



Guidance on Condition F1

Introduction

Condition F1.1 requires an awarding organisation to publish fees for its qualifications on its website (in accordance with Condition J1.7(c)).

Condition F1.2 builds on this obligation, requiring awarding organisations to make fee information easily accessible to any potential purchaser, without them having to request it from, or provide any information to, the awarding organisation.

When deciding how this information should be presented and how particular services should be identified and categorised, an awarding organisation must have regard to this guidance.

Use of defined terms

Awarding organisations are not obliged to use the defined terms ‘Standard Qualification Fee’, ‘Package Fee’, ‘Associated Learner Fees’ or ‘Mandatory Centre Fees’ that we have published in Condition J1.8 when publishing fee information.

Where these defined terms are not used, however, the awarding organisation should make clear which fee constitutes the Standard Qualification Fee and, if applicable, the Package Fee for each qualification. In addition, the awarding organisation should make clear which fees constitute the Associated Learner Fees and Mandatory Centre Fees categories.

Each fee, however it is labelled, should represent all of the information that must be covered by the Standard Qualification Fee, Package Fee, Associated Learner Fees or Mandatory Centre Fees respectively, as set out in the Conditions of Recognition and the guidance below.

Publication “where possible”

Condition F1.1 requires awarding organisations to publish the Standard Qualification Fee, any Associated Learner Fees and any Mandatory Centre Fees “where possible”. This means that the requirement will apply in almost all circumstances.

Where, in accordance with Condition F1.1(e), it is not possible for an awarding organisation to calculate a Standard Qualification Fee, Associated Learner Fees or any Mandatory Centre Fees, the awarding organisation must publish a statement of the method by which these fees are calculated. We consider that this will only apply in exceptional circumstances, where the awarding organisation can demonstrate that complying with the requirements of one or more of Conditions F1.1(a) to F1.1(d) is not possible. Any statement of method must be clear and readily capable of being understood by potential purchasers.

The “purchaser”

Condition F1 refers to purchasers and potential purchasers of qualifications. This term is not defined in Condition J1.8, and therefore has its ordinary meaning: anyone who pays (or, in the case of potential purchasers, might pay) the awarding organisation’s fees for the qualification.

In many cases, the purchaser will be a Centre. This will be the case whenever a Centre pays any of the awarding organisation's fees for the qualification, irrespective of whether or not the Centre subsequently recharges those fees to individual Learners. It also includes situations where a Centre pays a fee to the awarding organisation on behalf of one or more Learners. Individual Learners can also be purchasers (or potential purchasers) for the purposes of Condition F1. This will be the case whenever individual Learners pay (or might pay) any fees directly to the awarding organisation.

Standard Qualification Fee

The Standard Qualification Fee is intended to offer clarity to purchasers or potential purchasers about mandatory fees.

The Standard Qualification Fee must include all mandatory fees that must be paid in respect of a single Learner progressing from registration for the qualification through to certification. As such, it should include, but is not limited to, any fees for:

- qualification/unit entry
- assessment carried out by the awarding organisation
- marking carried out by the awarding organisation and/or Centre Assessment Standards Scrutiny, including Moderation (*if these are payable in respect of for individual Learners*)
- mandatory assessment materials (*if these must be purchased from the awarding organisation*)
- notification of results
- issuing of certificates

In calculating a Standard Qualification Fee, an awarding organisation should assume the Learner completes all assessments at the first attempt.

The Standard Qualification Fee should reflect current prices. An awarding organisation may have different fees for different optional routes through a qualification. Where that is the case, the Standard Qualification Fee should reflect the most likely combination of options Learners will take in order to be awarded the qualification.

Example 1

There are three optional routes (Options A, B and C) through a qualification, each priced differently. Option A is typically taken by 15% of Learners, Option B by 25% and Option C by 60%.

The Standard Qualification Fee should therefore reflect the price of Option C.

Example 2

An awarding organisation is introducing a new qualification with two differently-priced optional routes through it (Options A and B). It expects, based on entry patterns for similar qualifications it has offered in the past, that more Learners will take Option B.

When the qualification is made available for the first time, the Standard Qualification Fee should therefore reflect the fees for Option B.

Once it starts awarding the qualification, the awarding organisation observes that around 70% of Learners are in fact taking Option A. The awarding organisation then revises its published Standard Qualification Fee to reflect the fees for Option A.

An awarding organisation is not required to publish a breakdown explaining how it has calculated the Standard Qualification Fee, but equally is not precluded from doing so.

An awarding organisation can also choose to publish information which specifies or illustrates costs of alternative options (or combinations of options) that may be relevant for potential purchasers.

It is of course open for awarding organisations to negotiate discounts on any of its fees (including those that fall within the Standard Qualification Fee) with potential purchasers, for example based on their expected cohort size, or to reflect their role in developing or delivering the qualification.

Fees excluded from the Standard Qualification Fee

Some fees should not be included in the Standard Qualification Fee. In most cases, awarding organisations must still publish these fees in order to comply with Conditions F1.1(b) to F1.1(d).

Examples of fees that should be **excluded** from the Standard Qualification Fee might include:

- periodic or one-off Learner registration fees (*to be included in Associated Learner Fees*)
- periodic or one-off professional membership fees (*if obligatory and payable to the awarding organisation, to be included in Associated Learner Fees*)
- fees for Centre Assessment Standards Scrutiny (including Moderation) payable in respect of a group of Learners (*to be included in Mandatory Centre Fees*)
- fees for learning materials not required for assessment (*if obligatory and purchased from the awarding organisation, then this would be a Package Fee*)
- fees for any goods or services required to be purchased alongside the qualification, as a package (*to be included in a Package Fee*)
- any fee charged by a Centre to a Learner which is not payable to, or otherwise required by, the awarding organisation. Examples of such fees might include Centre charges for delivering or carrying out assessments, or for raw materials used in assessments.

Example 3

An awarding organisation charges a one-off registration fee the first time a Learner attempts one of the awarding organisation's qualifications. This fee is not charged if the Learner takes the same qualification again, or has previously paid the fee when taking another of the awarding organisation's qualifications.

Since this fee is not payable every time a Learner takes the qualification, it should not be included in the Standard Qualification Fee.

However, it would be an Associated Learner Fee, and the awarding organisation would still need to publish it to comply with Condition F1.1(c).

Example 4

An awarding organisation also acts as a membership body. It requires Learners to join that membership body in order to take one of its qualifications. It charges a membership fee every time a Learner attempts that qualification, irrespective of whether or not the Learner has previously paid a membership fee.

This fee must be included in the Standard Qualification Fee.

Example 5

An awarding organisation also acts as a professional body. It requires Learners taking its qualifications to be members of that professional body, which charges an annual membership fee.

Because Learners do not need to pay the membership fee every time they attempt one of the awarding organisation's qualifications, it should not be included in the Standard Qualification Fee.

However, it would be an Associated Learner Fee, and the awarding organisation would still need to publish it in order to comply with Condition F1.1(c).

In accordance with Condition E3.2(e), the qualification's specification must also make clear that a Learner must be a member of the professional body in order to be assessed.

Package Fee

Where an awarding organisation only makes a qualification available in a package with other products or services, the Package Fee represents the notional fees for those other products or services that are required to be purchased along with the qualification. The fee should not include the Standard Qualification Fee for the qualification itself.

If the awarding organisation makes the qualification available for purchase separately to the package, then the awarding organisation does not have to publish a Package Fee. It can, instead, publish details of the package alongside the Standard Qualification Fee, making clear this is an additional option.

Associated Learner Fees

Associated Learner Fees encompass all fees for optional services directly related to the delivery and award of a qualification to an individual Learner. These include, where applicable, the following, and any other relevant fees:

- (a) late entry
- (b) reviews of marking (even if these are not charged, or are refunded, in certain circumstances)

- (c) appeals (even if these may be refunded in certain circumstances)
- (d) taking the qualification again (if this differs from the Standard Qualification Fee)
- (e) replacement certificates
- (f) periodic or one-off Learner registration
- (g) annual professional membership, where membership is a pre-requisite for taking the qualification (even if the awarding organisation and the membership body are separate entities)

These fees may or may not vary by qualification. Where they do not vary they need not be repeated.

If the awarding organisation sets fee levels for some elements, such as Late Entry Fees, as a proportion of the Standard Qualification Fee, then it would be reasonable to present this fee in that way, rather than publishing the actual values relevant to each qualification. The awarding organisation's overall intention should be for clarity and transparency, in line with Condition F1.2(b).

Mandatory Centre Fees

These fees should represent all mandatory fees that must be paid by a Centre in order to deliver qualifications, but which would not be included in the Standard Qualification Fee. These fees would typically be payable in respect of a group of Learners, or a Centre as a whole.

These include, where applicable, the following, and any other relevant fees:

- initial Centre Approval fees
- annual Centre fees
- Moderation fees payable in respect of a group of Learners, or the Centre as a whole
- fees for periodic, mandatory, visits – for example, for audit or quality assurance
- fees for any other Centre visits where these are required by the awarding organisation
- minimum spending thresholds, alongside the terms relating to their application
- fees related to the delivery of a specific qualification which are payable in respect of a group of Learners
- fees payable in respect of a group of Learners that are not related to a specific qualification

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