

University of Durham

Provider's UKPRN: 10007143

Student Compensation Policy (Continuation of Study)

1. Scope

1.1. Responsibility

1.1.1. This policy will be reviewed annually through the Education Committee, reporting to Senate and Council as necessary.

1.2. Eligibility

- 1.2.1. Durham University considers refunds and compensation to be a remedy of last resort. In the event of programme discontinuation, Durham is committed to using all reasonable endeavours to ensure that students are able to continue and complete their studies at the University. However, the University recognises that this may not be feasible in all circumstances.
- 1.2.2. This policy sets out the circumstances in which the University will consider refund of tuition fees and other relevant costs, and/or provision of compensation, to registered students of the University (or, where applicable, applicants who have accepted offers of study at the University) who are affected by the withdrawal or substantial change of a programme of study by the University, where the University is no longer able to preserve continuation of study.
- 1.2.3. This policy only applies to situations where either:
- 1.2.3.1. the University is ceasing to deliver an academic programme of study before registered students of that programme have completed their studies, and where the University determines that it is not possible to teach a student through to the end of their academic programme; or,
 - 1.2.3.2. the University has changed the location of delivery of a programme from one campus to another, and where the University determines that this change in location has generated or will generate increased costs for some or all students on that programme.
- 1.2.4. This policy does not apply where students choose to withdraw from, or are suspended from, a programme of study which is not being withdrawn. The University has a separate Student Debt Policy¹ which outlines how we will refund tuition fees and other costs in the event of student withdrawal or suspension, and the processes by which refund payments will be made.
- 1.2.5. This policy applies to all registered students of the University. This includes: students in receipt of a tuition fee loan from the Student Loans Company; students who pay their own tuition fees; and students whose tuition fees are paid by a sponsor. In all cases, tuition fees and other costs will only be refunded to the original source of funding (e.g. Student Loans Company, student, student sponsor, or other individual or group). Where tuition fees are refunded, or future fees

¹ https://www.dur.ac.uk/treasurer/students/student_debt_policy/

are reduced, this will be done in accordance with the provisions within the University's Student Debt Policy.

- 1.2.6. This policy does not apply to students at partner institutions, where those students are registered with, and pay tuition fees to, the partner institution rather than the University.

1.3. Application

- 1.3.1. Where a decision has been taken to close an academic programme and to cease admission to it, and students have already commenced study on that programme, the University will aim to 'teach out' students to the end of their programme. If the process of teaching out generates additional costs for students – for example, requiring a change in campus location – the University will proactively consider supporting students with these additional costs.
- 1.3.2. In the unlikely event that the University is not able to 'teach out' students on a programme that is being discontinued, students (or applicants) will be offered the opportunity to transfer to another programme at the University. Where there is no suitable alternative programme at the University, the University will consider supporting students to transfer to a suitable programme at another UK higher education provider.
- 1.3.3. In circumstances where the University ceases to deliver an academic programme of study, and students have already commenced study on that programme, the University will consider reasonable financial compensation for affected students where they are forced to withdraw from the University.
- 1.3.4. The University will give due care and regard to the individual circumstances and characteristics of affected students in the application of this policy. In some situations (for example, where students have caring responsibilities) it may be necessary to vary this policy to provide additional support or compensation for individual or groups of students. This will be considered on a case by case basis, in dialogue with affected students.

2. Circumstances for Refund and Compensation

2.1. Discontinuation and transfer to an alternative programme at Durham University

- 2.1.1. In the event that a programme is discontinued, and registered students transfer to an alternative programme of study at this University with tuition fees different from the original course, the University will charge students the lower of the two fees for their continuing studies. Where the fees of the new programme are less than those of the discontinued programme, the University will refund fees already paid over and above the rate of the new programme.
- 2.1.2. If a student is transferring to an alternative programme at this University following discontinuation of their original programme but suffers a disrupted year as a result (i.e. not able to complete that year's programme of study due to discontinuation of provision and that year of study will not count towards completion of the new degree), any tuition fees already paid for the affected year will be refunded.
- 2.1.3. Where a programme is discontinued and a student accepts an alternative programme of study at the University, and the student is in receipt of a University bursary or University hardship funding, the University will make provision for the continuation of that bursary or hardship funding.

2.2. Discontinuation and transfer to an alternative programme at another UK higher education provider

- 2.2.1. In the event that a programme is discontinued and students are required to transfer to an alternative programme of study at another higher education provider to continue their studies, the University will support student transfer arrangements, producing transcripts and academic records and ensuring that such students receive the University award (for example, certificate or diploma) that recognises the stage they have reached.
- 2.2.2. Where the transfer involves students receiving 'credit', through an approved mechanism for the Recognition of Prior Learning (or equivalent), for study completed at Durham, no refund will be offered in relation to the elements of study which count towards that credit. Refunds of tuition fees incurred at Durham will be provided in respect of elements of study which do not receive credit for future study at a receiving higher education provider.
- 2.2.3. If a student is transferring to an another higher education provider following discontinuation of their original programme but suffers a disrupted year as a result (i.e. if a student is not able to complete that year's programme of study due to discontinuation of provision and that year of study will not count towards completion of the new degree), any tuition fees already paid for the affected year will be refunded.
- 2.2.4. This provision only applies to student transfer within the context of this policy. It will not apply where students withdraw from study at Durham and seek to restart studies at another provider at a future point in time.

2.3. Discontinuation and student withdrawal

- 2.3.1. In the unlikely event that the University is not able to 'teach out' current students on a discontinued programme of study, and the student is forced to withdraw from the University as a result of the programme discontinuation, the student (or their sponsor or the Student Loans Company) will be offered a refund of any fee payments made towards that year's programme of study. The refund of fees will normally only apply to tuition fee costs incurred in the year in which the academic programme ceases to be offered. Where appropriate, credit and/or qualifications will be awarded for completed years of study.
- 2.3.2. Where a student is in receipt of a University bursary and is forced to withdraw due to discontinuation of provision, the University will maintain the bursary to the end of the term in which the withdrawal occurs, recognising that the student will not have had opportunity to make alternative provision for living costs.
- 2.3.3. Where a student has to withdraw from the University due to discontinuation of provision without being able to complete the year of study, consideration will also be given to providing compensation of maintenance costs incurred in the year of the withdrawal, where those costs were incurred directly as a result of engagement with the programme. Eligible maintenance costs may include travel costs, the cost of academic materials, accommodation and catering costs. The maximum refundable amount for maintenance costs will be aligned with the maximum maintenance loan available from the Student Loans Company in the year of the student withdrawal. Students may be asked to provide evidence of expenditure. The amount of compensation payable will be determined on a case by case basis taking into account the duration of study completed in that year and the circumstances of each student (for example, for some students there may be enhanced costs relating to a disability).

2.3.4. Where a student has to withdraw from the University due to discontinuation of provision without being able to complete the year of study, consideration will be given to refunding payments for future University services (for example catering, college and society memberships, accommodation costs) where those services can no longer be accessed.

2.4. Change in campus location resulting in additional travel or accommodation costs

2.4.1. Where the location for delivery of a programme changes from one campus to another, or where a programme is discontinued and students accept an alternative programme of study at the University which is delivered at a campus different to that of the original course, the University will consider either: providing students with adequate compensation in respect of additional travel costs that are incurred as a result of the changed location; providing students with free or subsidised travel between campuses; or, where students are required to reside in a campus location with higher accommodation costs than that of their original campus, providing students with support for those increased accommodation costs.