

Tuition Fee Refund Policy

Summary

The policy sets out the arrangements and calculations relating to tuition fee refunds in the event of a student formally withdrawing from or suspending their studies.

Control information:	Control detail:
Owner	Group Finance Director, Finance Services
Author	Head of Transactional Services, Finance Services
Sponsor	Chief Financial Officer, Senior Team
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Approved by	University Executive Board
Responsible area	Finance Services
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DPIA assessment date	22 August 2025
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Applicable statutory, legal or best practice requirements	Student fees regulations
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Related information	<u>Anti-Money Laundering Policy</u> , <u>International Deposits Refund Policy</u> , <u>Guidance on suspending and withdrawing from study</u> , <u>Student Agreement</u>
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1. Updates to this policy

- 1.1. 11 August 2025 – revised PGCE refund calculation. Updated UG tuition fee amount.
- 1.2. 25 February 2025 - added Definitions and Responsibilities. Appendix 1 updated to reflect current job staff roles.
- 1.3. This policy has been updated to align to the new University of Bristol policy management framework.

2. Introduction

- 2.1. The following policy sets out the arrangements and calculations relating to tuition fee refunds in the event of a student formally withdrawing from their studies.
- 2.2. All information provided to students on the University website and any other literature available to students must reflect this policy.
- 2.3. Term dates are as follows:
 - a. Term 1 runs up to the winter vacation
 - b. Term 2 starts after the winter vacation and runs up to the spring vacation
 - c. Term 3 starts after the spring vacation and runs up to the summer vacation.
- 2.4. This applies to all undergraduates, including if you have applied for a Student Finance tuition fee loan. See the [term dates for undergraduate courses provided to the Student Loans Company \(SLC\) for funding purposes](#).

3. Scope

- 3.1. This policy applies to University of Bristol students who withdraw or suspend their studies and may be eligible for tuition fee refunds. It covers tuition fee refunds and adjustments based on withdrawal dates, applying to both undergraduate and postgraduate students. Staff responsible for processing withdrawals and refunds must follow this policy, ensuring compliance with University regulations.

4. Definitions

- 4.1. **Suspension:** A formally agreed, temporary break in studies (further detail in [the guidance on suspending and withdrawing from study](#)).
- 4.2. **University debt:** Monies owed to the University, in the case of this policy, for overdue tuition fees.
- 4.3. **Withdrawal:** A student leaves their programme without completing it (further detail in [Student Agreement](#) and [the guidance on suspending and withdrawing from study](#)) – whether due to a request by the student or required to withdraw following a decision by the University.

5. Responsibilities

- 5.1. **Faculty Student Administration team:** Process the student's withdrawal or suspension and record the date of last engagement. This calculates any refund due to the student.
- 5.2. **Student Fees team:** Process the refund to the original payer, following the fee adjustment by the Faculty.

6. Refunds – general provisions

- 6.1. Students may be entitled to a refund after paying some or all their tuition fees, if they withdraw from study at the University before completion of their programme. Refund calculations are based on a student's last date of attendance or engagement. Refunds can only be processed after the withdrawal is complete.
- 6.2. Where students are required to withdraw for academic reasons and have not completed the year, the last date of attendance will be the date on which the Exam Board decision is formally communicated to the student. Where students are required to withdraw for other reasons e.g. disciplinary action, the last date of attendance will be the date on which the decision is formally communicated to the student e.g. at or following the formal meeting or hearing considering the matter.
- 6.3. If a student has any University debt, it will be subtracted from any refund of fees payable.

- 6.4. All refunds will be calculated and issued in £ Sterling. The University will not refund any shortfalls due to exchange rate fluctuations or offer compensation for any bank or other charges incurred.
- 6.5. Refunds will only be made to the person who originally paid the tuition fees. If a parent or guardian, or a third party has paid on behalf of a student but wishes the refund to be paid direct to the student, the University is unable to comply with such requests. This is an important provision to ensure adherence with the University's [Anti-Money Laundering Policy](#).
- 6.6. Where refunds are calculated on a termly basis (for Undergraduate and PGCE students), please note that:
- a. Term 1 runs up to the winter vacation.
 - b. Term 2 starts after the winter vacation and runs up to the spring vacation.
 - c. Term 3 starts after the spring vacation and runs up to the summer vacation.

7. Refunds for undergraduate (UG) students

- 7.1. UG programme fees are charged as follows:
- a. No fees charged if withdrawal date is within the first two (teaching) weeks of the start of the programme/start of the academic year of their chosen programme.
 - b. 25% of fees charged if withdrawal date is after the first two weeks and before the start of the second term.
 - c. 50% of fees charged if withdrawal date is after the start of the second term and before the start of the third term.
 - d. 100% of fees charged if withdrawal date is after the start of the third term.
- 7.2. The University will ensure that home undergraduate students who withdraw are not charged tuition fees in excess of the tuition fee loan available to them.

Table 1: Undergraduates withdrawing / suspending from study. Please note – examples based on full fees paid at time of withdrawal/suspension. If not, refund calculation based on amount paid.

Charge periods	First 2 weeks	> 2 weeks < 2 nd term	> 2 nd term < 3 rd term	> 3 rd term
Fees Charged	Nil	25%	50%	100%
Refund example if fee for the year is £9,535	Refund £9,535	Amended fee £2,383.75 Refund £7,151.25	Amended fee £4,767.50 Refund £4,767.50	Refund £0

8. Refunds for postgraduate (PG) students

- 8.1. PG programme (not including modular or PGCE) fees are charged on a monthly basis, with a whole month's fees charged where withdrawal date is part-way through the month.
- 8.2. PG programme (modular route only) fees to be charged at 100% once the module has commenced.
- 8.3. PGCE programme fees are charged as follows:
 - a. No fees charged if withdrawal date is within the first two (teaching) weeks of the start of the programme/start of the academic year of their chosen programme.
 - b. 25% of fees charged if withdrawal date is after the first two weeks and before the start of the second term.
 - c. 50% of fees charged if withdrawal date is after the start of the second term and before the start of the third term.
 - d. 100% of fees charged if withdrawal date is after the start of the third term.
- 8.4. The University will ensure that PGCE students who withdraw are not charged tuition fees in excess of the tuition fee loan available to them.

- 8.5. Pre-sessional language programme fees are refundable in full within 14 days of original payment. After this period, no refunds will be made for students withdrawing from study.

Example calculations of postgraduates withdrawing or suspending from study

- 8.6. Please note that these examples are based on full fees paid at time of withdrawal or suspension. If not, refund calculation based on amount paid.

Table 2: PG withdrawal within first 2 weeks

Programme	PG
Charge periods	First 2 weeks
If withdraw	Within first 2 weeks
Fees Charged	NIL
Refund example:	If the tuition fee is £10,000: Refund £10,000

Table 3: PG withdrawal partway through month

Programme	PG
Charge periods	Monthly
If withdraw	Partway through month
Fees Charged	Whole month
Refund example:	If the tuition fee is £10,000 and student withdraws during their 3 rd month: Amended fee $\text{£}10,000 / 12 \text{ months} \times 3 = \text{£}2,500$. Refund £7,500

Table 4: PG withdrawal after module commences

Programme	PG
Charge periods	Modular
If withdraw	After module commences
Fees Charged	100%
Refund example:	<p>If the tuition fee for a 180 credit MSc is £10,620, the fee for each 20 credit unit is £1,180, and the student withdraws during their 2nd 20 credit unit:</p> <p>Amended fee £1,180 x 2 = £2,360</p>

Table 5: PGCE withdrawal partway through week

Charge periods	First 4 weeks	> 2 weeks < 2 nd term	> 2 nd term < 3 rd term	> 3 rd term
Fees Charged	NIL	25%	50%	100%
Refund example if fee for the year is £9,535:	Refund £9,535	<p>Amended fee £ 2,383.75</p> <p>Refund £ 7,151.25</p>	<p>Amended fee £ 4,767.50</p> <p>Refund £ 4,767.50</p>	Refund £0

9. Study Abroad

9.1. For Study Abroad students, the programme fees are charged as follows:

- Completion of up to 25% of the programme – 25% of fees charged
- Completion of up to 50% of the programme – 50% of fees charged
- Completion of up to 100% of the programme – 100% of fees charged

10. Refund of deposits

10.1. The following relates to the refunding of deposits following a withdrawal from a programme **after a student has fully registered**:

- Deposits will be included in refund calculations and refunded to the payer.

- 10.2. For deposits paid where **registration** has not been completed, the deposit will not be refundable except in circumstances outlined in the [International Deposits Refund Policy](#).

11. Suspension of study

- 11.1. The refund policy will also apply to eligible students within this policy who formally suspend from study.
- a. As per section 7 ([Refunds for undergraduate \(UG\) students](#)) no fees will be charged if the start date for suspension of study is within the first two weeks of their teaching course.
 - b. If they suspend after the first two weeks and paid a deposit, this can be used to secure their course place the following academic year if returning to study.

Appendix 1: Key staff dissemination list

- 1.1. Director of Education and Student Success
- 1.2. Faculty Heads of Student Administration
- 1.3. Faculty Managers
- 1.4. Director of Global Engagement
- 1.5. School Manager, Graduate School of Education
- 1.6. Head of Transactional Services
- 1.7. Secretary's Office
- 1.8. Deputy Head of Planning and Business Intelligence