

Tuition Fees, Course Costs and Other Charges Policy and Procedure

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Category: Business and Finance

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Responsibility: Senior Finance Business Partner

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Purpose

This policy and procedure outlines the establishment, review, management and publication of student charges. Its purpose is to ensure clear and timely communication of all student fees, compulsory course related costs, course related costs and administrative charges. This is so prospective students are able to make informed enrolment decisions.

Scope

All tuition fees (international and domestic), discounts, administrative charges and all course related costs that impact a student when undertaking study.

This policy and procedure includes the Student Services Levy when considering the publication of fee information to students or others. However, it is excluded in regards to the establishment, review and management of fees on the basis that this is specified under UCOL Council Statute and forms a compulsory component of the fee calculation.

This policy and procedure excludes the payment or refund of fees and other student charges which are covered under the Accounts Receivable and Credit Control Policy and Procedure. In addition, it excludes staff fees discounts awarded under the Staff Fees Concession policy and discounts granted under the Student Financial Relief policy.

Responsibility

Executive Dean¹

Tuition fee recommendations and the annual review of compulsory course related cost and course related cost items.

Executive Director, Education and Applied Research

Maintaining a register of compulsory course related cost and course related cost items.

¹ For the Faculty with responsibility for a qualification.

Chief Financial Officer

Annual review of domestic and international tuition fees.

Executive Director, Quality and Academic Assurance

Maintaining tuition fees in the Student Management System (SMS) and the Master Programme List.

Director Student Registry

Annual review of administration charges.

Policy Statements

Tuition Fees Policy

Tuition fees reflect the charge for delivering tuition to enrolled students. The ability to determine tuition fees for both domestic and international students is outlined under the Education and Training Act, 2020². The government strictly controls domestic student fees and provides various tuition subsidies. In contrast, international fees are required to reflect all costs of delivery and support, including capital costs. Tuition fees for domestic and international students vary as a result.

1. Tuition fees must be approved prior to any form of publication or notification to students or others.
2. Tuition fees and fee waivers are to be approved by the Chief Executive. Notwithstanding this, the Chief Executive may delegate fee approval to the Chief Financial Officer.
3. All qualifications and courses will have a tuition fee attached to them. The exception is where a domestic student fee is expressly prohibited as a condition of government funding or is specifically approved as having fees waived. International fees are unable to be waived.
4. Tuition fees must take account of UCOL's marketing and pricing strategies, the cost of delivery, and the fees of qualifications of a similar nature; whether delivered by UCOL or a competitor.
5. Tuition fees for the same qualification at different locations, or by different delivery methods, are to be the same where practicable.
6. Tuition fees for the following year are to be reviewed annually and will be set no later than the 30th June of the preceding year. The fee review process will include student consultation.

Fees Discount Policy

A fees discount may be for a specific course or qualification, an individual student, a specific cohort or a group of students with defined characteristics that UCOL wishes to support in order to achieve its strategic priorities. Ideally, the offer of discounts needs to be considered as part of the marketing strategy, alongside student scholarships and sponsorships.

² Refer section 256 (domestic fees) and s258 (international fees) of the Education and Training Act, 2020.

7. Prior to the fee discount being submitted for approval, a copy of the proposal must be submitted to the Finance Manager. The Finance Manager will then consider and provide any necessary guidance on the best available discounting method, any discount process workflow impacts, and any accounting best practice and technical compliance considerations.
8. Fee discounts must be approved by the Chief Executive. Notwithstanding this, the Chief Executive may delegate fee approval to the Chief Financial Officer³.
9. The value of a discount will vary depending on the desired outcome. However, a discount shall be no greater than the combination of the applicable tuition fee and student services levy. This limit applies regardless of whether the student is classified as a domestic or international student.
10. Discounts are only offered for one occurrence and must be authorised for each enrolment period. Any discounts offered for an occurrence only apply to that occurrence in that year and must be reauthorized for any subsequent enrolment period.
11. The Staff Fees Concessions policy is to be referred to for staff fee discounts.

Course Related Cost Item (CRC) Policy

Course related costs (CRC) are student costs directly related to study that a student may incur, other than the tuition fee. The student has the option to purchase the items from multiple suppliers. CRC's can include items such as text books, equipment, uniforms or costs associated with work placements. Some CRC items are discretionary. CRC items are subject to the following conditions.

12. CRC items must be approved prior to any form of publication or notification to students or others.
13. CRC items are to be approved by the Chief Executive. Notwithstanding this, the Chief Executive may delegate approval of CRC items to the Executive Director, Education and Applied Research.
14. CRC items for the same qualification at different locations are to be the same.
15. CRC items for the following year are to be reviewed annually and confirmed no later than 30th June of the preceding year.
16. A CRC Register is to be maintained by the Executive Director, Education and Applied Research.

Compulsory Course Related Cost Item (CCRC) Policy

Compulsory course related costs (CCRC) are for mandatory items directly related to study. CCRC's are items purchased and on-charged directly to students by UCOL. CCRC items are subject to the following conditions.

17. CCRC items must be approved prior to any form of publication or notification to students or others.

³ The exception to this is where the Executive Director, Education and Applied Research has approved a compassionate grant in the form of a discount for future study under the Student Financial Relief Policy.

18. CCRC items, for example administrative service fees, which are wholly dependent on external providers to set may be subject to change after the publication date. UCOL will endeavour to ensure these charges correct at time of publication.
19. CCRC items are to be approved by the Chief Executive. Notwithstanding this, the Chief Executive may delegate approval of CRC items to the Executive Director, Education and Applied Research.
20. CCRC items for the same qualification at different locations are to be the same.
21. CCRC items for the following year are to be reviewed annually and confirmed no later than 30th June of the preceding year.
22. A CCRC Register is to be maintained by the Executive Director, Education and Applied Research.

Administrative Charges Policy

A number of administrative activities are charged to students who apply for the relevant service.

23. All UCOL administrative and processing charges are to be approved by the Chief Executive. Notwithstanding this, the Chief Executive may delegate fee approval to the Chief Financial Officer.
24. Administrative charges should be set with the intention of recovering the costs incurred only and therefore, fairly represent the cost of activities undertaken.
25. Charges for the following year are to be reviewed annually and will be set no later than 30th June of the preceding year. The review process will include student consultation.
26. The Chief Executive, or delegate, has the discretion to waive any administration charges due to exceptional and extenuating circumstances within their level of delegation.
27. Administrative service fees set externally are covered by the Compulsory Course Related Costs.
28. A Register of Administrative Charges must be maintained by Student Registry.

Publication of Fees, CRC/CCRC items and Other Administrative Charges Policy

The clear and timely notification of fees and charging information to both students and the public is an important part of the marketing and communication strategy. Publication refers to the UCOL website, prospectus, information sheets or any other communication channels where fee and charge information is provided.

29. Changes to fees, CRC/CCRC items and other charges must be reflected in all publications as soon as is practical. Outdated publications must be withdrawn from circulation.
30. All information to prospective students on fees and charges, whether verbal or in writing, is to be expressed in New Zealand dollars and is to be GST inclusive.

31. All fees and charges must be disclosed before a prospective student has committed to study so that there are no substantial hidden costs. All information on fees and charges is to be clear about what is and what is not included.
32. The total fee must reflect the value of the tuition fee and student services levy.
33. Information to prospective students must include the length of study covered by the published total fee. Typically, published total fees are to be for a student enrolling in the approved EFTS value for that qualification for that year. For qualifications that extend beyond the period covered by the published total fee, a disclaimer must be included that reads 'Full cost tuition fees are assessed each year'.
34. Information to prospective students must note that the actual fee payable may differ from the published total fee depending on courses chosen, and start date of qualification. Information must note that costs for CRC items are best estimates only and may vary depending on supplier.

Procedures

Procedure for Establishing Tuition Fees

1. Fee recommendations will be provided in sufficient detail so that all components, at both qualification and course level, are available to determine future price increases in line with Tertiary Education Commission rules⁴. Details must include consideration of:
 - a. Tuition Fees;
 - b. Compulsory examination fees;
 - c. CCRC's(UCOL is the sole source of the item); and
 - d. CRC's
2. The Executive Dean of Faculty will recommend a tuition fee for a new qualification and /or course by completing a Fee Approval Form. The Executive Dean of Faculty may also recommend a fee waiver using this form.
3. When establishing the tuition fee, the Executive Dean should include consideration of the:
 - a. Marketing and pricing strategy;
 - b. Pricing of similar UCOL and competitor qualifications;
 - c. Cost of tuition;
 - d. Provisions of the Education and Training Act 2020 and Tertiary Education Commission rules; and
 - e. The availability and value of StudyLink loans to cover the cost of CRC/CCRC's.

⁴ This is to ensure that the basis for calculating Annual Maximum Fee Movement is clearly established.

In addition, justification for international fees should include consideration of costs:

- f. That would typically be covered by a government tuition subsidy if the student was a domestic student;
 - g. Specifically incurred as a result of international recruitment.
4. Once approved, tuition fees are to be entered into the Student Management System and the Master Programme List by the Student Information Programme Manager. Qualifications with discounted tuition fees will be clearly identified on the Master Programme List.
 5. Once approved, the Marketing Team will be notified of new qualifications and/or courses tuition fees to allow for marketing material to be updated.

Procedure for the Annual Review of Tuition Fees

6. Fees for the following year are to be reviewed annually by the Chief Financial Officer. The Chief Financial Officer will submit the annual fee proposal to the Chief Executive, for recommendation to the UCOL Limited Board for approval.
7. When reviewing tuition fees the Chief Financial Officer must take into account;
 - a. Marketing and pricing strategy;
 - b. General price increases as a consequence of economic activity;
 - c. Competitor pricing;
 - d. For domestic fees, Annual Maximum Fee Movement⁵ requirements as outlined in the Tertiary Education Commission funding rules;
 - e. For international fees, foreign exchange impacts.
8. When reviewing fees the Chief Financial Officer must undertake student consultation.
9. Once approved, changes to tuition fees are to be entered into the Student Management System and the Master Programme List by the Student Information Programme Manager.
10. Once approved, the Marketing Team will be notified of qualifications and/or courses tuition fee changes to allow for marketing material to be updated.

Fee Discount Procedure

11. Discount recommendations will be provided in sufficient detail to allow an informed decision to be made. Details to be provided include:
 - a. Qualification or course;

⁵ Government fee increase intentions for the following year are typically announced in the May Budget or Gazetted in the second half of the year.

- b. Current fee and student services levy⁵;
 - c. Applicable student, intake or other description of the targeted student group;
 - d. Value of discount;
 - e. Justification;
 - f. Discount end date.
12. Recommendations for a fee discount must be initiated by the principle budget holder who will fund the proposed discount. The principle budget holder must be a member of the Executive Leadership Team (ELT).
13. Once approved, the Finance Manager will be notified so discounts can be applied to the applicable student or student group. The Head of Recruitment and Marketing, will also be notified of fee discount approvals.

CRC/CCRC Items Procedure

14. The Executive Dean will outline all CRC/CCRC items for a new qualification or course on the Fee Approval Form when seeking an initial fee approval. An estimated dollar value should also be included.
15. Once approved, the Executive Director, Education and Applied Research will update the CRC/CCRC Register. The Register will include the following details as a minimum:
- a. Qualification description and identifying codes;
 - b. Specific CRC/CCRC items and estimated cost;
 - c. Date item was added to the Register;
 - d. Last annual review date of listed CRC/CCRC items.
16. The CRC/CCRC Register will be reviewed annually by the Executive Dean. The Executive Dean will submit any change recommendations to the Executive Director, Education and Applied Research for approval. Once approval is given, the Register will be updated.
17. Once approved, the Domestic and International Marketing Teams will be notified of changes to qualifications and/or courses to allow for the marketing material to be updated.

Administrative Charges Procedure

18. The establishment and annual review of administrative charges will include student consultation.
19. Once approved, the Director Student Registry will update the Administration Charges Schedule and notify the Marketing Team to allow for marketing material to be updated.

⁵ Refer Programme Master List.

Student Consultation

Student consultation refers to the process by which input on matters that affect students is sought. In the context of this policy, students are represented by either the Association of Students at UCOL (AS@U) or by direct student consultation. The aim of consultation is to notify and improve the transparency of any proposed changes to tuition fees (or other charges) incurred by students, and to seek feedback which should be taken into consideration prior to a final decision being made.

Relevant Legislation

- Education and Training Act 2020
- TEC Funding Rules (TEC Website)
- Public Finance Act 1989
- Crown Entities Act 2004

Related Documentation

- [Student Services Levy Statute - Non-Academic 2018](#)
- [Accounts Receivable and Credit Control Policy and Procedure](#)
- [Staff Fees Concession Policy](#)
- [Student Financial Relief Policy](#)
- Master Programme List
- Fee Setting Schedule
- Administration Charge Schedule
- Register of Compulsory Course Related Cost Item