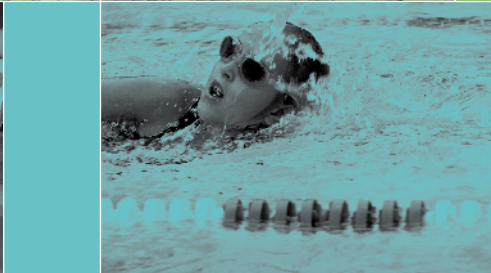


Changes to concession rates for council services



The revised concession rate will be applied to the following council services:

- the hire of town halls, museum exhibition or conference facilities, and other venues managed by the council's arts and museums service
- the hire of school and community halls
- the hire of council playing fields and pavilions
- the use of Renfrewshire Leisure Limited sports and leisure facilities*
- pre 5 out of school care and wraparound care
- activity/creative camps
- outdoor bowls
- golf
- the uplift of trade waste**

There are some services where this policy does not apply, including housing rents and council tax; charges for services where statutory concessions apply; parking charges; penalty charges and fines; ticketed events and performances managed by the council's arts and museums service; and commercial lets. Charges for services provided by our social work department are also excluded from the policy because they are based on a financial assessment of the individual client's financial circumstances.

Further information about these exclusions can be found in our full concessions policy, which is available to download from the Renfrewshire Council website.

* some variations in concessions may apply to Renfrewshire Leisure Ltd services – please contact your local leisure centre or visit www.renfrewshireleisure.com for details.

** registered charities requesting an uplift of trade waste will continue to receive a 100% concession.

Eligibility for concessions

The following customers will be able to apply for concessions for the services listed on the previous page:

Customer		Details
Individuals	Juniors	Individuals 16 years of age or under
	Students in full time education	Full time attendance at school, college or university
	Benefit recipients	An individual in receipt of one or more of the following benefits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pension Tax Credit • Income Support • Job Seekers • Full Working Tax Credit • Disability Tax Credit • Housing Benefit • Council Tax Benefit • Employment and Support Allowance • Disability Living Allowance • Attendance Allowance
Groups	Charities	Organisations who are registered as charities with the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator

Anyone wishing to claim a concession will need to be prepared to show proof of eligibility. This can be done by showing a student matriculation card or benefit award letter, for example.

Frequently asked questions

Q: I am in receipt of benefit – do I need to show my award letter every time I wish to claim a concession?

A: The council needs to ensure that the concessions are only available to those who are eligible to receive them. Unfortunately, this means that those claiming concessions are required to prove their eligibility at the point the service is requested. A benefit award letter from the council or the Department of Work and Pensions dated within the last 12 months will be accepted as proof that you are receiving benefit.

Q: I am a student on a part time course. Can I claim a concession?

A: Concessions are only available to students in full time education. However, if you are a part time student and are in receipt of any benefit that supports you while you are studying, then the concession will be available to you. To claim the concession, you will need to provide evidence of the benefit you receive.

Q: I am in receipt of tax credits. Am I eligible for a concession?

A: If you are in receipt of full working tax credit (i.e. for the year starting 6 April 2011, your annual income is less than £6,420), you will be eligible for a concession. If you are not in receipt of full working tax credit but are receiving one of the other benefits listed, you may still be eligible.

Q: I am over 65 – why doesn't the concession automatically apply?

A: Individuals over 65 years of age are entitled to receive the state pension, in addition to any provision they may have made themselves for their retirement. In many cases, people over the age of 65 may be in receipt of pensions or other forms of income which mean they can afford to pay for services when they require them. The council has therefore agreed that only those aged over 65 who are in receipt of pension tax credits will be eligible for the concession, as they have relatively low incomes.

Q: Why are certain services – such as services provided by social work, housing rents, council tax, and parking charges – excluded from the concessions policy?

A: Social Work care charges are based on a full financial assessment of the individual client's financial circumstances and it would be inappropriate to apply the concession policy to these services. From 1 April, a transport charge will be introduced for users of our learning and physical disability day centres. This charge will also be subject to financial assessment, which will take into account any mobility allowance received. Some other social work charges, such as the provision of meals, are not subject to financial assessment and all users are required to pay the same rate.

Although housing rents and council tax are currently excluded from the council's concessions policy, those who are eligible for council tax benefit and housing benefit will still be able to claim these benefits. The amount of benefit people will receive can vary and depends on several factors such as earnings; whether or not they are in receipt of income support or any other benefits; and personal circumstances such as age, size of family and whether or not they or anyone in their family is disabled.

Concessions are not available for parking charges. However, the council's blue badge scheme allows those with severe mobility problems to park close to where they need to go without paying a charge each time they park. There is an administration charge of £20 to issue or renew a blue badge, and they need to be renewed every three years, on average.

Q: We are a voluntary organisation but we are not a registered charity. Can we claim a concession?

A: There are many forms of voluntary organisations. Many of these organisations operate with charitable intentions and members will benefit from being part of that organisation. However, the council needs to make sure that organisations that receive the concessions available are formally recognised as having a charitable purpose, which means they should be registered as a charitable body with the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR). Organisations which are not registered will not be eligible for any concession; however, where the club is obviously run for the benefit of under 16s, the concession should apply.

Information on how to register with the OSCR can be obtained from their website (www.oscr.org.uk), calling them on 01382 220446 or by writing to:

OSCR, 2nd Floor, Quadrant House, 9 Riverside Drive, Dundee DD1 4NY

Q: Will this concession apply to the hire of the town halls?

A: Where venues are booked by a charitable organisation, then the concession will apply. Where the venue is booked for a private function, or a commercial let, no concession will be given.

Q: Why are ticketed events excluded from the concessions policy – can I no longer claim a concession for an event I'd like to go to?

A: Ticketed performances and events that are managed by the council's arts and museums service generally offer a full price and a concession price. This will not change. However, some performances and events have a single ticket price. It is also worth noting that ticket prices and levels of concession can vary depending on the financial arrangements between the council and the production company or artist.

Renfrewshire Council
Renfrewshire House
Cotton Street
Paisley
PA1 1UJ
Telephone: 0141 842 5000

