

International sponsored student policy

This policy outlines the academic and financial responsibilities of international sponsored students and the University of Bristol. [Home sponsored students](#) are not covered by this policy.

International sponsored students are overseas fee payers who are funded by an organisation (a sponsor) to attend the University of Bristol. See <https://www.bristol.ac.uk/students/support/finances/pay-your-fees/sponsored/> for more information on what an international sponsor is.

A sponsor's commitment to funding is outlined in a financial guarantee letter. This may be referred to as a sponsor letter.

There are specific requirements and responsibilities that international sponsored students and the University agree to meet:

- [Financial requirements and responsibilities](#)
- [Academic requirements and responsibilities](#)

Financial requirements and responsibilities

International sponsored student responsibilities

Students agree to:

- submit a financial guarantee letter (that complies with the [financial guarantee letter checklist](#)) to international-sponsors@bristol.ac.uk by a given date at the beginning of each academic year. Deadlines and instructions for submitting a financial guarantee letter can be found on the [international sponsored students webpage](#).
- take responsibility for any mistakes in their financial guarantee letter and re-submit a corrected version to international-sponsors@bristol.ac.uk as soon as possible.
- comply with any requests made by their sponsor to ensure a smooth payment process. This might include:
 - uploading a [student status letter](#) to the sponsor's portal
 - uploading a copy of an invoice or
 - uploading a document that specifies additional costs
- inform the International Sponsors Team of any specific requirements from their sponsor when submitting their financial guarantee letter.
- make sure sponsors pay the agreed fees outlined in their financial guarantee letter.

Financial guarantee letter checklist

Financial guarantee letters must be on official headed paper from the sponsor organisation. Financial guarantee letters must include:

- the student's name
- the programme or course of study
- the name of the university
- the name and contact details of the official financial sponsor

- the official stamp or signature of the official financial sponsor
- the date the letter was issued. This should be within 12 months of the start date of the course/programme, unless the letter explicitly states that it is valid for a longer period.
- the length of the sponsorship and the academic years it's valid for
- **either** the amount of the sponsorship and breakdown of what it is to be applied to, for example, 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.

If no breakdown is provided, the full amount will be applied to tuition fees and any remaining to bench fees (if applicable). It is the student's responsibility to provide this breakdown from their sponsor.

Student liability

If a student does not submit a financial guarantee letter by the deadline, they will be liable for the tuition fees for that year.

Students are liable for any costs not explicitly covered by their financial guarantee letter.

If a sponsor does not pay the agreed fees, this debt could be transferred to the student and could prevent graduation or award of degree certificate.

Storing and sharing information

Sponsor letters are submitted to, and centrally kept by, the International Sponsors team. All letters are stored in accordance with UK Data Protection legislation and are only used by teams within the University that are required to view this information.

University of Bristol's responsibilities

The University agrees to:

- not raise an invoice to a sponsor without a financial guarantee letter (that complies with the [financial guarantee letter checklist](#)).
- provide a [student status letter](#) (by request) for each year of study, including fee information if necessary.
 - If students need to confirm specific details not included in a standard status letter, they can [request a bespoke letter](#).
- only invoice sponsors for funding detailed in the financial guarantee letter.
- issue invoices in accordance with the requirements of the sponsor and include the sponsor's reference number where applicable.
- make students aware that:
 - they are liable for any costs not explicitly covered by the financial guarantee letter
 - if a sponsor does not pay by the agreed times, the debt may be transferred to the student and could prevent graduation or the award of a degree certificate
 - it is the student's responsibility to ensure sponsors pay the amounts specified in the financial guarantee letter. Students can see a "Sponsor balance breakdown" on their financial statement, which will show if any fees their sponsor owes are outstanding.

Academic requirements and responsibilities

International sponsored student's responsibilities

International sponsored students must comply with the University of Bristol's academic regulations. It is also the student's responsibility to ensure that they comply with the conditions of their funding, outlined by their sponsor.

All students must ensure they fully understand:

- the terms and conditions of their sponsor agreement, and notify the University as soon as possible if there are any areas of conflict
- that the terms and conditions of their sponsorship cannot overrule those agreed with the University of Bristol at registration
- any consequences set out by their sponsor that may occur if they do not comply with the terms and conditions.

Areas of conflict

Areas of conflict can occur if the University's regulations clash with the requirements set out by a sponsor. Students must notify their supervisor or personal tutor about any potential conflicts as soon as possible.

The University cannot deviate from its academic regulations. However, if a student notifies the University about a potential conflict in good time, the University will do its best to advise and work with the student with the intention of finding a solution that both parties accept; although this cannot be guaranteed.

Examples of areas of conflict

What follows is not an exhaustive list. There may be other examples.

The length of a course or programme

The time allowed by the University to complete a programme of study may be different to the time that the sponsor permits or will fund.

The suspension of studies

The University's regulations allow students to suspend their studies for medical or personal reasons. Periods of suspension are not counted towards the total period of study by the University. However, sponsors may still count this time as part of the funding period.

University of Bristol responsibilities

The University will:

- provide academic progress reports for sponsors at key points during the year
- not routinely share any personal details related to extenuating circumstances, academic investigations or wellbeing matters without the student's specific consent.

Consent to share academic progress

The university will only share personal data pertinent to the running of the sponsorship/scholarship and will be kept to the minimum required. Students have the right to withdraw consent for this information to be shared at any time, but students must accept any consequences of this information not being shared with their sponsor/ that this could negatively affect their agreement with their sponsor. Consent can be withdrawn by emailing international-sponsors@bristol.ac.uk.

Faculty office contacts

If students identify a potential area of conflict or have any concerns about academic requirements and responsibilities, they should contact their personal tutor or supervisor and faculty office.

Arts, Law and Social Sciences

Arts

UG: artf-ugoffice@bristol.ac.uk

PGT: artf-pgtooffice@bristol.ac.uk

PGR: artf-pgroffice@bristol.ac.uk

Law and Social Sciences

UG: fssl-ug@bristol.ac.uk

PG taught: fssl-pgt@bristol.ac.uk

PG research: fssl-pgr@bristol.ac.uk

Health and Life Sciences

Health Sciences

fhs-fem@bristol.ac.uk

Life Sciences

UG and PGT: fls-taught@bristol.ac.uk

PG research: fls-pgenquiries@bristol.ac.uk

Science and Engineering

Sciences

science-fem@bristol.ac.uk

Engineering

engf-fem@bristol.ac.uk