

Higher Education Fees Policy 2024-2025

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1. Purpose and Scope

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to explain the process for paying your fees, the options that are available to make your payments and the sanctions that we apply if you default on these. It is the legal basis of the contract between us and you, for the payment of your fees.

1.2 Scope

How do we set our fees? When we are setting fees, we set them so that:

- We comply with Government rules.
- Each fee is fair compared to other fees in The College.
- They are competitive compared to fees in other organisations.

We usually set our fees before the start of the academic year. Occasionally, this is not possible, but we will never increase the fee for your course, for that academic year, after you have enrolled with us.

Following approval by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), the Fees Policy will be communicated via the Head of MIS and Reporting and the Head of Higher Education Quality and Performance to all relevant staff involved with enrolment, admissions, and the provision of information, advice, and guidance (IAG). The policy shall be operated with effect from 1 August 2024 and refer to all courses commencing from then until 31 July 2025.

Once we have set our fees, we publish them on UCAS, our website and on our course information leaflets. You will be told about course fees when you are made an offer of a place on a course. You can ask us at any time if you are not clear about what we will be charging you. We will also tell you about any help you may be able to get towards paying your fees, for example, student finance and the different payment options available to you.

The Fees Policy will be available from the College website (www.wiltshire.ac.uk) under the Policies and Procedures section, or on request from the HE Admission Team

2. Accountability

Responsibility lies with the Senior Leadership Team to ensure that the Fees Policy is adhered to. On a day-to-day basis the HE Admissions Team will operate the policy in conjunction with the Director of Finance or delegated manager.

3. Procedure

3.1 Course Fees

A course fee will be set for each course offered by the College. Fees for most courses are made up of several elements. They include tuition and examination costs but can also be subject to administration charges and in some cases, material costs.

In addition, some courses require the learner to purchase special equipment, clothing and to pay for educational trips and professional membership.

A separate fee will be recommended for learners who fall outside of the Office for Students' (OfS) home fee rules and are classed as overseas students. The course fee will be set using the criteria described above in paragraph 1.2.

All course fees set will be valid for the period 1 August 2024 to 31 July 2025. Where students enrol on courses that continue beyond 31 July 2025, they should be made aware that any fees due after this date (e.g., for the second year of a course) may fluctuate because of external influences.

3.2 Examinations

The charge for examinations undertaken as part of a course are included within the course fee. This will include registration, entry and certification. It will not include professional body membership which may need to be paid directly to the professional body by the learner.

The costs of resitting/retaking examinations or assessments are not included in the course fee.

Students are also liable for paying any late entry fee which may apply, except where the College has caused the application to be late.

3.3 Payment of Fees

Students must indicate how they want to pay their fees when they enrol. They will not be able to enrol until they have either:

- Paid all fees in full, or
- Paid a deposit and signed a standing order agreement for the balance, via an instalment plan, or
- Provided evidence that your employer or another organisation is paying the fees, i.e. an employer's undertaking form or a purchase order requesting to be invoiced, or
- Provided evidence that they have approval from the Student Loan Company for an HE Tuition Fee Loan or have proof of application for a HE Tuition Fee Loan.

If an employer or another organisation has agreed to pay the student's fees but then does not do so, the student will become liable to pay them instead, unless they are undertaking an apprenticeship. This also applies if the learner has applied for a HE Tuition Fee Loan but does not complete their application or the application is later refused.

Recurring card payments are available for courses longer than 12 weeks and costing more than £150. Recurring card payments are subject to a £20 administration fee and will consist of a 25% deposit and 3 equal monthly payments for courses under £1000 and 3 equal payments in alternate months for courses above £1000. Payment must be made in full within 6 months of enrolment.

HE Tuition Fee Loans are available from the Student Loans Company for the OfS direct funded Higher Education courses.

Fees for franchised HE provision are set and collected by the franchising University in accordance with their own Fees Policies.

International students must pay 50% deposit on application, with the remaining 50% fee payable prior to the start of their course.

3.4 Refunds and Fee Liability

In the event of a course being cancelled prior to commencement by the College a full refund will be given. Full details of course closure processes can be found in the HE Course Closure, Suspension and Substantial Change Policy.

All students will be given a 14 day 'cooling off' period following their enrolment taking place and fees being paid unless the course commences within those 14 days.

Students paying by HE Tuition Fee loan from the Student Loans Company (SLC) will be invoiced for any remainder of the fee not already covered by previous loan payments should they withdraw after commencement of the course. The College will notify the SLC of a student's withdrawal from college to ensure that the loan debt does not accrue beyond their leaving date.

All refunds will be made at the discretion of the College.

Refunds will not be paid to an individual if their employer or another person has paid the course fees.

Refunds for OfS direct funded HE courses, where the student, or their sponsor, has paid the fees in full and wishes to withdraw, this must be requested in writing to the Head of Higher Education Quality and Performance and will be applied as follows:

- Refunds requested with 14 days of the course start date will be made in full, less a £35 administration fee.
- Refunds requested between 14 days and the end of the first term will receive 67% of fees less a £35 administration fee.
- Refunds requested during the second term will receive 33% of fees less a £35 administration fee.
- No refund will be given for withdrawals in the third term.

Refunds for franchised HE provision will be in accordance the refund policies of the franchising university.

Fees for Halls of Residence are refundable from the next full term following withdrawal less a £35 administration fee.

In the event that an international student is unsuccessful in obtaining a student visa the 50% deposit will be refunded less an administration fee of £200.

3.5 Course Transfers

In the event of the College agreeing to a student transferring between courses, there will be no financial penalty but if the course transferred onto has a higher course fee or affects the student's eligibility for fee remission the student must pay the difference.

The College will be liable for the payment of additional travel costs for students affected by a change in the location of their course.

The College will provide compensation for tuition and maintenance costs where students must transfer courses or providers.

4. Higher Education students wishing to suspend studies

Students can request in writing to the Head of Higher Education Quality and Performance, including supporting medical evidence, to suspend their HE studies if they intend to return in the following academic year. If the suspension is approved then the learner will receive a refund as paragraph 3.4 but will be liable for the balance of fees in the following academic year, on re-enrolment.

5. Outstanding Debts

Any student who has outstanding debts for tuition fees will be asked to settle their debt prior to enrolling.

Debts related to accommodation may result in the learner being asked to leave college accommodation.

Students who have outstanding debt, or do not meet their agreed payment schedule, in year may be asked to leave the course.

6. Student Bursaries

The College commits to pay any agreed student bursaries for the duration of the course originally enrolled on.

7. Inability to Preserve Continuation of Study

The College will pay compensation for maintenance and tuition costs where students have to transfer courses or providers.

8. Linked Policies

Examinations Policy
 HE Admissions Policy
 HE Student Transfer Policy
 HE Course Closure, Suspension, and Substantial Change Policy
 Higher Education Student Agreement

9. Equality Impact Assessment

Wiltshire College & University Centre strives to ensure equality of opportunity for all students, local people and the workforce. As an employer and a provider of education, the College aims to ensure that none are placed at a disadvantage as a result of its policies and procedures. It is intended that this policy and procedure is fair to all. Where any part could potentially lead to unequal outcomes, the policy then justifies why this is a proportionate

means of achieving a legitimate aim.

10. Data Retention Statement

Wiltshire College & University Centre is committed to ensure the data it collects, and holds is in line with the ICO's guidance and meets data protection law. Where appropriate a Data Protection Impact Assessment will be undertaken as and when policies are updated to ensure risks to the individual and college are considered and managed.

For further information please refer to Wiltshire College & University Centre's Data Protection Policy.

11. Policy Review and Ownership

This policy and procedure is owned by the Head of Higher Education Quality and Performance. It will be reviewed by the Head of Higher Education Quality and Performance periodically in light of developments in legislation, good practice or audit; and to ensure it continues to be relevant and supports operational effectiveness.

12. Amendments Log

Version	Date of Issue	Amendment summary	Author(s)
V1.0	Sept 2023		