

Fylde Coast Academy Trust



The best we can be

Charging and Remissions 2017 – 2020

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Staff responsible for Policy / review	CFO
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INTRODUCTION

Under the terms of the Education Act 1996, FCAT must have a policy on charging students to participate in academy activities. As a Trust 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 while not placing additional unexpected burdens on an Academy's budget

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

With certain exceptions education provided during Academy hours is free.

DETAILS OF CHARGES

MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT

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

REVISION AIDS

From time to time the Academy will provide students with the opportunity to obtain selected revision guides to assist them with the preparation towards examinations. These additional guides can only be provided if the student or his/her parents meet the cost.

TEXT BOOKS

The Academy will allow students to take Text Books home with them to assist them with their studies. These Text Books must be returned to the Academy on demand. The Academy will invoice parents if Text Books are not returned or are returned in a damaged state rendering them unusable. The Academy reserves the right to request a deposit prior to Text books being taken off site. Any such deposits would be returned upon safe return of the said Books.

MUSICAL INSTRUMENT TUITION

There is an exception to the rule about not charging for activities in Academy hours. Charges may be made for teaching either an individual student or group of up to four to play a musical instrument, if the teaching is not an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the student.

VISITS UNDERTAKEN AS ESSENTIAL PARTS OF GCSE AND OTHER EXTERNALLY EXAMINED COURSES

Where participation in a visit undertaken during Academy time is essential to enable a student to complete a GCSE course (e.g. a field work visit to enable course work to be completed) no charge will be made. The cost will be met from the Academy's Funds.

OTHER VISITS

The vast majority of visits do not fall into the above category. They are undertaken to enhance courses and provide students with experience they cannot gain in the Academy. The trust are sure parents will wish these visits to continue. It will only be possible for them to do so, however, if they continue to be self-financing. Participation in these visits is voluntary. Letters inviting students to participate in such visits will also invite parents to make a voluntary contribution to the Academy Fund equal to the cost of the visit. The visit will then be paid for by the Academy Fund. If it is not possible to cover the cost of the visit by these voluntary contributions, it may be necessary to cancel it.

RESIDENTIAL VISITS

Special rules apply in connection with Residential Visits. If a residential visit is deemed to fall within Academy time or meets the requirements of the syllabus for a public examination or is to do with the National Curriculum or religious education then no charge will apply for the costs of education or travel. However charges will apply for board and lodgings. Exceptions to this can be applied in respect of students whose parents are in receipt of certain benefits. Guidance should be sought from the Academy.

EDUCATION OUTSIDE ACADEMY HOURS

Parents will only be charged for activities that happen outside Academy hours when these activities are not a necessary part of the National Curriculum or religious education. No charge can be made for activities that are an essential part of the syllabus for an approved examination.

Charges may be made for other activities that happen outside Academy hours if parents agree to pay. The Education Act 1996 describes activities, which can be charged for as 'optional extras'. The Academy providing the activities will decide whether to make a charge. Details of such charges will be advised to relevant parties.

ACTIVITIES NOT RUN BY THE ACADEMY OR THE AUTHORITY

When a non-Academy organisation arranges an activity to take place during Academy hours and parents want their children to join the activity, such organisations may charge parents. Parents must then ask the Academy to agree to their children being absent, just as they would if they wanted to take their children out of Academy for a family holiday. The Principal must decide whether this is in the students best interest. They must also bear in mind the requirements of the Education (Schools and Further Education) Regulations that a student should not be allowed more than two weeks' absence in any year unless there are exceptional circumstances.

RE-MARKING FEES LEVIED BY AWARDING BODIES

The 2002 GCSE, GCE, VCE and GNVQ Code of Practice states that each awarding body will make a charge for use of its results enquiry service (re-marking fees).

If the Academy deems it to be in its own interest and/or the interest of former students to seek a remarking of certain examination papers (for example where results vary significantly from expected

performance and "league" position affected), then it can do so. The Academy will pay the appropriate re-marking fee from the Academy budget.

In some instances however, where examination results may not vary from expected performance, parents might deem it to be in the best interests of the child to have individual papers re-marked. If the Academy agrees to arrange for this to happen, then the Academy is acting as an agent for the parent in obtaining an additional service from the awards body, and the parent is responsible for any fees involved. It is not the Academy making this charge – the fee is being charged by an outside professional body for an additional service rendered to an individual parent, processed through the agency of the Academy. The Principal's decision in this respect is final.

PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS

No charge is made for entering students for public examinations that are set out in regulations. The Academy will enter a student for each examination in a public examination syllabus that the Academy has prepared them for unless there are educational reasons for not entering the student, or if the student's parents ask in writing that they should not be entered.

An examination entry fee may be charged to parents if:

- the examination is on the set list, but the pupil was not prepared for it at the Academy;
- the examination is not on the set list but the Academy arranges for the student to take it;
- a student fails without good reason to complete the requirements of any public examination where the Academy originally paid or agreed to pay the entry fee.

Charges will not be made for any cost associated with preparing a student for an examination. Charging is allowed for tuition and other costs if a student is prepared outside Academy hours for an examination that is not set out in regulations.

DAMAGE TO PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT

The Academy reserves the right to charge parents for losses incurred as a result of damage to property or equipment caused by the inappropriate behaviour of the student.

VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS

Whilst the Academy cannot charge for Academy-time activities, there may be occasions when it is necessary to invite parents and others to make voluntary contributions (in cash or in kind) to make Academy funds go further. All requests to parents for contributions will make it quite clear that the contributions would be voluntary. Children of parents who do not contribute will not be treated any differently.

If a particular activity cannot take place without some help from parents, this will be explained to them at the planning stage. Where there are not enough voluntary contributions to make the activity possible, and there is no way to make up the shortfall, then the activity will be cancelled. No student will be left out of an activity because his or her parents cannot or will not make a contribution of any kind.

The Academy will in the first instance decide which class or group of students is to benefit from the activity and then look for voluntary contributions, either for that activity or by general fund-raising.

REMISSIONS

The trust will continue to ensure that no student is excluded from participation in any Academy activity because of inability to pay. Parents of students in this situation, and particularly those whose families are in receipt of Income Support or similar benefits, should make the Academy Principal aware of the situation, which will be dealt with discreetly. In drawing up this Charging and Remissions policy, the trust believe parents will wish the Academy to continue to provide a wide range of extra-curricular activities. They believe parents would wish the Academy to help students discreetly where appropriate, but they would wish parents to know that only very limited funds are available for this purpose and therefore, the opportunity to exercise this discretion is very limited. The Academy will, where it is appropriate to do so, consider supporting disadvantaged students (usually within the Pupil Premium group) by contributing up to a maximum of 25% of the costs of school trips that are not curriculum related.

FCAT has a formal Uniform policy. The trust is committed to ensuring that the Academy Uniform is available at a fair and reasonable price. The trust would want to ensure that no family feels unable to apply for a place at the Academy for their child as a result of uniform costs. Parents of students in this situation should make contact with the Academy as described above so that consideration can be given as to whether any financial support can be made available.

Where reference is made within this policy to the Principal, this can be taken to mean either the Executive Principal, the Principal or the CEO.