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Finance & General Purposes Committee

Subject: Fee Policy update	**Purpose:** **For Approval** ☒ **For Discussion** ☐ **For Information** ☐
Prepared by: Andy Jones, Finance Business Partner	**Date:** 24 February 2020

Purpose:
Agree Border College Fee Policy. Attached Fee Policy amended for 2020. Last updated 2017.

Linked to Strategic Goal 3: Provide a high quality College experience.

Executive Summary:

1) Note History of Changes

2) Request change to early withdrawals

- Following SFC/Scottish Government letter, Fee policy amended. Previously full charge made with discretion for pro-rata reduction.
- New policy: fee based on attendance with discretion for personal circumstances to be taken account of.

Recommendation:
Recommend that Borders College change policy on students who withdraw early

Previous Committee Approvals:

For publication ☐	**For publication with redactions** ☐	**Not for publication** ☒

BORDERS COLLEGE

Working Together

Fee Policy

January 2020

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History of Changes

Version	Description of Change	Authored by	Date
1.1	Policy Reviewed	P Smith	July 2014
1.2	Admin Charges updated	P Smith	January 2017
1.3	3.3 Payment of Fees updated; 3.4 Refunds and Withdrawals updated	S Halliday	May 2017
3.2.3	Updated SFC Circular	A Jones	January 2020
3.4	Refunds and Withdrawals	A Jones	January 2020

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 This Policy sets out the criteria the College will use to set and apply fees and charges to courses of study.

1.2 This Policy sets out the criteria under which the College will award Fee Waiver or apply concessionary rates to tuition fees, and the circumstances under which refunds will be given.

2.0 Scope

2.1 This Policy covers all fees and charges that the College will levy for courses of study and details all instances where fees may be waived or concessions offered.

3.0 Key Principles

3.1 Fee Setting

3.1.1 Fees will be set in line with the table in 3.1.4

3.1.2 Variations

No variation to published fee levels may be made without the prior approval of the Vice Principal – Finance and Resources.

3.1.3 Re-sits

Students are permitted two free attempts for internal assessments. Subsequent re-sits and all external re-sits will be charged at the full cost.

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3.1.4 Table of Fee Setting

	Scottish/EU Students (excluding RUK)	Rest of UK (RUK) Students	Overseas Students
Definition	Fulfil the definition of the term “normally resident” per Schedules 1 and 2 of the SFC’s Bursary Direction	Do not fulfil the definition of the term “normally resident” per Schedules 1 and 2 of the SFC’s Bursary Direction and normal residence is within the UK but not Scotland	Do not fulfil the definition of the term “normally resident” per Schedules 1 and 2 of the SFC’s Bursary Direction
Full-time HNC, HND or Advanced Diploma	Set annually by the Scottish Government	Set annually by the College, taking into consideration inflation, anticipated demand and other business imperatives	
Full-time Non-Advanced	Set annually by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC)	Set annually by the College, taking into consideration inflation, anticipated demand and other business imperatives	
Higher National Units; Non-Advanced Units; Advanced Higher; Intermediate; GCSE	Set annually by the College, taking into consideration inflation, SFC rates, anticipated demand and other business imperatives	Set annually by the College, taking into consideration inflation, anticipated demand and other business imperatives	
Non-standard fees	The College, at its discretion, may set fees for individual courses by agreement with the recipient student or organisation		

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3.2 Fee Waiver & Concessions

3.2.1 The College will waive the fees of any student entitled to support under the National Fee Waiver Grant Policy, when that student is undertaking an eligible course of study.

3.2.2 EU students are eligible for National Fee Waiver for full-time and for part-time non-advanced courses.

3.2.3 In accordance with SFC Circular SFC/GD/05/2017, non-EU International students are not eligible for Fee Waiver, except where the student is:

- The spouse or child of a person who is an asylum seeker living in Scotland (as defined by the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999) on either an English as a Second or Other Language (ESOL) course (full or part time) or another part-time advanced or part-time non-advanced course; or
- A non-asylum seeker living in Scotland, on a part-time ESOL course and the student's main purpose for being in the EU is **not** to receive education.
- The three-year residency rule does not apply to refugees. A student is entitled to support from the date of the Home Office letter giving them refugee status.

3.2.4 Fee Waiver is not available under any other circumstances.

3.2.5 College staff members are entitled to a discount of 50% on course fees.

3.2.6 The College operates a discount scheme with certain employers and staff members of those employers are entitled to agreed levels of discount. A current list of participating employers can be obtained by contacting the Business Development Unit.

3.2.7 The College may also operate discounted fee schemes to stimulate demand in certain areas or where it is deemed to be of commercial value. Details of such schemes will be published as appropriate.

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3.2.8 Concessions are not normally available on the College's commercial courses. The College will define, from time to time, which courses fall into this category.

3.3 Payment of Fees

3.3.1 On enrolment, students are responsible for providing evidence that they are entitled to fee waiver or that their fees are to be paid by a third party sponsor eg SAAS, Employer, Managing Agent. If they do not provide this, or it is later discovered that they are ineligible for funding, they will be classified as self-funding.

3.3.2 Where students are self-funding the full fee will normally be payable in advance in full, unless they select one of the payment options in table 3.3.7.

3.3.3 In all cases where fees are not paid timeously the College may exclude the student from the course and seek to recover the outstanding debt, utilising collection agents where necessary. Certification may be withheld if fees remain unpaid.

3.3.4 Where course fees for part-time students are to be paid by a third party sponsor, full details must be provided upon application. If, for whatever reason, a sponsor fails to pay, the student will be liable for any fees unpaid and will be treated as self-funding.

3.3.5 The College reserves the right to reject or exclude any student who has an outstanding debt from current or prior years. This includes both unpaid fees and charges, and bursary overpayment.

3.3.6 Payment of tuition fees for overseas students is required in full prior to an unconditional offer being issued.

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3.3.7 Table of payment options.

Where any net fee (after any applicable grant) is:	Instalment option:
£200 or less **or** the course duration is less than 60 calendar days	Full fee is payable prior to attending first class or accessing materials
£201 to £500	25% deposit at enrolment followed by maximum of 3 monthly instalments (final instalment must be no later than 1 month before the end date of the course)
£501 to £750	25% deposit at enrolment followed by maximum of 4 monthly instalments (final instalment must be no later than 1 month before the end date of the course)
£751 to £1,000	25% deposit at enrolment followed by maximum of 5 monthly instalments (final instalment must be no later than 1 month before the end date of the course)
More than £1,001	25% deposit at enrolment followed by maximum of 6 monthly instalments (final instalment must be no later than 1 month before the end date of the course)
Tuition fees are non-refundable once a student commences the course. If a student subsequently withdraws before completing their payment plan, they will still be liable to pay any balance of fee remaining unpaid.	

3.4 Refunds and Withdrawals

3.4.1 Where a student withdraws from a course at HN level or above, or where the student is self-funding a course of study at FE level, and the withdrawal is notified before 1 December in the year of study, the College will not receive funding from SAAS. In this circumstance a reduced fee will be chargeable to the student, based on a proportion of the full charge and taking into account the length of attendance. The Finance Business Partner may apply further discretion taking account of the personal circumstances of the student, with full waiver of the charge requiring approval of the Vice Principal (Finance and Corporate Services). (This is following

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guidance from Scottish Funding Council 29 November 2019 to ensure consistency across the College sector).

3.4.2 Where a student withdraws from a commercial or community class, then no refund will be given, except in exceptional circumstances, at the discretion of the Finance department as advised by Business Development Unit staff. Such a refund will be subject to an administration fee.

3.4.3 Where a student withdraws from a course and they are paying their fees by instalments, any outstanding balance becomes payable in full within 30 days from the date of withdrawal.

3.4.4 Where a student is required to provide proof of benefit for a part-time National Fee Waiver, this evidence must be provided within 2 weeks of the commencement of the course, otherwise a fee waiver will not be granted and the full course fee becomes payable.

3.4.5 Where an Employer Discount Voucher is being used, this must be notified at application and the voucher submitted within 2 weeks of commencement of the course, otherwise the voucher will not be accepted and the full course becomes payable.

3.4.6 Where a course is cancelled by the College, a full refund of any fees paid will be given.

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4.0 Responsibilities

4.1 The Finance and General Purposes Committee is responsible for setting the Fee Policy.

4.2 The Senior Management Team sets fee levels annually in November for the following academic year.

4.3 Senior and Middle Managers with a remit for applying fees have a responsibility to adhere to this Policy.

4.4 The Finance Business Partner is responsible for the application of this Policy.

4.5 All staff with a remit to advise students and prospective students have a responsibility for the issue of proper guidance under this Policy.

5.0 Related Documents

5.1 UK/EU Fee Tariff

5.2 International Fee Tariff

5.3 The Education (Fees and Awards) (Scotland) Regulations 2007

5.4 SFC Circular SFC/14/2007

5.5 National Fee Waiver Grant Policy

5.6 Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

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6.0 Review

6.1 This Policy will be reviewed every three years or more regularly, if required.

Status:	To be Approved by Finance & General Purposes Committee
Policy Dated:	19 March 2020
Author:	Vice Principal - Finance and Corporate Services
Review Date:	January 2023
Equality Impact Assessed:	Completed

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Equality Impact Assessment
(Full assessment tool)

Part 1 Overview of strategy, policy, proposal being equality impact assessed	
Person responsible for the assessment:	Andy Jones
Name of the policy/proposal to be assessed:	Student Fee Policy
Date of Assessment:	31-1-2020
Is this a new or existing policy/proposal?	Existing policy
1. Briefly describe the aims, objectives of the policy, please explain:	Policy to ensure Border College provides a fair charging policy for fees.
2. Are there any associated objectives of the policy, please explain.	n/a
3. Who is intended to benefit from the policy and in what way?	Fair policy for Border College Students.
4. What outcomes are wanted from this policy?	Student fees: fairly charged with a clear recovery policy.
5. What factors/forces could contribute/detract from the outcomes?	n/a
6. Who are the main stakeholders in relation to the policy?	Students, College, Staff, SFC
7. Who implements the policy and who is responsible for the policy?	Finance Business Partner

Part 2 – Analysis by Protected Characteristic or other potentially disadvantaged group.		
8. Could there be a positive or negative impact because of a group or person's ethnicity?	~~Yes~~	No
Impact: No impact		
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?		
Evidence:		

9. Could there be a positive or negative impact due to the sex of the individuals? (Include binary, non-binary and intersex)	~~Yes~~	No
Impact: No impact		
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?		
Evidence:		
10. Could there be a positive or negative impact due to disability?	~~Yes~~	No
Impact: No impact		
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?		
Evidence:		
11. Could there be a positive or negative impact on people due to sexual orientation?	~~Yes~~	No
Impact: No impact		
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?		
Evidence:		
12. Could there be a positive or negative impact due to transgender or gender reassignment?	~~Yes~~	No
Impact: No impact		
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?		
Evidence:		
13. Could there be a positive or negative impact due to religion or belief?	~~Yes~~	No
Impact: No impact		
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?		
Evidence:		
14. Could there be a positive or negative impact due to pregnancy or maternity?	~~Yes~~	No

Impact: No impact		
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?		
Evidence:		
15. Could there be a positive or negative impact due to age?	~~Yes~~	No
Impact: No impact		
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?		
Evidence:		
16. Could there be a positive or negative impact due to marriage or civil partnership?	~~Yes~~	No
Impact: No impact		
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?		
Evidence:		
17. Could there be a positive or negative impact due to the person being a looked after child or a care leaver?	~~Yes~~	No
Impact: No impact		
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?		
Evidence:		
18. Could there be a positive or negative impact due to poverty or deprivation?	~~Yes~~	No
Impact: No impact		
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?		
Evidence:		
19. Could there be a positive or negative impact due to past criminal convictions?	~~Yes~~	No
Impact: No impact		

What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?		
Evidence:		
20. Could there be a positive or negative impact due to employment or trade union membership?	~~Yes~~	No
Impact: No impact		
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?		
Evidence:		

Part 3

Membership of E.I.A Team:	Finance
Other Consultees:	JCCP

Action to be taken as a result of the Assessment	By Whom	By When
None		

Date proposed actions agreed by JCC (Policy):	29/1/2020
Date Policy/Procedure/Guidelines Amended:	F&GP
Method of Publicising/Publicising Amendments:	Border College Website

The Equality Impact Assessment must be published alongside or as part of the Strategy, Policy, or Procedure to which it pertains.