



Fee Waiver Policy

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Fee Waiver Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Policy has been developed within the context of the national fee waiver policy issued by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC).

2. Purpose and Aims

- 2.1. The Board of Management provides free education and training for certain people including those dependent on specific state benefits. The criteria below will help you to decide whether or not you qualify.
- 2.2. If you have difficulty understanding this document, then please contact the College's Finance Department or Student Services Department for assistance.
- 2.3. You should apply for free education before you begin your course. You will be required to provide proof of entitlement.
- 2.4. If you qualify for free education, then you may also be eligible for other assistance in terms of travel, study expenses and childcare expenses. Please contact the College's Student Services Department to find out whether or not you are eligible for additional financial assistance.

3. Scope

- 3.1. The College Fee Waiver Policy will be applied to all SFC fundable courses.
- 3.2. Free places are not available on commercial courses or other courses not eligible for SFC funding.
- 3.3. In claiming a fee waiver grant for any student on any course, the college cannot charge that student any other fees for that course and must abide by the Scottish Government's policy that such students should not have any charge levied from them that could be construed as 'top-up' fees.
- 3.4. The College cannot use fee waiver grant for a student being supported by an Individual Training Account,

3.5. The burden of proof is on the student to satisfy the college with evidence of their eligibility status.

4. Policy Statement

4.1. Full-Time Further Education Courses – Eligibility

4.1.1. If you are following an eligible full-time course below HNC/D level, then you will not be charged a course fee. You must also meet the normal residency rules; all non-EU students must pay the full cost fee set by the College. The vast majority of applicants will meet the residency rules. Information on whether you meet the residency rules can be obtained from the College's Student Services Department.

4.1.2. FE students for whom SUM's can be claimed with learning difficulties or disabilities on courses classified in programme group 18.

4.1.3. If you are or your parent is an asylum seeker living in Scotland and you are enrolled on a full-time English as a second or other language (ESOL) course, then you will not be charged a course fee.

4.1.4. If you are a child of an asylum seeker or a young asylum seeker on a full-time non-advanced course, then you will not be charged a course fee. However, to be eligible you must:

- Have made an asylum application for yourself or your family prior to the end of 2006.
- Be resident in Scotland on 1 August, 1 January, 1 April or 1 July closest to the beginning of the first term of your course.
- Have been resident in Scotland for a minimum period of three years;
- Have been under 18 years of age on the date when the application for asylum was made, the application must have been made prior to 1st December 2006; and
- Be under 25 years of age on 1st August, 1st January, 1st April or 1st July closest to the beginning of the first term of your course.

4.2. Part-Time Courses - Eligibility

Most of the College's part-time courses are eligible for fee waiver support.

Some courses will not be supported. These are primarily leisure courses.

When you request a fee waiver you will be informed whether or not your chosen course is eligible for support. To encourage wider participation in the College's courses, a number of free places will be set-aside for people who are eligible for a fee waiver. If your chosen course is eligible for support, then your fees will be waived where:

4.2.1. You or your family is in receipt of:

- Income Support; or
- Working Tax Credit; or
- Pension Credit, or
- Income-based Job Seekers Allowance; or
- Income Related Employment and Support Allowance
- Housing Benefit.
- Universal Credit

4.2.2. Or where you are in receipt of:

- Carer's Allowance: or
- Disability Living Allowance: or
- Severe Disablement Allowance, or
- Attendance Allowance; or
- Incapacity Benefit; or
- Contributory Employment and Support Allowance
- Personal Independence Payment

4.2.3. Or where the taxable income of your family in the previous financial tax year is equivalent to or lower than the current threshold below;

Households with only one person	£8,282
Households consisting of a couple without children	£12,395
Households with dependent children	£18,977

Where there has been a material reduction in your family income from the previous financial tax year, the taxable income of the current financial tax year can be assessed.

The burden of proof is on you to satisfy the College with evidence of your family's income.

4.2.4. **Or** you are a young person in the care of a local authority and living in a foster home or children's home.

4.2.5. **Or** where you, or your parent is an asylum seeker living in Scotland on either English as a second or other language (ESOL) course or another part-time advanced / non-advanced course.

4.2.6. **Or** you are a non-asylum seeker, living in Scotland, and undertaking part-time English as a second or other language and your main purpose for being in Scotland is not to receive education.

4.2.7. **Or** you are a state school pupil undertaking part of your school-based curriculum at the College. You will receive an automatic fee waiver.

4.2.8. **Or** you are a privately or home educated school pupil. You will be eligible for a part-time fee waiver on a means-tested basis. However, in exceptional circumstances, the College may waive your fees where, for example, you have additional support needs or if there are other unavoidable circumstances, which prevent you from being educated in the state school system.

4.3. Other Requirements

4.3.1. For the purposes of this policy the definition of the following terms are as defined by the Scottish Funding Council:

- Family
- Child/young person
- Married
- Civil Partnership

Information of these definitions can be obtained from the College's Student Services Department.

4.3.2. In all of the above cases, the qualifying date is the start date of the course.

4.3.3. There is no upper age limit on eligibility for a fee waiver.

4.3.4. If you are a full-time student of the College and wish to enrol onto a further unit of part-time study, then your course fees may be waived where:

- You do not displace a fee-paying student.
- You do not displace a student who is eligible for a fee waiver.

Given the above restrictions, the College will be unable to confirm whether or not a fee waiver place is available until a few days prior to the start of the part-time course.

5. Definitions

Fee waiver Free place on a College course

SFC Scottish Funding Council

6. Responsibilities

6.1. COMPLAINTS

6.1.1. If your application is rejected, then you will be responsible for the immediate payment of the appropriate course fee.

6.1.2. You may complain where:

- The facts are in dispute;
- You consider that you have exceptional circumstances, which would merit a review of your application.

6.1.3. If the complaint is successful then your fees will be refunded to you.

6.1.4. If you wish to make a complaint, then a complaint form can be obtained from the College's Student Services Department or 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
SFC	SFC Fee Waiver Policy 2014-15

8. Document Control and Review

Approval Status	Approved						
Approved by	Audit Committee						
Date Approved	25 th May 2016						
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 type="checkbox"/></td> <td>No: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>	Initial Screening Conducted?	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No: <input type="checkbox"/>	Full EQIA Conducted?	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/>	No: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Initial Screening Conducted?	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No: <input type="checkbox"/>					
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Proposed Review Date	November 2018						
Lead Department	Finance						
Lead Officer(s)	Executive Director Finance						
Board Committee	Audit Committee						
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9. Revision Log

Version Date	Section of Document	Description of Revision
V1		Initial post merger policy
V2		Update in response to SFC 2012-13 policy
V3		Update in response to SFC 2013-14 policy
V4		Update in response to SFC 2014-15 policy
V5		Updates to dates & job titles