, a £25 administration fee will be charged.

For flexible learning course a £25 administration fee will apply.

6. Application for Refunds

Where the College cancels a course, the Head of Service or Department must advise the Student Records Manager who will provide course and learner details to the Fee Administrator. Where the reason for a refund is not due to the College cancelling a course, an application for a refund must be made in writing to the Student Records Manager.

Applications for refunds from Commercial and International learners are not subject to the scope of this procedure. Refunds in these matters will be at the discretion of the Director of Information Systems and are outlined in the International process and procedures documentation.

7. Timing of Refunds

The Fee Administrator will ensure that refunds are made within 14 working days of receiving full details of a refund claim. Card payments will be automatically refunded with all other refunds being repaid by cheque.

8 Discretionary Refunds or Withdrawal Fees

Only in exceptional circumstances will the Director of Information Systems or Student Records Manager use their discretion in awarding a refund or fee waiver.

10. Appeals

If a learner wishes to appeal against a refund decision, they should do so in writing to the Student Records Manager including as much corroborating evidence as possible. All appeals will be dealt with by the Director of Information Systems based on the information received. The Director of Information Systems will formally notify the learner of their decision within 15 working days of the appeal being received.

11. Other relevant policies

Other policies that are relevant to the Tuition Fee Refund and Withdrawal Procedure are:

- Tuition Fee Procedure
- Fee Waiver Policy
- Equalities Policy

12. Impact Assessment

This procedure has been screened to determine equality relevance for the following equality groups: gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, age or other characteristics. The procedure is considered to be equality relevant for these groups. A full impact assessment will be completed when the procedure is reviewed at the procedure review date.

We welcome feedback on this Procedure and the way it operates. We are interested to know of any possible or adverse impact that this procedure may have on any groups in respect of gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, transgender status, age or other characteristics. This procedure will be evaluated for impact assessment at its next review. If you wish to give feedback relating to this Procedure please email: equality@forthvalley.ac.uk