

Name of Policy	REFUND POLICY		
Purposes	To outline the College's policy for refunds and withdrawals		
Author / Job Title	Finance Manager		
Equality Assessment By Whom	Finance Manager	Date	12/2017
Version	1	Date of next review (month & year)	12/2018
		Date	
Approved by	Senior Manager	18/1/2018	
	SMT		
	Corporation		
Related policies or procedures or parent policy if applicable	Tuition Fees Policy Higher Education Fee Payment Policy and Procedures		
Groups/bodies consulted in the development of the policy			
To be published on College website	Yes		

REFUND POLICY

Summary

The College shall refund all fees in full should a course be cancelled, or if the attendance of the student is not possible as a result of action taken by the College.

The College shall refund all fees in full should a student enrol in advance and subsequently withdraw from a course prior to the course commencing, providing that the College is notified of this intention at least five working days prior to the start date of the course.

No refunds will be made in the event of a student withdrawing from a full cost course for personal reasons, and all fees shall become due immediately upon withdrawal.

The College does however, retain the discretion to authorise a proportionate refund or credit note in the event that the student is able to demonstrate extenuating circumstances that has prevented them from continuing with their course.

The refund of fees may be considered in the following circumstances:

1. Course cancellation
2. Complaint
3. Student request prior to course start date
4. Exceptional circumstances

1. Course Cancellation

The College reserves the right to cancel any course should there be an insufficient number of students enrolled on the course, or for any other operational reason determined by the College.

In the event of a course cancellation, the College will make every attempt where possible, to provide alternative arrangements for students already enrolled on the course. This may extend to the offer of alternate days, times or venue or acceptance to an alternate course provision.

Should alternative arrangements not be suitable to the student, a full refund of tuition fees and where appropriate, registration fees will be automatically refunded to the affected students.

Invoices raised in respect of fees owed shall be credited, and any fees paid shall be reimbursed to the appropriate student, sponsor or employer within 14 working days of receipt of the Request for Refund by the Finance Department.

2. Complaint

A refund may be offered should a complaint relating to course quality or delivery be upheld.

All complaints are subject to the College's Complaints Procedure and should be directed to the Director of Pastoral and Academic Progress (info@macclesfield.ac.uk). The complaint will be logged and investigated by the Director of Pastoral and Academic Progress. At the conclusion of the investigation, a report shall be presented to the Vice Principal: Finance and Resources, who will determine if a refund should be made.

Should a refund be approved, the Director of Pastoral and Academic Progress will arrange to prepare a Request for Refund Form (**Appendix 1**) to confirm the complaint decision (approved), and to initiate the refund. Copies of the request shall be passed to the Director of MIS and to the Finance Manager.

A refund will be prepared by the Finance Team and paid within 14 days of receiving the approved request. The Finance Manager shall arrange for the student to be notified of the refund payment.

Should a refund be declined, the Director of Pastoral and Academic Progress will advise the student of the outcome, and further advise that an appeal may be submitted to the Vice Principal of Curriculum and Quality within 5 working days if dissatisfied with the decision.

A Request for Refund Form shall continue to be completed to confirm the complaint decision (refused), and instruct the Finance Team that no refund is due.

3. Student Request Prior to Course Start Date

Students enrolling in advance and subsequently wishing to withdraw prior to the course commencing shall be entitled to a refund in full, providing that the College is notified of this intention at least five working days prior to the start date of the course.

A request to withdraw should be submitted in writing to the Course Leader and to Learner Experience (info@macclesfield.ac.uk). The student should aim to ensure that confirmation of this request has been received and acknowledged by the College.

A Request for Refund should be prepared by the Course Leader and passed to the Finance Team for payment within 14 working days of receipt. The Finance Manager shall arrange for the student to be notified of the refund payment.

4. Exceptional Circumstances

Should a request be received to withdraw owing to personal circumstances once a course has commenced, a refund will not normally be given unless exceptional circumstances can be clearly demonstrated. All requests for a fee waiver in these circumstances should be submitted in writing to the Course Leader, with a copy to the Finance Department.

Exceptional circumstances may include:-

- Death of spouse / partner, parent or child;
- Serious physical or mental illness that prevents the student from continuing with his or her studies;
- Serious personal injury that prevents the student from continuing with his or her studies.

The above list is not exhaustive and each request will require the submission of certified medical or other documentary evidence.

Note. The student should consider the decision to withdraw carefully, and is advised to approach their Course Leader and / or Student Services initially to determine what options are available to them, and the likely financial consequences resulting from their withdrawal.

4.1 Suspension (deferrals)

Should a student wish to suspend their studies with the intention of returning at a later date (as opposed to withdrawing from the course entirely), this must be agreed with and approved by the Course Leader initially. An agreed date of return should be confirmed with the Course Leader and communicated to Student Services.

The Course Leader shall be responsible for ensuring that a completed Request for Refund Form is prepared, which confirms the prior discussions and exceptional circumstances leading to the suspension of the course. The student may be required to submit a separate written letter addressed to the Course Leader to support the reasons, which should be appended to the form.

The completed, approved document shall in turn inform the MIS Team, Finance Team and Student Services of the status of the student.

The Finance Manager shall arrange for a Credit Letter to be issued to the student to confirm that any fees paid to date shall be held on account, and the agreed expiry date.

Should the student not choose to return to continue their course by the agreed date, all fees held on account shall be retained and any fees that remain outstanding shall be subject to the College Debt Recovery Procedures.

4.2 Withdrawal

Should a student wish to withdraw from their studies and does not intend to return at a later date, this again must be agreed with and approved by the Course Leader initially (and with the Head of Higher Education for all Higher Education courses).

The Course Leader shall be responsible for ensuring that a completed Refund Request Form is prepared, which confirms the extenuating circumstances leading to the withdrawal from the course. The student should submit a separate written letter addressed to the Course Leader confirming reasons for withdrawal, which should be appended to the form.

The completed, approved Request for Refund document and any supporting information should be passed directly to the Finance Manager, who shall consider the withdrawal request and reasons for withdrawal, in order to assess and confirm the financial impact and outstanding liability.

The Finance Team shall prepare the following information:

- Request for Refund form
- MIS Change of Circumstances confirmation (if already withdrawn)
- Supporting evidence of reason for withdrawal

The completed documentation should be submitted to the Vice Principal: Finance and Resources to obtain a decision on whether a refund may be approved.

Should a refund be approved, the Finance Team shall arrange for a Credit Note (signed by the Finance Manager), to be raised against the appropriate account and a proportionate refund of any fees paid to date where necessary in accordance with the Refund Policy.

Should the refund request be refused, the Finance Manager shall arrange for a letter to be issued to the student to advise them of the decision of the College, the outstanding financial liability and that College Debt Recovery procedures shall commence.

Withdrawals - Higher Education

Should a refund request receive approval following withdrawal from a Higher Education course, the amounts refunded shall be subject to guidance contained within the **Higher Education Fee Payment Policy**, and a tiered system of financial liability based on the following date criteria:

September starts

Withdrawal Date	% of Fees Liability
On or before 30 th September	0%
Between 1 st October and 31 st December	50%
On or after 1 st January	100%

January starts

Withdrawal Date	% of Fees Liability
On or before 31 st January	0%
Between 1 st February and 30 th April	50%
On or after 1 st May	100%

Withdrawals – Further Education

Should a refund request receive approval following withdrawal from a full cost course of Level 3 or above owing to exceptional or extenuating circumstances, the amount to be refunded shall be subject to a tiered system of financial liability based on attendance criteria:

Withdrawal Date	% of Fees Liability
Within 2 weeks of the course start date	0%
After 2 weeks of the course start date	100%**

** A credit note may be applied to the outstanding balance where qualifying circumstances (as outlined within Section 4 of the Policy) can be clearly demonstrated. The value of any credit note applied will be subject to deductions based on actual attendance to date at the point of withdrawal.

Any fees paid in excess of the pro-rata financial liability shall be refunded.

Should the course fees have been part or fully funded through Advanced Learner Loan, any loan payments received by the College at the time of withdrawal shall be deducted from the total amount owed, and the balance remaining shall be collected in accordance with College Debt Recovery procedures.

Withdrawals – General / All Other Courses

No refunds will be granted for any other course withdrawals.

It should be reiterated that refunds in respect of withdrawals shall only be considered in exceptional circumstances, where extenuating circumstances can clearly be evidenced.

The student shall remain liable for all fees due unless a withdrawal request / fee waiver is approved, and irrespective of loan application status and payments received by the College to the date of withdrawal.

The College debt recovery processes shall apply where fees remain outstanding until a withdrawal / fee waiver has been approved, or where a refund request is refused following withdrawal.

5. Forms of Refund Payment

Payment Method	Payment Details
Online	Online payments shall be refunded online to the same bank account.
BACS	All payments of refunds shall be made by BACS where bank details are available.
Card	Payments originally made by card payment shall be refunded to the same card where possible.
Cheque	Cheque payments shall be made where bank details are unavailable.
Cash	No refunds shall be made in cash. Any payment of fees by this method shall be refunded by BACS where bank details are available; else payment shall be made by cheque.

All refund payments shall be made within 14 working days of the date that the approved Request for Refund is received within the Finance Department.

REQUEST FOR REFUND / FEE WAIVER
 (Individual requests)

1. REFUND / FEE WAIVER DETAILS	
Requested By:	Date Requested:
Student Name:	Student No:
Course Title:	Course Code:
Course Start Date:	Refund / Waiver Amount: £
Reason for Request (delete as appropriate):	Cancellation / Complaint / Withdrawal / Overpayment / Other (state below):
Please pass for authorisation once completed	
Note: Please ensure any supporting evidence / reasons for the request are attached to the refund request. In the event of a withdrawal, please ensure that the student is made aware of any financial implications as detailed in the College Refund Policy.	

2. AUTHORISATION FOR REPAYMENT / FEE WAIVER	
Please tick appropriate option	
Refund Approved: <input type="checkbox"/>	Issue Refund / Credit Note / Credit Letter (delete as appropriate)
Refund Refused: <input type="checkbox"/>	Refusal Letter to be Issued (Section 3B)
Reason for option chosen:	
Authorised By (Name):	Authorised Signature:
Authorised Date:	

3. FINANCE USE		
3A. Confirmation of Prior Related Payments	3B. College Repayment / Credit Note Details	
Amounts Paid to College: £	Amount to Repay: £	Date:
Original Payment: Online / Cash / Card / Cheque / Instalment / Bank Transfer (delete as appropriate)	Refund Method: Online / BACS / Cheque / Credit Letter / Refusal Letter (delete as appropriate)	
Paid Date:	Payment Reference:	
Evidence Attached By:	Credit Note Value: £	Date:
Date:	Refusal Letter Date (if applicable):	
Processed in Finance By:	Processed Date:	
Approved By (Finance Manager):	Approved Date:	

4. MIS USE	
Database Amended	
Input By:	Input Date:

White Copy: Finance (Finance Manager)

Yellow Copy: Student Services (Director of Pastoral and Academic Progress)

Pink Copy: MIS (Director of MIS)