



Charging Policy

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3	June 19	TJ	EFA changed to ESFA
4	February 2021	JW	Point 3.3 regarding musical instrument tuition removed

1. INTRODUCTION

Legislation restricts the types of activity which colleges are allowed to charge parents for. Engineering UTC's policy applies to charges made to parents/students, for facilities used by private individuals and third party organisations that rent college premises.

As a college, we try:

- To make activities accessible to all students regardless of family income;
- To encourage and promote external activities which give added value to the curriculum;
- To respond to the wide variations in family income whilst not placing additional unexpected burdens on our budget.

For the purposes of this document, 'Parent' is taken to include any parent, carer or person with parental responsibility for a student.

2. LEGISLATION

Under the terms of the Education Act 1996, the college must have a policy on charging students to participate in college activities.

Education provided during college hours must be free – the definition of education includes materials, equipment and transport provided in college hours by the college to carry students between the college and an activity. By law, students may not be charged for activities that form part of the normal college day, but the college may invite parents and others from time-to-time to make a voluntary contribution towards the college's work, to allow us to offer activities or experiences which otherwise might not be possible. This might include a voluntary contribution towards activities taking place in college time, activities which form part of the curriculum or an examination syllabus, or those which form part of the religious education curriculum. However, the student of any parent who is unable to contribute will not be prevented from participating in an activity which takes place during college time if the activity goes ahead.

In any request for voluntary payments, it must be clear from the terms in which it is made that:

- There is no obligation to make a contribution
- Students will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents have contributed to the planned activity
- If there are insufficient contributions received to cover the cost, including all students who wish to participate, the activity will not go ahead.
- Where an activity takes place outside of college hours and does not form part of the curriculum or examination syllabus, this is classed as an optional extra and parents can be asked to meet the full cost of these activities.

3. DETAIL OF CHARGES

3.1 Admissions

No charge shall be made in respect of admission to the college unless it is for the purpose of:

- Part time education for persons over compulsory school age
- Full time education for persons over compulsory school age
- Teacher training

3.2 Provision of education

No charge shall be made in relation to the education of registered students where education is provided during college hours. Where education is provided outside of college hours, no charge shall be made provided it is required as part of the syllabus/curriculum. The college may charge individuals who are not registered students for education provided or facilities used by them belonging to the college.

3.3 Practical subject charge

Voluntary contributions may be requested to cover the cost of materials and ingredients provided by the college for practical subjects where parents indicate that they wish to receive the finished articles.

3.4 Visits during the college day

A voluntary charge will be made to cover the cost of educational visits and other activities. However, charges cannot be enforced where this forms part of the curriculum. Where the level of non-payment renders a trip financially unviable, consideration will be given to cancellation.

3.5 Residential visits

Where at least half of the time away from home is not normal college time, where the trip involves an overnight stay or where the work undertaken is not an integral part of the examination course, the trip is classed as optional and parents can be expected to meet the full cost of residential courses in college time. If the visit is deemed to have taken place during the college day, or is part of the required curriculum, or is preparation for a public examination, then only the cost of board and lodging can be passed onto parents and this cannot exceed the actual cost.

Any charge in respect of an optional extra requires parental agreement and willingness to meet the charges. Parents should be aware that the activity may be cancelled if insufficient contributions are received.

If a student is unable to go on a trip after the initial deposit has been paid (unless this is because of ill-health, for which a doctors' note will be required), parents will still be required to meet the full cost of the trip, unless another student can be found to take up the place.

3.6 Public examinations

No charge will be made in respect of the entry of a registered student at the college for an examination for which the college agrees the student should be entered. Charges will be applied for the entry of a student for an examination for which s/he has not been prepared by the college, or for entry to an examination against the advice of the college.

Entries for re-sits of examinations where the college has not provided additional tuition are also subject to charge. Parents seeking to have an examination paper remarked will be required to pay the re-mark fee; however, if the new grade exceeds the original then this fee will be refunded.

Where a student fails to attend for an examination for which they have been entered (unless this is because of ill-health, for which a doctors' note will be required), parents may be expected to meet the cost of the examination entry.

3.7 Optional extra visits

Visits that take place outside the college day or as part of an extra-curricular activity can be charged for, and parents are expected to meet the full cost of the trip.

3.8 Loss or damage

Parents will be expected to meet the cost of repairing or replacing any college property damaged or destroyed by a student, or any fines to be paid by the college as a result of the actions of a student. A charge will also apply for loss or damage of college property (including books or equipment) placed under the care of the student.

3.9 Fundraising and sponsorship

General fundraising and sponsorship from a variety of sources may be used to allow additional activities to take place. Any fundraising activity will make the purpose of the fundraising clear to those who may wish to contribute.

3.10 Lettings of the College Building

Charges will be levied for the use of the college's facilities by private individuals or external organisations at a rate to be determined annually by the Governing Body. Facilities will only be let where they are not needed for the purpose of education during that time and under no circumstances will lettings be subsidised from resources provided for the education of students.

Hirers will need to demonstrate that they have adequate insurance or provision for compensating the college for any damage they cause. They must also leave the facilities in a clean and tidy state, otherwise an additional fee for cleaning will be charged.

4.0 REFUNDING OF CHARGES

4.1 Trips and activities

Charges and contributions are set to cover the anticipated costs. If the income from an activity exceeds the actual costs, the college will refund any surplus of £5 or more per student who contributed to the activity. Any amount below this will be transferred to the Discretionary Grants fund.

4.2 Arrangements for surpluses not refunded

Any surpluses not refunded will be transferred to the Discretionary Grants fund and used to support access to optional activities for those pupils whose families are experiencing financial hardship.

4.0 REMISSION OF CHARGES

The college believes that all students should have the opportunity to gain fully from the experiences the college has to offer and recognises the real and persistent difficulties faced by families on low incomes in meeting the cost of educational activities for their children.

Where parents are in receipt of Income Support, Income Based Jobseekers Allowance, support under part IV of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 or Child Tax Credit (providing Working Tax Credit is not also received), the college will observe its statutory duty to remit in full the cost of board and lodgings for any residential activity deemed to take place within college hours.

Parents who find themselves in financial difficulties and who have students at the college in receipt of Free School Meals may apply in confidence to the college for financial support with optional activities. Remission of charges in part or full will be authorised by the Principal in discussion with the Finance Officer.

5.0 PROVISION FOR REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Finance and Audit Committee and will be adjusted in accordance with any subsequent guidance issued by DfE, ESFA or the local authority.