

# QUANTUM MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST



## Charging POLICY

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Source	

## Aim

Our trust aims to

- a) Have a robust, clear process on place for charging and remissions
- b) Clearly set out the types of activity that can be charged for and when charges will and will not be made
- c) Offer a range of activities and visits whilst minimising the financial barriers that may prevent some pupils/students from taking full advantage of these opportunities

## Legislation and guidance

Guidance has been provided by the Department for Education (May 2018) charging for school activities.

Academies are required through their funding agreements to comply with the law on charging for school activities.

## Statement of Intent

Quantum Multi Academy Trust (QMAT) believes that all pupils/students should have free access to the school curriculum and that no pupil/student will be penalised on the basis of cost.

## Definitions

**Charge:** a fee payable for specific purpose

**Remission:** the cancellation of a charge which would normally be payable

**Educational visit or trip:** an activity that is required to meet The National Curriculum or syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil/student is being prepared for at the school. This may include activities designed to fulfil requirements under the national curriculum for “inclusion statement”.

**School day:** School hours are those when the school is actually in session and do not include the break in the middle of the school day. Parents /carers will find information about school hours in the prospectus or on the website.

**Voluntary Contribution:** Where a trip is being run during the school day, a charge cannot be made. However, schools may ask for financial contributions. It is important to understand that IF there are insufficient contributions to cover the costs and there is no alternative funding source available, the trip would need to be cancelled.

## Where charges cannot be made

### Education

- Admission applications
- Education, including all trips and visits provided during school hours, plus the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment.
- Education provided outside school hours IF it is part of:
  - a) The National Curriculum

- b) A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil/student is being prepared for at the school
  - c) Religious Education
- Instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils/students learning individual or in groups, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil/student's parent/carer.
- Entry for a prescribed public examination if the pupil/student has been prepared for it at the school
- Examination re-sit(s) if the student is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school

### Transport

- Transporting pupils/students to or from the school premises, where the local authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport
- Transporting pupils/students to other premises where the Trust board or local authority has arranged for pupils/students to be educated
- Transport that enables a pupil/student to meet an examination requirement when they have been prepared for that examination at the school
- Transport provided in connection with an educational visit.

### Residential visits

- Education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours
- Education provided on any visit that takes place outside school hours is it is part of:
  - a) The National Curriculum
  - b) A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil/student is being prepared for at the school
  - c) Religious Education
- Supply teachers, covering for teachers who are absent from school, accompanying pupils/students on residential visit.

### Where charges can be made

#### Education

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the pupils/student's parent/carer wishes the child to own them, and items are a requirement of the school's uniform policy
- Optional Extras (see section appendix A)
- Music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see section Musical Instrument Tuition)
- Community facilities
- Examination re-sits if the student is being prepared for the re-sit at the school and the re-sit is at the request of the student's parent **OR** student fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirements for a syllabus, including non-attendance **OR** a re-sit in a public GCSE examination in core subjects for which the student has already attained his/her Grade 4 or above on the first attempt **OR** Late withdrawal of an entry for an examination

## Voluntary Contributions

Although the school **cannot charge for school-time activities**, it may still invite parents/carers and others to make voluntary contributions to enable an activity to proceed effectively. If the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the Trust board or Headteacher should make this clear to parents at the outset. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, or the school cannot fund it from some other source, then it must be cancelled.

All requests to parents/carers for voluntary contributions will make it quite clear that the contributions are voluntary. The Trust board will also make it clear that children of parents/carers who do not contribute will not be treated any differently. No pupil/student will be left out of an activity because his or her parents/carers cannot, or will not, make a financial contribution.

When making requests for voluntary contributions, parents/carers must not be made to feel pressurised into paying as it is voluntary and not compulsory. Schools should avoid sending letters to parents as a reminder to make payments.

**Refunds of contributions** – should an activity not proceed, or is cancelled in advance, refunds of amounts paid in advance will be repaid in full (where the school can recover the funds). Where an activity has taken place and the final total costs were substantially less than expected, refunds will be issued to parents/carers for amounts in excess of £5; otherwise the small amounts would be aggregated and donated to the school's wellbeing fund.

## PE Lockers

Where students have been allocated a PE Locker, the following charges may be applied:

- If student keys have been lost or mislaid a replacement key can be arranged by the school with the cost passed on to parents/carers. Students and parents/carers may arrange for additional keys to be cut at their own expense.
- All costs of repairing or replacing lockers withdrawn due to misuse, vandalism or any other reason will be met by parents/carers.

## Musical Instrument Tuition

Where it is not an essential part of the National Curriculum, charges may be made for vocal or instrumental tuition for an individual pupil/student (or groups of any size) provided that the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's/student's parent/carer. Where this is offered, the school will agree a contract with the parent/carer of each individual outlining the obligations of both the school and the parent/carer. Payment should be made by the end of the term preceding the term when the tuition is scheduled to take place.

Should a pupil/student who is looked after by a Local Authority choose to learn an instrument (limited to one) - no charge may be made.

## Public Examination Fees

Charges will not normally be made for entering students for public examinations. The Trust board will enter a student for each examination in a public examination syllabus that the school has prepared the student for. This will not necessarily apply if the Trust board decides there are educational reasons for not entering the student, or if the student's parents/carers ask in writing that the student should not be entered. The Local Authority may not override the Trust board's decision on whether to enter a particular student for an examination.

An examination entry fee should be charged to parents/carers for;

- Examination re-sit(s) if the student is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school and the re-sit is at the request of the student's parent/carer.
- Re-marking (a refund will be made in the event of a higher grade being awarded and the school has recovered the fees).
- A re-sit in a public GCSE examination in core subjects for which the student has already attained his/her Grade 4 or above on the first attempt.
- An examination for which the student has not been prepared by the school.
- The fee of a student who fails without good reason (in the judgement of the Trust board) to meet any examination requirements of that syllabus, **including non-attendance.**
- The return of examination papers from the examination board.
- Late withdrawal of an entry for an examination.
- The examination is **not on** the set list, but the school arranges for the student to take it.

Charges may not be made for any cost associated with preparing a student for an examination. But charging is allowed for tuition and other costs if a student is prepared outside school hours for an examination that is not set out in the Education Regulations.

## Education Partly During School Hours

Sometimes an activity may happen partly during and partly outside school hours.

A charge can only be made for the activity outside school hours if it is not part of the National Curriculum, not part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil/student is being prepared for at the school, and not part of religious education.

If 50% or more of the time spent on the activity occurs during school hours, it is deemed to take place during school hours. Time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours. School hours do not include the break in the middle of the day.

Where less than 50% of the time spent on an activity falls during school hours, it is deemed to have taken place outside school hours. For example, an excursion might require pupils/students to leave school an hour before the school day ends, but the activity does not end until late in the evening. Charges would then be allowed.

## Residential Activities

Special rules apply for residential activities.

If the number of school sessions taken up by the visit is equal to or greater than 50% of the number of half days spent on the visit, it is deemed to have taken place during school hours (even if some activities take place late in the evening), whatever the starting and finishing times of the school day.

Regulations require that the school day is divided into 2 sessions. A 'half day' means any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day.

### Example 1

A term-time trip from noon on Wednesday to 9pm on Sunday. This counts as 9 half days including 5 school sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place during school hours.

### Example 2

A term-time trip from school from noon on Thursday until 9pm on Sunday. This counts as

7 half days including 3 school sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place outside school hours.

For a residential activity taking place largely during school time, or which meets the requirements of the syllabus for a public examination or is to do with the National Curriculum or religious education, no charge will be made either for the education or for the cost of travel.

Charges will be made for board and lodging in these circumstances unless the remission policy applies.

When the school informs parents/carers about a forthcoming visit, it will make it clear that parents/carers who can prove that they are in receipt of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging:

## Free School Meals

- Income Support.
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance.
- Child Tax Credit (not Working Tax Credit), with an annual income below £16,190.
- Pension Guarantee Credit.
- Employment and Support Allowance, income related.
- Support under part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act, 1999.
- Working Tax Credit run-on, paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit.
- Universal Credit, with a household income of £7,400 or less (after tax and not including any benefits).

## **Remissions**

Eligibility criteria - As referenced above.

The costs involved in the remission of board and lodgings for residential trips are to be borne by the school.

## **Damage to Property**

Nothing in the Act prevents a charge being made to parents/carers for the cost of repair to any property damaged by a student. Wilful damage, or damage caused by misbehaviour, will be so charged.

Where provided, lost or damaged ID cards that need to be replaced will be charged at £3.00 each.

## **Library resources**

When library resources are issued, they become the responsibility of the pupil/student until they are returned. If the resources are damaged, students will be asked to pay towards the cost of a replacement resource, this will be a reduced sum from the original. Pupils/students will receive reminders via email and tutor about resources which are issued to them. If they fail to return a resource or lose a resource, they will be charged at a reduced cost.

## **Printing/Stationery**

Personal printing (if available) will be charged at 7p per colour print and 3p per black & white print.

## **School Minibus**

The schools cannot charge pupils/students for travelling in the school minibus for education activities or activities that take place during the school day.

## Appendix A

### Optional extras

Charges may be made for some activities that are known as 'optional extras'. Where an optional extra is being provided, a charge can be made for providing materials, books, instruments, or equipment.

Optional extras are:

- Education provided outside of school time that is not part of:
  - a. The National Curriculum
  - b. A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school
  - c. Religious education
- Examination entry fee(s) if the registered student has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school
- Transport (other than transport that is required to take the student to school or to other premises where the Local Authority/Trust board have arranged for the student to be provided with education)
- Board and lodging for a pupil/student on a residential visit (*unless the remission policy applies*)
- Extended day services offered to pupil/students (for example breakfast club, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions)

In calculating the cost of optional extras an amount may be included in relation to:

- Any materials, books, instruments, or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra.
- The cost of buildings and accommodation.
- Non-teaching staff.
- Teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra, this includes supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra.
- The cost, or an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, or vocal tuition, where the tuition is an optional extra.
- The cost of banking system payment transaction fees and administration charges (*currently 2%*)

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils/students MUST NOT exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils/students participating. It MUST NOT include an element of subsidy for any other pupils/students wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

In cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours the charge cannot include the cost of alternative provision for those pupils/students who do not wish to participate.

No charge can be made for supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying students on a residential visit.



The permitted charge may include an allowance for the costs of teachers from the school who supervise the activity, but only if those teachers have been given a separate contract to provide the activity as an optional extra. A contract need not be a formal document. It could be a simple letter to a teacher asking him or her to provide a service on a particular occasion.

Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Parental agreement is, therefore, a necessary prerequisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.