

Debt Management Policy – Students

Introduction

This policy sets out the University’s approach to the management and recovery of student debt. It applies to all fees and charges payable by current and former students, including tuition fees, accommodation fees, library charges, and other sundry charges.

This policy applies to all students, including full-time and part-time, undergraduate and postgraduate, and UK, EU, and international students.

The Head of Income & Credit Control is responsible for the oversight and periodic review of this policy. The Income and Credit Control team is responsible for its implementation. All University staff are expected to be familiar with this policy and to support its effective operation.

Student Financial Responsibility and Support

Students are expected to ensure they have sufficient financial resources in place prior to enrolment and are able to meet all fee instalment deadlines. Extensions to payment deadlines will not normally be granted.

The University recognises that students may encounter financial difficulties and will consider exceptional circumstances where appropriate. Students experiencing difficulty in meeting payment obligations must engage with the University at the earliest opportunity by contacting the Student Hub.

- through the website: [Contact the Student Hub](#)
- by email: Studenthub@brunel.ac.uk;
- by telephone on 01895 268268;
- visiting the Student Hub during opening hours (no appointment necessary)

Tuition Fees

Tuition fees are set by Council each year, following recommendations on the overall tuition fees framework by Senate. Information about:

- levels of tuition fees.
- payment methods for tuition fees.
- payment terms and due dates for tuition fees
- information on tuition fee discounts
- reimbursement of tuition fees in the event of withdrawal from the University; and
- the provisions, including sanctions, that apply in the event of a failure to keep to payment terms

can be found on the following University web pages – for undergraduate and postgraduate students respectively:

<http://www.brunel.ac.uk/courses/ug/fees>

<http://www.brunel.ac.uk/courses/pg/postgraduate-fees>

Additional Terms for Payment of Tuition Fees by a Sponsor

A sponsor is a commercial or charitable organisation providing full, or partial funding, of a Student's Tuition Fees. A sponsor may be the student's employer, Government embassy, charity or other company. Parents, relatives or individual associates are not classified as sponsors for fee paying purposes. For the purposes of this policy, the Student Loans Company, Research Councils, Local Authorities and Library Boards are also not classified as sponsors.

Students in receipt of sponsorship from a sponsor must provide a letter of confirmation to the University's Records and Funding department, within the Directorate of Governance, Legal, Academic and Student Services, on the sponsor's official letterhead, for the cost of the course of study to be charged to the sponsor. Failure to provide the sponsor letter will result in the course cost being charged to the student.

Sponsors will be invoiced for their contribution to the student's fees after the student has been enrolled. Payment must be made in full by the sponsor within 30 days from the date of invoice. Instalment payments or discounts are not offered to sponsors.

Where the Student's Fees are to be paid by a sponsor it shall remain the personal responsibility of the student to ensure that their Fees and sundry charges are paid in full. This means that any amounts unpaid by the sponsor will become payable by the student.

Accommodation Fees

The University's accommodation charges and application procedures including contacts are set on the [Accommodation and Residences intranet page](#). Students who accept University accommodation agree to comply with the terms and conditions of their licence agreement.

Rent payments are normally due at the beginning of each term in October, January and April, timed to coincide with maintenance loan payments from the Student Loan Company. Post-graduate students may have an additional instalment due.

The University reserves the right to terminate the Accommodation Licence Agreement and implement legal proceedings to recover outstanding fees at any point during the academic year that fees become overdue.

The Income and Credit Control Team will attempt to collect all debts owed to the University using recovery options available to them in accordance with current and acceptable practice which include overdue email/letters which will be sent after each instalment due date. In addition, the student's e-vision account will display an account query message where the total outstanding exceeds £25 and is seven or more days overdue. Late payment will incur an additional charge for each instalment that remains unpaid by the additional deadline allowed by the overdue letter.

In the event of non-payment, the University reserves the right to appoint debt collection agents to undertake debt recovery action, including the issuance of an eviction notice.

Any student with outstanding accommodation debt at the time of graduation will be ineligible to attend, participate in, or receive tickets for the Graduation Ceremony. Eligibility will only be restored once all outstanding accommodation charges and associated debts have been settled in full.

Sundry Charges Including Fines

Sundry charges are any fees owed to the University for services other than Tuition Fees or Accommodation Fees. Examples of a sundry charge are books, field trips, computer printing or library fines etc.

The arrangements for paying a sundry charge will be explained by the University College or Department making the charge.

Where an official University invoice has been raised, payment becomes due immediately. In the event of late payment, the student's e-Vision account will display an account query message where the total outstanding exceeds £25 and is seven or more days overdue.

Consequences of Non-Payment of Debts

The University will apply penalties, referred to as 'Debt Flags' where students are in default of payment terms as specified in the fee policy.

The penalties may be applied at various stages of the recovery cycle imposing differing levels of penalty as the debt ages. The University reserves the right to waive or postpones the application of penalties if appropriate to do so.

Penalties or 'debt flags' affecting and restricting tuition and tuition support services provision will be applied and escalated whilst Tuition payment for these services remains overdue and unpaid. This will impact on service provisions and access the University resources in one or many ways depending on the sanction applied. The University will give advance notice warning students prior to penalty application and will apply full penalties if all other payment requests have failed to result in full settlement of the debt (s) due.

Failure to pay the Tuition fees due may ultimately result in a student being withdrawn from their course or study programme. For those students studying with a Tier 4 student Visa application the University is required to inform UK Visas and immigration of this breach. This will have serious consequences on the student's ability to remain in the UK.

Non-Academic Debt

This refers to any debt relating to fees, charges, or costs associated with services provided by the University that are not directly related to tuition. This includes, but is not limited to, library fines, car parking charges, accommodation fees, or any other Miscellaneous charges.

Where a student has Non-Academic Debt and the University has been unable to recover the outstanding sums—having provided reasonable notice and taken appropriate steps to support repayment—the University may, after considering the full circumstance apply the following restrictions until the debt is cleared:

- restrict attendance at graduation ceremonies (note: this does not affect the conferral of an award or the issuing of a transcript)
- prevent the student from registering for another programme or continuing their studies.
- pursue debt recovery action, which may include legal proceedings.

Students will not normally be allowed to re-enrol for the next year of their programme whilst they have a debt relating to payment of tuition fees to the University.

The University may refuse an application for University Accommodation from a returning student if they have a poor payment record for accommodation fees.

Steps to enforce settlement of debt for all outstanding fees and charges will be taken against all current and former students who have failed to engage with the University to find a solution to any outstanding debt, or who have failed to honour agreements to pay. These steps may include the placement of the debt with an external debt collection agency who will take legal action through the courts to recover the debt incurring additional cost applicable.

No award shall normally be made or conferred on a student with a debt relating to non-payment of tuition fees to the University.

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