

High Tunstall College of Science



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Charging and Remissions Policy

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Stakeholder Consulted	- Staffing, Staff Welfare and Finance Committee
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Responsibility for Review	- Operations Manager

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Statement of intent

High Tunstall College of Science is committed to ensuring equal opportunities for all students, regardless of financial circumstances, and has established the following policy and procedures to ensure that no child is discriminated against by our offering of college trips, activities and educational extras.

In addition, we are committed to adhering to legal requirements regarding charging for college activities, and meeting all statutory guidance provided by the DfE.

We promise:

- Not to charge for education provided during college hours.
- To inform parents on low incomes and in receipt of relevant benefits of the support available to them when asking for contributions towards the costs of college visits.

Please note that while this policy may be more or less generous than the LA's, we have ensured it meets the requirements of the law.

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007
- The Education (Prescribed Public Examinations) (England) Regulations 2010
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- DfE (2018) 'Charging for school activities'
- DfE (2020) 'Governance handbook'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following college policies:

- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Freedom of Information Policy and Publication Scheme
- The college's Scheme of Delegation
- Financial Management Policy

2. Charging for education

The college will not charge for:

- Admission applications.
- Education provided during college hours.
- Education provided outside college hours if it is part of the national curriculum, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for by the college, or part of RE.
- Instrumental or vocal tuition, for students learning individually or in groups, unless provided at the request of the student's parent.
- Entry for a prescribed public examination, if the student has been prepared for it at the college.
- Examination resits, if the student is being prepared for the resits at the college.

The college may charge for:

- A variety of materials to students ranging from stationery and calculators to commercially produced revision guides. Prices are set to cover the college's costs.
- Contributions will be requested from parents/carers to cover the cost of ingredients or material for practical subjects, particularly where the finished article is kept by the students
- Optional extras.
- Music tuition (in certain circumstances).
- Use of community facilities and other commercial activities.
- Provision of information within the scope of freedom of information.

3. Optional extras

The college may charge for the following optional extras:

- Education provided outside of college time that is not:
 - Part of the national curriculum
 - Part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the college
 - Part of RE
- Examination entry fees where the student has not been prepared for the examinations at the college
- Transport, other than that required to take the student to college or to other premises where the LA has arranged for the student to be provided with education
- Board and lodging for a student on a residential visit
- Extended day services offered to students, e.g. breakfast or out-of-college provision

When calculating the cost of optional extras, an amount may be included in relation to the following:

- Materials, books, instruments or equipment provided in relation to the optional extra
- Buildings and accommodation
- Non-teaching staff (including TAs)
- Teaching staff under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra
- The cost, or an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide vocal tuition or tuition in playing a musical instrument, where the tuition is an optional extra

The college will not charge in excess of the actual cost of providing the optional extra divided by the number of participating students. A subsidy will not be charged for any students wishing to participate but whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge. In cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during college hours, the college will not charge for the cost of alternative provision for those not participating.

The college will not charge for supply teachers to cover for teachers who are absent from college accompanying students on a residential visit.

Participation in any optional activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges; therefore, parental agreement is a prerequisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

If a charge is to be made for a particular activity, such as optional extras, parents will be informed of how the charge will be calculated.

4. Examination fees and resits

The college may charge for examination fees if:

- The examination is on the set list (which includes SATs, GCSEs and A-levels), but the student was not prepared for it at the college.
- The examination is not on the set list, but the college arranged for the student to take it.
- A student fails, without good reason, to complete the requirements of any public examination where the governing body or LA originally paid or agreed to pay the entry fee.

Where a student is entered for a second or subsequent attempt at an examination, the college will pay the fee. Once students have left the college, resits must be taken at the college.

If a student or their parent consider it to be in the best interests of the student to request that an examination is re-marked, any fees involved must be covered by the student or their parent. If the awarding body changes the overall grade of the result, the college will not be charged by the awarding body and the parent or student will have their fees refunded.

5. Voluntary contributions

The college may, from time-to-time, ask for voluntary contributions towards the benefit of the college or college activities. If an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the college will make this clear to parents at the outset. There is no obligation for parents to make a contribution and parents will be notified regarding whether assistance is available.

No student will be excluded from an activity simply because their parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child will still be given an equal opportunity to take part in the activity. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund an activity, and the college cannot fund it via another source, the activity will be cancelled.

The college will strive to ensure that parents do not feel pressurised into making voluntary contributions.

6. Music tuition

Instrumental and vocal music tuition is an exception to the rule that all education provided during college hours must be free. The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007 allow for charges to be made for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually or to groups of any size – provided that the tuition is at the request of the student's parents. The charges will not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff providing the tuition.

Charging will not be made if the teaching is an essential part of the national curriculum.

No charge will be made in respect of students who are LAC.

7. Transport

The college will not charge for:

- Transporting registered students to or from the college premises, where the LA has a statutory obligation to provide the transport.
- Transporting registered students to other premises where the governing body or LA has arranged for students to be educated.
- Transporting students to meet an examination requirement when they have been prepared for the examination at the college.
- Transport provided for an educational visit if the visit is part of the national curriculum.

8. [Updated] Residential visits

The college will not charge for:

- Education provided on any visit that takes place during college hours
- Education provided on any visit that takes place outside college hours if it is part of the national curriculum, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the college, or part of RE
- Supply teachers to cover for teachers accompanying students on visits.

[Updated] Parent/Carers will be asked to meet the full cost for residential courses in college time, but the charge will not exceed the actual cost.

Assistance towards the cost of a residential visit may be available for some students who are eligible for Pupil Premium funding. **[Updated]** Parents/Carers are encouraged to contact the college if they think they may be eligible or have any questions and maybe exempt from board and lodging costs if they can prove that they are in receipt of one or more of the following benefits:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit, provided that they are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190
- Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit – if they apply on or after 1 April 2018, their household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits they receive).

9. Damaged or lost items

The College may charge for the cost of replacing items that are damaged or lost due to the negligence or poor behaviour of pupils or their parents. Parents will only be charged the replacement cost to purchase the same or equivalent item. The school will consider waiving costs in exceptional circumstances, e.g., financial hardship.

10. Remissions

Students eligible of pupil premium funding may request assistance with the costs of activities:

- All children eligible for free school meals in the last 6 years
- Children that are adopted or leave care under a Special Guardianship Order or a Residence Order
- Children who have been looked after for 1 day or more
- Children who have one of their parents serving in the regular armed forces

The funding is limited and there is no guarantee that all requests can be met. Assistance will be allocated on a needs basis, and if the full cost of the trip or activity cannot be met through assistance funding and voluntary contributions, the trip or activity will be cancelled.

To request assistance, parents should contact the college on 01429 261446.

11. **[Updated]** College trip refunds

All initial deposits for college trips will be non-refundable. Deposits to secure a place on a visit are paid by parents/carers on the understanding that the student will fulfil the full payment and participate in the visit. Parents will be informed of this when they are provided with initial information about the trip.

In the event that the college has to cancel a trip due to foreseen circumstances, parental contributions will be refunded. In the event that a college trip is cancelled by a party other than the college due to unforeseen circumstances, it is at the college's discretion as to whether a refund is given to parents.

In the event that a student or their parents cancel the student's place on a trip, it is at the college's discretion as to whether a refund is given. The college will take into account the reason for cancellation, whether the college will be reimbursed for the student's place on the trip, and whether the place on the trip can be offered to another student.

Where a student or their parents have previously cancelled a place on a trip and received a full refund, the college has the right to refuse to allow the student to attend future trips and visits.

In the event that a student cannot attend a trip at the last minute, e.g. due to illness, it is at the college's discretion as to whether a refund is given. The college will take

into account whether the college will be reimbursed for the student's place on the trip and whether the place on the trip can be offered to another student.

In the event that a college trip is postponed due to unforeseen circumstances, it is at the college's discretion as to what happens with the parental contributions for the trip. The college will consider its options, which could include carrying forward the money until the trip takes place, transferring the money to another trip, or refunding parents.

In the event that the decision is made to postpone a trip due to foreseen circumstances, it is at the college's discretion as to what happens with the parental contributions for the trip. The college will consider its options, which could include carrying forward the money until the trip takes place, transferring the money to another trip, or refunding parents.

[Updated] The College sets a behavioural expectation that all students attending the visit must ensure that they uphold all behavioural rules in College before the visit takes place. As the trip is taking place during the academic term students must ensure that they catch up on all work missed so that they don't fall behind. All students who do not follow behavioural expectations will have their place on the visit removed and all money paid towards the visit will only be refunded if another student takes their place.

The college will deal with cancellations and refunds on a case-by-case basis, ensuring that all students and their families are treated equally.

If a parent wishes to make a complaint about refunds, they can do so via the Complaints Procedures Policy.

12. Freedom of Information Policy and Publication Scheme

The college's Freedom of Information Policy and Publication Scheme sets out where fees may be charged for the provision of information.

13. Monitoring and review

The Policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Operations Manager and the Governing Body's Staffing, Staff Welfare and Finance Committee and will be adjusted in line with any subsequent guidelines from the DfE or Local Authority.

The next review will be March 2025.