

## Student Fees Refunds and Compensation Policy

Version	Date	Changes	Reason	Author	Next Review
1	05/18	N/A	N/A	AM	12/18
2	12/18	Addition of information on how students are communicated with and involved in review; inclusion of reference to OfS Regulatory Advice; additional information re categories of refund; addition of reference to Student Protection Plan; update re. College's Informal Complaints Form; update re financial implications; replacement of 'Vice-Principal' with 'Dean'; Correction of typographical errors; Numbering of paragraphs.	Annual Review of Policy	JY	12/19

### Quality Code:

This policy has been mapped against Part C: Information about Higher Education Provision of the UK Quality Code. It is also written in line with paragraph 69 of the Office for Students' (OfS) Regulatory Advice 2 (available at [https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/1094/ofs2018\\_04.pdf](https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/1094/ofs2018_04.pdf)) all providers are required to have a refund and compensation policy.

### Access:

All policies are available on the College website and Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) and referenced in the Student and Staff Handbooks. If required, hard copy or large format edition may be requested from Student Services.

### Review:

This policy is reviewed annually by the Dean and by Students, via their representatives on the Student Council and at the Student Staff Consultative Committee (SSCC), by staff, via the Academic Management Team (AMT) and Academic Board (AB) meetings and then approved and ratified by the Board of Directors (BoD) and the College Oversight Board (COB).

### Communication:

Students and staff are informed about College policies during induction and also receive periodic reminders during the academic year. Training on college policies and procedures is also part of student representative and staff development training.

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## 1. Policy Links

This policy is linked to the following Brit College policies and procedures:

- Student Protection Plan
- Consumer Protection Policy
- Student Experience and Engagement Policy
- Procedure: Student Registrations and Confirmation of Attendance
- Admissions, Applications and Enrolment Policy
- Communication Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Data Protection (GDPR) Policy

## 2. Introduction

Brit College is a student-friendly institution and engages students in all areas which affect their student experience. This includes information regarding course fees and refunds.

## 3. Policy

3.1 All providers are required to have a refund and compensation policy. This is designed to cover circumstances where continuation of study is not possible and outlines how, or whether, students may be entitled to refund of fees and other relevant costs.

3.2 The aim of this policy is to ensure that information regarding course fees and refunds conforms to consumer protection law (Consumer Rights Act 2015) as championed by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA). The policy should be easy to understand for all prospective students and staff members and should provide a clear understanding of the circumstances where students are eligible for a refund. The implementation of the policy should not be administratively burdensome but should be sympathetic to student needs. Methods of publication are the College prospectus, website and Virtual Learning Environment (VLE).

3.3 This policy applies to:

- Students paying the tuition fees themselves
- Students in receipt of tuition fees from the SLC
- Students whose tuition fees are paid by a sponsor
- Students in receipt of a bursary

## 4. Student Fees for Academic Year 2018-19

4.1 The College student fees will be as follows for Academic Year 2018-19:

- ✚ HND Business - £6,125 per year. There are no additional costs associated with this course.
- ✚ BAM Top-up - £9,000 per year – This fee is determined by the University of Northampton (UoN). Please refer to their fees and refunds policy for further information.

## 5. Refunds

5.1 Students considered to be eligible for a refund should complete a refund request form, available from Student Services, explaining the reason for requesting a refund. We aim to respond within 7 working days and, if appropriate we aim to send a refund within 14 working days.

Note: all refund requests must be accompanied by evidence.

5.2 Students who withdraw prior to the start of the course must inform the College in writing **within 14 days from the start of the course** in order to receive a refund. In such cases the fees paid for the first term will be refunded to the student/sponsor/SLC in full within 10 working days from the date, written withdrawal request was received.

Please note however, if undertaking the HND programme that any registration fee paid to Pearson is non-refundable and the College may not refund its £180 College registration fee.

5.3 Students who withdraw after the start of a course may receive a refund following consultation with the HR Officer and subject to approval by the Board of Directors. If a refund is granted, this will not include the College registration fee, or any other fees already paid on behalf of the student, or any materials fees where the materials have been used. Any refund is payable direct to the student/sponsor/SLC, whichever is the source of funding.

5.4 Exceptional circumstances.

The following examples are considered to be **exceptional circumstances** and will automatically entitle students to a complete refund if;

- a) A course is cancelled or closed prematurely by the College;
- b) The course location, day or start or finish times and dates are changed and no alternative times are acceptable, and - as a direct result – the student is unable to continue their studies;
- c) There is an enrolment error on the part of the College, for example the College has incorrectly enrolled a student onto a course or charged incorrect fees;
- d) The student provides written notification of a change in circumstances *prior to* the start of the course (A full refund will be given minus the College registration fee);

5.5 Where any of the above stated events occurs in relation to a course funded by Student Finance then the College will assume the responsibility of reimbursing the Student Loan Company / Student for the amount incurred / paid up to the point of the event as stated above.

5.6 The following circumstances are not exceptional circumstances and do not automatically entitle a student to a refund;

- a) Student moves out of the area;
- b) Student moves employment;
- c) Student develops a medical problem;
- d) Student changes their mind after the start of a course;
- e) Student who is excluded from the College will not be entitled to any refund of registration fees and/or possible refund of any course fees.

## 5.7 Relocation

If the College moves location to different premises students will be consulted and account will be taken of any extra individual expenditure required. If appropriate, the College will consider reimbursing students who incur additional transport or child care costs, but only in the unlikely event that the new location should be at a substantial distance from the original location.

## 5.8 Continuation of Study

If the College is unable to preserve continuation of study, it would consider compensating students affected by consequential costs such as additional maintenance costs, late fees or lost time.

## 5.9 Transfer

If a student has to transfer to another higher education provider to complete their programme of study the College would consider making compensation for tuition fee and maintenance costs.

## 5.10 Appeals

Students wishing to challenge or appeal a decision made about a refund, can do so in writing addressed to the HR Officer.

## 6.0 Complaints

6.1 Occasionally there may be instances where students are not satisfied with the quality, level of service or the advice and guidance provided by the College in terms of refunds. If this is the case students must submit a written complaint to the College detailing the reasons for dissatisfaction linked to the refund request. The complaint should be written on the College Informal Complaints Form (available on the VLE or from Student Services) and submitted to the Director of Compliance.

6.2 The procedure will then follow the College's Complaints Procedure (see separate Policy on the VLE).

6.3 The complaint and refund request will be investigated in line with the College's Complaints Procedure and you will be informed of the outcome of the investigation within 10 working days of the College receiving your complaint.

6.4 If we substantiate your claim, you will receive a refund as appropriate. If your claim is not substantiated, you will not be entitled to a refund.

6.5 Refund of fees for Higher Education courses (the BAM Top-up programme) are dealt with in line with University of Northampton's Refunds Policy.

- ✚ Refunds of Full Cost Course Fees are subject to an administration fee of £180.
- ✚ If the College cancels your course prior to commencement, you will be entitled to a full refund of all your fees.

## 6.6. Payments

- ✚ Payments will only be made to students by bank transfer.
- ✚ Where the refund in question is below £50 the College may, subject to available resources and volume of requests, allow a cash refund.

## 6.7. Financial Implications

The College has adequate financial reserves in place to allow for any compensation or refund that is awarded according to the above criteria. However, in recognition of the changing nature of the higher education financial landscape and the potential for such claims to increase the College is also investigating opportunities to insure refund and compensation against relevant costs. Such insurance will further protect students against potential risk scenarios outside of the scope of the College's resources.

## 7. Sanctions

7.1 The College will follow a standard credit control policy to seek recovery of fees due, including contacting the student by email, telephone or in person to secure settlement.

7.2 In the event that a student fails to pay the fees due after such follow up, the College will apply the following sanctions, progressively and in dialogue with the student;

- a. Withdraw a student's IT and VLE access and de-activate any password
- b. Suspend access to the College
- c. Prevent progression to the next year/session
- d. Exclude the student from the College

In addition the College may refer the debt to a third party agency for collection as a last resort.