Item 15
For Approval

Glasgow Kelvin College

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT – MEETING OF 7 JUNE 2021

FEES POLICY – SESSION 2021/22

Report by Vice Principal Operations and Head of Finance

1. Introduction

The Fees Policy sets out the fees and charges that will be applied during the academic year. This includes the scope and discretion that the College has to waive fees due for programmes of learning. The Board of Management are required to approve the fee policy prior to the start of each academic year.

2. Fees Structure

The College fees structure is based on the notional fee levels indicated by the Scottish Government and Scottish Funding Council (SFC). It should be noted that, at the time of writing, the SFC have not published their Fee policy for session 2021/22. It is possible, although unlikely that the SFC will change the longstanding fee rates. It is also possible that the situation in respect of Brexit may result in changes to the way in which EU learners are categorised and charged fees.

This report requests the Board to delegate authority to the Vice Principal – Operations to re-align fees to the SFC rates in advance of the new term in the event that the fee rates or eligibility rules are changed by the SFC, SAAS or the Scottish Government.

A copy of the 2021/2022 fees structure is included as Annex 1 to this policy. The fee structure applies to all student activity that qualifies for funding by grant-in-aid from the SFC or is part-funded by European Structural funds.

The College reserves the right to levy additional fees/charges for particular programmes of study which generate disproportionate costs for materials, trips or additional property charges. The Vice Principal Operations has delegated authority to set fee rates for specific programmes, these will normally be based on the rates outlined in the fee policy.

Commercial, some international provision, flexible workforce development fund projects and consultancy charges are not covered by the Fees Policy. The Director of Business Development has discretion to set prices for these types of activity. Normally, this activity will not contribute to the College funded teaching activity target but will be expected to generate a contribution to the overhead costs of the College.

3. Fee Waiver Policy

The SFC publishes a National Fee Waiver Policy annually. This provides the basis on which colleges are required to waive fees for certain groups of learners. Glasgow Kelvin College will comply with and operate the National Fee Waiver Policy.

The College will not accept Fee Waiver for its evening class or commercial provision except where this activity is specifically funded by partner organisations.

It is the policy of the Board that the Principal retains discretion to waive fees for students who do not meet the national fee waiver scheme criteria. This is applied only when the student can demonstrate financial hardship and where waiving the fee is consistent with the College ethos. It will also apply to some community based provision which is delivered in partnership with the Community Planning Partnership, Glasgow Housing Association and the Wheatley Group. Fees will not normally be waived for full time HE provision, evening or commercial provision.

4. Approval of Non-Standard Fees

Non-standard Fees or deviations from approved rates will normally be referred to the Teaching Management Group for consultation prior to approval. These are likely to relate to Training Agencies, block release and bespoke courses. Fee rates for such provision are formally approved by the Curriculum Directors or a Vice Principal.

5. School Pupils

The College notes that the fee waiver policy applies to school pupils for programmes that they undertake in colleges as part of their school based curriculum. The College will not seek to charge school pupils a fee for any activity they undertake at College.

6. Home, Rest of UK and Overseas Student Status

To qualify for home student status a potential student must meet the eligibility criteria given in the Education (Access Funds) (Scotland) Determination 2013. The College checks eligibility through the Student Enrolment form and the Fee Waiver Application form. Potential students who do not meet the residency criteria will be asked to finance their own study at the overseas rate.

The Education (Fees) (Scotland) Regulations 2011 applies to HE level fees (HNC and above). These regulations were designed to allow FE and HE institutions to charge fees to students from within the UK but out with Scotland (Rest of UK Students). The College will therefore charge such students a higher fee rate as such activity will not contribute to the student activity target.

The College does not hold a Tier 4 licence and therefore is unable to recruit international students.

7. Cancellation of Programmes and Classes

The College reserves the right to cancel any programme or class should there be insufficient numbers of students enrolled. Where the College cancels a programme or class, any fee paid in respect of the cancelled programme will be returned provided the student has paid the fees themselves or had fees paid by others on their behalf.

8. Payment of Fees

Fees are payable on enrolment and students are normally expected to pay the full fee for any programme of study prior to the commencement of the programme. In certain circumstances payment by instalment may be agreed by the College. The College reserves the right to vary instalment methods and demand outstanding payments in full should circumstances dictate. Payment plans must be arranged within 2 weeks of the start date of the course. Commercial and evening class fees will normally be paid for in advance of enrolment.

9. Complaints/Investigations

In the event that a student has submitted a complaint to the College, payment of fees must be maintained pending the outcome of the complaint. Any decision to waive or refund fees will be actioned as soon as is practicable after completion of the complaints process.

10. Withdrawal from Course

Should a student withdraw within three weeks of commencement of the programme consideration will be given to waiving fees. This recognises that student circumstances change and that the programme selected may not always be an appropriate choice.

Should a student withdraw after three weeks of the commencement of any block the full fees for the block will be charged.

11. Refund of Fees

The College will not normally refund fees paid by a student to attend a programme of study at the College. Should a student withdraw from a programme before the start, or within three weeks of commencement, of the programme consideration will be given to refunding fees. This recognises that student circumstances change and that the programme selected may not always be an appropriate choice.

Refunds will only be considered on the basis of a written request with an explanation of the reasons for withdrawing from the programme. Any refund granted will be subject to the deduction of a £40.00 administration fee. Refunds will not normally be granted if the student has attended three weeks after the commencement of the programme or class. Refunds will be repaid to the person or company who made the initial payment and by the same payment method as the original payment. Refunds will not normally be offered in respect of evening class or commercial provision. The following staff have delegated authority to approve the refund of fees:

- Vice Principal Operations
- Director of Faculty
- Director of Business Development
- Head of Finance
- Finance Manager
- Accountant

12. Method of Payment of Fees

The College will accept cash, credit/debit card or cheque as payment of fees. The College will also invoice a sponsor where a student can provide a letter at enrolment indicating who will take responsibility for the fee and to whom the invoice should be sent. Dishonoured cheques and direct debit payments will be subject to £30.00 surcharge.

13. Non-Payment of Fees

The College is expected to collect a fee for every student enrolled, except in circumstances where the National Fee Waiver Policy applies. The College will pursue students who fail to pay the agreed fee. The College will not certificate students who do not pay the fee due.

The College will also withdraw access to ICT facilities in cases where the terms of payment plans are not being met by the student and the debt will be referred to the College Debt Collection Agency. The student may be removed from their course of study as a result of non-payment of fees.

14. Marginal Cost Pricing

The College may be requested to provide education or training which has not been included within its budgeted academic plan. The provision of education or training will incur additional costs. Heads of Faculty and the Director of Business Development will ensure that the College recovers the additional costs of such activity.

15. Outstanding Debts

Students wishing to enrol who have previous outstanding debts to the college will be subject to the following conditions:

- Debts less than £100 – to be paid in full prior to enrolment;
- Debts more than £100 – 50% to be paid up-front with the balance to be paid by end of block 1. A direct debit payment plan will be arranged with individual students.

16. Resource Implications

Fee income is a critical component of the College budget. Approval of fee rates, the fee policy and debt recovery processes are critical to achieving the budgeted level of income. The fee rates have been held constant in cash terms for a significant number of years, this represents a gradual erosion of the real terms value of the fee at a time when delivery costs have increased substantially as a consequence of higher staff pay rates.

17. Equality Impact

The Principal's Discretion process enables the College to promote access and take into account other circumstances which may be taken into account in respect of the decision to charge a fee or not. No negative impacts on people with protected characteristics have been identified as a consequence of this report.

18. Risk

There is a financial risk associated with the fee policy in respect of receipt of budgeted income and viability of courses. There is also some reputation risk associated with the decision to charge fees to individuals who are not eligible for funding and progress the debt recovery process.

19. Recommendations

Members are recommended to:

i) note the contents of this report and its appendix;
ii) delegate authority to the Vice Principal Operations to amend the fee rates and eligibility criteria to align with SFC, SAAS and / or Scottish Government guidance/regulations in the event that these diverge from the proposed College rates for session 2021/22; and
iii) approve the Fee Policy for session 2021/22.

20. Further Information

Members may obtain further information relating to the contents of this report from Jeanette Evans, Vice Principal Operations JEvans@glasgowkelvin.ac.uk and Alan Carr, Head of Finance acarr@glasgowkelvin.ac.uk.

Annex 1

Glasgow Kelvin College

Fees Structure 2021 / 2022

Type of Fee	**Cost**
Full-Time	
Higher Education - Self Financing Students	£1,285
Higher Education – (Degree)	£1,820
Further Education - Self Financing Students	£1,008
Full Time - Overseas Students – Higher Education	£5,900
Full Time – Overseas Students – Further Education	£4,600
Full Time – Rest of UK Students – Higher Education	£2,500
Full Time – Rest of UK Students – Further Education	£1,008
Part Time	
Higher Education - Each Unit (including SQA registration)	£100(d) / £135(e)
Further Education - Each Unit (including SQA registration)	£95(d) / £135(e)
Overseas HE - Each Unit (including SQA registration)	£345 (per credit)
Overseas FE - Each Unit (including SQA registration)	£225 (per credit)
European Computer Driving Licence	£245
Highers (Home rate)	£252
Marginal Cost	
Charge per class hour	£70
Hourly Rate – per contact hour	£65