

TITLE:

Fees Refund and Waiver SOP**Summary of Contents:**

This procedure identifies the occasions when fees may be waived or refunded and specify the method by which fees are refunded.

Date Created:

July 2016

Last CMT Approval Date:17th August 2016**1.0 Background****Responsible Owner:**

Chief Finance Officer

REVIEW INFORMATION

Next Review Due: June 2017

Requires CMT Approval (yes/no): Yes

Previous Reference (for control purposes):
SOP 171-11-2014

The Fees Policy establishes the guidelines by which fees and charges may be levied for the provision of appropriate educational facilities and services. The Fees Policy provides the fee for each category of course per academic year.

The Policy states that fees are not waived nor refundable except in a number of circumstances outlined in this procedure.

Therefore, the purpose of this procedure is to:

- Identify the occasions when fees may be waived or refunded; and
- Specify the method by which fees are refunded.

2.0 Scope

This procedure refers to all waivers and refunds of the following fees:

Fee	Definition
Tuition Fee	This refers to the amount due from a student (or his or her sponsor) as stipulated in the Fees Policy.
Examination/Registration/Validation Fee	The money collected by the College which is then forwarded to the examination Awarding Body.

A Fee Waiver refers to the waiving of the remainder of any fees due to be paid. This relates to a fee that has not been paid in full. A Fee waiver is not a concession.

A Fee Refund refers to a fee, which has already been paid in full, being reimbursed to a student (or his/her sponsor). This may be partially refunded or refunded in full.

It is possible that a situation may arise where there is a requirement for a Fee Waiver and Fee Refund in the same instance.

This procedure applies to:

- All staff who shall inform an individual or organisation requesting a waiver or refund
- Customer Services and Schools who shall process all applications for refund of money paid by applicant or applicant request for a fee waiver.
- Applicants requesting a refund of money paid or a fee waiver.
- The Finance Department which shall process refunds and waivers

3.0 Procedure

3.1 Waiver / Refund Circumstances

The College Policy is that fees are not waived nor refundable except in the following circumstances:

- 3.1.1 A course/class is cancelled by the College; where cancellation of a course takes place, students will be offered either a place on a suitable alternative course or a full refund/fee waiver.
- 3.1.2 If the time, day, evening or location of the class has been changed by the College and the student is unable to continue attending because of these changes.
- 3.1.3 A student does not attend the course of study and informs the College more than five working days prior to the commencement of the course. Any student who fails to notify the College at least 5 working days before the course commences, but prior to the course commencement, shall be liable for a £20 administration fee.
- 3.1.4 Other fee waiver or refund applications shall be considered only in exceptional circumstances by the Financial Controller. Any case for exceptional circumstances to be considered **must be supported by appropriate evidence** and a statement from the Head of School. This will include situations where the student did not attend the course of study but only informed the College after the course commenced. Any approved fee waiver or refund will be subject to a £20 administration fee.

If a fee waiver/refund applicant has attended one or more classes then no reduction in fee (waiver) nor refund may be given, except in circumstance 4 above.

Where a refund has been refused it may be possible to transfer the tuition fee paid to another programme in the current academic year.

Registration, examination and validation fees will only be waived or refunded if the amount is requested before the fee has been forwarded to the external body.

3.2 Waiver / Refund Procedure

The fee waiver / refund procedure for sections 3.1.1 – 3.1.4 is as follows:

- i. Course Cancellation – the student will be notified about the course cancellation by the School Support Officer. If the student does not wish to transfer to another course the School Support Officer will commence the refund request by submitting the AOS Session Cancellation e-form or if this has already been submitted, then the Transfer/Refund e-form should be used. This form will then require approval by Customer Services and MIS before the refund can be processed by the Finance Department.

- ii. Course changed from advertised - the student will be notified about the course change by the School Support Officer. If the student does not wish to transfer to alternative course session the School Support Officer will commence the refund request by submitting the AOS Session Amendment e-form or if this has already been submitted, then the Transfer/Refund e-form should be used. This form will then require approval by Customer Services and MIS before the refund can be processed by the Finance Department.
- iii. Student withdrawal prior to course commencement - the student must submit a completed 'Fee Waiver/Refund Request Form' (Appendix A) to Customer Services for the attention of the Senior Customer Services Officer. The form must be marked with the date received. The Senior Customer Services Officer will log the request on the central refund system and check the student's enrolment and attendance record before informing the student in writing of the outcome of their request. The Senior Customer Services Officer will then complete the Transfer/Refund e-form. A £20 administration fee will be noted on the e-form if the College is not notified less than 5 working days before the course commences.
- iv. Exceptional Circumstances - Where a fee waiver or refund is requested in exceptional circumstances the student must complete a 'Fee Waiver / Refund Request Form' (Appendix A). The Fee Waiver / Refund Request form must include supporting evidence e.g. medical evidence, proof of relocation, evidence from employer. The form must be submitted to Customer Services for the attention of the Senior Customer Services Officer. The Senior Customer Services Officer will then log the request on the central refund system and seek a statement of recommendation from the Head of School.

The Financial Controller will then review the request and will make a decision based on the information and supporting evidence in conjunction with the recommendation from the Head of School.

The Senior Customer Services Officer will inform the applicant of the outcome of their request, in writing, and if appropriate complete the necessary Transfer/Refund e-form requesting the refund, including a £20 administration fee.

The Finance Department will process a fee waiver / fee refund within 5 working days of the approved e-form being submitted.

All refunds will be issued by cheque regardless of the method of the original payment.

3.3 Appeals

In the event that a fee waiver/refund applicant is dissatisfied with the outcome of their application they may lodge an appeal, in writing, within 10 working days of the receipt of the outcome letter.

Applicants cannot appeal a Fee Waiver/Refund decision on the same issue unless there is new evidence or other grounds to do so.

The Chief Finance Officer will form the Appeals Panel with a Senior Customer Services Officer.

4.0 Communication Plan

This procedure will be communicated to staff via the Learning Engine on the Intranet and made available to any customer upon request.

This document can be made available in alternative formats upon request.



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FEE WAIVER/ REFUND REQUEST FORM

T: 0345 600 7555

E: info@serc.ac.uk

Please return this form to Customer Services at your local main Campus

1. PERSONAL INFORMATION

STUDENT ID <i>(if available)</i> :	
SURNAME: DR/MR/MRS/MS/MISS	FORENAME:
DOB:	EMAIL:
PERMANENT HOME ADDRESS:	
POSTCODE:	
CONTACT NUMBER:	

2. COURSE DETAILS (INCLUDING CAMPUS)

COURSE TITLE:	COURSE FEE:
COURSE CODE:	AMOUNT PAID:
CAMPUS:	RECEIPT NUMBER:

3. REASON FOR REFUND REQUEST *(Please attach any supporting documentation/medical evidence to support your request. Requests received less than one week before the course start date can only be considered if supporting evidence is provided).***4. STUDENT SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____**

For Admin Use Only:

Form Accepted by CSA:		Decision:	
Received Date:		Initials & Date:	
Logged Date:		Student Notified Date:	

NOTE: The information provided in this application will be retained in compliance with the Data Protection Act (NI) 1998