

HE Tuition Fees and Charges Policy 2024-2025

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| Owner: Executive Director – Strategy & Systems Improvement | Related Strategies: Financial Regulations |
| Relevant to: All Staff | |

Office Use only:

| Corporate Intranet Family: | Approval Board/Committee/Group: | Approval/Re-approval Date: | Implementation Date: | Next Review Date: |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|---|--------------------------|
| HE | Finance, Employment and General Purposes Committee Executive Owner: Executive Director of Strategy and Systems Improvement | Approved October 2020 Reviewed September 2021, 2022 and 2023 | 31.10.2023 for new entrants from 1.8.2024 | September 2024 |

New Policy or Substantive Policy Review

| Version | Date | Policy Development Agreed by <i>(Executive Owner)</i> | Policy Development Author | Draft Policy Verified by | Policy Approval | Impact Assessment <i>(if applicable)</i> |
|---------|------|--|---------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|---|
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| Rationale for new or substantive policy review | Each year, in line with the <i>Higher Education Research Act</i> (HERA) 2017 the college must confirm the fees it intends to charge students on higher level programmes on the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications. This is developed in line with the college's Access and Participation Plan. |
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Please make explicit if change/review relates to procedures, guidelines and associated documents only

Periodic Policy Review / Change History

| Version | Date of Review / Revision | Description of Change | Reviewed By | Approved By <i>(Executive Owner)</i> |
|---------|---------------------------|--|-----------------|---|
| 1 | October 2020 | Policy previously incorporated into College Tuition Fees and Charges Policy 2019/20 but now separate to reflect different regulatory regime, legislation and deadlines | DCE/DP | EDFR |
| 2 | September 2021 | 9.1 Updated to include 2022/23 fees (Page 4-5) 9.3 fee liability for withdrawal amended as per Student Finance England methodology (Page 6) | VPHTS DCE/DP | EDF |
| 3 | September 2022 | 5. Responsibilities updated to include fee setting and appeal process 8. Links to guidance updated 9.1 Updated to include 2023-24 fees 9.7 Additional information added for clarity on fee charges 9.8 Title amendment and inclusion of appeal process | VPHE | EDF |
| 4 | September 2023 | 5. Responsibilities updated to include change of role titles for fee setting and appeal process 9.1 Updated to include 2024-25 fees | EDSSI | EDF |

Communication

To be agreed by Executive Leadership Team

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| Announcement on hub <input type="checkbox"/> | SLT email <input type="checkbox"/> |
| College newsletter <input type="checkbox"/> | All staff email <input type="checkbox"/> |
| SLT meeting <input type="checkbox"/> | Cascade brief <input type="checkbox"/> |
| External website <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Training needed (specify who) <input type="checkbox"/> |

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1. POLICY STATEMENT

Higher Education courses within this policy are those defined as such by the *Education Reform Act 1988* schedule 6. The college charges tuition fees for these courses in accordance with parameters set out in *Higher Education Research Act 2017*.

2. DEFINITIONS

HERA: Higher Education Research Act (2017)

OFS: Office for Students

APP: Access and Participation Plan

SLC: Student Loan Company

SFE: Student Finance England

3. PRINCIPLES

The key principles that underlie the fees and charges policy are:

- fees will be based within both the college's APP and within the guidance set out by regulatory bodies
- the cost of validating body registration and examination fees for all courses are contained within the policy
- students may pay their fees either through a loan from the SLC (where the student has an individual direct relationship with SFE), via an instalment plan or by being sponsored by a third party
- proof of payment must be demonstrated at the time of enrolment
- refunds will only be given where appropriate
- (except where stated in the course information as included or provided by the student's own bursary/grant funding) tuition fees shall not include provision of course books and individual's study materials, exam re-sit costs or retake costs for course modules. Fees do not include, and hence the college also expects students to pay separately for, non-essential activities e.g. photocopying and computer printing costs and for the costs of educational trips and visits, travel to and from college and meals and refreshments whilst at college
- the college will, wherever possible, enable and facilitate students to access other funds available to contribute to the fees and charges for those students who would otherwise have difficulty in paying these costs.

4. SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

The fees policy covers all Higher Education students on all modes and levels of teaching.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

The Governing Body is responsible for setting the policy by which the tuition and other fees payable to it are determined, in accordance with the [Instrument and Articles of Government](#) (Article 19 refers).

The Chief Executive and Principal, as Accounting Officer, is responsible for overall operation of the fees policy of the college.

The Executive Director of Strategy and Systems Improvement is responsible for updating, monitoring the implementation of, and evaluation of the policy and for considering applications for fee waivers.

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The Deputy Principal is responsible for the appeals process for tuition fee refund or waiver requests.

The Executive Director – Strategy & Systems Improvement is responsible for the setting of Higher Education tuition fees and ensuring that the Higher Education Tuition Fees are reviewed annually in line with Office for Student guidelines, the Access and Participation Plan, the Teaching Excellence Framework and with due regard for financial viability and market forces.

The Executive Director of Commercial and Operations is responsible for ensuring that fees are appropriately advertised to all prospective students.

The Head of Data Services and Exams is responsible for ensuring that the correct fees are captured in the college's system and accurate information is available to students throughout enrolment.

6. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

The following fees and charges will be implemented for the Academic Year commencing August 2023 onwards.

7. MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy is subject to annual review. Such review would normally take account of any changes to government funding policies, changes in the college's costs in providing programmes and market conditions, as appropriate.

8. SUPPORTING/RELATED DOCUMENTS

The college sets its fees in conjunction with devising its APP. The Regulatory guidance on this can be found here: <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/promoting-equal-opportunities/access-and-participation-plans/>

The OFS issues annual guidance on confirming fees and the current guidance can be found here: <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/8ca12b0b-5f39-4770-bc91-39ad139f8e93/annual-fee-information-collection-guidance.pdf>

Internal policy documents

Financial Regulations

Subcontracting Fees and Charges Policy

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9. REGULATIONS

9.1 Tuition Fees

The college reviews the tuition fees on an annual basis. HE Fees are in this policy (rather than the college's general Tuition Fees Policy) because they are set in line with Office for Students guidelines, the Access and Participation Plan, the Teaching Excellence Framework. The fees are also set with due regard for financial viability, and market forces. The fees for students starting a new HE course in 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 are as follows:

| Award | Mode | 2024/25 tuition fees per annum | 2023/24 tuition fees per annum |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| BA top up | Full time (1 year) | £7,950 | £7,500 |
| Foundation Degrees | Full time (2 years) | £7,950 | £7,500 |
| | Part time (3 years) | £5,300 | £5,000 |
| HND | Full time (2 years) | £7,950 | £7,500 |
| | HND top-up from HNC (1 year) | £7,950 | £7,500 |
| | HND top up Part Time (2 years) | £3,975 | £3,750 |
| HNC | Full time (1 year) | £7,950 | £7,500 |
| | Part time (2 years) | £3,975 | £3,750 |
| Initial Teacher Training | Part -Time | £4,700 | £4,500 |

Fees for repeated assessment with attendance will be calculated based on the number of credits to be re assessed at the rate applying when the module is retaken.

9.2 Other charges

Unless specified in the course information provided prior to application, the tuition fee covers all teaching delivery costs. Students will not be charged additional costs except for the following:

- **DBS checks** where the check is not required for participation in learning or where it is related to the learner's employer in which case the employer is responsible for the cost
- **Any examination or awarding body fees** incurred where a student chooses not to attend an examination without informing the college at least 48 hours in advance or where they cannot provide satisfactory evidence that failure to attend was unavoidable
- **Resit examination fees or awarding body fees** will apply for all students who choose to re-sit an examination previously sat with The Sheffield College. The re-sit fee for each exam will be the examination fee set by the relevant awarding body. Re-sit fees must be paid in full in advance. Students must re-sit the relevant exam at the first appropriate opportunity. After this, they will be required to pay the external candidate fee.

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- **Health and Safety clothing and equipment** which is necessary to undertake their programme of study and where the equipment will remain the property of the student once the course has been completed. Alternatively, students can borrow safety equipment / special clothing free of charge.
- **Materials for practical courses** e.g. art and design programmes, contributions will be voluntary, but a student who does not make the specified contribution will not be able to retain any practical work they have completed.
- **Trips or visits** undertaken which do not link to learning outcomes on the student's programme of study, a fee may be charged for such trips and visits but not for trips and visits that enable students to complete learning outcomes for their qualifications.

9.3 Withdrawals

Where a student withdraws from the course, the student's fee liability will mirror the SFE methodology (except where an employer / sponsor pays the fees), whereby a student's total fee liability is determined by confirmation of attendance at three liability points during the academic year.

| Date of liability | Fee Liability |
|---------------------------------------|---------------|
| After the start of term 1 | 25% |
| On the start date of term 2 | 50% |
| On the start of term 3 and thereafter | 100% |

Where a student withdraws from the course and a tuition fee loan is in place, there will be no further liability on the student for the element of the tuition fee not covered by the portion of the loan that has been received by the college as at the date of withdrawal. No refund of fees already paid will be given in this situation.

Where a student withdraws from the course and a tuition fee loan is not in place, the student will be liable for the portion of the tuition fee payable according to the SFE table above depending on the date of withdrawal.

Where an employer/sponsor pays:

- for a Higher Apprenticeship, the college will comply with relevant ESFA funding regulations
- for all other HE courses, the employer accepts liability for the full fees for the year and requests for refunds would only be considered in line with the Refunds Policy (section 9.6 refers).

9.4 Payment

Course fees are due and must be paid by the student **in full** at enrolment, unless:

- An employer has provided written authority to the college that they accept liability for the student's fees with invoicing details
- The student provides written evidence of a valid student loan, or career development loan funding
- The student has completed a direct debit or Instalment agreement to pay the fees.

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Students who do not secure loan finance from a funding body such as SFE or have their fees paid by their employer are advised to make arrangements to pay their tuition fees via a direct debit instalment plan unless they have made arrangements to pay their fees in full at enrolment.

Where an employer/sponsor has agreed to pay the fees, the college will invoice the employer/sponsor for the full annual fee at the beginning of the academic year. Should the employer/sponsor not settle the invoice within the payment terms, the college will invoice the student and will follow the procedure in section 9.5 to pursue the unpaid fee.

9.5 Debt and Debt Collection

If arrangements to pay tuition fees are not made by the student at the point of registration, the college will subsequently make every effort to remind students that fees are due. However, these are reminders only and students are responsible for paying fees on time whether reminders are received or not.

If a student fails to make arrangements to pay fees they will be withdrawn from their course. Even though they are no longer a student, they will still be liable to pay the portion of the tuition fee, per the SFE table above.

Students who agree an instalment plan with the college will receive written confirmation from the college of direct debit instalment dates and amounts at least ten days before the first payment is due. The college will not send reminders about individual instalments.

In the event of a failed instalment payment or cancelled direct debit, the option of payment by instalment will cease and all outstanding fees will be due immediately.

If a student knows in advance that a direct debit will fail, it is essential that they contact the Finance office immediately in person or telephone to agree alternative arrangements for payment.

If a student does not secure loan finance for their fees by the end of the calendar month in which they enrol, or the employer/sponsor does not pay the invoice, the college reserves the right to raise an invoice to the student at the beginning of the next calendar month, which must be settled immediately. The college may agree to settlement via a direct debit instalment plan. If the student does not pay the fee in full nor agree a payment plan, the college reserves the right to prevent the student from attending classes or participating in other teaching, learning or assessment activities until satisfactory arrangements for payment of all outstanding fees have been made.

On an exceptional basis, where the student has special extenuating circumstances, the Executive Director of Finance may approve an individual payment plan with a student. If the student fails to comply with the terms of an exceptional payment plan, the payment plan shall cease with immediate effect and any outstanding balance of fees will be due for immediate payment. Students experiencing financial difficulties should contact the Finance office as soon as they are aware of the problem.

Where students breach the terms of an instalment agreement, the college will use appropriate debt recovery procedures and may exclude the student from the college or remove their access to teaching or services until the full debt is paid.

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The college refers unpaid debts to an external agency to pursue payment. A student with a debt that has been referred to an external agency will be liable for the reasonable additional costs incurred by the college and its agent in collecting the debt, such costs are added to the debt.

If a student completes the course with an outstanding tuition fee debt of more than £50 then, until the debt is paid, the student will:

- Not be permitted to re-register for new courses or to continue their course
- Not be entered to take assessment or sit examinations pertaining to the course
- Not be permitted to attend the Awards Ceremony or equivalent
- Not be issued with any academic references.

If a student owes the college any other debt (such as library fines, nursery fees, and tuition fees under £50), the college will use its debt procedures to recover these.

Exceptions to the above (e.g. allowing a student to enroll on a course when they are in debt to the college for tuition fees for the same or a different course) will only be granted exceptionally and requires the express written approval of the Executive Director of Finance.

9.6 Fee Refund Policy

The college will provide a full refund of fees when a course does not run or closes as a result of a decision by the college.

The full fee for a course is payable even if the student decides not to complete the course. The college will not grant refunds if a student decides to leave partway through an academic year. For self-funded and SFE funded students, the college may waive a portion of the fee owing at the date of withdrawal in line with the liability points in the SFE table (section 9.3 refers).

The college will not refund to a student any fees paid on their behalf by the SLC or an employer. The college will give a fee waiver where it is appropriate under the college's Terms and Conditions of enrolment or the Student Protection Plan.

The provisions under this policy do not affect the student's statutory rights, where acting as a consumer.

Cooling Off Period: The college may agree to provide a full refund of any fees paid where a student withdraws from their programme within 14 days of the course start date (typically the first date of attendance unless otherwise notified).

9.7 Annual review of fees and charges

Students should be aware that course fees are reviewed annually and may increase in line with inflation or as permitted by relevant regulations. Any inflationary or other increase will affect students starting new courses. The college will not increase fees for students continuing to the next year of the same course. Top up fees and changes in qualifications count as new courses and not continuations.

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9.8 Correspondence

Any correspondence regarding fees and charges should be addressed to:
Executive Director of Finance:
The Sheffield College
Granville Road
Sheffield
S2 2RL

Please note that there is no automatic right of appeal against any decision made in respect of a fee refund or waiver request. However, where a refund is not granted in line with this policy and there are specific considerations for appeals, this may be presented to the Deputy Principal at the same address above. Appeals will be considered on their individual merits and the Deputy Principal's decision is final.

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