

## **CHARGING POLICY - TUITION FEES**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This document sets out the University policy in respect of the charging and payment of Tuition Fees. Students and staff should ensure that they are aware of the rules in place and the consequences of late or non-payment of fees.
- 1.2 The University provides a range of pro-active support mechanisms for students to help manage their money, as well as advice regarding internal and external sources of support and funding. Hardship and emergency loan funds are also available. Available support is detailed here <https://www.chester.ac.uk/student-life/fees-and-finance/support-for-your-circumstances/>

### **2. DEFINITIONS / GLOSSARY**

- 2.1 Tuition Fee – the fee paid by students to undertake a course of study (module or programme) at the University.
- 2.2 Fee Status – this indicates the rate at which a student is required to pay tuition fees.
- 2.3 Mode of Attendance – this relates to the proportion of time that a student is spending on the course over a given period, and the University resources made available to the student for that period.
- 2.4 Sponsor – any person or organisation, other than the student, who has agreed to pay towards all or part of the student's tuition fees.
- 2.5 University debts – any monies owing to the University.

### **3. PURPOSE**

- 3.1 The purpose of this policy is to ensure the University explains in an open and transparent manner how Tuition Fees are charged and how payment will be collected.
- 3.2 To clarify what actions may be taken against students who do not pay the relevant fees at the appropriate time.
- 3.3 To allow the University to manage the level of student debt and ensure that students are aware of the consequences of non-payment.
- 3.4 To ensure that all students are aware of the charging and payment process, to enable early intervention and support for any student whose financial situation has changed during their time at the University.

### **4. SCOPE**

- 4.1 This policy applies to all current students of the University of Chester and former students who have left the University with outstanding debts.

## 5. ACADEMIC FEES

- 5.1 All courses offered by the University will be subject to a Tuition Fee unless the University specifically decides that no tuition fee shall be chargeable.
- 5.2 Tuition Fees will be reviewed on an annual basis and may vary.
- 5.3 For some courses the maximum Tuition Fee chargeable is set by Government, particularly in the case of home undergraduate students.
- 5.4 The level of Tuition Fee will vary according to the mode of attendance and the fee status of the student.

## 6. STUDENT FINANCE (Home Undergraduate Students)

- 6.1 Depending on where they normally live, all students requiring financial support should make an application for a finance assessment with one of Student Finance England, Student Finance Wales, Student Finance Northern Ireland or the Student Awards Agency for Scotland. This may include an assessment for a maintenance grant and/or a maintenance loan and/or a loan for the payment of Tuition Fees.
- 6.2 Students will in most cases be entitled to receive a non-means assessed loan from Student Finance to cover the full tuition fees.
- 6.3 Where a student is receiving a loan from Student Finance for all or part of their tuition fees, Student Finance will make payment to the University in three disbursements, based on the loan liability points illustrated in the table below:

| <b>Date for proportion of fee loan</b> | <b>Proportion of full years fee paid to the University by Student Finance</b> | <b>Cumulative Loan Liability</b> |
|--|---|----------------------------------|
| September                              | 25%   | 25%                              |
| January                                | 25%   | 50%                              |
| April                                  | 50%   | 100%                             |

- 6.4 Students receiving a fee loan from Student Finance will become liable for the proportions of loan identified in section 6.3 when they are confirmed as in attendance on each of the three liability dates.
- 6.5 Students who have obtained a Tuition Fee loan for only part of their programme fee, or students who have miscalculated the level of fee waiver to which they may be entitled and hence borrowed an insufficient amount of loan to cover their Tuition Fee, will be personally liable for the remaining fee and will need to make arrangements for the payment.
- 6.6 Students who are unsuccessful when applying for a Tuition Fee loan will become personally liable for the Fees.
- 6.7 Students need to submit a new application each academic year to Student Finance. There are time limits by which a student must make an application each year.  
<https://www.gov.uk/apply-for-student-finance/when>

## 7. SPONSORSHIP

- 7.1 Where an external organisation (e.g. a company or overseas government embassy; not a friend, relative or Student Finance) is responsible for payment of all or part of a student's Tuition and/or Research Fee, the University will invoice the organisation directly.
- 7.2 Students must provide the Tuition Fees Team ([fees@chester.ac.uk](mailto:fees@chester.ac.uk)) with an official sponsor letter or purchase order (on official letter headed paper) from their sponsor. This should be provided before students register for the session to which the sponsorship applies. Where sponsorship is secured after registration or after fees have been charged, evidence should be provided as soon as possible so that fee liability can be amended.
- 7.3 All sponsors must pay in full within 30 days of being invoiced.
- 7.4 Information on the scholarships and bursaries available to eligible students can be found at <https://www.chester.ac.uk/student-life/fees-and-finance/bursaries-and-scholarships/>
- 7.5 The proof of sponsorship should show:
- Students full name
  - Student University Number
  - Full details of where and to whom the invoice should be addressed, including:
    - Organisation contact name.
    - Organisation address
    - Organisation email
  - Details of any payment reference the sponsor requires on the invoice. (i.e., a Purchase order number)
  - GBP amount the organisation is paying for your Tuition Fees.
  - The period/academic year of study that the organisation is paying for.

The University will keep this letter within its records.

A new letter should be provided for each year of study.

- 7.6 Students who do not provide this official letter will be considered as self-funding and will be expected to pay their own Tuition Fees.
- 7.7 Sponsored students are responsible for making sure that their Tuition Fee is paid. Where a student's sponsor defaults on any fee payment arrangement, the sponsor's invoice will be cancelled, and the debt will be transferred to the student's account for immediate payment. Where fees remain outstanding, the University will apply academic sanctions in accordance with section 12.

## **8. SELF-FUNDING**

8.1 Students self-funding all or part of their Tuition Fees must familiarise themselves with the available payment plans before the start of each academic year. Failure to adhere to the correct published payment plan will result in sanctions being applied as described in section 12.

8.2 If you are self-funding, you will be invoiced following your enrolment. On receipt of your invoice, you will be offered the choice of payment plans through the University finance system.

Your fee invoice will be sent through the University finance system and will include a direct link for you to make payment or arrange payment plans. All fees should be paid through the finance system.

The University does not accept payments in cash or cheques.

## **9. INTERNATIONAL UNDERGRADUATE & TAUGHT POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS**

9.1 International students should refer to their offer letter which states the payment terms, including initial deposit, payment of fees required before the start of the course and date of final payment. Where fees remain outstanding, the University will apply academic sanctions in accordance with section 12. For further information:

<https://www.chester.ac.uk/international/fees-scholarships-and-finance/how-to-pay/>

## **10. HOME UNDERGRADUATE, POSTGRADUATE AND RESEARCH STUDENTS**

10.1 Students in receipt of postgraduate funding, please note this is paid directly to you and it is the students' responsibility to pay the University.

10.2 Self-funding PG students starting in September can opt to pay in full, in three equal termly instalments (November, February and May) or nine monthly instalments (November – July) Students can select which option they prefer on receipt of their invoice.

10.3 For students whose programmes start in January, students can opt to pay in full, in three equal termly instalments or nine monthly instalments. Students select their preferred option on receipt of their invoice.

10.4 Where a student fails to make the necessary payment(s) in accordance with the arrangements prescribed, sanctions will be applied in accordance with section 12.

10.5 Alumni discount for students who completed an undergraduate degree at the university will automatically be applied to their postgraduate invoice for eligible postgraduate courses.

## 11. PROGRAMME FEE LIABILITY & REFUND POLICY

- 11.1 The University will re-calculate the amount of programme fee to be charged in circumstances where a student chooses not to register on their programme, or to leave or suspend their programme during the academic year. In such an event, a student will have no claim to a refund of fees charged for any period they were registered as attending during that academic year.
- 11.2 Fees charged to registered students will be calculated based upon the date the University is formally informed of any change in registration. Students should therefore follow the University's formal procedures for withdrawal or suspension.
- 11.3 Tuition Fees for students will be calculated in accordance with the following table:

### All Postgraduate and Full-time Undergraduate Students

Tuition Fees remain due if a student is in attendance on the first day of each term as follows:

| Date         | % of course fees due | % of course fees due |
|--------------|----------------------|----------------------|
|              | Undergraduate        | Postgraduate         |
| First Term * | 25%                  | 34%                  |
| Second Term  | 50%                  | 67%                  |
| Third Term   | 100%                 | 100%                 |

No charge is due for a Home student who withdraws within two weeks of the start of their course. International students deposit is non-refundable once they have received a successful visa decision and travelled to the UK.

### Part time Undergraduate students:

Full fees are due once a student has attended three or more sessions of a module. No fees are due for modules that have not been started. Part time students need to withdraw from any module not started.

### WBIS/ Distance Learning:

Full fees are due once the student has either accessed e-learning materials or attended at least one session of a module.

### International Students:

The withdrawal fees above include the non-refundable deposit that International students have to pay in advance to secure their place. Any fees paid for, but not due which exceed the deposit that International students have to pay in advance to secure their place, will be reimbursed.

**Research Students:**

Students are charged for a full academic year, should a student submit their Thesis, interrupt study, or withdraw part way through an academic year they are liable for fees pro-rated, monthly, up to and including the month of submission, interruption or withdrawal. (Thesis must be submitted in accordance with the Thesis Submission policy).

**Courses not starting in September/October:**

Different rules may apply to programmes which do not commence in September/October. Students should contact the Tuition Fees Team ([fees@chester.ac.uk](mailto:fees@chester.ac.uk)) in the first instance for further information.

- 11.4 Any refund due following the application of this policy will be made to the person and account from which the original payment was received.
- 11.5 Refund requests should be sent to [fees@chester.ac.uk](mailto:fees@chester.ac.uk)

**12. ACADEMIC SANCTIONS**

- 12.1 Where a student fails to make the necessary programme fee payment(s) in accordance with their relevant published payment plan, the University will seek to restrict their access to a range of key online administrative services. This will include restriction of students' access to the Graduate Document Portal, and to the facility to request secure, verified and digitally signed documents such as transcripts and official student status confirmations.
- 12.2 The sanction identified in section 12.1 will remain in place until such time that the outstanding account balance is settled.
- 12.3 Students placed on sanctions are encouraged to contact the Tuition Fees Team at the earliest available opportunity to discuss their financial position ([fees@chester.ac.uk](mailto:fees@chester.ac.uk)). Section 13 provides contact details for help and support.
- 12.4 Under normal circumstances, students in debt to the University for Tuition Fees at the end of a given academic year will be prevented from registering for a new academic year until such time that all outstanding debts have been paid.
- 12.5 Under normal circumstances, students in debt to the University for Tuition Fees before the date of the award of a degree, diploma or certificate will be deemed ineligible to be presented for such an award.
- 12.6 Where a student in debt to the University for Tuition Fees ceases to be a registered student of the University – and where all other avenues for debt collection have been exhausted – the University may also deploy formal external debt recovery proceedings, which may ultimately result in County Court judgements.

### 13. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 13.1 The Tuition Fees department will be the primary contacts for any information regarding the Charging Policy – Tuition Fees. Contact details are as below:

Tuition Fees Team

[fees@chester.ac.uk](mailto:fees@chester.ac.uk)

01244 512 810

### 14. RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- 14.1 The Charging Policy – Tuition Fees is subject to review every 3 years by the Chief Financial Officer or following a change to relevant UK legislation.

### 15. DOCUMENT CONTROL INFORMATION

|                      |                                |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|
| Document Name        | Charging Policy – Tuition Fees |
| Owner                | Finance Dept                   |
| Version Number       | V2                             |
| Approval Date        |                                |
| Approved By          |                                |
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