

# STUDENT FEES POLICY AND PROTOCOLS

## OPEN TRAINING COLLEGE

### 1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that students are adequately informed about the charging and payment of student fees and to ensure that fee protocols are applied in a consistent and correct manner. The *Student Fees Protocol* will be made available to perspective and existing students to ensure that they are aware of their obligations and commitments

### 2. Scope

This policy and protocols apply to all students registered with College.

### 3. Policy Statement

The fees policy and protocols sets out the student's fee liability, payment schedules, payment supports and sanctions for late payment or non-payment of student fees and if the student subsequently withdraws or defers from the Course. Students will be advised of their fee liability during the application process and College registration process. Each student is advised to familiarise themselves personally with their fee liability prior to registration.

### 4. Related Documentation

#### Student Fees Protocol

**(Refer to schedule of programme costs published each year and available on the College website and in programme literature).**

#### Commitment to paying fees

As part of the application/re-registration process at the beginning of each academic year, students are asked to complete an application/re-registration form in which they commit to paying their fees for the full academic year. The signature on that form commits the student to paying fees on time.

The signature on the form commits a student to pay the total amount of fees for that year, even if they decide to withdraw from the programme without completing all the modules.

Where an agency is making a contribution towards annual student fees, students are still responsible for the payment of all fees.

#### Fees instalments option

Students have a choice of paying fees all at once at the start of the academic year or through instalments during the academic year. Instalment deadline dates are as follows:

1. December 1st
2. February 1st
3. April 1st

Fees must be paid directly to the College through the online IMS (Information Management System).

If, for an unusual reason, payment cannot be made in this way, it is possible they may be paid by cheque, postal order, bank draft or by credit card (this method will incur an additional admin. fee). In those cases, all payments should be made out to the Open Training College (send fees for the attention of **Fees Administrator, Open Training College, Prospect Hall, Willowfield Park, Goatstown, Dublin 14**). Do not send cash to the College. It is advisable to make use of Registered Post when sending fees or assignments to the College.

Where an agency is making a contribution towards annual student fees, students are still responsible for the payment of all fees. Students are instructed to pay all personal instalments prior to any payments expected from their agency. Students should contact the Administration Team if they are unclear about any aspect of fees instalments.

#### **Sanctions for Late fees:**

If a student is paying by instalments and has missed a deadline by more than 2 weeks, it will be necessary for the Open Training College to withdraw all student supports.

This means that student supports such as access to My Learning Centre (MyOTC), and distribution of assessment feedback, will not be available to the student as long as there are outstanding fees. The College will email a message (1st reminder) to each student confirming that supports have been withdrawn until payment is received and total fees are up-to-date. The message will include a revised deadline date by which full payment of outstanding fees is expected.

If a student is still in arrears for a period of 2 weeks after the revised deadline date, the College will email a letter (2nd reminder) containing a withdrawal form and will request the immediate return of a completed withdrawal form from the student, along with payment of any outstanding fees.

If the College does not receive payment or the completed withdrawal form after a further 2 weeks from the reminder date, the College will post a letter (3rd & final reminder) to the student explaining that the College must accept that the student has withdrawn from the programme and they will not be put forward for registration with QQI. A student who has already withdrawn is prohibited from returning to study with the Open Training College if there are any outstanding fees.

### **Student Appeal**

The student can appeal in writing to the Course Director within 2 weeks of receiving the 3rd and final reminder.

### **Support for Students**

The College will offer short-term support to any student who is the victim of extenuating circumstances and who can evidence documents to support their unusual and extreme situation. The student and College must agree on repayment terms submitted in writing by the student to the College. Academic student supports will remain withdrawn until all the relevant documents have been reviewed fully and a decision has been made by the Course Director. The student will be notified of the decision immediately. Any further appeal from this stage will go through the normal College appeal/complaint channels, to the relevant sub-committee of the Academic Council (i.e., the Registration and Admissions committee), in the first instance, with the Academic Council itself being the next and ultimate level of appeal.

All outstanding fees owed, due to extenuating circumstances during the academic year, must be paid by June 15th.

The College continues to offer the greatest of flexibility to all students regarding payment of fees. The various instalment plans relative to each course are explained each year to all learners attending Applicants' Day. If student circumstances change after this, it is the responsibility of the student to communicate with the Administration department.

### **Agency Support**

A portion of the programme fees may be paid by the participant's agency. Individual fee arrangements are agreed between the applicant and their agency prior to the commencement of the programme. Therefore, invoices are issued to the student. **Negotiation with agencies in relation to fees will not be undertaken by the College in any circumstances.** Where there is a delay/issue in the College receiving agency fees, students are still expected to pay their contributions on the required dates on the instalment plan, which will be prior to the instalment date for agency fees. Students are then expected to liaise with their agency to expedite the payment of said fees.

### **Fees are non-refundable.**

In the case of students who withdraw from their course of study, fees that have been paid in advance will be fully credited to the student's account if the student returns within 12 months of the withdrawal date. 50% credit will apply to students returning within 24 months of the

withdrawal date. Students returning after 24 months are liable for full fees applicable at that time.

### **Tax Relief on Fees**

For programmes of one year or more, tax relief is available at the lower rate. Tax relief is available for the portion of fees paid by the student. In order to claim tax relief for tuition fees you will need to do the following:

Go to [www.revenue.ie](http://www.revenue.ie) and type 'IT 31' into the search box.

1. Download and print off form **IT 31 Tax Relief for Tuition Fees form**.
2. Complete the form and send it with the receipts to your regional Revenue office.
3. If requested by the revenue service, contact the College office to request a specific tax receipt for the total amount of your fee payments.

(Details are also available on the [www.revenue.ie](http://www.revenue.ie) website)

### **Miscellaneous Fees/Costs**

Miscellaneous costs that may be incurred during the programme of your studies include:

#### **Course Material**

Students receive access to all materials online as part of the programme fee.

Students are not permitted to copy materials or pass them to third parties without the express written consent of the College. The Open Training College retains the copyright in all programme materials.

#### **Purchasing Hardcopy Material**

Hard copies of programme material can be purchased (refer to schedule of costs published each year and are available on the College website). Each module will be mailed to the student's residence as the module is released online. Please contact the Administration department if you wish to purchase hardcopy learning materials. The deadline for ordering your complete set of hardcopy modules occurs in September each year.

#### **Bridging Fee**

A fee is charged for applicants who participate in the Bridging process.

### **Re-registration Fee**

Students who withdraw will be required to pay a re-registration fee on returning to their studies. Students who are spreading completion of their programme over additional academic periods (only by prior agreement made at application stage) will not incur a re-registration fee during the already agreed additional period.

### **Late Re-Registration Fee**

Students who fail to complete the re-registration process within the specified timeframe will incur a late re-registration fee.

Failure to submit a complete re-registration form will warrant the return of the form to the student, which may delay the process and result in a late fee being charged due to a missed deadline.

### **Repeat Exams**

Students who avail of a re-sit examination for whatever reason will be required to pay an administration fee.

### **Repeat Module Fee** (pro rata based upon programme fees)

Where students are required to repeat a module due to failure of that module in the previous academic period a repeat module fee will apply per module. Repeat module fees cover the student's attendance at the workshop, learning materials, MyOTC access, tutorial support, formative and summative assessment.

### **Formal Appeals**

The College charges a fee in relation to appeals. A refund will be issued in the case of a successful appeal.

### **Exemptions**

Students who are granted an exemption from a module or modules, pay their fees for the year on a pro-rata basis based on the number of modules they must complete in full.

*All fees are communicated to students on the commencement of each academic year.*

*Increase in Fees: All fees are reviewed annually and may be subject to increases.*

<b>Policy Title:</b>		<b>Fees Policy</b>
<b>OTC Policy No</b>		<b>1710</b>
<b>Version</b>		<b>2</b>
<b>Date approved:</b> Sept 2018	<b>Date policy will take effect:</b> Sept 2018	<b>Date of Next Review: July 2019</b>
<b>Approving Authority:</b>		<b>College Directorate</b>
<b>Document Owner/Contact:</b>		<b>Corporate Services Manager</b>
<b>Supporting documents, procedures &amp; forms of this policy:</b>		Programme Withdrawal Form Programme Schedule of Costs
<b>Audience:</b>		<b>Staff and Student access</b>
<b>Reference(s)</b>		<b>QA Review of Administration Function (Current Version)</b>