Fees and Billings Implementation Guide

Contents

1   Introduction

This document describes key steps for successfully setting up Sentral for a school to run a Billing cycle including synchronising the transactions with an external Finance System e.g. Xero.

Several pre-requisites will be outlined followed by a description for the setup of each area in Fees, Billing and Payments.

1.1   Module Overview

The module being discussed in this document is the Fees, Billing & Payments under the Finance module. Once you have clicked on this module, click the Fees, **Billing & Payments Setup**.

2   Considerations, Dependencies and Pre-Requisites

2.1   Enrolments

Enrolments is configured by Sentral prior to Fees & Billing. Sentral Pay can be implemented by the school prior to Fees & Billing implementation but does rely on enrolments data. Enrolment's data includes student details, household details and medical details

Please see the **Enrolments Setup Guide** for further information.

All data for Students, Debtors and Household billing information must be captured in Enrolments prior to Fees and Billing being used. If the school is preparing for the first billing cycle of a new School year, then new enrolment records should also be prepared.

To access Billing Information in **Enrolments**, go to the **Household > Billing >** complete responsible for Billing for each household. Billing setup in enrolments is per child.

Household 1971	Is Responsible Billing Household	No	
Name	Contributions And Charges Billing Percentage	Responsible For Billing	Official Documentation To Be Sent
Versie Forrest	0%	No	No
Luigi Forrest	0%	No	No

If a household is marked as a billing household, it will enable options to select the members within that household who are financially responsible or if they have a fee split percentage obligation.

If a household member had a fee split percentage select, then the household member will pay X percentage of the fees for that student. They will each receive individual invoice addresses to that single person based on the household members billing address.

If no fee split percentages are set, then those who are marked as financially responsible will receive a single invoice sent to the household billing address for that household.

If more than one household is marked as a **Responsible Billing Household,** then fee split percentages must be used.

To ensure accuracy, schools need to add the Billing address to the household. This can eb the same as the Physical or mailing address.

Use the set Billing Address button to have physical address and Billing be the same or the pencil icon if they differ. Complete the online form to add a different Billing address.

2.2 Financial Management System

Sentral is designed to only provide basic Finance functions and relies on integration with a 3rd party system to provide full Finance operations for a school. Xero & Dynamic are currently the system of choice for Sentral.

The Sentral database is the place where the rules around fees and billing are setup and this data is synchronised with the Finance System.

The setup of the Financial Management System (e.g. Xero) needs to be configured before a Billing cycle can be executed.

2.3 Enterprise Debtors

For schools on the Enterprise version with tenancies, please consider review and managing debtors across the Enterprise or at a tenancy level within the actual module.

Go to **Sentral Cog > Enterprise Setup > Fees, Billing & Payments > Debtors**.

From this screen, schools can add debtors, export debtors, and import debtors.

Schools can then edit and debtors' details like they would in the actual module.

Data can then be synced to the tenancies.

2.4 What needs to be setup in FMS?

- **Chart of Account (COA):** A Chart of Account structure is recommended by the Department of Education (DoE) for each state. As there is no obligation for independent schools to comply with the account structure of the DoE, this structure may be used as a guideline only
- **Tax Codes**: once in Xero they populate into Sentral.
- **Tracking Categories** (Xero) and **Dimensions** (Dynamic)

Once these elements have been setup, a synchronisation from Xero to Sentral can be performed by pressing **Sync with Xero**/Dynamic button.

Things that will sync over from Sentral into FMS are:

- Debtors Details
- Fees as inventory Items

A Sync with the FMS is required for you to be able to email or print invoices, statements etc as Sentral pulls these templates from the FMS.

2.5   Security

A digitally secure connection needs to be established between the school's FMS instance and the school's Sentral site. This is accomplished by setting up a digital certificate.

A customer key, shared secret & webhook key needs to be added in FMS by using the primary Sentral certificate key. This will be provided to the appropriate Finance employee at the school.

To access this area, click the main **Settings Cog > Integrations >FMS > Configure**.

After the respective keys are entered, a **Sync** must be conducted between Sentral and Xero. The purpose of this sync is to:

- Update the Fees and Billing module with the latest configured contact information from Enrolments; and
- Update Fees and Billing with the updated Chart of accounts and tax rates captured in Xero.

For Dynamic clients, the API version, username and web service access key need to be applied.

2.6   Parent Portal

The parent portal does not need to be configured for schools to send payments via Sentral Pay. A guest Portal account is created for Sentral Pay.

However, schools who have setup Parent Portal can still use Sentral Pay and Fees & Billings. This offers schools a seamless collections experience as payments made by parents via the guest or registered portal will automatically reconcile thus saving the school time and reducing the risk of accounting errors.

	Off	On
Payments: Allow parent to view invoices	○ Off	◉ On
Payments: Allow parent to pay invoices	○ Off	◉ On
Payments: Allow parent to view statement of account for linked debtors	○ Off	◉ On

Parent Portal View

2.7   Email Templates in Xero

If the school is planning to use automated messaging for sending out emails for Payment notifications, then it is a prerequisite to have the email templates configured in Xero.

2.8   Permissions

Role Permissions allow you to specify what capabilities a user is given access level to be able to do within Sentral modules. Administrator level access always has full level of access.

It is best to check for staff managing fees, billing, and payments.

Go to **Enterprise Setup > Permissions > Fees, Billing, and Payments**

Things to consider;

- Can perform manual enterprise sync
- Has access to Fees and billing setup

3   Setup Fees, Billing & Payments

The following is a description of the setup for each area. These details will guide you through the critical configurations you need to setup in Fees, Billing & Payments. Settings that are not explained in this guide can be configured without explanation or configured later. The configurations can be found via **Fees, Billing & Payments module > Fees, Billing & Payments Setup**.

Please refer to Sentral Pay guide for payments.

3.1   School Settings

Taken from Global settings. School information must be configured using the **School Details** item under the main settings button. This will configure the school contact details with the Physical and Billing addresses. This is a read only view of those details.

3.2   Online Payments Settings

This section allows schools to configure the rules around handling payments via the parent portal. If partial payments are allowed, then the school will need to set the minimum threshold for allowing partial payments on bills created and payments received from parents.

Ensure you define and select notifications (emails) to be sent to parents for successful, scheduled, cancellation of scheduled and fail transactions.

3.3   Fees, Billing & Invoicing Settings

This section is important in configuring how billing runs are conducted. It organizes the rules that govern billing events and its associated default settings. Different settings can be applied to different groups by defining multiple Fee Groups. Some settings to take note of include:

- **Default Fee Group** – The default fee group will configure the rules that are contained within the selected Fee Group. This is a logical grouping of Fee categories. Fee Groups are configured in **Fee Structures -> Fee Structures.**
- **Default activity revenue account, default revenue account, default payment (Bank) account and default portal payment (Bank) account.** These settings are used to control with GL Code different types of payments are assigned to.
- **Default Debtor Communication Preference -** this setting defines whether you mail, email or send invoices to the portal.
- **Invoice/Credit Note/Purchase Bill and Receipt Payment Number Prepend** allows schools to configure the respective numbers so that they start with a consistent character set. E.g. Invoices can be configured to start with characters **INV2020-** to depict invoices generated in 2020.
- **Invoice/Credit Note/Purchase Bill and Receipt Payment Number Start** takes in a starting number and concatenates it to the prepended number described in the point above. E.g. a start number of **1000** on invoices will create a starting invoice number of **INV2020-1000** to the first invoice generated by the system.
- When invoices are initiated in Sentral, they can automatically be pushed to the accounting package by switching the **Automatically Push Invoices to your Accounting Package** function

to **Yes**. This can also be achieved by applying the same logic when being created from **Activities.**

- **Purchase bills** is a term that is used by Xero to identify transaction fees posted for each transaction. We can configure purchase bills to be automatically pushed to Xero when a transaction is processed.
- Automatically push payments to your accounting package.
- Automatically push payments to your accounting package (when created from Parent Portal).
- Automatically Push Credit Notes to your Accounting Package.
- Automatically Push Bank Transfers to your Accounting Package.
- Automatically Sync with your Accounting Package.
- Create Bank Transfers for disbursements the school receives via Portal Payments Gateway.
- School's Real Bank Account. (Dropdown).
- The Billing Wizard Debtors checkboxes allow the user to select various categories of students when a billing run is being conducted with the Billing Wizard. As the list of billable contacts will continuously grow as students join (and leave) the school, this allows the user to specify a finite/manageable list of students to work through in the billing run. E.g. Active students and Accepted students.
- Number of days from current date the Due Date in Billing Run set to.
- Allow Billing by Subjects.
- Apply Sibling Discounts based on Discount Rules.
- Apply Discounts based on **Eligible for Discount** flag in Enrolments, overriding Sibling Discounts.
- Show Only Student Codes in Invoice Line Items.
- Description shown against each invoice line item is to include.
- Allow Discounts to be linked to Billing Periods.
- Extra fields to check when determining if two bills are duplicates.

3.4   Invoicing, Receipt and Statement Template Settings

This information is pulled from FMS

3.5   Chart of Accounts

The Chart of Accounts (COA) are setup in the FMS and will be imported into Sentral when a **Sync with Xero/Dynamic** is conducted. School users can view their chart of accounts within this section for convenience.

Note: For revenue accounts to be visible in the Activities module, users will be able to locate the respective account in their chart of accounts by:

- selecting the account type,
- selecting the account by clicking on its associated checkbox, then
- clicking on the **Actions** button and selecting to **Set as show in Activities**

Similarly, accounts can be hidden from the Activities module by selecting the **Set as Hide in Activities** function.

Account Type Classes	
🛈 All accounts management is done via **Xero** so accounts can only be created or altered in your Accounting Package and then synced with this module.	
Name	
ASSET	View
EQUITY	View
EXPENSE	View
LIABILITY	View
REVENUE	View

3.6   Billing Periods

Schools must decide on the frequency that is applicable to fees prior to a billing run being conducted. A billing period must be defined prior to each bill run. Cycles refers to the calendar year. Periods refers to the frequency of the Billing Period (annual, termly).

Adding a Billing Period requires staff to name the Period, add a cycle with a start and end date, select the period, discounts and duration (if required).

Billing Period	
Name	
Cycle	2019
Start Date	06/08/2020
End Date	06/08/2020
Period	Annual
Duration	None
Select only if fee amount for chosen duration is not to be adjusted	
	Close Save

3.7   Tax Rates

All tax rates management is done via FMS, so tax rates can only be created or altered in FMS and then synced with this module.

Tax Rates					
🛈 All tax rates management is done via **Xero** so tax rates can only be created or altered in your Accounting Package and then synced with this module.					
Name	**Tax Type**	**Code**	**Rate**	**Applies to Account Type Classes**	
Ammad Tax	TAX004	TAX004	1%	ASSET EQUITY LIABILITY REVENUE	
BAS Excluded	BASEXCLUDED	BASEXCLUDED	0%	ASSET EQUITY EXPENSE LIABILITY REVENUE	
GST Free Capital	EXEMPTCAPITAL	EXEMPTCAPITAL	0%	ASSET EQUITY EXPENSE LIABILITY	
GST Free Expenses	EXEMPTEXPENSES	EXEMPTEXPENSES	0%	ASSET EQUITY EXPENSE LIABILITY	

3.8   Banks

You will need to setup a "Bank" entry in this section.

Go to **Add Bank.** Complete Bank Code, SWIFT or BIC code and a description. **Add.**

Bank details may also sync over from Xero.

3.9   Contra Accounting

A contra account is used in a general ledger to reduce the value of a related account when the two are netted together. A contra account's natural balance is the opposite of the

associated account. If a debit is the natural balance recorded in the related account, the contra account records a credit.

Schools can enable this feature and define a start date with selected contra invoice Accounts and accounts.

When a school has voluntary tuition fees (i.e. treat them as optional contributions) and runs on accrual accounting, partially paid invoices will over-state the income and accounts receivable accounts. Sentral can now post journals to for the overstated income amount to a contra accounts receivable account in an overnight adjusting journal that is reversed the next day to reconcile for this.

3.10 Receipting Setting

Schools have the opportunity to setup payment methods.

When adding a payment method consider whether to;

- Display in Sentral - Yes / No option to determine whether the payment method will be visible on the drop-downs in Fees where you could potentially select the payment method i.e. Receive a Payment functionality.
- Automated Settlement Transfer - If the school is currently using Sentral Finance this value is to be defaulted with current "Create Bank Transfers for disbursements the school receives via Portal Payments Gateway?" value in Setup Fees and Billing > Fees, Billing & Invoicing Settings.

Note that this functionality should ONLY be available for the 'Sentral Pay - Online' payment method. For every other payment method, it should be disabled.

- Bank Account - Searchable drop-down for each payment method that allows the selection of the operating account.
- Inbuilt Flag for Payment Methods

3.11 Fee Structures

A fee structure must be setup when configuring the Fees and Billing module. This can be done by clicking on the **Fee Structures** menu item under the Settings page. A Fee Structure can also be prepared in Excel and imported as a CSV file, under Imports.

Fee structures follow a hierarchy when being configured.
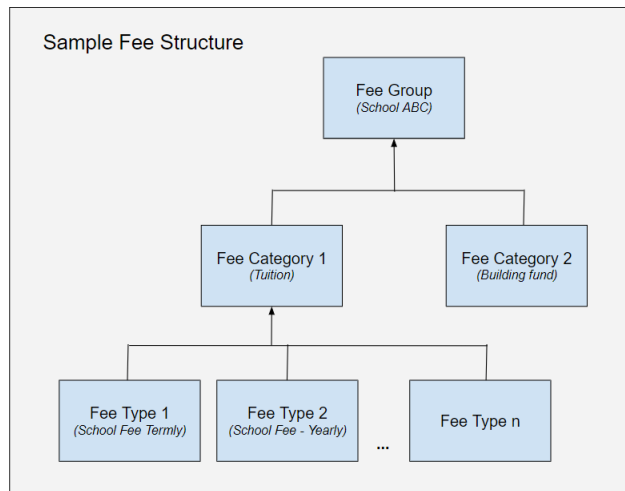
Four key steps must be performed to successfully configure a new Fee Structure as follows:

3.11.1 Setup Fee Types.

This can be done by clicking on **Fees, Billing and Payments Setup > Fee Structures > Fee Types > Add Fee Type.**

Define the Fee name and if it is applicable to student or household and if pro rata is applicable.

3.11.2 Fee Structures

1. **Configure Fee Groups**. This is achieved by clicking on **Fees, Billing and Payments Setup > Fee Structures > Fee Structures (menu item) > Add Fee Group**.

Note: Sentral recommends that only one fee group be used by schools. Schools must request specialist support when configuring more than one fee group.

2. **Configuring Fee Categories** can be achieved by clicking on **Setup Fees, Billing and Payments > Fee Structures > Fee Structures (menu item) > View** button under the newly added **Fee Group > Add Category**.

Note: the name of the category must then be added before clicking on the save button.

3. **Linking fee types to the Fee Categories**. Fee Categories are just the ordering of fees in a fee Group. You can link a fee to a fee type e.g. Year 6 Tuition fees (Fee) to Tuition Fees (Fee Type).

   Adding a fee into a fee type is a drop-down menu option in the individual fee.

   Changing which Category, a fee is in (in a fee group) is as simple and Dragging and dropping with the mouse.

Fee Type	Applies To	Pro-Rata Applicable	Duration		
	STUDENT	No	Once Off	Edit	Delete
Application Fees	STUDENT	No	Once Off	Edit	Delete
Bus Fees	STUDENT	No	Once Off	Edit	Delete
Excursions/Camps	STUDENT	No	Once Off	Edit	Delete
Household Fee	HOUSEHOLD	No	Once Off	Edit	Delete

Select **Action > Edit Fee.** Complete online form to define the fee type, category, cost centres etc.

3.11.3 Discount Rates

It is important that the appropriate discount rates and rules be configured prior to the bill run being conducted. Setting up Discount Rates allows the Fees and Billing system to automatically apply discounts to students based on these rules.

Discount Rates can be configured by clicking on **Fees, Billing and Payments Setup > Fee Structures > Discount Rates > Add Discount Category**.

A discount category name must then be added, and the user must configure the Fee Types that would be associated with this Discount Category. More than one Fee type can be allocated to a Discount Category. You will need to choose the GL account and tax rate for each discount.

The **Discount Type** must then be configured as either a **Flag based Discount** or a **Sibling discount**.

Sibling discounts are a type of discount that is applied to students marked as Siblings on the enrolment's module. This type of discount will typically be applied to the subsequent siblings within a household. A unique rate or amount can be applied to subsequent siblings. E.g. first child pays full fee, second sibling pays 20% less, third sibling pays 30% less, etc.

After a discount category is saved, discount rules or values can then be added to sibling or flag-based discounts, respectively. i.e. Sibling based discounts will add rules to each sibling whereas values (fixed amount or percentage) can be added to flag-based discounts for students in each year. This can be achieved by clicking on the **View Discount Rules/amounts** button associated to the newly added **Discount Category** and then the **Add Discount Value** button.

3.11.4 Instalment Plans

Instalment plans can be defined here and associated with a debtor. Once linked to a debtor, it will allow the **Billing Wizard** to create multiple invoices based on the split-up fee proportions. Instalments plans need to be setup first. To apply an Instalment Plan to a debtor, follow these steps:

- Go to the **Fees, Billing & Payments** module.
- Use the **Search Fees, Billing & Payments field** (top right) to lookup the **Debtor (Parent).**
- Click **Edit** (top right, centre-screen).
- Select the **Instalment plan** from the **Debtor Payment Instalment Plan** drop-down.
- Scroll down and click **Submit** to apply.

3.11.5 Flags

A flag can be created and allocated to a student's user credentials on the Fees and Billing module. When a bill run is conducted on a specific fee type, if a flag is applied to any students, then the respective discount category will systematically be applied.

Flags play an important role in allocating unique discounts to students. When a flag is created, it must be attached to a student's profile in the Fees and Billing module for the discount to be triggered. Flags work together with Discount rates and after a flag is created, a discount value should be added to the flag as described in the bullet point above.

NOTE: when multiple discounts are applicable to students (e.g. sibling discounts + staff discounts + other) schools will be able to configure how one of the following discounts apply:

1. the maximum discount applies (i.e. the highest discount rate)

2. the minimum discount applies (i.e. the lowest discount rate) or

3. the total discount applies (i.e. the sum of all applicable discounts for a student).
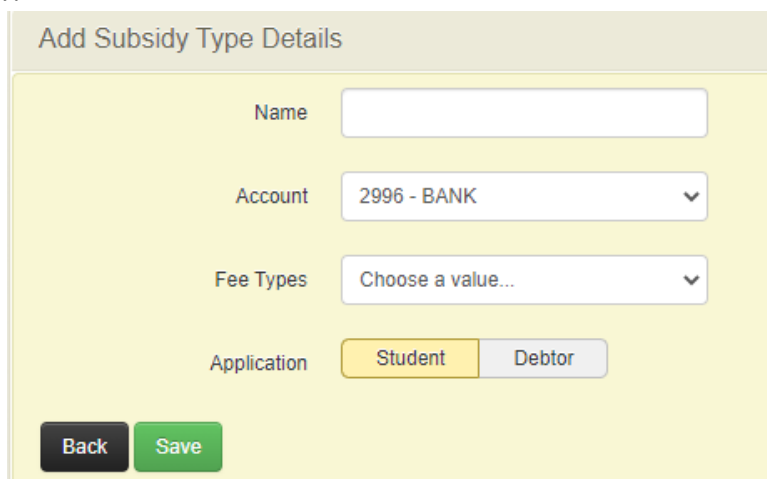
This can be configured by selecting the relevant radio-button in the **Setup Fees Billing and Payments > When determining FLAG BASED/OVERALL discounts for students use section**.

Flags can be created in Enrolments also and imported into this module.

3.11.6   Subsidy Types

Subsidy Types relate to money or grants so schools can set these up and associate them to an account and fee type.

3.12   Imports

This section allows for the bulk import of Invoices, Fee Structures and Debtors.

3.12.1   Import Invoices

This interface allows you to import invoices form external systems via csv file. Steps are available onscreen.

3.12.2   Import fee Structures

This interface allows you to define new and edit existing fee structures via importing the csv file. Steps are available onscreen. Steps are available onscreen.

1. Use the **Generate Fee Structures CSV Document** button to generate a csv document which will be filled with existing fees structures. You can add new structures to that file in while ensuring the format of the document and the document file type remains the same.
2. After filling in the info, choose the file and click **Import**.

If you generate a document to edit and then import that document, you will need to generate a new document if you want to change the fee structure again.

Note:

- Do Not Change values for **Fee ID** column as they are used for identifying fees within the system. (Internal use only)
- If you want to create a new fee in the document and import it in, then leave the field **Fee ID** blank.
- All fields are mandatory for import to succeed except for **Fee Description, Fee ID** and the **Year Level** fields.
- For Year Level fields you just need to mark the relevant column with a Y to indicate to the importer that fee should be assigned to the marked school year otherwise leave it blank.

3.12.3   Import Debtor Details

This interface allows you to import and update debtor details via an Excel file.

1. The **Generate Debtor Details Document** button links to an interface that can export current debtors' details.
2. Update the debtor info in the file and save, pick the saved Excel file (above) and click **Import**.
3. Non-mandatory data columns missing from the import file will not overwrite any existing debtor data. i.e. if the BPAY CRN column is missing from the import file, no debtor BPAY CRN data will be overridden via the import.

Note: The following fields are mandatory **Debtor ID, Debtor Instalment Plan** for a successful import.

3.13   Bulk Tasks – Assign Billing Period to Invoicing Runs

This section allows users to **Assign Billing Period to Invoicing Run**. This would normally done at the pint of creating an invoice run but can be used by admin staff if this step is missed.

Name	Type	Run On	Run By User	Invoice Date	Linked Invoices	Assigning Billing Period
Australian Institute of Sport	AdHoc Run	10/01/2020 08:47	Jay Halai (@Sentral)	2020-01-10	3	--none--
Amendment	AdHoc Run	11/10/2019 14:16	Robin Sayad (@Sentral)	2019-10-11	2	

3.14   Bulk Tasks – Instalments Run

This section allows users to **Assign Billing Period to Invoicing Run** in advance.

3.15   Reset

This button will wipe all existing billing, invoicing and payment data in your system so use with caution. Possibly you may use this in the scenario where you have been testing billing and invoicing runs.

Appendix B: Summary Checklist

So you've scanned the detailed document and are wondering what's next? This table gives you a road map in concise, easy to read steps of how to get your Fees and Billing module up and running in no time.

MODULE	CHECKLIST	REVIEW FREQUENCY	PREREQUISITES
School Settings	Pre-populated in Global settings	as required	Configure School Addresses in Global Settings Configure Banks in Finance Setup -> Banks See * below
Financial Settings	Billing contacts and FY end date Enable Portal Payments Y/N Bank account details Transaction Fee structure	as required	Sync with Enrolments Sync with Payment gateway (SentralPay) Sync with Xero
Online Payments Settings	Determine if partial payments will be allowed and if Yes, what the thresholds are	as required (annual)	
Fees, Billing & Invoicing Settings	Determine these settings for each Fee Group. This section has a long list of settings. Recommend these be addressed in a Fees setting meeting with appropriate stakeholders.	as required (annual)	Review Fee Groups
Invoicing Template Settings	Design Invoice template	as required (annual)	
Receipt Template Settings	Design Receipt template	as required (annual)	
Chart of Accounts	Sourced from Sync with Xero.	as required (annual)	Setup in Xero. Decide on which GL codes should be visible within Activities
Billing Periods	Define Billing Periods based on Year, start and end dates and Duration	as required (annual)	Decide on Billing periods
Tax Rates	All tax rates management is done via Xero, so tax rates can only be created or altered in Xero and then synced with this module.		Setup in Xero
Banks	Setup an entry for the bank your school uses. This needs to be done first		*

MODULE	CHECKLIST	REVIEW FREQUENCY	PREREQUISITES
Fee Types	Fee Types can be maintained here after the initial import of the Fee Structure Prepare CSV file for import of Fee Structures ** Go to Setup Fees, Billing & Payments -> Imports -> Import Fee Structures	as required (annual)	Define Fee Groups, Categories and Types
Fee Structures	Import the CSV file containing the initial Fee Structures here. Fee Groups can then be maintained here	as required (annual)	
Discounts Rates	Setup Discounts here for early payments or Sibling discounts as required	as required (annual)	
Instalment Plans	Setup payment plans here	as required (annual)	
Flags	Internal flags can be created and managed here. Once these flags are created, they can be allocated to students from their profile view in Fees and Billing.		
Import Invoices	Use this feature to import Invoices from external FMS		
Import Fee Structures	** use this feature to import Fee Structures		

Appendix C: Billing Preliminary Assessment

4   Preliminary Fees and Billing Assessment

What is your current Financial Management system e.g. Xero, MYOB.

How often do you bill your parents?

☐ Annual   ☐ Annual with instalments   ☐ Termly   ☐ Monthly
☐ Other: _____

What discounts do you offer?

☐Sibling Discount Tuition fees only	%	☐ Hardship	%	☐ Early Payment	%	☐ Other – Staff Discount - Tuition fees only	%
1st Sibling		Level 1				Full Time	
2nd Sibling		Level 2				.8 FTE	
3rd Sibling		Level 3				.6 FTE	
4th Plus		Level 4					

What Fee types do you charge?

☐ Tuition   ☐ Levies   ☐ Excursions   ☐ Subject Fees
☐ Fee per family e.g. Building Fund   ☐ Boarding Fees   ☐ Refundable Bonds
☐ Other:

Do you charge non enforceable fees e.g. request for contribution? Please give details below.

_____

_____

_____

What payment methods have you offered in the past?

☐ Online Credit Card   ☐ Direct Debit   ☐ EFTPOS   ☐ BPAY
☐ Direct Deposit   ☐ Cash   ☐ Other:

Are you interested in setting up Sentral Pay for communicating bills and taking payments?

Are there any areas in your current fees and billings that you would like to improve? Where would you like it to be in 5 years?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Any challenges and constraints that have been identified?

_____

_____

_____

Briefly describe your Debtor management practices e.g. from sending out fees to bad debtors

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

How do you communicate with your Debtors throughout the Debtor management process?

_____

_____

_____

Describe your method of allocating payments to debtor's accounts?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Describe how you manage settlements and reconciliation in your finance package

Fee Table

Year	Tuition	Levy 1	Levy 2	Levy 3	Total
K					
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					