

CREDIT CONTROL AND DEBT MANAGEMENT POLICY

1. Introduction

The University of Huddersfield receives income from three main sources:

- Tuition Fees
- Central Funding (e.g. OfS)
- Sponsors and Companies

Each type of income is collected differently and the University's Credit Control and Debt Management Policy reflects this.

The University continues to diversify its income sources and thus a Credit Control and Debt Management Policy is vital to help prevent unauthorised risks being taken with the University's resources.

Overseas opportunities have provided an area of growth and it is important that staff are aware of and capable of managing the risk associated with trading in overseas markets.

Effective credit control maximises the cash flows from each area of the business and minimises the risk to the University of bad debt. It is vital that all decision-makers in the University are aware of the importance of cash management and fully co-operate with the staff of Financial Services who manage the administrative process. Financial Services in return will provide assistance and advice to other departments on debt management issues.

2. General Information

Payment Methods

The following payment methods are available:

Cash	(in person for values of less than £100.00 at the University's Cashiers Office located in the Student Finance Office, Central Services Building, Level 8).
Cheque	(made payable to 'University of Huddersfield' <u>or</u> 'University of Huddersfield Enterprises Limited' as appropriate).
Bank Transfer	(using bank details as provided on invoices).

Credit Card/Debit Card (by web payment or in person at the University's Cashiers Office located in the Student Finance Office, Central Services Building, Level 8 or by telephone to that office)

Recurring card payments (by completed details at enrolment, or by contacting the Student Finance Office on 01484 472210)

Standard Terms and Conditions

Students

Tuition fees become due on the first day of a programme of study. Field trip payments are due 28 days from the date of invoice.

Other Debtors

University standard terms and conditions apply. Invoices are due for payment on or before 28 days after the invoice date.

Payment terms can only be changed with prior agreement of the University's Director of Finance or his nominee.

Collections Agency

As part of our rigorous procedures we utilise specialist debt collection agencies. The University will only pass matters into their hands where all other internal efforts have been exhausted. Their remit is to use the legal system to contact debtors and pursue enforcement.

3. Debt Management Policy

Individual Students

'Students' are for the purpose of this policy defined as persons registered or enrolled at the University to follow a programme of study, which may or may not lead to an award or qualification. If a student leaves the University with outstanding debts, the University will pursue payment of the outstanding debt.

Students are responsible for paying all fees incurred whilst studying at the University.

The policy for individual students details the arrangement for the payment of fees and the sanctions which will be applied in the event of non-payment of fees by the due date. The policy is designed to ensure that all students are treated in a fair and equitable manner with respect to the payment of fees.

The policy applies to all students including full-time, part-time, undergraduate, post-graduate, home and overseas.

Tuition Fee Payment Methods - New Students

For each academic year all new students registering with the University will be required to pay their tuition fees as follows:

Either payment in full by cheque, Visa, Mastercard, Switch, Delta, Solo or American Express, at registration.

or payment in full within 28 days of receipt of invoice.

or by 2 equal instalments - first payment due at registration second payment due in January via recurring card payment.

or by four equal instalments for fees over £200 - first payment due at registration, the remaining three payments will be collected by recurring card payment in November, December and January.

or NHS Confederation funded – on production of a sponsor letter.

or Student Loan Company funded – on production of funding entitlement letter.

or Sponsor funded – on production of a sponsor letter.

For non-standard enrolments (e.g. January), the same payment terms will apply on a pro rata basis depending on enrolment date.

Tuition Fee Payment Methods - Continuing Students

For each academic year all continuing students re-registering with the University will be required to pay their tuition fees as follows:

Either payment in full by cheque, Visa, Mastercard, Switch, Delta, Solo or American Express, by enrolment.

or payment in full within 28 days of receipt of invoice.

or by two equal instalments - first payment due before enrolment, second instalment due in January via recurring card payment

or by four equal instalments for fees over £200 - first payment due by enrolment, remaining three payments will be collected by recurring card payment in November, December and January.

or NHS Confederation funded – on production of a sponsor letter.

or Student Loan Company funded – on production of funding entitlement letter.

or Sponsor funded – on production of a sponsor letter.

Some undergraduate full-time students may not have received confirmation of their fee contribution before August. If no Student Finance financial assessment form is received by 30 September, the student may be invoiced for the full fee. It is the student's responsibility to provide The Student Finance Office with the relevant proof of funding from Student Finance England/Wales/Scotland/Northern Ireland or other body.

Collection Procedure

Whilst the procedure to collect monies outstanding is specific to each case, the following steps will be taken:

1. E-mailed reminders from the University
 2. Suspension of AD login access to online services
 3. Withdrawal of the student from University
 4. Non re-enrolment in a subsequent academic year
 5. Referral to debt collection agency
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1. Sending reminders to students owing money to the University is the sole responsibility of the Student Finance Office of the Financial Services Department (unless others are specifically authorised to do so in individual cases). In most cases this will consist of a prescribed process dictated by time and responses from the debtor.
 2. Students AD login access will be suspended at the end of January (September start) until the tuition fee account is settled or the student is in a recognised payment plan. For non-standard enrolment dates, suspension of AD login access will occur 5 months from course start date.
 3. The debtor withdrawal process will begin if tuition fees remain outstanding seven months from the end of the month in which enrolment takes place.
 4. A student will not be allowed to enrol in a subsequent academic year if he/she/they owe(s) money to the University in respect of the previous and/or earlier academic years and an official arrangement to pay has not been made with the Student Finance Office.
 5. After it has exhausted its internal procedures for collecting monies outstanding, the University will refer remaining cases to the chosen debt collection agency, which will pursue debts on the University's behalf, including via due legal process.

Payment by a Sponsor

Some students have agreements with a sponsor to pay their tuition fees. In the event that the sponsor defaults on payment or does not acknowledge responsibility for paying the fees, it is the student's responsibility to pay them and he/she/they will be invoiced accordingly.

Severe Hardship

The University recognises that some students may encounter severe financial hardship during their studies and may have difficulty in paying their outstanding accounts to the University. Staff of the Student Finance Office are available to try and help students in this situation, e.g. it may be possible to arrange an individual payment plan.

The earlier a student in such a situation contacts the Student Finance Office the better chance there is of coming to an acceptable arrangement.

Where staff of the University are aware of the students having financial difficulty, they should encourage them to contact the Student Finance Office for assistance.

Initial contact with the office can be made by a personal visit, email (sfo@hud.ac.uk) or by telephoning 01484 472210.

Early Withdrawal or Suspension

In the event of students withdrawing or suspending themselves from a programme of study, the date of withdrawal or suspension will be the date from which the student formally advises the University in writing that he/she/they is/are no longer attending his/her/their course of study.

The procedure for calculating any reduction in fees is as follows:

Full-time and part-time students - full refund up to the end of teaching week 4; 75% refund for remainder of term 1, 50% refund in term 2 and no refund in term 3.

If the student is in receipt of a bursary or stipend further payments will be stopped from the date of the withdrawal or suspension. In the event of an overpayment, once the Student Finance Office is informed it will instigate the standard process to recover any overpayments. Any such student in receipt of an overpayment relating to suspension or withdrawal is expected to notify the University when such discrepancy arises, and should make arrangements to repay the overpayment immediately.

4. All Other Debtors

Debt Management

The University's standard terms and conditions state that payment terms for all invoices are on or before 28 days following an invoice date. Exceptions to this must be agreed by the Director of Finance or his nominee.

Late payments may be liable to interest charges. Where this occurs the rate of interest will be 4% above the Bank of England base rate per annum on the full outstanding amount. Interest will be calculated from the date when the debts become overdue and to the date when the debts are paid in full.

Sending reminders to debtors is the sole responsibility of the Student Finance Office of Financial Services Department (unless others are specifically authorised to do so in individual cases). In most cases this will consist of a prescribed process dictated by time and responses from the debtor.

Invoices will be treated as individual transactions when reminders are issued. They will only be withheld from the debt collection process by Financial Services staff, requests to prevent reminders being issued must be made via email to Financial Services, and monthly reviews will take place to determine ongoing status.

Whilst the procedure is specific to each case the following steps will be taken to recover debt:

1. Written reminders from the University
2. Referral to debt collection agency

POLICY SIGN-OFF AND OWNERSHIP DETAILS

Document name:	Credit Control and Debt Management Policy
Version Number:	V3.0
Equality Impact Assessment:	N/A
Approved by:	Director of Finance
Date Approved:	12 May 2021
Date for Review:	May 2023
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Owner (if different from above):	
Document Location:	https://www.hud.ac.uk/media/policydocuments/Credit-Control-and-Debt-Management-Policy.pdf
Compliance Measures:	Compliance monitored by management via Student Finance Office procedures to ensure consistency of approach.
Related Policies/Procedures:	List any applicable University regulations/policies/procedures that may impact upon the procedure.

REVISION HISTORY

Version	Date	Revision description/Summary of changes	Author
V1.0	Sept 2017	First draft of new policy	Head of Student Finance
V2.0	Sept 2019	Reviewed and amended	Student Finance Office Manager
V3.0	May 2021	Minor changes	Student Finance Office Manager