

School of Biomedical Science

Policy on Charging on-campus Undergraduate Students for Course Materials

Policy

The Federal Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) and University policy make it clear that undergraduate students may not be charged for course materials such as course manuals. Courses, Schools and Departments need to take great care in the way in which they identify material provided to or sold to students. This policy aims to provide a precise definition of what can and what cannot be charged for. Charging for materials does not just mean selling material through the bookshop or department – it also means having the material on the web if a student has to pay to print it and also pay their ISP. Therefore, it is not permissible to put all the material on the web and expect students to download and print “essential” components.

1. A useful way to identify material that cannot be charged for is to decide whether it is “essential” to the student. In other words do you as a teacher, expect the student to possess or come to class with the material. For example a unit or course manual that contains all essential information – objectives, timetable, specific requirements, contact details etc. – this is *essential*. Also a practical manual that you expect the student to bring to a practical class is *essential*. Tutorial notes that you expect the student to bring to a tutorial is *essential*. Material that is or includes formative assessment tasks would be considered *essential*.
2. A useful way to identify other items that cannot be charged for is to decide whether “there is some choice regarding the item to the student. In other words i) do you as a teacher or does the university as “employer” consider the item a necessity and ii) if so, does the student have a choice about where they can obtain the goods or services.

Cost of safety equipment for practical laboratory work, such as laboratory coats, safety goggles and radiation monitoring badges or any other safety related equipment. In the DEETYA guidelines (April 1997), higher education institutions may charge students for equipment regarded as ‘tools of the trade’. E.g. protective clothing, if student have the choice of acquiring the goods from suppliers other than the institution. Thus, students can be expected to either provide their own personal protective equipment for use in practical classes or purchase this equipment from the department. OHS&E have formulated the following guidelines to assist laboratory course co-ordinators to determine the appropriate level of personal protective equipment to be worn in practical classes.

Recommendations:

- Laboratory co-ordinators should undertake an analysis of the risks to students undertaking the practical class. Appropriate control measures should be implemented to ensure that students are able to work safely in the class.
- The use of long-sleeved cotton or cotton/polyester coats, preferably with press stud or velcro closures, is recommended for general laboratory work. Rear-opening wrap-around gowns are recommended for microbiological laboratory work.
- Appropriate eye protection, selected in accordance with the Australian/New Zealand Standards 1336 & 1337, should be worn in the laboratory. When hazardous substances are being handled, either by the student or by personnel in the near vicinity of the student, wrap-around safety glasses must be worn. Additional eye protection may be required in

- some instances. The practical co-ordinator should determine when this is required and make sure that appropriate eye protection is available for the students.
- It is prudent for departments to have a supply of equipment available to those students who inadvertently forget to bring personal protective equipment to a practical class on a day when it is required.
 - Monitoring of student exposure to radiation, via radiation badges, would be considered the responsibility of the department as due care for the student's safety. As students do not have a choice of supplier and the monitoring is considered an essential safety requirement of the practical component of the course, the cost for this should be born by the department.

Accommodation and travel expenses that is incurred as part of essential clinical placements. If the placement is an essential part of the degree program then the department must meet the costs for accommodation and travel. If the student is placed within Melbourne then there should be no accommodation costs and travels cost do not need to be met as the students would normally incur these when travelling to and from Monash each day.

Material that can be charged for is in the category of "nice to have" or supporting material. For example, lecture notes can be charged for as the University expects students to attend lectures and take their own notes. A set of readings can be charged for – **but only** if the readings are also available to the students free of charge in the library or through the school or department.

It may be appropriate to divide print material that is presently provided to students as a single entity into what is "essential" and what is not essential. In other words material that is really optional resource material and in the "nice-to-have" category should not be called a "unit / subject / course manual" and may be sold to students, while the "essential component" of the material is supplied free of charge.

While this policy is largely prescriptive it cannot cover every variation that may exist. The best strategy to adopt is to identify "essential" material as described above and that should be provided free in hardcopy. If there is doubt as to the classification of the material it is simpler to err on the side of caution and provide it free.