

Task C - Review on Fee Remission/ Scholarship Scheme

You are a member of the Governance Review Sub-committee (GRSC) of ABC College. One of the selected review items for the 2014/15 school year is the policy on fee remission/ scholarship scheme. A meeting is now held to examine the school's policy on *Fee Remission Scheme* (FR R1). You can make reference to an extract from EDB Circular No. 10/2012 on *Fee Remission/ Scholarship Schemes in Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS) Schools* (FR R2) and the *information downloaded from the webpage on Financial Assistance for Primary and Secondary Students of the Student Financial Assistance Agency* (FR R3) while conducting the review. Please note down your observations and recommendations in the table below. Ignore the parts shaded in grey.

Areas to be reviewed: Policy on Fee Remission/ Scholarship Scheme (the Schemes)


	Review Items	Yes	No	Findings/Evidence	Recommendations	Actions Required
1.	Is the policy on the Schemes, which includes application procedures as well as approving and appeal mechanisms, discussed and approved by the SMC/ IMC?	✓		The Schemes discussed and approved at the SMC Meeting on 25.6.2014 [Footnote of FR R1].	-	To cross check with the relevant meeting minutes.
2.	Is the operation of the Schemes discussed and approved by the SMC/ IMC with an annual operational summary and its criteria?					
3.	Has the school set aside the required amount of school fee income into a reserve for the Schemes?					
4.	(i) The fee remission reserve is at or below the school's half-year total fee income; or					

	(ii) An utilization plan on how the reserve could be effectively deployed have been devised and endorsed by the SMC/ IMC, and submitted to the EDB.					
5.	Has the school consulted the SMC/IMC and PTA about the operation of the Schemes and how the related information should be presented?	✓		The updated guidelines on the scheme were discussed at the meetings of SMC and PTA on 25.6.2014 and 14.3.2014 respectively [Footnote of FR R1].	-	- Ditto -
6.	(i) Has the school adopted eligibility benchmarks no less favorable than the government financial assistance schemes for the Schemes; or		✓	The AFI eligibility benchmarks are different from that of the SFAA The upper limit of AFI for half level of assistance is found less favorable.	The AFI eligibility benchmark for full and half level of assistance should tally with that of SFAA, and the AFI for one-fourth level of assistance and ineligible group should be adjusted accordingly to cover more students in the Scheme if funds set aside are available.	To revise the eligibility benchmarks where necessary. To check availability of funds set aside.
	(ii) (a) Has the school obtained approval from EDB to exempt the adopting of the benchmarks; and					
	(ii) (b) Have students received fee remission before the exemption being not affected by the revised benchmarks until they graduate from the school.					

7.	Has the school offered fee remission to students from families receiving the CSSA or assistance from SFAA if funds available, and set this out clearly in the Schemes?		✓	Such criteria are missing from the Scheme.	Such criteria should be set out clearly in the Scheme and made known to parents/prospective parents.	To check if funds are available. To revise the Scheme and information to parents.
8.	Has the school processed applications from newly admitted students before the new school year begins as far as possible?	✓		New students are required to submit application by the commencement of the school year.	-	-
9.	Has the school processed applications received during the school year as early as possible?		✓	Mid-year application is not entertained as stated in FR R1.	The Scheme should allow mid-year/emergency applications to meet students' urgent needs.	To revise the Scheme and information to parents.
10.	Are records on the operation of the Schemes properly kept?	✓		There is a set of procedures to be followed.	-	To review guidelines on record management as and when appropriate.
11.	Have details of the Schemes, including the amount of school fee, eligibility criteria and levels of fee remission been provided:					

a)	in the application form for admission?	✓		-	-	-
b)	in the School Profile by stating the hyper-link for relevant details on the schools' websites?	✓		-	-	-
c)	(for all students newly admitted) by enclosing such details with the letter offering admission?	✓		-	-	-
d)	in the school prospectuses and on the school's website?		✓	Not yet clearly indicated in the policy document.	The school prospectus and the website should include the necessary information or hotlink to the scheme.	To check if details are in prospectuses and school website.
e)	to students when notifying them their application results for financial assistance provided by SFAA?		✓	Not mentioned in the policy document.	Information should be provided to students when notifying them the results from SFAA.	To review work flow on the Scheme, where necessary.
12.	Has the school provided a simulation test for fee remission on their websites as encouraged by EDB?	✓		-	-	To revise the formula of the simulation test upon the adjustment of the AFI eligibility benchmark.
13.	Are any deviations from the laid down procedures approved by the SMC/ IMC and justifications recorded?	✓		-	To establish a control system to detect any irregularities.	To conduct random sampling of the fee remission records.

14.	Is there a mechanism to handle appeals and complaints?	✓		Established procedures found.	To enhance objectivity, the composition of Appeal Panel could involve independent members or members of the SMC.	To review the composition of Appeal Panel.
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 Items shaded in grey are included for the completeness of the checklist on the key domain of School Fee Remission/Scholarship Scheme. The information in the case study might not be sufficient to assess these items.