



Charging and Remissions Policy

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Date:	September 2022
Review date:	September 2023
Approved by:	Trust Board 3 rd October 2022
Trustee Minute No:	0272.6

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1.0 Introduction

This policy sets out the activities that will be provided by QEGSMAT (the Trust) free of charge, and the circumstances in which charges will apply. It also sets out the circumstances in which the Trust will remit, wholly or partly, any charge which would otherwise be payable.

2.0 Principles

The Trustees acknowledge the right of every pupil and student to receive free school education and understand that activities offered wholly or mainly during the school day must be made available to all pupils and students regardless of the ability or willingness of their parents/carers to contribute towards the cost.

The Trustees also recognise the benefits of offering a wide range of additional activities, trips and residential experiences to pupils and students and aim to promote and provide such activities both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum and as additional optional activities.

The Trust is required by law to have a statement of general policy on charging and remissions. This policy has been drawn up to reflect the terms of the Education Act 1996 and the principals of 'A Guide to the Law for School Governors'. This policy is reviewed by the Board of Trustees annually.

3.0 Practice

3.1 Education during School Hours

The Trust will make no charge for admitting pupils and students to a school. Education provided during school hours will be free, including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment where the school retains ownership. Transport provided by schools during school hours to carry pupils or students from the school to activities will also be free. School hours are those when the school is in session and exclude the lunch break.

3.2 Vocal and Instrumental Tuition

The Trust follows government legislation that states all education provided during school hours must be free. However, some music lessons are exceptions to the rule. Charges will be made for vocal or instrumental tuition where the tuition is provided to individuals or groups of any size at the request of parents/carers and the teaching is not an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupil or student. Charges will not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff who provide the tuition, and parents/carers will be notified in advance of the charge for each lesson.

No charge will be made in respect of pupils or students in public care (looked after children).

3.3 Voluntary Contributions

Although there will be no charge for school time activities, schools may from time to time seek voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school and/or the activity. If the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions this will be made clear from the outset. It will also be made clear to parents/carers that there is no obligation to make a contribution. Where there are insufficient voluntary contributions to make the activity possible, and there is no way to make up the shortfall, the school may take the decision to cancel the activity. If a parent/carer is unwilling or unable to pay, their child(ren) will be given an equal chance to participate in the activity.

3.4 Activities Not Run By the School

When an organisation acting independently of the school arranges an activity to take place during school hours and parents/carers want their child(ren) to participate, such organisations may charge parents/carers. Parents/carers must then ask the school to agree to their child(ren) being absent, just as they would if they wanted to take their child(ren) out of school for a family holiday. However, where an activity is organised by a third party and is approved by the school, is educational or is supervised by someone authorised by the school, then it is the Government's view that it should be treated as if it were provided by the school and no charge will be made to parents/carers. Such an activity, if it takes place outside the school's premises, is an 'approved educational activity' within the meaning of Regulation 4A (a) of the Education (Student Registration) Regulations 1995.

3.5 Education Outside School Hours

Parents/carers will only be charged for activities that happen outside school hours when these activities are not a necessary part of the National Curriculum, the school's basic curriculum for religious education or the syllabus for an approved examination. These are described as 'optional extras' under the Education Act 1996.

3.6 Education Partly During School Hours

Sometimes an activity may happen partly during and partly outside school hours. If most of the time spent on a non-residential activity occurs during school hours, that activity counts as taking place entirely in school hours and no charge will be made.

3.7 Residential Activities

No charge will be made for education provided on a visit that takes place during school hours, or on any visit that takes place outside school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil or student is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education. Charges will however be made for board and lodging, except where parents/carers are in receipt of:

- 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 (providing they are not entitled to the Working Tax Credit and their annual gross income is no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit - where their household income is less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits they receive)

3.8 Public Examinations

No charges will be made for entering pupils or students for public examinations that are set out in regulations, and where the school has prepared the pupils or students through the syllabus. Parents/carers will however be charged at cost an examination entry fee if:

- The examination is on the set list, but the pupil or student was not prepared for it at the school;
- The examination is not on the set list, but the school arranges for the pupil or student to take it; and
- A pupil or student fails, without good reason, to complete the requirements of any public examination where the school originally paid or agreed to pay the entry fee, this includes failure to attend an examination.

No charge will be made for any cost associated with preparing a pupil or student for an examination, but a charge at cost will be made for tuition and other costs if a pupil or student is prepared outside school hours for an examination that is not set out in regulations.

3.9 Damage To or Loss of Property and Equipment

Where a pupil or student has lost or caused damage to property or equipment belonging to the school or to another pupil or student through deliberate misuse or vandalism, then the school will charge parents/carers for repairing or replacing the equipment. In collaboration with the school's transport providers, the school will also charge parents/carers for any wilful damage caused to vehicles by pupils or students. Charges will be made at cost.

3.10 Lettings

Schools will from time to time allow third parties to hire their premises and facilities for which there will be a charge. Details of the charges are available from the school.

3.11 Training and Support to Other Organisations

The Trust offers a range of training and support programmes to other organisations. Charges are made for these, the scale of which depends on the programme. Details are available upon request.