

Northern Regional College Policy, Procedures & Strategies

Fees Policy & Fees Regulations 2019/20 [Doc No.: STU 2]

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1st	Fees Policy and Regulations for 2019/20	November 2018		Sean Lavery

This document can be made available in alternative formats upon request

Northern Regional College

Fees Policy for 2019/2020

1. Aim

1.1 The Fees Policy aims to ensure that:

- sufficient revenue is raised to meet the College's requirements;
- College fees are value for money compared to those of other providers;
- fees for individual courses may be adjusted to ensure optimal participation, quality performance and revenue.
- access to College programmes is widened as far as possible in line with College strategy;
- the fees structure is readily understood by applicants and sponsors;
- associated administrative processes can be effected in the most straightforward fashion;
- the College's Equal Opportunities Policy aims are met.

1.2 The policy is restricted to those facilities and services where the College is able to operate some discretion in the levying of charges. The policy, therefore, does not relate to the following:

- Any subsidies, bursaries or exemptions as offered by the Department for the Economy (DfE), any other government agency or private benefactor;
- Examination fees as charged by Awarding Bodies;
- Financial support packages for students;
- Loans as made available from the Student Loan Company or Education Authority.
- Minimum fees for full-time HE Provision.

Please note: This policy may be produced in alternative formats on request.

1.3 Northern Regional College complies with the Consumer Rights Act (2015) and Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) requirements. Our policies and procedures are compliant with the legislation and are written to protect your rights as a consumer of our service.

2. Background

- 2.1 The College, is not fully funded from the Department for the Economy (DfE) for all its education programmes and training activities. Fees and charges are therefore an important source of income to the College, without which it would not be able to deliver the range of programmes, attract and retain high quality staff and invest in new equipment and buildings to facilitate learning.

3. Fees Setting

- 3.1 The process of setting fees and charges takes into account DfE policy, sectoral recommendations, prevailing economic climate, market forces, the College Strategic Improvement Plan, target market, competitor analysis, skill shortages, equality of opportunity and the legislative environment.
- 3.2 The College has the responsibility for setting its own fees as laid out in the College's Financial Memorandum with DfE.
- 3.3 The Governing Body will determine the fees and the application and value of any concessionary fees that may be deemed as appropriate following recommendation by the Fees Working Group.
- 3.4 Course fees are set annually but may be subject to change as a result of changes to Government policy.
- 3.5 Tuition fees apply to the financial year beginning 1 August and ending on 31 July.
- 3.6 Tuition fees for part time courses will remain the same as year one for each year of the duration of the course e.g. for years two or three of the same course.

4. Fees

- 4.1 The fee for each category of course is included in the annual Fees Regulations (See Appendix 1). Some full-time course fees are prescribed by NI Statutory rules and Student Support Regulations for HE courses. Fees for franchised courses i.e. awarded by another external institution, are set by that external body and do not attract concessionary rates or staff discount. International Students are those students as defined by Further Education and Funding Arrangements Circular FE 14/12 and subsequent amendments.

The fees for international students are based on full cost recovery for Higher Education and Further Education programmes.

- 4.2 Part-time course tuition fees for accredited courses are derived from the number of taught hours including contribution to overheads. Other costs may include examination, registration and assessment fees, residential costs and course materials. These collectively contribute to the composite fee applied to College courses.
Part-time franchise course fees are as per agreement with the external institution and may be included in the composite fee
- 4.3 Fees for all other courses (non-DfE funded) are based on the number of taught hours, cost of materials and other direct costs associated with the programme including contribution to overheads.
- 4.4 In defining cost recovery provision the College will adhere to current DfE circulars.
- 4.5 Staff discount applies to the tuition fee only. This applies to staff on NRC payroll at the time of enrolment.
- 4.6 Reduced tuition fees may be available to certain groups. Please see Fees Regulations (**Appendix 1**).
- 4.7 Terms and Conditions relating to fees will be published on the NRC website.
- 4.8 The College reserves the right to offer promotional rates in some courses. Such rates would be subject to approval by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).
- 4.9 **Widening Access** - The Northern Regional College's vision for widening participation is that any eligible individual in its catchment area should be able to gain access to, and succeed within, higher education, irrespective of their personal or social background. The **College Bursary Scheme provides bursaries up to £250 per year** for students in receipt of a full maintenance grant. There will be no limit to the number of bursaries available.
- 4.10 Students can also apply for financial help and assistance from Student Services.

5. Payment of Fees

- 5.1 The composite fee applied to College courses is due at the time of enrolment.
- 5.2 All HE students will be required to notify the College of their tuition fee contribution.
- 5.3 Fees may be paid by cash, cheque, credit/debit card or agreed payment plan. An agreed payment plan via direct debit or other acceptable payment method is available for the composite fee applied to College courses.
- 5.4 If the student is sponsored by any organisation, the employer is required to complete the College consent form prior to enrolment. The organisation/employer is committed to the full cost of the programme.
- 5.5 Fees due from the Education Authority, the Student Loan Company or other external authorities are collected by the College. It is the responsibility of students to ensure that all relevant paperwork has been completed and confirmation received before informing the College that they are supported. In the event of an external authority refusing to fully support a student, the student will be required to pay the balance of the full fee.
- 5.6 Entitlement Framework:
The College will raise an invoice and payment will fall due as per normal NRC business terms.
- 5.7 Non DfE funded Income Generation:
The College will raise an invoice and payment will fall due as per normal NRC business terms.
- 5.8 Exceptions to the arrangements for the payment of fees will only be considered in very extraordinary circumstances and MAY only be authorised by the Principal or the Vice-Principal's.

6. Reduced Tuition Fees

- 6.1 Reduced tuition fees are made available by the College to individual self-paying students for a range of vocational courses. The schedule of those who currently qualify for reduced fees is shown in the Fees Regulations (**see Appendix 1**). Rules are applied according to the status of the student at time of enrolment.

- 6.2 The College reserves the right to allow discount for other charges.
- 6.3 A discounted rate is available to former students under the auspices of the past students association (LINK).
- 6.4 Past students are encouraged to register as Alumni and may receive membership benefits.

7. Collection of Debt

- 7.1 Responsibility for ensuring that debts are paid rests with the individual student. Letters of reminder will be sent to students who owe money to the College. For further details on College sanctions on students who fail to pay their fees in full please refer to the Fees Regulations for 2019/20 (**Appendix 1**). Legal proceedings may be taken to recover any outstanding fees together with any administrative costs.
- 7.2 Organisations and employers who sponsor students are liable for the full cost of the composite fee applied to College courses. Letters of reminder will be sent to organisations/employers who owe money to the College. For further details on College sanctions on students where fees remain unpaid please refer to the Fees Regulations for 2019/20 (**Appendix 1**). Legal proceedings may be taken to recover any outstanding fees together with any administrative costs.
- 7.3 The College reserves the right to refuse or discontinue the provision of services where the level of monies due to the College by an individual or an organisation is at an unacceptable level. The College may carry out credit checks where it considers it to be appropriate.

8. Refunds

The College will make every effort to run courses and programmes which are advertised. All courses are, however, required to have a viable number of enrolled students in order to contribute to operating costs. In some circumstances classes may be combined to achieve viability.

The College reserves the right to cancel/change classes due to lack of demand. For further details on the College Refund procedure refer to Fees Regulations 2019/20 (**Appendix 1**).

Appendix 1

Fees Regulations

2019/20

In formulating these Fee Regulations the following criteria have been taken into consideration:-

- That sufficient revenue is raised to meet the College's requirements;
- College fees compare favourably to those of other providers;
- Fees for individual courses may be adjusted to ensure optimal participation, quality performance and revenue.
- Access to College programmes is widened as far as possible in line with College strategy;
- The fees structure is readily understood by applicants and sponsors;
- Associated administrative processes can be effected in the most straightforward fashion;
- The College's Equal Opportunities Policy aims are met.
- The College complies with relevant legislation.

Tuition

NB: Charges are subject to rounding up to the nearest £1.00.

Full-time Vocational Courses

Higher Education Courses

£2,500 (per annum)

For students undertaking a component of a full-time HE course a fee will be calculated as a percentage of the full fee. Fee to be confirmed by Assistant Head of Department/Head of Section. Student to be defined as part-time on MIS. Sandwich year fee £780.

Further Education Courses for home students

Students must be 16 years on or before 1 July 2019

Tuition is free for approved vocational FE courses. A fee of £860 per annum may be charged for over-19s repeating a course or for persons deemed not to be progressing from one NVQ level to another.

Part-time Vocational Courses

All NRC Part-time courses exceeding 15 weeks in a single academic year (including off-site provision but excluding Community Education)

Higher Education

		Number of Semesters	
		1	2
One	Session (up to and including 4 hours)	£80.00	£160.00
Two	Sessions (over 4 hours and up to and including 8 hours)	£160.00	£320.00
Three	Sessions (over 8 hours and up to and including 12 hours)	£240.00	£480.00
Four	Sessions (over 12 hours and up to and including 16 hours)	£320.00	£640.00

Further Education

(up to and including 4 hours)	£130.00
(over 4 hours and up to and including 8 hours)	£260.00

Where a third session is required up to and including an extra 1.5 hours, an additional £50 is to be added to the course fee

		Number of Sessions	
		1	2
Adult Access to University provision		£130.00	£260.00

NB Students returning to repeat a module will be charged the relevant proportion of the full Access fee. i.e. 1 module $\frac{1}{4}$ fee = £62.50, 2 modules $\frac{1}{2}$ fee = £125, 3 modules $\frac{3}{4}$ fee = £187.50

Students infilling on a part time basis into a full time programme will be charged for the contracted hours rather than the sessions attended on a percentage basis. Students infilling into a part time programme will be charged as per a short term part time course.

Short-term Part-time courses

Higher Education Courses	£2.80 per hour
Further Education Courses	£2.50 per hour

Minimum course length is 10 hours up to a maximum of 15 week duration. Thereafter charge as above.

Community Education Courses (excluding SLDD)

Vocational courses charged on an hourly rate	£1.60 per hour
DfE Non-Accredited courses charged on an hourly rate (no reduced fees)	£3.00 per hour

SLDD no reduced fees apply

Short courses	£0.35 per hour subject to a minimum charge of £35
Wider Choices provision	£40 per person
Pre-entry/Adult SLDD English, Maths, ICT	£35 per person

DfE Non Accredited Courses no reduced fees apply

All courses (with exception of NEBOSH level 3 Certificate in Health and Safety) charged on an hourly rate	£3.50 per hour Additional charge for consumables where applicable to curriculum need
NEBOSH level 6 Diploma in Health and Safety total fee (including tuition and exam registration fee)	£2,100 (£625 per module)

Essential Skills

Essential Skills programmes	No tuition fee or examination fee
Entry level ICT	No tuition fee or examination fee (subject to the terms of FE Circular 07/10 and subsequent amendments)

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

ESOL Programmes	£40.00 administration fee (non-refundable)
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Economic Engagement - Bespoke Provision

Charges for Non DfE funded self-financing courses/activities should be based on a number of factors including:

- (i) Delivery costs
- (ii) Support staff costs (e.g. technician, finance, invigilator cost)
- (iii) Premises costs and location
- (iv) Materials and administration
- (v) Specialist services
- (vi) Market factor
- (vii) Overhead absorption
- (viii) Level of course
- (ix) Assessor fees
- (x) Travel costs

The hourly rate is £85 per hour.

Any examination fees payable are charged in addition at actual cost.

A discount may be offered for commercial reasons such as for entry into a new market. A premium may be charged in circumstances where the provision is of a very specialist nature, requires additional set-up costs or includes the use of specialist resources.

Any departure must be agreed with the Chief Information Officer and VP for Business Development in advance.

Economic Engagement (including community delivery) supported by non DfE funding

In circumstances where delivery is funded by an external funder, the amount paid to NRC for staff costs, may be limited to the actual hourly rate.

The costing of such provision should include

- (i) Delivery costs- using actual hourly rates of staff involved
- (ii) Direct support staff costs, including finance, technician support
- (iii) Premises costs and location
- (iv) Materials and administration
- (v) Specialist services
- (vi) Market factor
- (vii) Level of course
- (viii) Assessor fees
- (ix) Travel costs

Any examination fees payable are charged in addition at actual cost.

Any guidelines issued by the funder relating to eligibility of expenditure should be observed.

TFS/ApprenticeshipsNI/Steps to Success Provision

Where trainees are coming from external organisations £6.40 per hour.

All arrangements for trainees that come from external organisations must be approved in advance by the Head of Department and Work Based Learning Manager.

All third party contracts will be charged at an agreed rate per annum.

School Partnerships Programmes

Entitlement Framework Support

Schools will be charged as appropriate for Entitlement Framework activities as defined by the current DE Funding Model. Schools may also be charged for any additional courses at a specific school related cost recovery rate.

Entitlement Framework Charge (£70 per hour)

The charge for an individual School will be negotiated with the School Principal and agreed by the VP for Teaching & Learning.

Where a student, who would normally be expected to be educated in school, is placed in FE full-time with the consent of the Education Authority, the School should be invoiced for the amount of funding which would be available from DE for a full-time pupil. The contract for such provision will be agreed between the Education Authority, the pupil's School and the College.

Overseas Students (full-time)

Higher Education Courses	£6,000 per annum
Further Education Courses	£4,500 per annum

The residency regulations (as confirmed in the DFE circular Further Education Residency and Funding Requirements Circular FE14/12 and subsequent Amendments) must be adhered to when determining if a student is entitled to be charged as a home student.

Overseas Students (part time)

Higher Education	£10 per hour
Further Education	£8 per hour

Assessment Fees

A contribution to assessment costs incurred by the college for carrying out work-based assessment required by awarding organisations is included in the composite fees applied to College courses.

This fee may be reduced by an agreed percentage if the assessment is only required for a module(s). A further payment will be required if the student requires more than one academic year. The fee rate is to be agreed by the Head of Department.

For assessment fees relating to Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), exemption and credit transfer refer to relevant Policy.

Reduced Tuition Fees

Means tested reduced fees

Reduced tuition fees may be claimed by applicants in the following categories (or equivalents):

- Students in receipt of:-
 - Universal Credit
 - Income based Jobseekers Allowance
 - Income Support
 - Working Tax Credit
 - Child Tax Credit
 - Pension Credit
 - Rates Relief
 - Means tested Employment Support Allowance (ESA)
 - Other means tested benefit

Non-means tested benefits (in isolation) e.g. Personal Independence Payment, Disability Living Allowance or Incapacity Benefit are not eligible for concessionary fees.

Supporting evidence i.e. documentary evidence from the Social Security Agency (SSA) issuing office e.g. a letter of current entitlement to benefit must be made available by the applicant for inspection and/or photocopying by the administrator collecting their fees at enrolment.

The reduced fee **applies to the tuition fee only for part-time courses and is determined as 50% of the full tuition fee** for the course, subject to a minimum fee of £30.00.

Short term (10 weeks or less) **infill** enrolments will **not** be eligible for reduced fees.

The College reserves the right to offer special discounts to learners on College approved initiatives.

Discounted tuition fees and incentives

For 2019/20 the College will offer a 10% discount for current members of the past student association (LINK).

For 2019/20 College will offer no discount for DfE non-accredited courses.

For 2019/20 the College will offer a discount of 50% to NRC full time students upon proof of full-time study for part-time vocational courses (e.g. a current student identity card must be available for inspection at enrolment).

For 2019/20 the College may offer incentives on fees payable to encourage enrolment and/or participation.

Only one discount or fee reduction may be claimed for each individual enrolment.

Concession to carry forward fees

Tuition fees associated with single subject classes under the auspices of *Business and Management* are permitted to carry forward standard/concessionary rate fees to cover any level of tutelage to ensure that the maximum progress for an individual student can be realised over the minimum period of time.

For example, the tuition fee for Word Processing can be carried forward to the next or highest level (provided the tutelage is delivered **in the same** academic year).
NB enrolment forms are still required to effect formal enrolment.

This clause relates to the following subjects only:-

- Text/Word Processing Begs/Basic, Intermediate and Advanced
- Legal Terminology/Audio Transcription Begs/Basic, Intermediate and Advanced
- Medical Terminology/Audio Transcription Begs/Basic, Intermediate and Advanced

Enrolment forms should be authenticated by the signature of a member of SLT on site to denote any waiver of fees in accordance with this subsidiary regulation.

Examination and Accreditation Expenses

Internal Candidates

Internal Candidates who are required to pay exam fees (including late entrance fees) will be charged as per the College examination fees schedule, available from the examinations office.

An internal candidate is a student enrolled on a course at the NRC and registering/entering for an exam for that course.

Re-sit Fees

Candidates who are required to pay re-sit fees will be charged as College fees schedule. No additional levy will be charged.

Full time FE/HE students wishing to re-sit online examinations will be charged the College fee per re-sit entry.

External Candidates

At the discretion of the College external candidates may be accommodated. All enquiries are to be directed to the Examinations Manager at ta.exams@nrc.ac.uk.

Charges for External candidates are as follows:

Examinations offered by the college curriculum will be charged £60.00 per examination entry in addition to the Examination/Awarding Body fee.

Examinations not offered by the college curriculum will be charged £100.00 per examination entry in addition to the Examination/Awarding Body fee

An external candidate is someone who is not enrolled on a course at the College or a student entering/registering for an exam that is NOT an exam for a course they are enrolled on.

Separate arrangements may be applied to external organisations requesting examination facilities.

Re-mark of Exam Papers and Additional Certification

Candidates who request a re-mark of an exam entry or additional certificates will be charged as per Examining/Awarding Body fees. An additional levy of £12.50 per exam re-mark will be charged to cover College administration.

Letter of Confirmation of Results

Letter of Confirmation of Results will be charged at £25.00 per letter for awards attained from 2016/17 academic year onwards.

Awards attained previous to this can be obtained from the relevant Examination/Awarding Body.

Examinations administrative fee

Administrative fee for part-time vocational examinations will be £6.00. This fee includes payment for registration and certification with the awarding body and registration with learner record service, statement of entry and postage as appropriate.

Access to Information

There will be a nominal administration charge of £10 applied per request in respect of responses to requests for information under the Freedom of Information legislation. Additional charges may be applied in the event of significant time being required to fulfill the request.

Payment of Fees

Fees may be paid by cash, cheque, credit card or debit card. For courses where the total composite fee applied to College courses of £200.00 or less, remittance should be collected in a single up-front payment on enrolment.

Where the total composite fee for a course exceeds £200 remittance may be collected using a direct debit payment plan arrangement which consists of a deposit payable (minimum of £100 or 25%, whichever is greater) at enrolment and 3 subsequent direct debit payments. All fees for courses commencing in the autumn term must be collected by 1 February 2020. The initial deposit payable at the time of enrolment will be a minimum of £100, or 25% of the value of the composite fee, whichever is greater; 3 subsequent payments of the same amount will become due on 1 November 2019, 2 December 2019 and 2 January 2020. Default on any payment will result in enrolment on the course/programme of study becoming invalid. Any exception or departure to these dates in exceptional circumstances requires prior approval of a vice-principal.

For January and subsequent enrolments the dates of payment plan will be notified to students. The composite fee applied to College courses is defined in Section 4.2 Fees Guidelines.

The payment plan will be subject to an administration fee of £10.00. This arrangement will apply to both Home and Overseas students who have a valid UK bank account. HE students may pay by the above arrangement.

Part-time FE and part-time HE students applying for funding may avail of the following enhanced arrangement:

£75 deposit to be paid at time of enrolment and liability form and direct debit mandate to be signed.

Confirmation of funding received must be submitted to the College. If application for funding is unsuccessful the student is liable for payment of fees in full. All fees to be collected by 1st April 2020.

NB Payment plans are only available for enrolments on or before the second week of the class.

Room Hire Rates for External Organisations

Room hire will not be considered for individuals/organisations where the request involves activities deemed to be in direct competition or conflict with College business.

For room hire rates, please see **Annex A**.

Refunds

Full-time Higher Education Refunds:

Full-time higher education students who have not formally withdrawn from their course before 8 November in the academic year for which the fee is payable are liable for full course fees.

All other Refunds:

The College will make every effort to run courses and programmes which are advertised. All courses are, however, required to have a viable number of enrolled students in order to contribute to operating costs. In some circumstances classes may be combined to achieve viability.

However, the College regrets that classes may have to be cancelled due to lack of demand.

Students enrolling on any course can cancel within 14 days of enrollment (booking the course) and will receive a full refund of payments made.

For any course cancelled or changed by NRC, a full refund of the total fee paid to date will be issued to the student, if the College cannot offer a suitable alternative arrangement. If you are unable to continue with your course for medical or Access NI reasons, then a refund may be allowed. Other refund applications shall be considered **only** in exceptional circumstances by the VP Teaching & Learning and the Head of Finance, in this case, a £10 admin fee may be charged.

NOTES

- A unit of instruction is equivalent to one block of study lasting up to and including 4 hours (i.e. each morning, afternoon or evening session attended) per programme of study.
- Students may not be registered with the relevant validating body until all fees are paid or a valid arrangement has been established for payment.
- Failure to pay fees in full will result in one or more of the following:
 - The student will not be able to avail of any of the College facilities
 - The student will not be permitted to continue any College courses/programmes of study.
 - The student will not be permitted to enroll on other courses/programmes of study at the College
 - The student will not be included on College graduation success lists

Every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of the information contained in this advice. Northern Regional College, however, reserves the right to alter or delete any of the details without prior notice and it shall not be bound by any errors or omissions and cannot accept liability in respect thereof

Annex A Room Hire Rates (for external organisations)

Classroom/Small Training Room/Syndicate Room/Gallery	£21.00	per hour
Counselling Room	£32	per hour
Lecture Theatre/Large Training Room/Specialist Room	£38	per hour
Sports Hall/Gym/Small Hall	£42.00	per hour
Computer Suite	£42.00 £15	per computer suite per hour + per hour technician's time (only during normal opening hours)
Kitchen/Lab/Workshop	£42.00	per hour + any extras, e.g. technician
Canteen	£42.00	per hour
Car Parks	£115.00	per day
Outside normal College opening hours the following charges will apply:		
Caretaker	£23.00	per hour – Saturday and Evenings
Caretaker	£30.00	per hour – Sundays and Public Holidays
Any other staff required (Saturday & Sunday)	Overtime rates apply	

*A discount of 25% will be available to those booking the facilities for 6 or more sessions a year.

Discount does not apply to staffing costs: Caretakers, Technicians and Catering staff.

The above charges may be varied only by the Head of Estates when taking into consideration local market conditions, circumstances wider benefits to the College.