

LANCASTER UNIVERSITY

STUDENT FEE REGULATIONS AND DEBT PROCEDURES

If you are struggling to pay any university fees or charges, please contact the Credit Control team to discuss – ask for help at the earliest opportunity

Don't let debt get you down - take action and get help

For information regarding financial support and awards please follow the link below:

<http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/student-based-services/money/funding/>

Advice is also available from the Students' Union, see:

<https://lusu.co.uk/about-our-advice-service/finance-and-money>

To not pay your debts not only affects getting your degree; it could also affect your future credit rating and even your employment opportunities.

Fee liability

All students will receive notification of fees due prior to their first registration.

The University may refuse to register a student who cannot, on request, show that they have the means to pay their fees and other financial commitments. If fees are to be paid by a sponsor direct to the university, the University requires evidence of how this will be provided at the time of registration or as soon thereafter as possible. Tuition fees will not normally be refunded following withdrawal or exclusion during the session following week 4 of the academic year.

Every student becomes liable for the full sessional tuition fee upon registration and payment must be made according to the published schedule (link). It is a condition of registration that a binding undertaking to meet all university charges is made. Failure to make payment by the due date without contacting the University credit control section to make alternate arrangements will result in the University starting debt recovery procedures, as detailed below.

Please note that the University reserves the right to pass any unpaid debt to its appointed debt collection agency. Doing so can incur interest and legal fees for which the student is responsible and which may result in increased debt. It can also affect future credit rating and employment opportunities. Students are strongly encouraged to talk to Credit Control to avoid this outcome.

Where charges are being paid by a sponsor, the University will pursue payment from the sponsor. If no payment is received, in line with normal payment terms, the liability and responsibility for payment reverts to the student.

Invoices can be viewed online showing the sums to be paid in respect of fees and other balances outstanding. Debts in respect of residence charges, fees, fines, compensation for damage or loss or any other financial obligation must be met by the due dates given.

Consequences of not paying fees

There are two types of debt, academic debt and non-academic debt. Academic debt is considered to be any debt relating to the student learning experience. Primarily this constitutes tuition fees, but the university reserves the right to deem other unpaid academic related fees as academic debt. Non-academic debt is any other fee owed (accommodation, fines, compensation for damages, etc.)

Where the debt is academic debt, the University reserves the right not to grant a degree, diploma or certificate. Students participating in exchange programmes sponsored by the university, who are in academic debt to the host institution at the end of their period of study, shall be deemed to be in academic debt to Lancaster.

Non-academic debt will result in all actions being taken as below with the exception of not receiving the award – for the avoidance of doubt it does include possible exclusion from degree ceremonies.

Students are liable for all debt, and the University reserves the right to invoke debt recovery procedures regardless of debt type.

Debt Recovery Procedure

If at any time after registration, students encounter unforeseen financial difficulties, they should consult Credit Control to discuss whether alternative payment arrangements for fees are available, or their Accommodation Manager in relation to a residence debt. Students may contact either Student Based Services or LUSU for information, advice and guidance on budgeting and any statutory or discretionary financial support which may be available.

Students will receive notification of any amount overdue to the University. Failure to make payments due will result in further action.

All students personally liable for specified amounts should make payment by the due date. After the due date, the university will initiate procedures to collect outstanding debt. Initially, students who have unpaid debts will receive reminders requesting payment. Should this not result in payment then the University reserves the right to implement the actions below depending on the nature of the debt:

After six weeks

The issue of warning letters with deadlines
Administration/late payment charges in relation to residence debts

After 12 weeks

Letter advising of referral to Debt Collection Agency
Exclusion from degree ceremonies
Withholding of official degree certificate
Suspension of registration at the end of the academic year for a period of twelve months
De-registration from the University at the end of the academic year
Referral to a debt collection agency at the end of the academic year
Legal action by debt collection agency

Any student whose membership of the University is to be terminated as a consequence of the application of the procedures above has the right of appeal.

Refunds

Students who have overpaid will receive a refund. The exception is for intercalating students. Where intercalating students have an overpayment of fees following adjustments for intercalation this will be held on account for the following academic year.

The University policy on the refunding of fees for students who have withdrawn or been excluded is as follows:

1. Before the end of the first week of registration – no charge.
2. After the first week, but before the end of the fourth week – postgraduates will be charged for one month, undergraduates will be charged pro-rata from week 1 to week 4
3. After week four, no refunds will be given and self-funded students or sponsors will be charged for the full year.

Other Fees

A special supplementary fee may be charged where the student's programme of research causes the University to be put to special expense, such as the supervision of work away from Lancaster. The amount of the supplementary fee shall be notified to the student in advance of registration or re-registration.

A fee at a rate determined each year shall be payable by a student who is given permission to re-sit any examination or re-submit a dissertation or thesis. Students who apply for the degree of DSc or DLitt may be liable for an examination fee at a rate determined each year.

Fees for members of staff

Lancaster University staff members may be entitled to a fee waiver if they meet certain criteria which can be found at: <http://www.lancs.ac.uk/depts/hr/development/files/feesremissweb.html>

Student fee waivers

There are a range of financial awards offered by the University depending on the year of entry. Please see the University website for more information:

<http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/student-based-services/money/funding/>