



Tuition Fees Policy

For any matters not covered by this policy, please speak with the Executive Director of Finance

Version	3.0
Ratified by	SMG
Author	Executive Director of Finance
Reference Source (if applicable)	
Date approved	26.07.19
Effective from	01 August 2019 (start of the 2019/20 academic year)
Review date	
Target audience	All AECC University College students, including students who are staff
Policy location	SIP

Contents

1.	Introduction.....	3
2.	Definitions.....	4
2.1.	Currency.....	4
2.2.	Period of Registration.....	4
2.3.	New Student (Full-time and Part-time).....	4
2.4.	Continuing Student (Full-time and Part-time).....	5
2.5.	Course Level Fees.....	5
2.6.	Unit Fees.....	5
2.7.	Standard Fee Coverage.....	5
2.8.	Resits and Repeats.....	5
2.9.	Materials Fees.....	6
2.10.	Reimbursement.....	6
3.	Fees Setting And Notification Process.....	7
3.1.	Fees Setting.....	7
3.2.	Fees Promise.....	7
3.3.	Notification / Publication Of Fees.....	7
4.	Collection / Payment Of Fees (Undergraduate And Postgraduate Full Time Courses And Access to Higher Education Diploma Course).....	8
4.1.	General.....	8
4.2.	Methods Of Payment.....	8
4.3.	Overpayments.....	8
4.4.	Tuition Fee Loans From The Student Loans Company (SLC).....	8
4.5.	Self-funded Students.....	9
4.6.	Applicants With Refugee Status.....	9
4.7.	Student Fee Liability And Liability Periods.....	10
5.	Collection / Payment Of Fees (Postgraduate Part Time Courses).....	11
5.1.	General.....	11
5.2.	Methods Of Payment.....	11
5.3.	Overpayments.....	11
5.4.	Payment Of Tuition Fees.....	12
5.5.	Postgraduate Loans From The Student Loan Company (SLC).....	12
5.6.	Student Fee Liability And Liability Periods.....	13
6.	Collection / Payment Of Fees (CPD And Short Courses).....	14
6.1.	General.....	14
6.2.	Methods Of Payment.....	14
6.3.	Delegate Fee Liability And Liability Periods.....	14
7.	Scholarships And Bursaries.....	15
8.	Discounts.....	16
8.1.	General.....	16
8.2.	AECC University College Alumni Discount.....	16
8.3.	Staff Family Discount.....	16
8.4.	Staff Discount.....	17
8.5.	Early Payment Discount (Overseas And ELQ students).....	17
8.6.	Early Payment Discount (Part-Time Postgraduate courses).....	17
8.7.	Deferred Assessment / Reassessment Discount (Part-Time Postgraduate courses).....	17

9.	Debt / Failure To Pay On Time	18
9.1.	General.....	18
9.2.	What To Do If You Are Struggling To Pay Your Fees	18
9.3.	Consequences Of Failing to Pay Fees on Time	18
9.4.	Hardship Related Fee Deferral Loan	19
10.	Student Rights To Complain Or Dispute Fees And Other Charges	21
11.	Cancellation, Withdrawal, Repeating Study And Study Breaks.....	22
11.1.	Cancellation Of Registration (New Students Only, Excluding CPD And Short Courses).....	22
11.2.	Withdrawal.....	22
11.3.	Repeating Study.....	23
11.4.	Study Breaks	23
12.	Refunds And Compensation (Under Normal Circumstances)	25
12.1.	Refunds Following Cancellation Or Withdrawal (Except CPD And Short Courses).....	25
12.2.	Refunds Following Cancellation Or Withdrawal (CPD And Short Courses Only)	25
12.3.	Compensation	25
13.	Refunds And Compensation (Under Exceptional Circumstances)	26
13.1.	General.....	26

1. Introduction

- 1.1.1 This Fees Policy (“the policy”) provides guidance to all students studying at AECC University College (“University College), whether full-time or part-time.
- 1.1.2 This policy does not state specific fee levels for each course, these can be found on our website within the ‘Course Fees’ sub-section of each course.
- 1.1.3 It is intended that this policy will offer guidance on:
- how fees are set and how students are notified;
 - how fees are collected / can be paid;
 - scholarships, bursaries and discounts available;
 - debt and what students should do if they are struggling to pay their tuition fees;
 - help available to students experiencing financial difficulties;
 - how to make a complaint or dispute fees and other charges;
 - how fees will be dealt with in the event of cancellation, withdrawal, repeating study and study breaks;
 - consequences of failing to pay tuition fees on time;
 - details of compensation and refunds available under certain circumstances (as required by the Office for Students).
- 1.1.4 Students retain ultimate liability for payment of their fees, even if they are sponsored by a third party.
- 1.1.5 In applying this policy, the University College will at all times seek to be sympathetic and understanding of individual student financial circumstances.
- 1.1.6 The University College reserves the right to correct administrative errors and to recover any associated shortfall in tuition fees, but will consider mitigating circumstances on a case-by-case basis to determine a payment plan if deemed appropriate.
- 1.1.7 In relation to tuition fees, in the event of any apparent conflict between this policy and any other document or publication from the University College, this policy has precedence.
- 1.1.8 It is important that students keep their address details up-to-date, by emailing Registry (registry@aecc.ac.uk), as these will be used for communications about outstanding payments. When communicating with a student, the University College will normally post letters to the student’s term-time address during standard term times and to the student’s home address at other times. However, the University College may send letters to either or both addresses where it believes this is appropriate. Electronic communications for all students will be sent to the student’s University College email address. The University College reserves the right to send electronic communications to any private email address that the student may have supplied. Students are expected to check for messages on their University College email address at regular intervals.

2. Definitions

2.1. Currency

All fees published by the University College are in pounds (GBP, £) sterling. Fee information will be published in other currencies only where explicitly required by regulatory or external bodies and only as needed. Any publication in currencies other than pounds (GBP, £) will be based on the exchange rate applicable at the time the amount is calculated, the University College cannot be held responsible for changes in global financial markets or currency exchange rates. The fee paid will be the pounds (GBP, £) sterling rate in force when the student enrolls on the course; all fees must be paid in pounds (GBP, £) sterling.

2.2. Period of Registration

Students register at the start of each academic year, the usual duration of which is a maximum of one year (12 months). At the end of this period, students are required to register again for their next academic year.

The fee policy in place at the start of a student's first academic year remains in effect for the duration of that academic year and will be revised and updated on an annual basis. Revised versions apply to each subsequent academic year.

Students deferring their place at the University College will pay fees applicable in year of entry not year of application. Usually students taking up a place will be charged the fees applicable to their course at the time they actually commence study.

2.3. New Student (Full-time and Part-time)

A student starting a new course at the University College in the current academic year.

Or

A student starting a new course at the University College in the current academic year and where the course is at a different level (e.g. postgraduate, not undergraduate) from any course taken during the previous academic year.

Or

A student who is continuing the same course at the University College following an authorised break from study of more than one academic year, including part-time students who have up to 5 years to complete their course.

Or

A student changing their mode of study (e.g. from full-time to part-time). This is distinct from changing to a part-time mode of attendance while still registered on a full-time course.

Or

A student 'topping up' a higher education qualification (e.g. from Foundation degree to an Honours degree) following a break in study of more than one academic year.

2.4. Continuing Student (Full-time and Part-time)

A student who is continuing the same course at the University College as in the previous academic year.

Or

A student who is continuing the same course at the University College as in the previous academic year or following an authorised break from study of up to one full academic year.

Or

A student 'topping up' a higher education qualification (e.g. from Foundation degree to an Honours degree) with no break in study or a break in study of up to one full academic year.

2.5. Course Level Fees

Course fees include all compulsory elements needed for students to meet the minimum learning outcomes of the course. In some courses, optional additional costs may be incurred (e.g. field trips, materials, professional body membership).

Tuition fee levels may differ between courses and a student will be charged the fee appropriate to the course on which they are registered. Students transferring during the academic year from one course to another where the fees charged for the second course are different to the fee charged for the first, the student would be required to pay the fee appropriate to the new course.

In such cases, either students will be required to pay more for the higher cost new course or they may be entitled to a refund depending on any charges due for any course/unit withdrawal associated with the original course.

2.6. Unit Fees

All units at the University College carry a credit rating and the fees charged for a unit reflect the number of credits a student can achieve on completion of the unit. Unit fees include all compulsory elements needed for students to meet the minimum learning outcomes of the unit. In some units, optional charges may be incurred (e.g. field trips, materials, professional body membership).

2.7. Standard Fee Coverage

The standard fee will cover a student for a first sit and one resit at all units necessary to complete an academic year of a course.

2.8. Resits and Repeats

Resit – With the exception of the MSc Medical Ultrasound course, students who do not pass a unit at the first sit will get an automatic resit in which they will be reassessed in the component(s) they did not pass. There is no charge for a resit taken within the academic year. With respect to the MSc Medical Ultrasound course please see 'Important Information Additional costs'.

Repeat – With exception of part-time postgraduate students all students who have failed a unit or other credit-bearing element of their course and are registered for a full academic year of repeat study are liable to pay a repeat tuition fee. The repeat tuition fee will normally be calculated with reference to the number of modular units being repeated as a proportion of the equivalent standard academic year and subject to the full time/part time definitions laid out above. For part-time postgraduate students who are undertaking a first attempt, second attempt or repeat please refer to 5.4.4.

2.9. Materials Fees

Students may be required to pay for additional materials for some courses. See 'Important Information Additional Costs' on the website.

2.10. Reimbursement

Should it be necessary for the University College to reimburse a student, every effort will be made to use the same method by which payment was received. If this is not possible then the Student Finance Office will contact the student regarding alternative refund methods.

3. Fees Setting And Notification Process

3.1. Fees Setting

The University College reviews its fees, charges and fee policy annually, the Board of Governors has overall responsibility for the University College's fee framework. Tuition fees are likely to be subject to annual increases reflecting increases in costs of delivery but are set at least one year in advance.

The upper limit that an institution may charge funded undergraduate full-time UK and EU students for their tuition fee is currently set by the UK Government. All other tuition fees are set by the Board of Governors of the University College.

The University College reserves the right to amend and alter its fees following appropriate internal scrutiny and consultation. Changes will only be made as allowed by the terms of this policy. Students on courses where whole duration fees are published or where year on year fee increases are specified in advance will not have additional fee changes made during the course of their registration unless a break in study occurs.

All fees are rounded up to the nearest one pound (GBP, £) therefore where part time fees are calculated based on a pro rata per credit charge, the total fee may vary from the full time equivalent fee.

3.2. Fees Promise

Unless required to do so by the UK Government, the University College will not change fees for any funded undergraduate full-time UK and EU students for the term of their course unless a break in study occurs.

The University College will not increase any non-funded full-time tuition fees for existing students on award bearing courses by more than the UK Retail Price Index (RPI) at the time of setting the fees +1%. As a guide only, the University College recommends that all non-funded and part-time students on award bearing courses budget for an annual tuition fee increase of 5%.

The fees promise does not apply to CPD or short courses.

3.3. Notification / Publication Of Fees

Tuition fees and additional charges are published on the University College's website.

Information about tuition fees and additional charges is issued to students with their offer letter. Offer letters to applicants are based on the information declared at the time of application but the tuition fees may be adjusted at registration if any key fact has not been taken into account previously.

4. Collection / Payment Of Fees (Undergraduate And Postgraduate Full Time Courses And Access to Higher Education Diploma Course)

4.1. General

All students are personally responsible for ensuring that payments of tuition fees and other charges incurred in their name are received by the University College before the deadlines outlined within this policy.

The University College assigns all students a 'cohort' when they start a new course registration and this cohort is used to determine the fees and fee regime applicable to each student. A student's cohort will change each time they take up a new course registration or return from a break in study.

4.2. Methods Of Payment

Payment of fees can be paid by:-

Credit card or debit card - either on the telephone (+44 (0)1202 436289), or in person at the Student Finance Office. Please note the University College does not accept payments by American Express.

Bank transfer - the University College's bank details are as follows:-

Bank:	HSBC Bank plc
Address:	15 High Street, Christchurch, Dorset BH23 1AF
Sort Code:	40 - 46 - 19
Account Number:	51073796
IBAN Number:	GB52HBUK40461951073796
Bank Identifier Code:	HBUKGB4B

All students must quote their name and student number (if known) or course when sending a payment by this method.

Cash or sterling banker's draft - in person only at the Student Finance Office, which is open from 9am to 1pm each day from Monday to Friday.

4.3. Overpayments

If a student who has withdrawn or is in their final year of a programme makes an overpayment of less than £20.00 the University College is not obliged to refund that overpayment due to the administrative costs of repayment exceeding this sum. Instead it will be treated as a donation to the University College.

4.4. Tuition Fee Loans From The Student Loans Company (SLC)

The SLC works with Student Finance England, Student Finance Wales, the Student Awards Agency for Scotland, Student Finance NI and Higher Educational Providers to provide support for British and EU undergraduate students in the UK.

For undergraduate students who have arranged a loan with the SLC to cover the cost of their tuition fees, the SLC will pay the fees directly to the University College.

An undergraduate student wishing to rely upon SLC funding for payment of their fees directly to the University College must provide evidence at the point of registration of either the SLC's approval of funding or that a plausible application for SLC funding has been submitted.

Undergraduate Students who require funding from the SLC must apply for funding for each academic year.

For postgraduate students who have arranged a postgraduate loan with the SLC to assist with their course costs, the SLC will pay the loan directly to the students. Please see paragraph 0 re payment of tuition fees.

Students who have applied to the SLC must be aware that paragraph 0 will apply if such funding is not granted.

4.5. Self-funded Students

Students not eligible to, or not electing to, obtain tuition fee loans from the SLC are normally required to pay their fees in full on or before enrolment.

Overseas students and people studying for a qualification which is Equivalent or Lower Qualification (ELQ) than they have previously achieved paying non-funded fees are entitled to a discount of £60.00 if all their tuition fees are paid within 4 weeks of the start of Term 1. This discount should be deducted from the payment made.

Students undertaking a full-time undergraduate, postgraduate or Access to Higher Education Diploma course may elect to pay their tuition fees in instalments by contacting the Student Finance Office (studentfinance@aecc.ac.uk). If opting to pay in instalments a minimum of 33.34% of the tuition fee must be paid on or before enrolment or the first day of the academic year for continuing students. The second instalment of a minimum of 33.33% must be paid on or before the first day of Term 2. The third instalment of the balance of the tuition fees owed must be paid on or before the first day of Term 3.

4.6. Applicants With Refugee Status

Students with refugee status will normally be charged the fee level appropriate to their country of origin until such time as the formal right to domicile in the UK is granted by the Home Secretary. Where a change of fee status occurs part-way through the academic year, the revised fee will be applied as from the following academic year. Students will not be entitled to a fee refund where their refugee status changes partway through the academic year.

4.7. Student Fee Liability And Liability Periods

For the purposes of collection of fee charges each academic year is divided in to liability periods. Liability periods are aligned to term dates rather than to semester or teaching block dates.

The liability due from a student shall be calculated in accordance with the following table:-

Withdrawal Date	Liability as percentage of fee
Funded students in their first year of study	
First 14 calendar days from official start date of Term 1 (or registration if later)	0%
From calendar day 15 of the start date until the first day of Term 2	25%
From the second day of Term 2 to the first day of Term 3	50%
On or after the second day of Term 3	100%
Non-funded and Access to Higher Education Diploma students in their first year of study	
First 14 calendar days from official start date of Term 1 (or registration if later)	0%
From calendar day 15 of the start date until the first day of Term 2	33.33%
From the second day of Term 2 to the first day of Term 3	66.67%
On or after the second day of Term 3	100%
Continuing funded students	
From official start date of Term 1 until the first day of Term 2	25%
From the second day of Term 2 to the first day of Term 3	50%
On or after the second day of Term 3	100%
Continuing non-funded and Access to Higher Education Diploma students	
From official start date of Term 1 until the first day of Term 2	33.33%
From the second day of Term 2 to the first day of Term 3	66.67%
On or after the second day of Term 3	100%

5. Collection / Payment Of Fees (Postgraduate Part Time Courses)

5.1. General

All students are personally responsible for ensuring that payments of tuition fees and other charges incurred in their name are received by the University College before the deadlines outlined within this policy.

The University College assigns all students a 'cohort' when they start a new course registration and this cohort is used to determine the fees and fee regime applicable to each student. A student's cohort will change each time they take up a new course registration or return from a break in study.

5.2. Methods Of Payment

Payment of fees can be paid by:-

Credit card or debit card - either on the telephone (+44 (0)1202 436289), or in person at the Student Finance Office. Please note the University College does not accept payments by American Express.

Bank transfer - AECC's bank details are as follows:-

Bank:	HSBC Bank plc
Address:	15 High Street, Christchurch, Dorset BH23 1AF
Sort Code:	40 - 46 - 19
Account Number:	51073796
IBAN Number:	GB52HBUK40461951073796
Bank Identifier Code:	HBUKGB4B

All students must quote their name and student number (if known) or course when sending a payment by this method.

Cash or sterling banker's draft - in person only at the Student Finance Office, which is open from 9am to 1pm each day from Monday to Friday.

Sponsorship / by employer - if a student's fees are being paid by their employer or they are being sponsored and this sponsor requires an invoice to be sent to them, both the student and the sponsor will need to complete a Sponsorship Authorisation Form (see Appendix 1).

The fully completed form must reach the Student Finance Office either by email, studentfinance@aecc.ac.uk, or post, AECC University College (Finance Department), Parkwood Campus, Parkwood Road, Bournemouth, BH5 2DF, by 5.00pm on 22 October.

The University College is not obliged to accept any forms received after this date.

If the form is not received by 5.00pm on 22 October the student will be personally liable for payment of their own tuition fees. If a student pays their fees but later produces a completed Sponsorship Authorisation Form, then a refund may be made once the sponsor has paid the fees.

5.3. Overpayments

If a student who has withdrawn or is in their final year of a programme makes an overpayment of less than £20.00 the University College is not obliged to refund that overpayment due to the administrative costs of repayment exceeding this sum; instead it will be treated as a donation to the University College.

5.4. Payment Of Tuition Fees

Tuition Fees are payable on or before the day of enrolment for first year students and by 31 October for continuing students.

Students may elect to pay their tuition fees in full or in instalments. If opting to pay in instalments a minimum of 33.34% of the tuition fee must be paid on or before enrolment for new students and by 31 October for continuing students. The second instalment of a minimum of 33.33% must be paid on or before 1 January of that academic year. The third instalment of the balance of the tuition fees owed must be paid on or before the 1 April of that academic year.

If full payment of a student's tuition fees for that academic year are received by 31 October, students are entitled to an Early Payment 5% discount which should be deducted from the payment made. The student is responsible for ensuring that the payment is received by the University College before the deadline. The Early Payment Discount does not apply where students are eligible for another discount offered by the University College and referred to in section 8.

Students on part-time postgraduate courses are permitted to take an assessment, either as a first, subsequent or repeat unit attempt, in the academic year following undertaking the unit to which the assessment refers may apply for a discounted rate equivalent to one-third of the standard tuition fee per unit for the year of the assessment. To pay the reduced fee the student must not undertake any additional units during the same academic year as the repeat unit year. .

5.5. Postgraduate Loans From The Student Loan Company (SLC)

The SLC works with Student Finance England, Student Finance Wales, the Student Awards Agency for Scotland, Student Finance NI and Higher Educational Institutions to provide support for British and EU students in the UK.

Postgraduate loans from the SLC are a contribution towards costs and are paid directly to the student.

The student is responsible for ensuring that all tuition fees are paid according to the student's programme of study. Please see paragraph 0 re payment of tuition fees.

5.6. Student Fee Liability And Liability Periods

The liability due from a student shall be calculated in accordance with the following table:-

Withdrawal Date	Liability as percentage of fee
Students in their first year of study	
First 14 calendar days from official start date	0%
From calendar day 15 of start date – 30 November	33.33%
On or after 1 December	100%
Continuing students	
From official start date of Term 1 to 30 November	33.33%
On or after 1 December	100%

6. Collection / Payment Of Fees (CPD And Short Courses)

6.1. General

All delegates are personally responsible for ensuring that payments of course fees and other charges incurred in their name are received by the University College before the deadlines outlined within this policy.

The fee must be paid in full before the delegate will be allowed to attend the course.

The University College requires a minimum number of delegates for each course date and reserves the right to cancel or change any course dates if required, giving a minimum of 21 days' notice.

Delegates are advised to not book any non-refundable travel or accommodation (or incur any other such costs) prior to 21 days before the course date, as the University College is unable to refund any personal expenditure (including but not limited to travel and accommodation costs) that is incurred as a result of cancellations or changes (or for any other reason).

6.2. Methods Of Payment

- All payments should be made through the event booking system at the time of booking.

6.3. Delegate Fee Liability And Liability Periods

The liability due from a delegate shall be calculated in accordance with the following table:-

Withdrawal Date	Liability as percentage of fee
All students	
Up to 30 calendar days before the event.	0% Less £10.00 Administration Fee
Between 7 and 29 calendar days before the event	50% Less £10.00 Administration Fee
Less than 7 calendar days before the event	100%
If the course is cancelled by the University College	0%
If the course date(s) is / are changed by the University College and the delegate is unable to attend on the new date(s)	0%

7. Scholarships And Bursaries

Full details of all Scholarships and Bursaries offered by the University College are provided on the website at <https://www.aecc.ac.uk/about/how-we-work/latest-policies/>.

Students with outstanding tuition fees owing to the University College will not be entitled to any payment in relation to scholarships or bursaries administered by the University College unless an acceptable repayment plan is in place.

8. Discounts

8.1. General

All discounts are non-contractual and discretionary. The University College reserves the right to change the eligibility criteria, rules of use or the value of the discount given at any time. In exceptional circumstances or as a result of disciplinary action or the failure to pay, discounts may be restricted or withdrawn at any time and at the University College's discretion, either on an individual basis or University College wide.

Only one discount may be used each academic year / discounts may not be combined.

All discounts must be requested prior to enrolment in each academic year. Discounts will not be applied retrospectively or automatically.

It is the student's responsibility to request the discount and to prove that it applies to them. The University College may require documentary proof prior to applying a discount.

Discounts are subject to normal academic progression, discounts will not be applied where students have to repeat some or all of their programme.

8.2. AECC University College Alumni Discount

An 'AECC University College Alumni Discount' is available to all University College alumni enrolled on a postgraduate course delivered by the University College, except alumni who have graduated from the same course or course with similar content in the past five years.

The total the University College Alumni Discount available is 10% of the annual tuition fees for each year of the course (applied annually).

The University College Alumni Discount does not apply to students on the MSc Chiropractic course or where there is a special cohort rate which is already discounted.

8.3. Staff Family Discount

A 'Staff Family Discount' is available to all individuals who have an immediate family member working directly for the University College.

The total Staff Family Discount available is 10% of the annual tuition fees for each year of the course (applied annually).

The staff family member must be a permanent paid member of staff who has worked (full or part-time) for the University College for at least one full calendar year prior to the award of the Staff Family Discount. For clarity, this discount does not apply to family members of the University College governors.

The Staff Family Discount is only available for students studying an undergraduate, postgraduate or further education award bearing programme. The Staff Family Discount is not available for CPD or short courses.

The Staff Family Discount is applicable for the first and subsequent years but will cease to apply if the family member leaves the employment of the University College.

For the purposes of this section, an immediate family member means the student's:

- brother or sister
- parent or child
- husband, wife or civil partner

8.4. Staff Discount

Tuition fees may be paid for by their department for staff where their attendance is aligned to the University College's staff development policy. This is at the complete discretion of the University College and must be endorsed by their line manager. Where fees are not paid by their department, other discounts may apply as appropriate. .

8.5. Early Payment Discount (Overseas And ELQ students)

Overseas students and student studying for a qualification which is Equivalent or Lower Qualification (ELQ) than they have previously achieved paying non-funded fees are entitled to an Early Payment Discount of £60.00 if all their tuition fees are paid within 4 weeks of the start of Term 1. This Early Payment Discount should be deducted from the payment made. The student is responsible for ensuring that the payment is received by the University College before the deadline.

The Early Payment Discount only applies to students on full time undergraduate or postgraduate courses.

8.6. Early Payment Discount (Part-Time Postgraduate courses)

Part-time students are entitled to a 5% Early Payment Discount if full payment of their tuition fees are received by 31 October. This Early Payment Discount should be deducted from the payment made. The student is responsible for ensuring that the payment is received by the University College before the deadline.

8.7. Deferred Assessment / Reassessment Discount (Part-Time Postgraduate courses)

Students who are permitted to take an assessment, either as a first, subsequent or repeat attempt, in the academic year following undertaking the unit to which the assessment refers may apply for a discounted rate equivalent to one-third of the standard tuition fee for the year of the assessment. To qualify for the reduced fee, the student must not undertake any further units during the same academic year as the assessment/reassessment.

The Early Payment Discount referred to in section 8.6 does not apply in these cases.

9. Debt / Failure To Pay On Time

9.1. General

As stated at 0, students retain ultimate liability for payment of their fees and all other University College charges, even if they are sponsored by a third party. See section 9.2 for information on what to do if you are experience financial difficulties in paying your student fees.

9.2. What To Do If You Are Struggling To Pay Your Fees

The University College adopts a supportive approach to its students with regards to the collection of student fees and will try to accommodate the needs of its students wherever reasonable. If a student is having problems paying tuition fees, or any other monies owing, it is essential that the student contact the Student Finance Office (studentfinance@aecc.ac.uk) as soon as possible to discuss options available to them.

The University College can only help a student with payment matters if the Student Finance Office is fully aware of the student's situation and the student has taken reasonable steps to keep the Student Finance Office informed.

9.3. Consequences Of Failing to Pay Fees on Time

With section 9.2 in mind, it is important that students understand the potential consequences of failing to pay their fees on time or falling behind on their payment plan.

The University College will always seek to recover monies owed to it for tuition fees. In the event a student falls behind with their payment plan, or fails to meet the payment date of an invoice the University College will attempt to contact the student by email, telephone and letter. If the University College does not receive a reply and/or debts remain, sanctions will be applied.

Should a new student fail to pay tuition fees by the deadlines set out within this document, the following sanctions may be applied:

- withdrawal of library borrowing rights;
- withdrawal of student IT rights;
- disablement of student ID card and any controlled access privileges;
- withdrawal of the student from their course and deregistered as a student of the University College – in the case of students in the UK under a Tier 4 visa, this will result in confirmation to the UKVI that the University College will cease to be the immigration sponsor for that student.

Should an existing student fail to arrange to pay tuition fees and / or fails to meet agreed payment terms, all of the above-mentioned sanctions will be applied. In addition, the student may;

- not be permitted to re-register;
- not be issued with a final award certificate;
- not be permitted to attend the Graduation Ceremony;
- not be issued with any academic reference.

Fee remission, waiver and debt write-off are at the discretion of the Executive Director of Finance and Principal, and may occur in exceptional circumstances.

The University College will refer unpaid accounts to legal debt recovery and / or external agencies to pursue payment. A charge of £100 will be added to the account when such a transfer is made. In addition, the University College may exclude debtors from its premises and seek recovery through the courts, including recovery of all associated legal and court fees and charges.

Students who are withdrawn and deregistered because of non-payment of tuition fees will not normally be considered for re-registration until all debts to the University College have been settled, including all additional charges and interest, and will be required to pay all future fees in full prior to enrolment. A re-registration fee of £250 will also be charged for all re-registrations and this must be paid in full before re-registration can be finalised. Applications to resume studies in these circumstances must be in writing to the Academic Registrar, and will be considered on a case by case basis.

Withdrawal from a programme of study, even for a short period, may lead to students missing essential parts of their programme requiring additional time, possibly as much as an additional year, to complete their studies. This may affect any funding that the student may receive and their student visa (if the student requires one). Additional fees may also be incurred.

9.4. Hardship Related Fee Deferral Loan

In exceptional circumstances only, the University College may deem it appropriate to offer students a hardship related fee deferral loan ("hardship loan"). This is not a grant but an agreement to defer the payment of fees until after graduation. If a hardship loan is agreed to by both parties, a legally binding loan agreement will be put in place. The maximum value of the hardship loan will be equivalent to one year's academic fees. In very exceptional circumstances, the University College may issue more than one hardship loan to a student but this must be agreed by the panel; the student's academic performance will be taken into consideration when making this decision.

Students wishing to be considered for a Hardship Loan must submit a written application to the Executive Director of Finance, via the Student Finance Office. However, please note that applications **will not** be considered until the student can demonstrate that they have made all reasonable efforts to obtain finance from other sources (assistance and advice can be obtained from the Student Finance Office and Student Services).

Written applications should contain **all** of the following:

- a detailed personal budget for the remainder of the course, including all income and expenditure;
- details of how the student planned to fund their studies when they initially enrolled on the programme;
- a detailed explanation of the unforeseen and / or exceptional circumstances that occurred, which have rendered the above plan ineffective and resulted in the student being unable to fund their studies;
- a detailed summary of the actions taken by the student to obtain other funding sources;
- a detailed summary of the actions taken by the student to reduce their expenditure;
- details of all paid work being undertaken by the student, along with details of pay and hours;
- details of any assets held by the student that could be realised to fund their studies;
- details of people (e.g. family or friends) who may be able to assist the student in funding their studies.

Documentary supporting evidence should be included with the application. Where supporting evidence is missing or deemed to be inadequate, the University College may request further information / documentation.

The applicant should be aware that the University College may seek to independently verify aspects of the application and will assume that any person may be contacted as part of this process unless the applicant specifically indicates otherwise.

The provision of false and / or fraudulent information, statements and / or supporting documentation will be regarded as a serious offence and may result in disciplinary action.

Each application will be reviewed for completeness by the Executive Director of Finance before being approved for submission to a panel for assessment. The panel meeting will occur within 28 days of the date of approval by the Executive Director of Finance.

The panel will consist of the following individuals (a quorum of three panel members will be necessary for any decisions to be taken):

- Principal or Vice Principal
- Executive Director of Finance
- Academic Registrar
- Programme Leader or Head of School
- Student Union Manager or Student Services Manager

Applicants must attend the panel meeting to discuss their application and to answer questions. If the student does not attend the panel meeting, the panel will automatically reject the application.

The panel will inform the applicant of their decision within 28 days of the date of the panel meeting.

The applicant should be aware that where a Hardship Loan is taken, their degree certificate will not be issued until all fees, charges and interest have been fully repaid.

10. Student Rights To Complain Or Dispute Fees And Other Charges

Students who dispute other debts should contact the University College Student Finance office on 01202 436289 or email (studentfinance@aecc.ac.uk) as soon as possible. If the dispute cannot be resolved, the student may make a complaint under the Student Complaints Policy. Debt recovery action will not be pursued and the sanctions referred to above will not be applied whilst a complaint about an outstanding debt is subject to the Complaints Procedure.

Mitigating circumstances will be considered based on individual student circumstance(s) and any supporting documentation provided by the student. The decision made in relation to the payment of, or repayment plans for, any debts is at the discretion of the Executive Director of Finance and/or a delegated officer. The student may make a complaint under the Students Complaints Procedure if they disagree with any such decision.

11. Cancellation, Withdrawal, Repeating Study And Study Breaks

11.1. Cancellation Of Registration (New Students Only, Excluding CPD And Short Courses)

New students have a right to cancel their contract (registration) with the University College within 14 calendar days of the completion of that contract (registration). This applies to all new students registering at the University College at the start of the academic year meeting the definition of a new student (section 2.3). The University College has in place this policy to support students' right to 'cancel' their contract within a 14-day 'cooling off' period.

For 14 calendar days from the day after a student completes registration or for 14 calendar days from the day after the start of term, whichever is later, a student can withdraw from the University College without incurring financial penalty.

It is the student's responsibility to ensure that the University College Registry is notified of all cancellations in writing either by letter or email (registry@aecc.ac.uk) headed "CANCELLATION OF REGISTRATION". Students are not required to give a reason for their withdrawal.

The date of cancellation for student fee liability and liability period purposes will be the date on which the University College Registry receives the above notification. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that this notification reaches the University College in a timely fashion and before the end of the 14 day 'cooling off' period (as described above).

For SLC funded students, the University College will notify the SLC that the student has withdrawn. Individual tuition fee liability, payable by a Tuition Fee Loan, will be reduced to £nil and the SLC funding record will be closed. The SLC may additionally seek to reclaim any monies paid as part of maintenance support.

Students in receipt of funding from the SLC should notify the SLC that they have withdrawn from the University College under the terms of this 'cooling off' period and that fee liability is expected to be reduced to £nil.

If a refund is due to the student, this will be dealt with in line with section 12.1 of this policy.

At the end of this 'cooling off' period, withdrawal or suspension from the University College is subject to the withdrawal provisions, student fee liabilities and the liability periods outlined in this policy.

11.2. Withdrawal

New students who wish to withdraw after the 14 day 'cooling off' period (as defined in this policy) and continuing students wishing to withdraw at any time must inform the University College in writing (unless they have been withdrawn by the University College) and must complete an the University College Withdrawal Form (Available from the appropriate Programmes Office), which must be handed or emailed to the head of the appropriate programmes office.

The date of withdrawal for student fee liability and liability period purposes will be the date on which the University College Registry receives the above notification, not the date of last attendance. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that this notification reaches the University College in a timely fashion.

The University College will adjust the student's liability for tuition fees in accordance with this policy.

For SLC funded students, the University College will notify the SLC that the student has withdrawn and of the adjustment to the student's liability for tuition fees as a result of their withdrawal. If a refund is payable to SLC, the University College will pay it directly to SLC. Students must be aware that withdrawing after the official start date of a programme may affect how many years a student can get a student loan for. Students should, therefore, check with the SLC if they are thinking about withdrawing.

If additional payment is due, this must be paid in full (including all charges and interest) and received by the University College within 28 days of the date of withdrawal. See section 9 of this policy.

If a refund is due to the student, this will be dealt with in line with section 12.1 of this policy.

11.3. Repeating Study

All students who have failed a unit or other credit-bearing element of their course and are, at the decision of the Assessment Board, registered for a full academic year of repeat study are liable to pay a repeat tuition fee.

The repeat tuition fee will normally be calculated with reference to the number of modular units being repeated as a proportion of the equivalent standard academic year and subject to the full time/part time definitions laid out above.

11.4. Study Breaks

Any students wishing to take a study break at any time must inform the University College in writing (unless they have been suspended by the University College) and must complete a University College Study Break Form (Available from the appropriate Programmes Office), which must be handed or emailed to the head of the appropriate programmes office.

The date of start of the study break for student fee liability and liability period purposes will be the date on which the Student Finance Office receives the above notification or the date requested by the student, whichever is later, not the date of last attendance. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that this notification reaches the University College in a timely fashion.

The University College will adjust the student's liability for tuition fees in accordance with this policy.

For SLC funded students, the University College will notify the SLC that the student has taken a study break and of the adjustment to the student's liability for tuition fees as a result of their study break. If a refund is payable to SLC, the University College will pay it directly to SLC. Students should check with SLC how a study break will affect their ability to obtain funding from SLC for future years.

Where a student takes a study break part way through the academic year with the intention to return to their studies at the same time in the next academic year the University College will, at the discretion of the Executive Director, deduct any fees that were paid for the suspended year's study from the following year's fees.

Students should be aware that taking a study break may affect the level of their tuition fees for future years, see sections 2.3 and 2.4 of this policy.

If additional payment is due, this must be paid in full (including all charges and interest) and received by the University College within 28 days of the date of the start of the study break. See section 9 of this policy.

If a refund is due to the student, this will be dealt with in line with section 12.1 of this policy.

12. Refunds And Compensation (Under Normal Circumstances)

12.1. Refunds Following Cancellation Or Withdrawal (Except CPD And Short Courses)

The University College will aim to pay all refunds within 28 days of notification being received; however, occasionally this may not be possible.

The University College will make every effort to make a refund using the same method by which payment was received. If this is not possible, the Student Finance Office will contact the student to discuss alternative refund methods; this may result in a delay.

The requirements of the UK Money Laundering Regulations (MLR) will apply to all refunds, as interpreted by the University College.

12.2. Refunds Following Cancellation Or Withdrawal (CPD And Short Courses Only)

No refunds will be made for cancellations or withdrawals made less than 7 calendar days before the start of the course.

Delegates may send a substitute in their place so long as they inform the University College before the start of the course. This will incur an administration fee of £25, which must be paid in full before the substituted delegate can attend any part of the course.

Where a refund is due under the provisions of section 6.3 of this policy (delegate fee liability and liability periods for CPD and short courses):

- The University College will aim to pay all refunds within 28 days of notification being received;
- The University College will make every effort to make a refund using the same method by which payment was received. If this is not possible, the Student Finance Office will contact the payer directly to discuss alternative refund methods; this may result in a delay;
- The requirements of the UK Money Laundering Regulations (MLR) will apply to all refunds, as interpreted by the University College.

12.3. Compensation

No compensation will be paid under any circumstances.

13. Refunds And Compensation (Under Exceptional Circumstances)

13.1. General

Please refer to our 'Student Refund and Compensation Policy', which is available on our website.