

## **CHARGING POLICY 2018 - 19**

### **Introduction**

St Francis Xavier College aims to ensure that there are resources, facilities, trips and activities made accessible to as many students as possible within a broad curricular and extra-curricular offer and ensure equality of access to these activities. We aim to establish and maintain a fair and coherent system of charges within the constraints of the College budget (and funding regulations) and to ensure that through prudent use of the 16 – 19 Bursary or other funds no student should have their access to the curriculum limited by charges.

### **16-19 Cohort**

#### **ICT Package Fee**

All new students will be asked to pay a £50 fee upon enrolment as a contribution towards the provision of enhanced ICT facilities. The ICT package fee is defined as covering the following:

Free access to Wi-Fi across the site, for both the use of College equipment and ‘Bring Your Own Device Technology’.

Free access to all library/LRC/Media resources, including online educational resources & IT Technology for which the College is charged. This also includes unlimited access to all materials, which would usually involve a ‘copyright’ or ‘user’ fee.

Free Access to the College e-ST Dashboard tracking system, which allows students to monitor all aspects of their progress at SFX – attendance, markbook, ILP Reports etc, as well as providing access to timetable, examination, learner support data, UCAS/Reference Data. This system also gives parents/guardians online access to information about students.

Free (and on-going) access to specialist diagnostic software to support the development of literacy & numeracy (BKSB) – again the College is charged for this.

Free Access to IT support for all IT/technology related issues.

A contribution towards subsidising Printing Credits for each student.

The ICT package fee should be paid by new students arriving at the College. It is not paid in the second or third year at the College, therefore the fee covers the whole duration of a student course at SFX. (Note- Unlike many Colleges SFX does not charge a ‘Governors Fund’ fee, which is paid annually).

#### **Tuition Fees**

Full-time 16-18 students who have been resident in the EU for 3 years do not pay tuition fees. Students who are 19 or over (meeting the EU residency criteria) and who are ‘continuing’ courses started when they were 16-18 are also eligible for full fee remission and will not pay tuition fees. The College no longer enrolls fee paying students following changes to the tier 2 UKBA rules for overseas students and since 31/8/15 the College also no longer enrolls any ‘new’ student aged 19 or over. This reflects the fact that SFX no longer attracts ESFA Adult Skills Funding and the majority of new 19+ Learners are expected to either pay fees or be co-financed within the ESFA Adult Skills framework.

#### **Curriculum Materials/Additional fees**

16-18 year-old and 19 year-old ‘continuing students’ in the categories above are entitled to the free provision of course materials as set out in the ESFA funding guidelines. This includes all material relevant to the course specification and delivery, but with the following points which are added for clarification.

Departments may provide resources and educational experiences, which go beyond the standard requirements, or procure materials on behalf of students. For example, Art purchase sketchbooks, Drama/Performance take students on theatre visits, and English utilise textbooks that are required to be annotated. Some departments also provide additional texts beyond those directly needed for the course. All such materials in these type of categories can be 'charged' for as long as they then become the property of the student.

All additional costs are recorded within the approved Book/Additional Course fees list and will only be charged to students if they have been clearly indicated to students during enrolment/Induction. These costs are not expected to be paid until early November and the full details of what the costs cover will be outlined by the departments, once the students begin their courses.

The College will also seek to help students with all additional costs, by using 16 – 19 Bursary funds wherever possible.

Where additional costs are incurred by the student as a result of their disability or learning difficulty, these costs will be met by ALS or discretionary funding.

Students are expected to purchase their own writing paper, pens, pencils, calculators etc.

Students may purchase credits from the LRC for their own photocopying / printing.

### **Loss or Damage**

A charge will be made for books which are lost or damaged belonging to either a department or the College Library. Students will also be charged for the loss of ID cards and may also be charged for any loss or damage to College property at the Principal's discretion.

### **College Trips**

Financial contributions are asked from students for field trips and curriculum related outings. Residential courses are subsidised but a contribution will be requested from students. Any insurance costs will also be included in charges for trips or activities.

In the case of activities arranged by a third party, legal advice will be taken about such activities and the charging implications.

Where additional support or resources are required to enable a student with learning difficulties or disabilities to participate, the ALS or 16 – 19 Bursary budget will fund these costs.

### **Examinations**

Full-time 16-18 and 19+ students do not pay public examination fees for courses followed at SFX unless the examination is a retake unit or assessment. Students will be expected to cover the full cost of undertaking retake units & assessments, unless the retake is a result of long term illness or disability. (The 17 – 18 retake fees vary according to qualification and range from £10 for a functional skills unit to £35 for a GCSE qualification and £80 for a whole linear A level entry. These retake costs will be kept under review in line with any cost rises imposed by the Awarding bodies for 18 / 19)

The College also reserves the right to recover examination fees from any student who has failed to attend a public examination without good reason. (Documentary evidence to support this absence will be requested).

### **Work Experience**

Student travel costs from home to a work experience placement in excess of normal daily travel to College will be refunded. The most reasonably priced ticket or form of transport must be used.

### **Free College Meals**

All students in receipt of guaranteed or discretionary bursary at the College receive FCM at the rate of £2.41 per day. Hot & cold meal options are provided at this price. In addition, the College will continue to provide 'free breakfasts' for all students entitled to free college meals.

### **Hardship Cases**

In all cases where charges are to be levied students and parents will be advised in advance and all monies will be collected prior to the activity. Requests for help from parents on Income Support or Universal Credit will be considered and assistance provided within the limits of the College's 16 – 19 Bursary budget. Complete confidence will be observed in all such matters.

All 16 – 19 year-old students are eligible to apply for guaranteed and discretionary bursary payments. Both funds are subject to an income threshold.

### **Community Education Students**

All courses are provided on a full cost recovery basis. Charges are calculated to cover the salary costs of tutors, materials and overheads taking account of market rates. The fee charged for each course is reviewed annually and set out in the Community Education Prospectus, published online each academic year during the preceding summer term. If there is space in a class late enrolments are accepted. The full course fee is payable until the half term point is reached and thereafter half the fee is charged. Fees can be paid by cash, cheque or card (credit or debit). Online payment is available for all enrolments except taster classes and guest attendance fees. Places are only reserved on full payment of the due fee.

There are no concessions to the course fees.

In addition to course fees, an administration charge of £10 is payable per enrolment. As an incentive to encourage early re-enrolments a loyalty scheme operates which waives the administration fee plus £5 if an existing learner signs up and pays for a subsequent course the following term in advance of the advertised enrolment session.

SFX staff and governors are exempt from the administration fee.

The opportunity to try a course before committing to a full term enrolment is available. The cost of this "taster" session is £10. If the learner decides to enrol for the full course this amount is deducted from the full fee and administration fee payable.

"Guest attendance" is possible on some oversubscribed courses with the agreement of the tutor. The published fee is £10 per attendance.

There is no charge for payment by card – this is not permitted. Card payments are accepted with or without the student being present subject to the conditions set out by the Merchant Service provider

(currently AIB<sup>1</sup>). A secure virtual terminal system has been adopted for acceptance of “customer not present” transactions.

The administration fee and course fee are non-refundable for cancellations within 14 days of the start of the class; exceptions are at the discretion of the Community Education team. A £10 fee is charged to process transfers or refunds.

If a course does not open, the full fee and administration fee are repaid to the learner – in these circumstances every effort is made to encourage the learner to try an alternative class. Refunds are paid either back on the credit / debit card or by cheque requisitioned through the Finance department.

Payments are registered through a till or via the secure AIB online “Authipay” portal or secure “eApp” online enrolment system and receipts are issued. Accounts are processed by the College Finance department in accordance with Financial Regulations.

### **Commercial Courses (e.g. UCAS):**

Delegates pay fees agreed by contract or as advertised by the College. The fee is payable in advance directly by cash, cheque or card as for Community Education classes or by invoice raised via the Finance Department in accordance with the terms and conditions of the agreement in place and the College Financial Regulations.

### **Use of College Premises / Facilities “Lettings”**

Lettings are to be run at a profit to support the “income generation” strategic plan target. Adequate charges are made to cover all the overheads including staff salaries and cleaning. An agreement including terms and conditions is drawn up and risk assessment; insurance; safeguarding and child protection issues/arrangements are checked as appropriate. An invoice will be raised for payment of the agreed fee (plus VAT where applicable) and a deposit taken and held to cover damage or late finishing.

Advertising and marketing initiatives have been developed using the most cost effective means of inviting the public to rent a range of college facilities - including the sports hall; multi-purpose hall; social space and the quad; teaching and computer rooms and, where appropriate, the Chapel - in the evenings, at weekends and during holidays. Availability is planned around exam and teaching commitments and building and maintenance programmes with the attendant limitations these bring.

---

<sup>1</sup> Allied Irish Bank