

HE Fees and Finance Policy

Section 1 Introduction

The purpose of this document is to outline details of our tuition fee policy for the College's Higher Education students studying in the 2020/21 academic year. This policy is updated annually.

The College sets its fees in line with government policies and currently charges fees below the basic rate so that the cost of its courses are competitive and affordable for local students.

Choosing to study Higher Education at the College is a big decision and a great investment in your future. It is also a big financial investment, so it is important to be aware of the cost of tuition and other essential rules such as when fees must be paid, or when you might be entitled to a refund.

All students are personally liable for the payment of their fees relating to their studies, unless your offer letter expressly informs you otherwise. If payment is to be made by a third party, i.e. Student Finance England, employer or other sponsor, or by a parent or guardian, then it is the responsibility of the student to ensure this is arranged before any payments are due.

The College can provide advice and support if things go wrong or if students get into financial difficulties; our contact details and other useful information can be found at the end of this document.

1.1 Fee information

Calculating tuition fees

Tuition fees are payable for each year of a student's course. The level of tuition fee payable by a student will depend on:

- *Residential status*; whether a student is a Home/EU or international fee payer, the definition of which can be found at www.ukcisa.org.uk. Students are assessed for Home/EU fees status during the admissions process. The fee status will normally stay with the student for the remainder of their course and is not transferable between individuals
- *Course of study*; each course has an agreed fee. The College sets its fees annually in line with government policies and guidelines and these are included within this policy. Some courses do attract a higher fee
- *Attendance*; the fee amount a student will pay may be reduced if they withdraw, suspend or defer their studies before the 100% fee liability point. The reduction in the fee will be based on the date of the change in relation to the College liability dates, for which see Section 1.4 below
- *Start date*; the fee payable will depend on the year that a student starts their studies

The fee payable by a student for 2020/21 will be included with their Offer (the formal offer of a place) and/or the Notification of Fees email sent to students shortly after registration.

1.2 Residential status

The assessment to decide whether a student will be classed as a Home/EU or international fee payer will depend on numerous factors such as:

- nationality
- immigration status in the UK/EEA*
- where a student has been living
- what the student has been doing for the three years prior to the start of their course

Assessments of fee status are carried out during the admissions process and take into account the circumstances of each applicant. If the College is unable to determine the residential status of an applicant a questionnaire will be sent to the applicant requesting additional information.

Once fee status has been assessed it is not usually possible for this to be changed. If a student starts a **new** course, then the fee status can be re-assessed if circumstances have changed since the start of the original course.

* At the point of writing the Government has confirmed that EU students commencing study in 2020/21 will be able to access the same financial arrangements as Home students for the duration of their course.

1.3 Other tuition related costs

The College tries to keep any additional costs to a minimum. However, some courses do attract additional costs for activities such as field trips. Students are advised about any additional costs alongside their Offer. This will detail these costs and whether they are a mandatory or optional part of the course.

FEES AND FINANCE POLICY



1.4 Fee liability dates

Students become liable for each academic year's tuition fees once they enter into the Learning Agreement with the College. The fee liability points for HE at the college for 2020/21 are illustrated in the table below:

Student starting in Semester A	Amount due
Until 5 October 2020	No fee liability
From 5 October 2020	25% of tuition fees
18 January 2021	50% of tuition fees
19 April 2021	100% of tuition fees
Students starting in Semester B	Amount due
Until 1 February 2021	No fee liability
From 1 February 2021	25% of tuition fees
3 May 2021	50% of tuition fees
9 August 2021	100% of tuition fees

Barnfield Students on University of Bedfordshire programmes	Amount due
28 September 2020*	25% of tuition fees
25 January 2021	50% of tuition fees
19 April 2021	100% of tuition fees

*N.B. 14 day cooling-off period from date of offer for students to withdraw with no financial liability.

1.5 University of Hertfordshire

There is some scope for refunds to be paid, with this outlined in the College's Refund and Compensation Policy. Fees may be paid in one of the following three ways:

- Full payment of annual course fee at the start of each academic year
- Monthly Direct Debits payable in equal instalments (or as near equal as practicable) across the duration of the course
- A loan from the Student Loan Company

1.6 University of Bedfordshire

The liability points for self-funding or (non-SLC) sponsored students are as follows:-

Within 8 weeks from start date of course = 65% of the full tuition fee*

After 8 weeks from start date of course = 100% of the full tuition fee

1.7 Payment of tuition fees

Students who are eligible and have applied for a Tuition Fee Loan will have their fees paid directly to the College by the Student Loans Company. For all other students, tuition fees must be paid in line with the liability dates outlined in Section 1.4.

The Student Loans Company will make the first payment directly to the student once they have fully registered onto their course, provided that their application is fully approved and the declaration has been returned. The second and third payments will be made four and seven months after the course start date respectively.

If an employer or other sponsor is paying the tuition fees the student will need to provide a completed and signed sponsor form at enrolment. **The student, unless your offer letter expressly informs you otherwise, will be liable for the fees if they do not provide the form or if the sponsor does not pay the fees.**

Fees can be paid credit card, debit card or cash (pounds sterling).

1.8 Sanctions for non-payment of tuition fees

The College provides information, advice and support to students who find themselves in financial difficulty or have had their funding delayed. Further details can be found on the College's website or through visiting Student Support.

The College encourages any student unable to pay their tuition fees to contact the College's Student Administration team to discuss a payment plan or alternative sources of funding as early as possible.

However, if a student has not paid the applicable instalment of their tuition fees within 28 days of the liability date, or has not made alternative arrangements which are acceptable to the College, the College may (without affecting any other right or remedy available to it) do one or more of the following:

- (i) withdraw the facilities of the College intranet, which will prevent the student from accessing course material, submitting assignments or registering for award ceremonies
- (ii) withdraw the student from their course
- (iii) bar the student from returning in the following year
- (iv) bar the student from attending his/her graduation ceremony

The College may also take more formal steps to recover any unpaid tuition fees, such as engaging a debt collection agency and/or commencing legal proceedings. If it does so, the College reserves the right to require the student to pay in addition any costs and expenses (including legal costs) reasonably incurred by the College in recovering the unpaid sums. The College also reserves the right to charge the student interest on the unpaid sums on a daily basis at an annual interest rate of 2% above the base lending rate of Lloyds Bank plc until all outstanding sums and interest are paid.

The College will withhold examination results from students in debt, but may issue such results in non-standard format to enable students to undertake any referred/deferred assessment. The College will not normally bar the student from attending resit examinations, provided that arrangements have been made with Student Finance to pay the fee or other debt.

Any sanctions will be lifted as soon as the student's debt has been cleared in full.

Students who have withdrawn or applied to suspend their studies will still be contacted to pay any outstanding debt. Students will not be entitled to resume their studies or apply to study a new course until all outstanding debt has been cleared in full.

1.9 When tuition fees change

The fees contained in this document are those that have been set for the 2020/21 academic year.

Please note that the fees set for future academic years may be higher. The College will determine fees in accordance with the following:

- Tuition fees are fixed for the duration of the course at the amounts contained in this document and will not therefore be subject to annual increases. Except for,
 - New students, or for current students* who start a new course, or change their mode of study, the fees for their first academic year will be as published by the College at the relevant time
- For current students* who remain on the same course and mode of study (part time or full time), there will be no increase in fees
- Please also note that VAT is not currently charged on tuition fees. If in future the College is required to charge VAT (or some other tax) on tuition fees, this amount will be added to fees in addition to any of the increases referred to above

* "current student" means a student who is registered with the College in the 2020/21 academic year.

1.10 When there is a material change to a course or a course is discontinued

In accordance with Office for Students' requirements, the college has developed a Student Protection Plan: <https://www.westherts.ac.uk/media/6166/student-protection-plan-whc-group.pdf> which aims to minimise the impact on students of any material change or discontinuance of a course.

The Student Protect Plan for the University of Hertfordshire and the University of Bedfordshire can be found here:

University of Hertfordshire: <https://www.herts.ac.uk/study/your-offer-package>

University of Bedfordshire: <https://www.beds.ac.uk/howtoapply/money/policy/>

The College may sometimes make changes to a course, or occasionally even discontinue a course.

If a student is not happy with a change to a course (which may include the discontinuation of an individual module), the student may choose to leave the course, in which case the student will need to complete a Withdrawal Form as outlined in Section 1.11 below. The student's fee liability (which may include an entitlement to a partial refund) will then normally be calculated in the same way as in Section 1.11, i.e. the fee will be based on the date of receipt of the Withdrawal Form in comparison to the fee liability date. However, in the unlikely event of a change (or module discontinuation) that is likely to have a serious adverse effect on the student (for example, by prejudicing their future choice of career), the College will consider their fee liability on a case by case basis.

If a student's course is discontinued before they have completed their course (ie so that the student is not "taught out"), and if none of the alternative arrangements offered by the College are acceptable to the student, the College will refund the student's fees for their final year (or part year) of study on the course.

1.11 Implications for students who withdraw, etc.

Students will be liable for their tuition fees for the entire year of study unless they formally notify the College that they wish to withdraw, defer, or apply for a suspension of their studies.

Withdrawing from a course is a big decision and students are advised to seek as much advice as possible before taking this step. A student who withdraws will, subject to the College's Refund and Compensation Policy, ordinarily remain liable for fees up to and including the fee liability point indicated in section 1.4 above.

The College will contact students who are entitled to a refund within 28 days of receiving the completed Withdrawal Form. Where fees have been paid by way of tuition fee loan, the College will contact Student Finance England (or other UK funding body) to advise them of the change which will also impact on the student's maintenance entitlement.

If a student requests to suspend their studies, the quantum of the fee liability remains the same, but is deferred to when their studies subsequently resume.

1.12 Fees for 2020/21

Fees vary dependent upon the academic year in which the student began the course:

Full time & Part time Home/EU Fees – Standard Courses

Provision	If you started in 2017/18	If you started in 2018/19	If you started in 2019/20 or 2020/21
Foundation/Extended Degree (in partnership with University of Hertfordshire)	£6,000	£6,165	£6,165
HND (except Music)	£4,500	£4,500	£6,165
HNC/D (Barnfield)	£4,900	£4,900	£6,165
HND Music	£4,680	£4,680	£6,165
Foundation Degrees/Certificate in Education/ Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (in partnership with University of Bedfordshire)	N/A	£6,000	£6,165

All Channel Island students entering Higher Education for the first time in 2020/21 or commencing a new course will be subject to this new fee regime and will be considered as Home/EU students as above.

Returning Channel Island students' fees will be dependent upon the fees set by the appropriate authority at that time.

Isle of Man - <http://www.gov.im/categories/education,-training-and-careers/student-grants>

Guernsey - <http://www.education.gg/unifunding>

Jersey - <http://www.gov.je/Working/Careers/16To19YearOlds/EnteringHigherEducation/FinancingHigherEducationCourses/Pages/index.aspx>

Date of Issue	Authorised by
September 2020	CLG

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