

International sponsored student policy

Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to outline the responsibilities of the university and international sponsored students to ensure sponsor records are set up accurately resulting in correct and timely invoicing of sponsors.

Scope and definitions

This policy covers the agreements and processes related to international sponsored students and invoicing international sponsors. Sponsored home students are not covered under this policy. For clarity, definitions are included.

International sponsored student

An International sponsored student is an overseas fee payer who is part of a funding stream from an organisation to financially assist with attendance the University of Bristol. This could be to cover tuition fees (in full or part), bench fees and/or living expenses.

International sponsor

An International sponsor is a sponsor that is based in an overseas fee paying country, or those that exclusively sponsor international (overseas fee paying) students. This could include an international government, the British Council, an international organisation, a UK government funded scheme e.g. Chevening or Commonwealth.

FGL/Sponsor letter

A Financial Guarantee Letter (FGL) or sponsor letter, is a letter from the sponsor confirming their funding for a specific student.

A Financial guarantee letter is not needed for an admissions decision.

Financial guarantee letter (FGL) requirements

The letter must be on official headed paper from the sponsor organisation, and must include:

- i. the student's name;
- ii. the programme or course of study;
- iii. the name of the university;
- iv. the name and contact details the official financial sponsor;
- v. the official stamp or signature of the official financial sponsor;
- vi. the date of letter issue;
- vii. the length of the sponsorship and which academic years it's valid for;
- viii. the amount of sponsorship and breakdown of what it is to be applied to i.e. tuition fees and/or bench fees

or

that the sponsor will meet the full cost of tuition fees and any additional programme costs with a breakdown of how this should be applied.

For the avoidance of doubt, if no breakdown is provided, the university will apply the full amount to tuition fees and any remaining to bench fees (if applicable). **It is the student's responsibility to provide this breakdown from their sponsor.**

Holding and sharing information

FGLs will be submitted to and centrally kept by the International Partnerships and Relations (IPR) team. These will be stored in accordance with Data Protection legislation in a location that can only be accessed by other teams within the university who need to view them.

International sponsored student responsibilities

International sponsored students will:

- i. submit FGL to International Partnerships and Relations by given date at the beginning of *each* academic year. This date can be found on the International Sponsored student webpage. If the student fails to submit their FGL they will be liable for the programme/course fees for that year;
- ii. comply with any requests made on them by their sponsor to ensure the smooth process of payment. This might include uploading a registration letter/student status letter to the sponsor's portal, uploading a copy of an invoice or uploading a document to specify other costs.
- iii. inform IPR of any specific requirements from their sponsor when submitting their FGL

For more information about submitting FGLs and deadlines to submit visit

<https://www.bristol.ac.uk/students/support/finances/tuition-fees/payment/sponsored/>

Students are liable for any costs not explicitly covered by the FGL – this includes amounts left over due to fluctuations in exchange rates. It is the student's responsibility for their sponsor to pay the amounts covered by the FGL and, if the sponsor fails to pay, the debt may be transferred to the student and could prevent graduation.

University of Bristol responsibilities

The university will:

- i. not raise an invoice to a sponsor without an FGL that meets the requirements outlined in this policy;
- ii. provide a letter of registration/Student status letter to the student for each year of study by request to the relevant faculty, including fees where requested;
- iii. only raise invoices to sponsors for funding explicitly covered on the FGL;
- iv. issue invoices in accordance with the requirements of the sponsor, including the sponsor's reference number where applicable;
- v. include relevant FGLs in all communications with sponsors regarding outstanding payments;
- vi. notify the student at agreed times within the academic year if their Sponsor has not paid;
- vii. make sponsored students aware on submission of FGL to IPR:
 - that they are liable for the any costs not explicitly covered by the FGL;
 - that if the sponsor does not pay by the agreed times, the debt may be transferred to the student and could prevent graduation;

- that it is their responsibility for their sponsor to pay the amounts specified in the FGL.

Timeline of notification of sponsor payments

International Sponsored students will be informed January/February if their sponsor has not yet made payments as per the FGL for the current academic year. Students are expected to liaise with their sponsor to ensure payments are made.

Contacts

	Contact	Email
Payment and refund enquiries	Student Fees	student-fees@bristol.ac.uk
Overdue payments	Credit Control	finance-creditcontrol@bristol.ac.uk
FGL submission and queries	International Partnerships and relations	International-partnerships@bristol.ac.uk
Tuition fee queries	Relevant school/faculty	Contact your school office
Registration/Student Status letter	Relevant faculty	See https://www.bristol.ac.uk/students/support/finances/tuition-fees/payment/sponsored/