

Student Refund and Compensation Policy

Policy Objective

The University's priority is always to ensure that students receive the education they are entitled to expect. As far as possible, complaints should be resolved through dialogue between student and the University, and where necessary, via the Office for the Independent Adjudicator (OIA).

Financial compensation will not always be an appropriate response to complaints and it is unlikely that most issues will be resolved in this way. The University will strive to ensure that students receive what was promised from their degree and university experience. However, occasionally it will be necessary to consider whether refund or compensation is appropriate.

A **refund** relates to the repayment of sums paid by a student to the university or an appropriate reduction in the amount of sums owed in future by the student to the university. This could include tuition fees, other course costs, or accommodation costs.

Compensation will relate to some other recognisable loss suffered by the student. This normally falls into two categories, either: (a) recompensing the student for wasted out-of-pocket expenses they have incurred, which were paid to someone other than the university (such as travel costs) or (b) an amount to recompense for material disadvantage to the student arising from a failure by the university to discharge its duties appropriately

Policy Scope where non-continuation of study is not involved

Except as outlined below, a refund or compensation will generally only be considered where a student has been through the internal complaints procedure and had their complaint upheld. As the individual circumstances of complaints are different, so any potential refund or compensation will be judged on the individual circumstances.

Where a problem has potentially affected a large number of students, the University may consider a streamlined process for dealing with groups of complaints efficiently or may initiate an offer of refund or compensation without the need for students to make a formal complaint. Neither of these would preclude a student from using the standard [complaint procedure](#) if they prefer to do so.

Policy Scope where non-continuation of study is involved

This section sets out the terms of financial compensation that the University will consider paying to students who are affected by the University no longer being able to preserve continuation of study. In circumstances where the University ceases to deliver an academic programme of study, and students have already commenced study on that programme, the University will consider financial compensation for affected students where they are forced to withdraw from the University. Students in these circumstances may also transfer to another programme of study at this or another university. If this results in additional costs for those students, the University will also consider supporting students with these additional costs. This policy sets out the terms for this.

This policy only applies to situations where the University is ceasing to deliver an academic programme of study before registered students of that programme have completed their studies. The University will always aim to teach students to the end of their programme even when a decision has been taken to close an academic programme and to cease admissions to it. This policy will only apply where the University determines that it is not possible to teach a student through to the end of their academic programme.

This policy covers all students of the University. It covers: students in receipt of a tuition fee loan from the Student Loans Company; students who pay their own tuition fees; and students whose tuition fees are paid by a sponsor. In all cases, tuition fees and other costs will only be refunded to the original fee-payer/sponsor (whether Student Loans Company, individual student or sponsor of a student).

In the unlikely event of the University not being able to 'teach out' students on a programme that is being discontinued, students will be offered the opportunity to transfer to another programme at the University. Where there is not a suitable alternative programme at the University, the University will consider supporting students to transfer to a suitable programme at another UK university.

Tuition Fees

In the unlikely event that the University should not be able to "teach out" current students on a discontinued programme of study, students (or their sponsor or the Student Loans Company) will be offered a refund of any fee payments made towards that programme of study in the year of the discontinuation when the student is required to withdraw from the University as a result of the programme discontinuation. The refund of fees will only apply to tuition fee costs incurred in the year in which the academic programme ceases to be offered.

Where a programme is discontinued and students transfer to an alternative programme of study at this University with tuition fees different from the original course, the University will charge students the lower of the two fees for their continuing studies. Where the fees of the new programme are less than those of the discontinued programme, the University will refund or adjust future fees already paid. If a student is transferring to an alternative programme at this University following discontinuation of their original programme but suffers a disrupted year as a result (i.e. not able to complete that year's programme of study due to discontinuation of provision and that year of study will not count towards completion of the new degree), any tuition fees already paid for the affected year will be refunded.

Where a programme is discontinued and students accept an alternative programme of study at the University which is delivered at a location substantially removed/distant from the location of the original course, the University will provide students with adequate compensation in respect of additional travel costs that are incurred as a result of transferring programme.

Where a programme is discontinued and students transfer to an alternative programme of study at another university, the University will utilise student transfer arrangements to enable a transfer to the new University. Where the transfer involves students receiving 'credit' at the receiving university, through an approved prior learning mechanism for study already undertaken, no refund will be offered in relation to the elements of study which count towards that credit. Refunds of tuition fees incurred will be provided in respect of elements of study which do not receive credit for future study at a receiving University. Where the transfer to another University involves a disrupted semester or year of study that does not count towards the new degree, the University will refund the tuition fees for the disrupted period of study.

Other Costs

Where a programme is discontinued and a student is required to withdraw as a result, the University will offer students (or their sponsors) a refund on paid-for future University services, such as food catering services, sports centre membership and society memberships.

Where a student is locked into an accommodation contract in expectation of continuing study at the University and is forced to withdraw or transfer before the end of the contract due to discontinuation of provision, the University will offer compensation, if the student is moving out of the accommodation, for the costs that the student has incurred from the date of moving out to the end of the accommodation contract or the end of the academic year, whichever is sooner.

Student Bursaries

Where a student is in receipt of a University bursary and is forced to withdraw due to discontinuation of provision, the University will maintain the bursary to the end of the semester in which the withdrawal occurs, recognising that the student will not have had opportunity to make alternative provision for living costs.

Maintenance costs

Where a student has to withdraw from the University due to discontinuation of provision without being able to complete the year of study, consideration will also be given to providing compensation of maintenance costs incurred in the year of the withdrawal. Eligible maintenance costs would include travel costs, the cost of academic materials, accommodation and catering costs. The maximum refundable amount for maintenance costs will be aligned with the maximum maintenance loan available from the Student Loans Company in the year of the student withdrawal (currently £8,700 for 2018/19). Students would be asked to provide evidence of expenditure. The amount of compensation payable would be determined on a case by case basis taking into account the duration of study completed in that year and the circumstances of each student.