Fee Assessment Review and Appeals Procedure

This paper outlines the process by which the University conducts an assessment of an applicant’s fee status. This assessment provides the confirmation of the fee level the student pays on enrolment.

Recommended actions

Educational Quality Committee is asked to:

i) **consider** the paper

ii) **recommend to Senate** that this policy is approved.
GENERAL PRINCIPLES

1. City, University of London determines the tuition fee status of applicants and students in accordance with The Education (Fees and Awards) (England) Regulations 2007 (Statutory Instrument No 779) as amended by the Education (Student Fees, Awards and Support) (Amendment) Regulations 2016 (Statutory Instrument No 584).

   The Regulations state that applicants who are classed as ‘Overseas’ can be charged a different, higher rate than those classed as ‘Home’ or ‘EU’.

   A student’s classification is based on the fee regulations and the terminology employed (‘Home’/’EU’/’Overseas’) may not have any relation to a person’s immigration status or other rights.

   Where there is any confusion over the terminology, it should be noted that a person’s fee status will always be based upon the regulations and not invoked or inferred from the terminology in any other document.

   A breakdown of the Fee Regulations and further advice is available at www.ukcisa.org.uk

2. The assessment of your fee status is made independently of the institution’s academic assessment of your application to study on your chosen course. Fee assessments are made towards each individual student, their personal circumstances and bona fides presented during the period of the assessment. The assessments of other family members, other students or decisions made by other institutions will not be invoked.

3. The institution (City, University of London) may provide guidance on the fee regulations but does not make decisions on the fee status of a student before an application is received and all bona fides gathered and assessed.

4. Your initial fee status will normally be assessed by the staff member responsible for your chosen course and is based upon the information provided on your application. Where it is possible to deduce your fee status from application materials, the status will appear on your offer letter. This status should be used to infer the fee of the programme – the most up to date information for this will always be on the relevant course webpage at www.city.ac.uk

5. Where it is not possible conclusively to deduce a person’s fee status or the information provided is incomplete or unclear, the institution may send a Fee Questionnaire.

6. The Fee Questionnaire is a generic document designed with all the Regulations in mind and to enable the institution to investigate all possible options for your assessment. Some of the questions may not apply in all cases, but you should still answer all questions fully.
7. If you believe yourself to be an ‘Overseas’ student and receive a Fee Questionnaire, you should still complete and return the requested information so that your status can be formally confirmed.

8. Undergraduate students should return the Fee Questionnaire and any supporting documentation to fees@city.ac.uk. Postgraduate students should return the Fee Questionnaire and any supporting documentation to the Courses Officer for your chosen course. If on receipt of the Questionnaire, an assessment still cannot be made, the relevant officer may write to you requesting additional information.

9. Decisions made subsequent to a Fee Questionnaire being received, will be communicated in writing.

10. If your circumstances change between the fee decision and your Registration documentation being sent, you must inform the relevant officer immediately.

11. If you do not return the Fee Questionnaire during the application cycle and prior to Registration, your Registration documentation will default to ‘Overseas’.

12. Should you omit any requested or relevant information or provide false or misleading statements or documentation, including after the outcome of your fee decision, City, University of London reserves the right to withdraw your offer or your place of study or change your fee classification and, therefore, the amount payable.

13. If you later provide information which changes your fee status, but which was available to you when the initial classification was made, the institution reserves the right to withhold any monies previously paid. Any reconsideration will only be applicable to the following ‘relevant date’ (see below) and will not be applied retrospectively.

14. The ‘relevant date’ for assessment will be whichever date from those below is the closest to the start of your course or ‘an academic year’ as appropriate (see Regulations for details):

   1st September   1st January   1st April   1st July

   Initial fee assessments are based upon your circumstances as they are on the ‘relevant date’. In some instances, it may not be possible to confirm student’s fee status until after the ‘relevant date’ has been reached. For this reason you should be mindful of advising the institution if you do think your circumstances should be reconsidered at the ‘relevant date’.

   The ‘relevant date’ or date of assessment is not the date on which fees are paid or Registration occurs nor is it connected with any instalment plan.

15. Any legitimate changes in classification during the course will apply only at the following ‘relevant date’ (e.g if the ‘relevant date’ of your course is 1st September and you provide information after that date, any appropriate change will occur from the following 1st September).
16. Information provided in support of a student’s fee status is deemed to be the responsibility of the student regardless of whoever provided it. This includes the accuracy and veracity of the information. Nominated representatives on a UCAS form or agents are considered to have been authorised.

17. If you accept an offer with a fee assessment and do not challenge it within one month, you are deemed to have accepted the assessment. Reconsideration will only occur at the discretion of the University.

18. If you accept an offer after a fee reconsideration has reached its outcome and do not challenge it within one month, you are deemed to have accepted the assessment. Reconsideration will only occur at the discretion of the University.

19. If you accept an offer and register at City, University of London, without asking for review or appealing your fee assessment, you are deemed to have accepted that assessment.

FEE ASSESSMENT REVIEW AND APPEALS PROCEDURE

1. We understand that there may be instances where a student will wish to dispute their fee assessment and have prescribed a two stage Review and Appeals procedure. The institution will seek to ensure that all reviews and appeals are treated equitably and consistently and in accordance with the following procedure.

2. The institution will, also, endeavour to ensure that appeals are conducted promptly and, in principle, within three weeks of receipt of the formal appeal. If the appeal is to take longer, then the student will be informed of this.

3. Appeals which dispute the Regulations themselves cannot be considered.

4. City, University of London understands the concept of discretion. However, where an applicant’s fee status is clear, it will not reassess an applicant counter to the Regulations. Discretion will only be invoked where the institution considers it appropriate to do so.

5. Assessment of eligibility for discretionary fee waivers will be considered by a senior member of the Admissions Team in conjunction with a student’s Department.

6. Students will not suffer any disadvantage in requesting a Review or Appeal of a fee status assessment.

REVIEW

7. A Review is a request for reconsideration of an institution’s initial decision.

8. Requests for review should be directed, in the first instance, to the relevant officer responsible for the initial decision. In the case of Undergraduate applications,
should be sent to fees@city.ac.uk  Postgraduate review requests should be made to the relevant Courses Officer.

9. If, following a review, the institution determines that the grounds for review are upheld, then it will action such remedy as may be appropriate. If a review is not upheld, then the reasons will be provided in writing.

10. Anonymous or third party requests for review will not be considered unless authorised in writing by the student. Nominated representatives on a UCAS form are considered to have been authorised. The student is deemed responsible for any information, provided during an appeal or review, by their nominated representative. This includes the accuracy and veracity of the information.

11. Should the nominated representative omit any requested or relevant information or provide false or misleading statements or documentation, including after the outcome of the applicant or student’s fee decision, City, University of London reserves the right to withdraw the offer or the place of study or change the fee classification and, therefore, the amount payable.

12. If a review or appeal is to be conducted face-to-face, then both the institution and the student are entitled to be accompanied by a third party or other colleague.

13. The institution believes that requests for review of fee assessment should be made as early as possible in the application process. Failure to do so may impact upon your Registration at the University.

Review after Offer with assessment

14. If you believe that you have legitimate cause to dispute a fee assessment on your initial offer, you should implement your appeal within two weeks of receipt of the offer being received. You may be sent a Fee Questionnaire in which case the ‘Review after Fee Questionnaire’ procedure applies.

15. The University will aim to respond within three weeks of receipt of your request for review. If the review is likely to take longer than three weeks you will be notified.

Review after Fee Questionnaire

16. If you have been sent a Fee Questionnaire as part of your offer you should respond within two weeks. The institution will aim to respond within three weeks of receipt. If the review is likely to take longer, you will be notified.

17. If, following the outcome of your assessment, you wish to appeal, you should do so within two weeks of receipt of the decision. The appeals process is below.

Reviews at Clearing
18. The institution will conduct its fee assessments during Clearing in the same manner as it does throughout the cycle. It is, however, understood that the timescales above may be impossible for both sides to achieve.

19. The institution will aim to resolve any fee status issues as quickly as is practicable and will endeavour not to disadvantage any Clearing applicant.

Registering without a resolved Fee Status

20. Whilst the institution will aim to resolve all Fee Status cases prior to Registration, there will be instances when this is not possible. This may be due to time constraints (especially in relation to Clearing applicants); it may be due to lack of communication from applicants; it may be due to the complexity or individual nature of the case.

21. If an applicant’s Fee Status is not resolved at the point of Registration, the status will be set to ‘Overseas’ by default.

22. An applicant, in such circumstances, would be able to register as an ‘Overseas’ student in order to gain access to the institution’s facilities, both physical and electronic. An applicant who chooses not to Register would not have access to the institution’s facilities and should be mindful of this in advance. There is presently no facility whereby an applicant may register without a fee status.

23. Unless the applicant or student has failed to respond during the timescale(s) indicated above, the institution will conduct the fees review. The institution will endeavour to conduct the review within three weeks of the commencement of the course. If the review is to take longer the student will be advised of the timescale.

APPEAL

24. An appeal may be submitted on the following grounds:

   i. That new material evidence is available for consideration which, for good reason, was not available at the time of the initial assessment

   ii. That there was a procedural error which has resulted in an incorrect assessment

25. Students may only submit a formal appeal if they have previously requested a review using the process described above.

26. Students can submit an appeal against their fee status by completing this form.

27. If, as part of the appeal, you or a third party acting on your behalf omit any requested or relevant information or provide false or misleading statements or documentation, including after the outcome of your fee decision, City, University of London reserves
the right to withdraw your offer or your place of study or change your fee classification
and, therefore, the amount payable.

28. An appeal will be considered by a member of staff responsible for overseeing fee
assessments and who shall investigate the basis on which the initial assessment was
made before undertaking any new assessment.

29. The institution reserves the right, under appropriate circumstances, to insist that
communication in relation to an appeal is only conducted in writing. Where this is to
be the case, the student or other relevant parties will be informed in writing.

30. An appeal should be submitted within fourteen calendar days of the Review decision
having been received.

31. The outcome of the appeal will normally be provided within three weeks of receipt of
the appeal. If this is not possible, the student will be informed of the timescale.

32. If the institution does not hear further from an applicant within three weeks of the
Appeal decision being sent, then they do not have any right to appeal further within
the institution.

33. If following this stage of the appeal, a registered student is still dissatisfied, they may
refer their appeal/complaint to The Office of the Independent Adjudicator. The process
for issuing a Completion of Procedures letter can be found by contacting the Student
Voice Team at ace@city.ac.uk. This process is not available to applicants who have
not registered.