**POLCFO 17 Refund and Withdrawal Policy**

All College policies and procedures adhere to the guidelines and ethos of Equality and Diversity

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| **Date Origin** | **Last Review** | **Next Proposed Review Date** | **EQIA Date** | **Responsibility for Review** |
| August 2014 | July 2023 | July 2024 | July 2023 | Chief Financial Officer |

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# **1 Introduction**

This refund policy must be adhered to by all members of staff who are involved in assessing/processing fee refunds or in calculating the fees due when a student withdraws from a course. The policy applies to both tuition and exam fees.

# **2 General Principles**

1. The College must ensure that the policy for refunds and withdrawals represents a fair way of treating students and simultaneously protects the College from financial loss.
2. All fees are due to be paid in advance of the course starting unless a payment plan has been agreed (See FIN10 – Tuition Fees Instalment Policy) or at the discretion of a member of the Executive Board (EB).
3. **It is not the policy of the College to refund fees automatically** and there is a note on the Enrolment Form that states fees are non-refundable. Refunds may only be considered under the following circumstances. An application in writing is required except for (i) – (iv). This should be communicated to the Finance Department in the first instance who will then liaise with the appropriate Department. An award letter is required for (iv) rather than an application in writing.
4. Where the College has decided that a course will not be delivered due to lack of numbers/over enrolment/any other reason.
5. Where the College alters the time/day of the course and the student is therefore unable to attend.
6. Where the student was unaware of their eligibility for fee waiver or SAAS funding at the time of enrolment.
7. Where the student has paid fees pending confirmation of bursary/grant. The student should be advised that a full refund will be made when documentary evidence of award is produced.
8. In the event of death of a student (on production of a copy of the death certificate).
9. Where serious illness/accident to student or dependant (including necessary childminder where appropriate) on a proportional basis where student was therefore unable to continue studies (doctors certificate required).
10. In other circumstances at the discretion of a member of the SFT or EB.
11. Once exam applications have been submitted to the examining body the College cannot return the exam fees unless at the discretion of a member of the SFT/EB.
12. Prior to exam applications being submitted to the examining body full refunds may be given under conditions (iv), (v), (vi) and (vii).
13. This policy does not apply to fees paid by the Student Awards Agency Scotland, as there are contractually agreed refund terms in respect of these fees.

# **3 Refund Policy**

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

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| --- | --- |
| **Circumstance** | **Refund** |
| Course cancelled or altered by College/Fees paid by other source/Student death | Full Refund |
| Refund where attending < 10% of the course. | Full refund less the administration fee\* and any non-refundable costs due |
| Refund where attending between 10% and less than 30% of the course | 75% refund less the administration fee\*. |
| Refund where attending between 30% and 50% of the course | 50% refund less the administration fee\*. |
| Refund where attending more than 50% of the course | No refund granted. |

\*The administration fee will be £20.

The percentage of the course, which has been attended, will be determined based upon the last day of attendance, per the College’s registration system, against the total number of days of the course. This information is held on the Student Records System and should be obtained from your campus MIS Office or from the Information Systems Administration Manager.

These rates can be overwritten at the discretion of a member of the SFT/EB.

# **4 Withdrawals**

Fees should be paid in advance of the course starting. However, where a student withdraws from a course prior to paying the fees due, the **full fee will be charged** subject to the provisions of Section 2. Where the student withdraws and would have otherwise been eligible for a partial refund had they paid e.g. case (vi), the following fees will be charged:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Circumstance** | **Fees Due** |
| Student withdraws before attending 10% of the course. | Administration fee\* plus any non-refundable costs due |
| Student withdraws after attending between 10% and less than 30% of the course | 25% of fees plus the administration fee\* due. |
| Student withdraws after attending between 30% and 50% of the course | 50% of fees plus the administration fee\* due. |
| Student withdraws after attending more than 50% of the course | 100% of fees due. |

Where no fee is collected and a student withdraws in circumstances where paid tuition fees would have been refunded e.g. case (ii), then no fees are due.

However, these rates can be overwritten at the discretion of a member of the SFT/EB.

# **5 Application for Refunds**

Where a course is cancelled, the Head of Department must immediately email the EB providing course and student details and inform the Finance Department.

# **6 Timing of Refunds**

The Finance Department will ensure that refund payments are actioned within 14 days of receiving written details of the refund claim.

# **7 Discretionary Refunds or Withdrawal Fees**

In exceptional circumstances the refund policy can be over-ridden at the discretion of the Principal.

# **8 Appeals**

If a student wishes to appeal against a refund policy decision, they should do so, in writing to the Finance Department. The Senior Accountant (Sales) will investigate the circumstances in conjunction with Finance and Faculty staff and can then apply their discretion to reduce debt or grant refund.

To appeal this decision, the student would appeal in writing to the Financial Controller. All appeals will be heard by the Financial Controller and a Head of Department. (The Financial Controller will formally notify the student of their decision.)

A further appeal can be made in writing to the Chief Financial Officer.

# **Version Control**

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| **Version** | **Version date** | **Sections updated** |
| V1 | Aug 2014 | Original version of document |
| V2 | July 2016 | Section 2 (iii) updated to include mention of SAAS funding in addition to fee waiver |
| V3 | Jan 2019 | 2 Point re refunding fees - (iv) included with no letter of application required  (vii) SFT included here  3 Discretion to be given to SFT also  4 Discretion to be given to SFT also  8 Section amended to add initial Senior Accountant discretion, appeals now to Financial Controller and no final appeal to the Principal. In section 7 the Principal maintains the ability to over-ride the policy. |
| V4 | Dec 2021 | New Logo, SMT changed to EB, Vice Principal (Resources) changed to Chief Financial Officer, Faculty to Department. |
| V5 | July 23 | Reviewed, no change |