

College Fee Policy

This document is published as a general reference guide to the Avila College parent(s) and guardian(s) of current students as well as for parent(s) and guardian(s) who are considering enrolling their daughter at the College.

Avila College is committed to providing a quality education for young women in the Catholic tradition. The College has a reliance on parent(s) and guardian(s) to fulfil their financial obligations, as this will support the College in providing high quality teaching and learning experiences.

Avila College's key core values of faith, hope and love underpin the principles of this policy.

Accordingly the College has a responsibility to ensure that all parent(s)/guardian(s) share equitably the education costs of the students at the College. Where the parent(s)/guardian(s) experience financial hardship the College will provide alternative payment options to assist them to meet their financial obligations.

The College seeks a positive and co-operative relationship with parent(s)/guardian(s) and by accepting an offer of a place at the College, the parent(s)/guardian(s) are consciously making a commitment to honour their annual financial obligations to the College.

How Much Will I Pay?

It is expected that approximately two thirds of all school costs at Avila College will be funded by State and Commonwealth Government grants. The remaining costs for salaries, classroom materials, maintenance, administration and capital expenditure will be met from school generated income, mostly by Annual Tuition Fees charged to the parent(s)/guardian(s).

The Annual Tuition Fees will continue to cover all compulsory camps, excursions and any fee applicable to the MacBook Program. Additional charges will be made for optional and co-curricular programs, including overseas study programs, Private Instrumental Tuition, some Vocational Education & Training (VET) courses, interstate Immersion programs and student conferences. Any government funding received for an elective VET course will be deducted from the fee to be charged.

Please refer to the College Schedule of Fees for Annual Tuition fee information (published on the College website in November each year, www.avilacollege.vic.edu.au). These costs are to remain fixed throughout the year unless significant and unforeseen circumstances arise. Ongoing enrolment at Avila College indicates a parent(s)/guardian(s) acceptance of the Annual Tuition Fee structure.

Re-enrolment Fee

From 2016, at the beginning of August each year parent(s)/guardian(s) of students in Year 7 to 11 will be asked to pay a re-enrolment fee to confirm and secure a place for their daughter at the College for the following year. The amount paid will be deducted from the Annual Tuition Fee charged in the new school year. A re-enrolment form returned without a payment is not considered as acceptable notice; therefore your payment must be included with the returned form for a place to be held for your daughter.

Please refer to the annual College Schedule of Fees for the amount to be paid each year. *This fee is non-transferable and non-refundable should a student not return to the College at the beginning of the year.*

Charges for New Students

Enrolment Application Fee

A payment of \$300 (inc GST) is to accompany the standard application form.
This fee is non-transferable and non-refundable.

Enrolment Confirmation Fee

Following an offer of a place at Avila College, a confirmation deposit of \$450.00 (GST is not applicable) is payable. This payment reserves the student's place and confirms the acceptance of an offer of enrolment at the College. *This fee is non-transferable and non-refundable.*

Debenture Deposit

A Debenture Deposit Fee of \$450 (GST is not applicable) is held for each student enrolled at the College. The deposit is due and payable on a student's acceptance of enrolment.

If the student remains at the College for six years, the fee is refundable at the end of their Year 12 year.
This deposit is non-refundable if the student leaves prior to the end of Year 12.

The refund amount to be paid will take account any outstanding fees owed by the family. If fees are in arrears the Debenture Deposit will be credited to the family account. Families will also be given the opportunity to donate an amount to the College Building fund.

Student enrolments during the school year

Families who enrol a student during the school year will be charged Annual Tuition Fees on a pro-rata basis. However, please note the Enrolment Application Fee and the Enrolment Confirmation Fee will need to be paid in full prior to the student commencing studies at Avila College.

Early Payment Discount

A discount per student will be granted when the full amount of the Annual Tuition Fee is paid to the General Office by 4.00pm on the last business day in February each year. *Late payments will not be entitled to the discount.*

Please refer to the annual College Schedule of Fees for the amount to be discounted and the date the payment must be received by, this is published on the College website in November each year, www.avilacollege.vic.edu.au.

Family Discounts

Families with more than one student at Avila College currently receive the following discounts:

Second Child \$300 | Third Child and subsequent \$1400

How Do I Pay?

As ratified by the College Board in 2016, families are asked to nominate their method of payment via the College Payment Option form. The preferred method of payment for Annual Tuition Fees is by College scheduled payment plans using your Credit Card or by Direct Debit. The College asks that cash payments for Annual Tuition Fees are not sent to the College for security and administrative reasons.

The initial statement of account issued in mid-February each year will identify the total Annual Tuition Fee payable and the monthly instalment amount required over the period February to November will be 1/10th of this total.

Scheduled Payment Plan Options

- Credit Card | Regular monthly payments
February to November - 10 instalments: 25th of the month (or nearest bank trading day)
- Direct Debit | Regular monthly payments
February to November - 10 instalments: either the 15th or 30th of the month (or nearest bank trading day)

Non Scheduled Payment Plan Options Currently Offered

- Payment in Full | Single payment on the last business day in February each year
A discount per student is applied. **Please note:** *late payments are not acceptable*
- Bpay | Regular monthly payments must be received by the College for this option to be available
February to November - 10 instalments: either the 15th or 30th of the month (or nearest bank trading day)

The College reserves the right to withdraw the Bpay option to families if payments are not received by the due date/s

Finalising Annual Tuition Fee Accounts By The End Of The School Year

It is an expectation of the College that:

All family accounts are to be paid in full by the end of the school year to ensure that the College is able to meet its financial obligations to both staff and external suppliers. The College is unable to extend Credit terms to families.

What Notice Is Required If My Daughter Is Leaving The College at the end of the year?

If a decision is made that your daughter will not be continuing at the College, a letter addressed to the Principal is required to advise the College of the student's withdrawal. It is an expectation that parents will give the equivalent of one term's notice, in writing, to the Principal for any student's withdrawal at the end of the year or the equivalent of one term's Annual Tuition Fees may be charged in lieu of notice.

This amount charged will be due and payable within 14 days of the student exiting the College.

College Macbook Program

The College allocated MacBook is to be returned to the College by the student on her last day of attendance, no later. If this does not occur an administration charge of \$275 (including GST) be payable to cover the follow up costs that will be incurred by the College to ensure the return of the device.

What Assistance Is Available?

Where families are experiencing financial hardship, consideration of a fee reduction or the acceptance of an alternate payment plan will need to be discussed with the Business Manager, Ms Lyn McGuinness.

Consideration for Fee Reduction is made based on the application form to be completed by families. This form can be requested by telephoning 9831 9600 or emailing familyaccounts@avilacollege.vic.edu.au

Submissions should be placed in an envelope addressed to the Business Manager and marked "Confidential".

Fee reductions may be available in circumstances that include:

- Absence of a student due to extended illness – longer than a term
- Withdrawal of a student during the year

- Variations to fulltime enrolment (less than 75% of a typical student program)
- Approved long-term absence

The procedures to be followed by parent(s)/guardian(s) who seek fee reductions due to Special Circumstances are outlined in the Appendix to this policy.

Obligation to Pay Fees

At the time of acceptance of enrolment, a student's parent(s)/guardian(s) sign the Enrolment Acceptance Form that incorporates obligations and agreements about the payment in full of all fees annually.

The payment of fees is binding upon each signatory to the agreement. Each signatory to the enrolment confirmation form, and/or subsequent re-enrolment form, will be solely or jointly responsible for the timely payment of fees.

Non-payment of fees, wherein parent(s)/guardian(s) consistently disregard reminder notices and contact attempts, fail to discuss the issue with the College, and/or default on alternative arrangements, the College reserves the right to take legal action to recover outstanding debts from the student's parent(s)/guardian(s). If deemed to be necessary, this action may occur whilst the student is still attending the College.

If there are any outstanding Annual Tuition Fees for any student at any time throughout the year, the College will reserve the right to withhold tickets for College activities and/or withdraw the student from extra-curricular activities i.e. overseas study programs, interstate immersion program, student conferences, private instrumental tuition, until the Annual Tuition Fee Account is brought up to date.

Please note that once a student has exited the College, all family accounts not paid by the due date will be immediately forwarded to the College Debt Collector.

What If Our Family Situation Changes?

If family and parental/guardianship arrangements alter, and the liability for the payment of fees changes from one party to another, either during the course of the student's enrolment or after she has left the College, each party is expected to notify the College so that a new Agreement can be made.

A Change of Status form is available from the Business Manager on request. The document must clearly indicate the change in liability for the payment of fees and the commencement date of this change in liability.

If the College does not receive a mutually accepted agreement from the parties involved, the original signatories to the enrolment and subsequent re-enrolment forms received will be binding upon each signatory to the agreement.

General Enquiries

For any general enquiries regarding Annual Tuition Fees and or any other charges please contact the Finance Officer (Family Accounts) on 9831 9600 or email familyaccounts@avilacollege.vic.edu.au

Related Policies and Documents

- *Catholic Education Office Melbourne Policy 2.4, Enrolment for Schools in the Archdiocese of Melbourne*
- *Catholic Education Office Melbourne Policy 2.27, School Fees*

Policy Review – 2017 /Person Responsible – College Business Manager

Appendix 1 - Fee Reductions

Special Circumstances and Application Procedures

In certain circumstances families may apply for a pro-rata reduction in fees. In such circumstances, the reductions that may apply, and the procedures to be followed are outlined below.

Absence of a student due to extended illness

Where a student is absent from the College for a term or more due to prolonged illness or injury, some form of fee remission may apply.

The level of remission will be determined by a number of factors including the length of absence, the nature and level of ongoing support provided by Avila College for the student's ongoing learning and wellbeing. All requests for fee reduction due to such circumstances must be made in writing to the Principal. Cases will be considered on an individual basis.

Withdrawal of a student during the year

Consideration of any refund for Annual Tuition Fees will be based upon the student's reason for departure and the date of their exit taking into account the notice period given by the family.

It is an expectation that parents will give the equivalent of one term's notice, in writing, to the Principal for any student's withdrawal throughout the year or fees may be charged in lieu of notice.

The table below is a general guide only and is based on the expectancy that all Annual Tuition Fees are paid in full each year.

Term 1 75% | Term 2 50% | Term 3 25% | Term 4 nil

If pastoral reasons underpin the withdrawal of a student from the College, additional pro-rata fee reductions may be considered. For all other reasons (e.g. family relocation) refunds for partial terms are not provided for.

Variations to full time enrolment

For a student whose learning program is less than 75% of a typical student program within the College, they may be considered to be a part time student and as such may be entitled to some remission of Annual Tuition Fees.

The level of remission is determined on an individual basis and takes account of the level of the student's part-time status, the number of days attended and the level of support required. Requests for fee reductions in such circumstances must be made in writing to the Principal.

Long-term leave of absence

For a student who will be absent for two terms or more, a place can be held provided a return date is known and the parent(s)/guardian(s) give a minimum of one term's notice in writing to the Principal.

The Annual Tuition Fee account will need to be paid in full before Avila College can agree to reserve the student's place. Any fee rebate will be limited to a maximum of 50% of the Annual Tuition Fee, and a holding deposit of \$750 will be requested from the family. The deposit will be non-refundable and non-transferable but will be credited towards any future fees once the student returns to the College.

Avila College will generally not offer any fee remission to families in the case of extended overseas travel except where a student is on a College approved student exchange program that extends over a Semester in any given year.

Please note the Principal is the arbitrator of the boundaries under which all of the above circumstances are applied.

Appendix 2 – Fee Collection Guidelines

Process for Recovery of College Fees in Arrears

As the College is not fully funded by the Commonwealth and State Governments, the College is dependent on family fees to be paid. Parents/Guardians acknowledge their obligation to honour their payment of all fees and levies that are applicable when they sign the enrolment form.

As per the College Fee Policy, finance packs with the ratified payment plan options are sent to all new families with the expectation they will sign up to avoid the issue of chasing outstanding fees.

Process for Recovery of Fees in Arrears

- The Finance Officer (Family Accounts) in an endeavour to be consistent with the College Fee Policy will pursue initially from the family the College Payment Option Form to identify how the College Fees are to be paid for each student (who is or has been) enrolled at the College.
- Should an account be in arrears, the College Finance Officer (Family Accounts) will make contact by email and/or telephone to remind families of their obligation to pay the College Fees in full by the end of each year. After three reminders and no responses from the family a letter requesting a meeting with the family and the Business Manager will be organised.
- **At all times** it is a College Expectation that
 - both the College staff following up outstanding fees and the parents who have outstanding fees treat each other with respect and work in partnership to align all College fee payments to the College Fee Policy.
 - that parents will respond promptly and favourably to any requests for fees to be brought up-to-date and that they will sign up to a ratified payment option plan that aligns to the College Fee Policy.
 - families will respond promptly and favourably in regard to any requests to meet with the Principal and/or Business Manager to further discuss any financial issues that they may be facing.
- Records of all contacts with families will be kept in the notes section of the College accounting software package.
- Should a family account be in arrears when enrolment applications are being sent to families, the College reserves the right to review a further sibling enrolment.
- The Business Manager will bring to the attention of the Finance Committee any family accounts where there has been no satisfactory response to:
 - a) reminders or contacts requesting payments to be made
 - b) meeting requests to discuss payment arrangements.
- Should the account remain in arrears and all avenues to have the family recognise their fee responsibilities have been exhausted, the next step would be to seek approval from the Finance Committee to prompt legal action. The Board will be kept informed at each stage.
- The College nominated Debt Collector shall ensure that they:

1	send a demand notice
2	telephone the family as follow up
3	initiate a field call as part of a follow up on the telephone call
4	Obtain judgement when all else fails

Appendix 2 – Fee Collection Guidelines

Process for Recovery of College Fees in Arrears cont'd

- The Principal is to be authorised to obtain Judgement if absolutely no resolution has been obtained once all avenues to recover outstanding fees are exhausted in relation to the person responsible for the fees outstanding.
- Any notice of defence by the fee payer in relation to a judgement noticed served it is noted will initiate a pre-trial hearing. A letter of permission to act on behalf of the College Board would need to be given to the Principal and the Business Manager to attend any such defence meeting called.
- As a final step, court proceedings may be initiated but prior approval (via a letter from the College Board) of the Director of Catholic Education must be gained (CECV Policy 2.27)
- The College Board approves that parents will be liable for any cost incurred by the College in relation to the recovery of arrears.
- Updates (excluding individual names) of Write Offs and Fee Reduction discounts are to be reported in summary to the Finance Committee at each scheduled meeting.
- The rate of Fee Collection is to be reported annually to the College Board through the Finance Committee.

Related Policies and Documents

- *Avila College Fee Policy*
- *Catholic Education Office Melbourne Policy 2.4, Enrolment for Schools in the Archdiocese of Melbourne*
- *Catholic Education Office Melbourne Policy 2.27, School Fees*

Guidelines approved 2017 / Next Review date – 2019 / Person Responsible – College Business Manager