

<b>Policy title</b>	Tuition Fee Policy
<b>Version number</b>	2.2
<b>Effective from date</b>	8 <sup>th</sup> April 2025
<b>Applicable to</b>	Students for whom the University charges and receives payment for tuition fees, even if paid by a sponsor (e.g., Student Loans Company, employer or apprenticeship levy).
<b>Owner</b>	Director of Finance & Planning
<b>Date EIA completed</b>	16 <sup>th</sup> April 2024
<b>Approving Committee(s)</b>	University Board Executive Committee
<b>Date of approval</b>	8 <sup>th</sup> April 2025
<b>Review date</b>	April 2026

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. The University charges tuition fees annually against an agreed schedule of prices. Therefore, tuition fees are liable to change year on year but are set at least two years in advance and published alongside course information on the University's website and prospectus.
- 1.2. The University Board has overall responsibility for the University's tuition fees and policy, and reviews both annually.
- 1.3. Words in **bold** (excluding section headings) relate to a policy or document which can be found on the University website.

## **2. Setting fees**

- 2.1. Regulated fees: The Office for Students (OfS) set maximum fees chargeable for the following courses for home students: Bachelor/Undergraduate degree, Foundation year (year 0), Higher National Certificate/Diploma (HNC/HND), Postgraduate Initial Teacher Training, Accelerated degrees, overseas study and sandwich years.
- 2.2. Postgraduate research (PhD) fees are pegged to UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) funding levels for home students.
- 2.3. Apprenticeships: The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) sets maximum fee rates a provider can charge for a particular course which can be claimed from the apprentice levy. Charges over this need to be claimed directly from the relevant employer. The University, provided it can justify the full charge in accordance with ESFA guidance, sets fees at the maximum fee rate.
- 2.4. Unregulated fees: This includes all masters programmes, fees for overseas/international (hereafter referred to as overseas only) students, and fees for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and non-credit bearing courses.
- 2.5. Fee levels and uplifts for unregulated fees will be calculated taking into consideration:
  - Competitor benchmarking based on market conditions
  - Any specific costs of provision
  - Availability and level of financing options for students
- 2.6. Exceptional changes to tuition fees or the application of the tuition fees policy may be made by the Director of Finance & Planning, with any changes reported to Board as part of the next update. Exceptional is not expected to extend beyond changes to the regulatory environment, correction of mistakes, or clarification to avoid future confusion.

## **3. Calculating fees**

- 3.1. The tuition fee for each student is determined by the course, level, mode of study, the number of academic credits that the student is taking, and the student's fee status, less any scholarships.
- 3.2. Part-time tuition fees are set pro-rata to the number of credits being studied against the number of credits and fee for the same full-time course. Not all courses are available on a part-time basis.
- 3.3. Tuition fees may be reduced where a student can demonstrate Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL – both certificated and experiential) as evidenced under the University's

policy. Students should be aware that reducing the number of credits studied in a year may affect their eligibility for student loan financing.

- 3.4. Regulations to determine a student's fee status as Home or Overseas are available on the UK Council for International Student Affairs website at [www.ukcisa.org.uk](http://www.ukcisa.org.uk). It is the student's responsibility to provide any documentation necessary to satisfy the University that they are eligible for home fee status. Fee status will be determined at admission and apply for the duration of the student's course.
- 3.5. Should a student believe their fee status has changed (e.g., following a successful application for UK citizenship) then they may apply to have their status reassessed. The University reserves the right to charge for any reassessments. Revised fees will only apply from the point of reassessment and will not be backdated i.e. from the course start date after a successful reassessment. For clarity, students should submit a request for a reassessment before (re)enrolling on their courses ahead of their course start date.
- 3.6. Students may apply for any University **scholarships** they are eligible for. **Scholarships** are agreed annually and are used to reduce the level of tuition fee charged to the student. This may impact on other financing options and students should check all relevant funding terms before committing.
- 3.7. **Bursaries** provided by the University and any external bodies are paid to support students with maintenance costs and do not reduce the tuition fee charged. The University reserves the right to offset any **bursary** payments it makes against any overdue fees.
- 3.8. University of Suffolk staff and staff teaching University courses at East Coast College and Suffolk New College may undertake courses at a reduced rate, provided they are agreed as part of the staff member's development plan. Please refer to the relevant organisation's staff development policy for eligibility and repayment conditions (the hub for University of Suffolk staff).
- 3.9. A 25% **staff discount** is available for University staff to undertake any other course not agreed as part of a staff development plan i.e., for personal interest.
- 3.10. A University of Suffolk **alumni discount** is available on tuition fees for certain postgraduate and CPD courses. The discount reduces the overall level of tuition fee payable.
- 3.11. Overseas students may be offered an early payment discount i.e., a reduction in total tuition fees payable, if full payment of annual tuition fees is received with their Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS – evidence required for a student visa) deposit. The scope and level of any discount will be agreed each year.
- 3.12. The University does not offer country-based scholarships or discounts, and unless specified in the qualifying criteria, all scholarships and discounts are applicable to all students in all teaching locations.
- 3.13. If, under the terms of the course's Framework and Regulations, the student is required to retake a module and defer progression, a retake fee will be charged on the same basis as if the student were part-time. Students are advised to contact SLC for advice on retake fees and loan finance.
- 3.14. Where a student chooses to change their mode of study (i.e. full-time to part-time or vice versa) all changes will be made in accordance with Student Loan Company (SLC) guidelines. For example, a student may be required to withdraw and re-apply if this is

required to secure ongoing loan finance. Students must check requirements before making any change.

- 3.15. While the University is transitioning to a revised academic model (e.g., from 20/40 credit to 30 credit framework), if a student is required to retake additional credits (for example 30-credit module as the failed 20-credit module is no longer available) the student will only be charged for the number of credits required to achieve the award.
- 3.16. Where a longer period of deferral is required, and the student is required to move to a different year/cohort, they must check their funding eligibility with their relevant funding body.
- 3.17. Student Finance regulations do not allow 'seasonal swaps' e.g., moving to a September course start cohort from a February course. All other options for teach out etc must be explored as any student on a seasonal swap will remain on their original payment schedule and may therefore incur significant additional immediate repayment liability if they ultimately withdraw from the course.
- 3.18. Some courses may have additional fees associated with trips, consumables, or residential, which will be specified in the **Definitive Course Record** (DCR). These will be charged separately and do not constitute tuition fees for the purpose of this policy.

#### **4. Payment of fees**

- 4.1. Students remain ultimately liable for the payment of all tuition fees, regardless of any sponsor or financing arrangements, except for apprenticeships where the employer is liable.
- 4.2. Fees for the year will be invoiced upon course start date and are due within 30 days of the invoice date unless an alternative payment arrangements are requested by the student and agreed by the University, e.g. successful student loan application or submission of a payment plan request at enrolment. The University reserves the right to amend fees charged should any errors or omissions be discovered.
- 4.3. All fees issued by the University must be paid to the University, regardless of location of study, and must be made in £ sterling. The preferred method of payment is bank transfer or direct debit for students on a payment plan. The University does not accept cash.
- 4.4. Home undergraduate students who expect all or part of their fees to be paid by a loan from the SLC must apply for student loan finance prior to each year of study. The University will be notified by the SLC of students who have financing, and their fees will be paid directly to the University by SLC.
- 4.5. It is the student's responsibility to keep the SLC and University up to date with any changes in circumstances and ensure their financing remains in place for their course. Students must complete enrolment with the University of Suffolk to become eligible for any maintenance loans, and tuition fee loans are conditional on continued engagement and attendance by the student.
- 4.6. Postgraduate students may apply for student finance to cover maintenance costs. Tuition fees must therefore be paid directly to the University and the student will be classified as a self-paying student.
- 4.7. Overseas students who require a student visa to study in the UK must pay a deposit to secure their place on a chosen programme of study in order to receive a CAS. The level

of deposit will be agreed each year, based on perceived sponsorship risk, alongside tuition fees and scholarships.

- 4.8. Overseas students who require a student visa are also required to provide appropriate evidence that they have sufficient funds to cover tuition fees and living expenses upon application for the first year of their course. This evidence must meet UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) financial evidence requirements.
- 4.9. Overseas students may agree a payment plan, typically expected to be 50% at the first liability point (see section 5 below) and 50% at the second liability point. CAS deposits will reduce the balance to be paid. Payment must be made within 14 days of these dates to remain compliant with the payment plan.
- 4.10. Fees payable by sponsors will only be agreed upon receipt of official acceptance from the sponsor e.g., a purchase order, University of Suffolk Invoice Authorisation Form (IAF) or apprenticeship agreement.
- 4.11. Payment plans may be agreed with all other self-funding students i.e., excluding overseas and SLC funded tuition fees. Payment may only be spread over a maximum of 9 months from the course start date to ensure there is no impact on the student's progression and graduation, except for PhD students who may pay over 12 months.
- 4.12. Payment plans will be reassessed for changes that affect the total chargeable tuition fee. Missed payments will result in the payment amounts being adjusted to meet the original payment deadline and not extended. Any other changes remain at the discretion of the Director of Finance & Planning.
- 4.13. Failure to pay tuition fees may result in the following sanctions:
  - Removal of access to the University's campus facilities and online learning environments
  - Withholding of any payment due from the University e.g., bursaries
  - Withholding of any results, certificates of award or transcripts
  - Withholding of permission to attend their graduation ceremony
  - Withdrawal from the course and a bar on enrolling on any other courses awarded by the University
  - Barring of Graduate Route visa application as student will not be reported as Study Complete to UKVI
  - Notification to UKVI of non-compliance with visa terms and conditions
  - Referral to a debt collection agency, subsequent legal action and County Court Judgements on the student's credit history
- 4.14. For the avoidance of doubt, a student is not considered a debtor and no sanctions will be applied where full payment has been received in the University's bank account or where a payment plan has been agreed **and** is being adhered to.
- 4.15. However, no student may enrol into the next year of study while tuition fees remain outstanding, even if a payment plan has been agreed. This is to ensure the student does not continue to build up debt they are unable to repay. Similarly, a student will not be awarded their degree or invited to graduation while fees remain outstanding, even if adhering to their payment plan.

## 5. Refunds and Liability Points

- 5.1. Students have the right to withdraw, intercalate or change/transfer from a course of study and this may trigger a refund of fees:
- Withdraw – a student may voluntarily leave a course of study, or, following a period of suspension, be required to leave. Return to study is only possible through a new successful application
  - Intercalating – taking a break from study for an authorised reason – charges will apply up to the liability point at which the student intercalated. The student will be charged the remaining fees for the academic year when they return to study
  - Current continuing – where a student has outstanding submissions - no charge until the student re-joins the course, although the student is also ineligible for a student finance loan while current continuing
- 5.2. All notifications to change must be via official University of Suffolk processes and forms. The date of submission of this form by the student will be used to calculate the fee liability.
- 5.3. In accordance with the General Regulations all correspondence with an enrolled student must be via a University of Suffolk email account (ending uos.ac.uk).
- 5.4. The University reserves the right to suspend a student for lack of engagement or attendance, academic misconduct, failure to pass an annual progression review, or non-payment of tuition fees. The last date of engagement will be used to calculate the liability point in line with SLC guidance.
- 5.5. Liability points are calculated as per the table below:

Home students	Term <sup>1</sup> start date		
Liability Point	Jul - Dec	Jan – Mar	Apr - Jun
1 - 25% of fee	Day 14 after term start date	Day 14 after term start date	Day 14 after term start date
2 – 50% of fee	Day 1 of return from Christmas break	Day 1 of return from Easter break	Day 1 of return from summer break
3 – 100% of fee	Day 1 of return from Easter break	Day 1 of return from summer break	Day 1 of return from Christmas break

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<sup>1</sup> Term dates as defined with Student Loan Company. The first day of term is typically the date on which a student will receive their maintenance loan payment.

<b>Overseas</b>	<b>Term start date</b>		
<b>Liability Point</b>	<b>Jul - Dec</b>	<b>Jan – Mar</b>	<b>Apr - Jun</b>
<b>1 - 80% of fee</b>	Day 14 after course start date	Day 14 after course start date	Day 14 after course start date
<b>2 – 100% of fee</b>	Day 1 of return from Christmas break	Day 1 of return from Easter break	Day 1 of return from summer break

- 5.6. Postgraduate research (PhD) students are refunded pro-rata to number of months attended.
- 5.7. Refunds for additional charges for modules to be retaken, CPD and other short courses are available up until the earlier of 14 days after the start of the course or the date of course completion.
- 5.8. Refunds will only be made on money actually paid, so will exclude any outstanding amounts, discounts or scholarships which reduce the tuition fee. Non-refundable deposits are also excluded.
- 5.9. Money Laundering Regulations require refund payments to be made to the account from which the payment was originally made. This includes where the payment was made from either the SLC or a sponsor.
- 5.10. Where an overseas student has their student visa rejected, their CAS deposit will be refunded, subject to the provision of appropriate evidence of the rejection, and that it was not on the grounds of failure to follow UKVI guidance or the submission of fraudulent documents. Refunds, minus an administrative fee, will be considered if an Administrative Review is successful.
- 5.11. Students who arrive in the UK on a Student visa and claim asylum, or switch their immigration/visa status, will not be issued a CAS deposit refund unless there are exceptional circumstances, which will be assessed on a case-by-case basis by the International Team and approved by the Director of Finance and Planning.
- 5.12. CAS deposit refunds will not be given to students granted a student visa who then fail to enrol. In some cases, and at the University's discretion, we may consider a refund but will need proof to support the exceptional circumstances and evidence that the student is resident in their home country at the point at which the refund is requested — this may include meeting with a member of in-country staff or an approved University agent.
- 5.13. CAS deposit refunds to applicants applying under the student route are subject to administration fees, and will only be refunded to the account from which the payment was originally made.
- 5.14. All refunds will be calculated in £ sterling. The University will not refund any shortfalls due to exchange rate fluctuations or offer compensation for bank or similar transaction charges incurred.

- 5.15. If a course is closed or provision is withdrawn and a suitable alternative course is not available, then a full refund of all tuition fees paid for the year in which the course is closed will be made. Bursaries already paid will be honoured. The University will also compensate students for any additional travel costs due to a change of study location, and maintenance costs for transfers or lost time as per the University's **Student Protection Plan**.
- 5.16. The University, SLC, professional statutory regulatory bodies, employers and sponsors require regular engagement and attendance from students. Failure to adhere to the **Student Attendance and Engagement Monitoring Policy** will result in the student being withdrawn from their course. Any SLC maintenance and tuition fee loans will be suspended, and for overseas students a report will be made to the Home Office which may result in withdrawal of sponsorship and the revocation of the student's permission to stay in the UK.
- 5.17. In the event of fire, strike, lock-out, accident, civil disturbance, pandemic, or any other cause whatsoever beyond the University's control, the University will provide suitable alternative provision for continuation of learning, including online provision, and will not be liable for refund of fees, or any other financial penalty, unless alternative provision cannot be made.