

## **Higher Education Refund and Compensation Policy 2018/19**

***This policy applies to students who are registered and studying at the Sunderland College. Students who are registered with the University of Sunderland for a franchised programme should refer to the Universities' refund and compensation policy.***

As a registered provider of higher education, Sunderland College has published a Student Protection Plan that sets out how continuation and quality of learning opportunities will be maintained for current and potential students if a risk to their continued study materialises. In addition to the Student Protection Plan, Sunderland College is required to adopt a Refund and Compensation Policy which sets out the circumstances in which the College will refund tuition fees and other relevant cost to students and provide compensation where the College is no longer able to maintain continuation of study for one or more students.

### **Tuition fee refunds**

Tuition fee liability is set out below. In the event a student ceases their studies and leaves the College, a refund of tuition fees will be made if the fees paid exceed the calculated liability.

The policy is updated annually. The policy that applies to students is therefore dependent on the nature of the programme studied and the programme start date.

There is no variation in policy in relation to a student's fee status be they categorised as being liable for fees at the Home, EU or International rates.

The refund would be paid to whomever paid the tuition fee.

This Refund and Compensation policy will be made available to applicants via the College website and drawn to the attention of applicants as part of the offer information.

### **Bursaries**

The College offers a limited number of bursaries which are linked to attendance and progression. If a bursary holder breaches the terms and conditions associated with the bursary it will be withdrawn depending on the type of bursary and the nature of the breach, they may be liable to re-pay some or all of the award.

### **Compensation**

Sunderland College has a number of campuses in Sunderland, Washington and Hartlepool from which it delivers programmes.

The College's approach to programme closure is to teach all students through to the completion of their studies. The College's programme closure process ensures plans are put in place to enable all students registered on the programme to complete their studies. There are no programmes identified where there would be an increased risk of non-continuation.

In the exceedingly rare event the College was not able to preserve the continuation of study the College would provide a result letter and where appropriate an exit award in relation to the credits passed and awarded, and seek to relocate the student, so they can complete their studies and achieve the intended qualification aim, at another provider.

In the event of programme closure and students transfer to complete their studies at another provider in England, the College would provide a compensation payment that would cover

1. In the case of students on a programmes with an unregulated fee
  - a) the difference in tuition costs between the fee that would have been liable at Sunderland College and the fee at the new provider to complete the programme
  - b) relocation expenses of up to £1,500 on the provision of receipts
  - c) the fee for any single academic year of additional study at, and required as a condition of registration, by the new provider and a sum of £3,500 towards maintenance costs for this year of additional study
  
2. in the case of students on a programme with a government regulated fee
  - a) relocation expenses of up to £1,500 on the provision of receipts
  - b) the fee for any single academic year of additional study at, and required as a condition of registration, by the new provider and a sum of £3,500 towards maintenance costs for this year of additional study

In the event an alternative provider cannot be found that is acceptable to the student the College would refund all tuition fees, and make a compensation payment which would take into account maintenance costs and the duration of study.

### **Financial security**

The College has sufficient cash reserves to provide refunds and compensation for students for whom we have identified in the event of increased risk of non-continuation of study.

### **Tuition fee liability**

Tuition fees are normally charged on an annual basis and so for a programme being delivered over two years a student can expect to pay a tuition fee for each year of study.

**Students who completely withdraw from the College are not expected to return to their programme and shall receive a refund in line with the mechanism set out in the refund calculation below:**

1. All students who withdraw prior to the end of the second week will receive a full refund of the tuition fees less any registration and awarding body fees paid to a third party
  - a) Any refund will be made back to the original source of payment
  - b) Students who withdraw after the third week will not be eligible for a refund
  - c) The fees remain payable for your tuition fees even if you have not paid or secured funding prior to withdrawal as per the mechanism set above
  - d) In cases of hardship a recommendation will be made to the Deputy Chief Executive and Principal who will make the final decision

### **Payments**

Refunds will normally only be made to the bank and account holder (or other financial institution) that originally paid the tuition fee and will not be paid in cash. This applies whether a student is in receipt of a tuition fee loan from the Student Loans Company, pays their own fees or has their tuition fees paid by a sponsor.

### **General**

The refund and compensation Policy is linked to the College's Student Protection Plan and forms an important part of the College 'Student's Terms and Conditions'. It will be reviewed annually in line with these documents.

This policy will not normally apply to individuals who have completed the studies for which they registered as a student with Sunderland College.

Queries about the application of this policy should be addressed to the Directorate of Higher Education, participation and skills at [HE@sunderlandcollege.ac.uk](mailto:HE@sunderlandcollege.ac.uk) in the first instance.