

**QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY BELFAST**

**STUDENT FINANCE FRAMEWORK 2018-19**  
(Revised November 2017)

## **C O N T E N T S**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to provide information on the University's terms and conditions, in relation to the calculation and payment of tuition fees and related charges. This document should be read in conjunction with:

- the University's Tuition Fees and Related Charges Schedule for the relevant academic year (this is updated on an annual basis);
- the University's Terms and Conditions for 2018 Entry
- the University's General Regulations (Part III, Regulations for Students, Section 3)

The University reviews its tuition fees and related charges annually, with details of the fees/charges provided in the Tuition Fees and Related Charges Schedule for the relevant academic year. These are available on [www.qub.ac.uk/tuitionfees](http://www.qub.ac.uk/tuitionfees).

The primary method of communication with students will be by email using their Queen's University email account. It is therefore important that students regularly check their University email account.

The overarching principle, regarding the payment of tuition fees and related charges, is that the student remains liable for the payment. If the student loan or sponsorship arrangements do not subsequently provide funding, the student will be required to pay all charges personally.

The initial determination of a prospective student's fee status is undertaken at the admissions stage, based on a combination of factors including nationality, immigration status and residency. Guidance on this matter can be found on the UKCISA (UK Council for International Affairs) website [www.ukcisa.org.uk](http://www.ukcisa.org.uk) and on [www.qub.ac.uk/Study/Undergraduate/How-to-apply/Feestatus/](http://www.qub.ac.uk/Study/Undergraduate/How-to-apply/Feestatus/)

## 2. TUITION FEES SETTING AND APPROVAL MECHANISM

### 2.1 Approval Process

Tuition Fees are approved by the University's Planning and Finance Committee (PFC), under delegated authority from Senate. Tuition fees for the academic year 2018-19 are due to be approved by PFC on 6 December 2017 and International tuition fees were approved by PFC on 20 June 2017.

### 2.2 Setting of Fees

#### 2.2.1 Northern Ireland (NI) Domiciled Undergraduate Fees

Tuition fees for NI domiciled Undergraduate students, who attend the University, are set by Government.

#### 2.2.2 Other (non-UK) EU Domiciled Undergraduate Fees

Students from non-UK EU countries, including the Republic of Ireland, who attend the University, will be charged the same fee as NI domiciled students.

### 2.2.3 England, Scotland or Wales (GB) Domiciled Undergraduate Fees

Undergraduate students from England, Scotland or Wales, who plan to study at the University, will be charged a tuition fee in accordance with legislation approved by Government.

### 2.2.4 NI/GB (Home) and EU Postgraduate Fees

The Postgraduate Research fee is based on guidance provided by the Research Councils. Postgraduate Taught fees are set, in the main, by the University.

Some postgraduate courses, such as the Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE), are linked to the undergraduate fee rate and students studying these courses are eligible for Student Loans Company (SLC) funding. Postgraduate students from England, Scotland or Wales who enrol on these courses will be charged a higher fee than that charged to NI/EU students.

### 2.2.5 International Fees

All fees for international students are set by the University.

## 3. CALCULATION OF FEE

The calculation of a student's tuition fee is based on the following five criteria:

### 3.1 Programme of Study (Career)

For fee calculation purposes, a student can either be Undergraduate, Postgraduate Taught or Postgraduate Research.

### 3.2 Academic Load Status

In any one of these three programmes of study, the student can have the status of either being full-time or part-time.

A student can only have the status of either full-time or part-time in any given academic year, ie he/she will be deemed to have a single status for fee purposes. However, it may be possible for the student to change his/her status during the academic year. The fee will be payable according to his/her status at the beginning of the academic year. However, should the student's status change during the academic year, the fee will be recalculated and charged accordingly.

#### 3.2.1 Undergraduate Students

The determination of the status of a degree level student is based on the number of CATS points he/she is studying. CATS is an acronym for the Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme. This is a system which gives credit for each individual course unit that is completed successfully. This counts towards the final award, and allows students to change course and transfer the credits to another course. The exception to this relates to Study Abroad students, where a separate approach to the fee calculation is adopted – see (iv) below.

(i) Full-time

A student is normally classified as full-time, if the total CATS points of the course that he/she is studying are greater than 90 CATS points, for the academic year. A full-time fee will be charged, based on the fee rate for the course of study.

(ii) Part-time

A student is normally classified as part-time if the total CATS points of the course that he/she is studying, throughout the academic year, are less than, or equal to 90 CATS points.

Fees will be charged, according to CATS points, based on the fee rate for the course of study. The CATS points may be studied in any combination, across the semesters of Autumn, Spring, Summer and/or the Full Year.

(iii) Change of status

Should a full-time student drop any modules(s) during the academic year, but remain an active student, his/her status can change to part-time. This change in status, which will be subject to approval by the School, will be determined by the total number of CATS points of his/her course(s) as follows:

Situation 1: Total number of course CATS points > 90, the student remains classified as a full-time student.

Situation 2: Total number of course CATS points  $\leq$  90, the student is reclassified as a part-time student.

Exam only status for modular enrolment in an academic year is only permitted if the module to which the exam relates, has been paid for either in the current or prior academic year.

(iv) Study Abroad Students

Study Abroad students will be regarded as 'full-time' students, for the duration of their study at the University. A weighting of 90% will be applied to the standard full-time fee, if they spend more than one semester (module) at the University, and to half the full-time fee, if they spend one semester, or less, at the University.

### 3.2.2 Postgraduate Taught Students

The determination of the status of a Masters level student is based on the number of CATS points he/she is studying (further details of CATS are provided in paragraph 3.2.1 above).

(i) Full-time

A student is normally classified as full-time if the total CATS points of the course that he/she is studying are greater than 120 CATS points for the academic year.

A full-time fee will be charged, based on the fee rate for the course of study. This includes the fee for the submission of a dissertation, where appropriate.

(ii) Part-time

A student is normally classified as part-time if the total CATS points of the course that he/she is studying are less than or equal to 120 CATS points for the academic year. Fees will be charged according to CATS points, based on the fee rate for the course of study.

(iii) Dissertation fee

If the required dissertation is not submitted by the due date of the academic year in which the student is enrolled and there are no exceptional circumstances, he/she will be subject to the General Regulations governing the late submission of assessed work.

If the required dissertation is not submitted by the due date of the academic year in which the student is enrolled and he/she has been granted an extension by their School, then he/she should be re-enrolled on a full dissertation module (60 CATS points) charged at the prevailing rate. In the case of exceptional circumstances refer to Sections 5.6 and 11.

If the required dissertation is submitted by the due date of the academic year in which the student is enrolled and the dissertation fails, then he/she may be re-enrolled and charged the appropriate fee.

If a student enrolled on a dissertation module is prevented from starting their dissertation due to failure in one or more taught modules, the dissertation module will be dropped and the liability for that module will be capped at 25% of the fee for the module (60 CATS points). If the student wishes to be enrolled on the dissertation in a subsequent academic year, then the student will be subject to a 100% tuition fee liability for that module.

### 3.2.3 Postgraduate Research Students

The determination of the status of a Postgraduate Research student is normally based on the number of hours of study per week.

(i) Full-time

The annual fee will be charged, based on the fee rate for the course of study. However, in order to accommodate the more flexible nature of commencing and completing research degrees, the method of fee calculation will differ for research students. The fee will be calculated on a monthly basis, pro-rated for the academic year in which he/she starts. In the month that the student commences their studies, a monthly fee will only be calculated if he/she is deemed to be in attendance on, or before, the 25<sup>th</sup> of that month. In all subsequent months, a monthly fee will be calculated if he/she is deemed to be in attendance on, or after, the 5<sup>th</sup> of that month.

At registration, students will be charged the appropriate number of monthly fees up to the end of the academic year. If a student commences studies at the start of the academic year, he/she will be charged twelve monthly fees. If a student completes their course of study during the academic year, the fee will be recalculated and a refund may become due.

(ii) Part-time

Part-time research students are assessed, on the basis that they are studying less than 21 hours per week, over a period of more than 18 weeks, on the course of study.

The fee is calculated and charged based on 50% of the full-time fee.

(iii) Thesis Only

Following confirmation by the Progress Review Panel that the student has completed all the necessary research, and after approval by the relevant School Committee, a student may be registered as thesis only (writing up) for one year only (regardless of the previous full-time or part-time status).

Following the period of thesis only, where a student has not submitted, he/she will be returned to his/her original mode of study, ie full-time or part-time. At registration, students will be charged the appropriate number of monthly fees up to the end of the academic year. If a student completes their course of study during the academic year, the fee will be recalculated and a refund may become due.

(On the occasion when a thesis is required to be re-submitted, a resubmission charge will be payable by the student).

### 3.2.4 Students Enrolled on more than one Course of Study

Students who are enrolled on more than one course of study will be charged a fee for each course. For example, this can arise when a student is enrolled on more than one part-time course.

### 3.2.5 Collaborative Research Students

In the absence of an existing alternative collaborative arrangement, the appropriate arrangements involving international students, studying at both their home university and Queen's, are as follows:

- For the periods when the student is full-time at Queen's, the pro-rated full-time international fee is payable.
- For the periods when the student is not at Queen's, i.e. he/she is studying overseas instead, the part-time international fee is payable, again pro-rated for the time the student is not here.

### 3.2.6 Distance Learning Students

Students who are undertaking a designated distance learning programme and who are not in regular attendance at the University will be charged a distance learning fee.

### 3.2.7 Professional Doctorates

Professional Doctorates comprise taught components which are regulated by the Study Regulations for Postgraduate Taught Programmes, and research components which are regulated by the Study Regulations for Research Degree Programmes.

Students who enrol on a Professional Doctorate programme may exit with a taught Master's degree if sufficient credit has been attained from the taught components (including from a research project and dissertation); or a research Master's degree if the examiners consider that the thesis submitted for the research component is only Master's level.

#### (i) Tuition Fee

The calculation of the fee for Professional Doctorates will be based on the number of CATS points that the student is studying, based on the Postgraduate Taught fee.

#### (ii) Thesis Only

Following confirmation by the Progress Review Panel that the student has completed all the necessary research, and after approval by the relevant School Committee, a

professional doctorate student may be registered as thesis only (writing up) for one year only (regardless of the previous full-time or part-time status).

Following the period of thesis only, where a student has not submitted, in normal circumstances, he/she will be enrolled as a postgraduate research student and charged monthly, at the prevailing postgraduate rate until submission of their thesis. In the case of exceptional circumstances refer to Section 11.3.

- (iii) On the occasion when a thesis is required to be re-submitted, a resubmission charge will be payable by the student.

### **3.3 Fee Rates**

All courses are subject to a fee rate, based on the classification, as outlined below. Students from NI, GB and the EU will pay a set fee, regardless of the rate.

Fee Rate 1: Courses which are essentially classroom based

Fee Rate 2: Courses with a substantial laboratory, workshop component and pre-clinical elements of nursing courses.

Fee Rate 3: Pre-clinical elements of medical courses

Fee Rate 4: Clinical elements of medical courses

Full-time students will normally be charged the fee relating to their ultimate course/qualifications, ie the fee will be based on the final course they are registered on for the year. Similarly, such students who change fee rate during the year will be charged a fee based on the final rate. Part-time students will be charged, based on the course at the end of each semester.

### **3.4 Residency**

The following main categories of residency apply:

- NI (Northern Ireland) – applicable for Undergraduates\*
- GB (England, Scotland or Wales) – applicable for Undergraduates\*
- NI/GB (Home) – applicable for Postgraduates\*
- Non-UK EU (European Union, excluding the UK but including the Republic of Ireland)\*\*
- Isles (Channel Islands and Isle of Man – applicable to Undergraduates)
- International

Guidance on residency can be found on the UKCISA (UK Council for International Affairs) website [www.ukcisa.org.uk](http://www.ukcisa.org.uk) and on [www.qub.ac.uk/Study/Undergraduate/How-to-apply/Feestatus/](http://www.qub.ac.uk/Study/Undergraduate/How-to-apply/Feestatus/)

\* The NI or GB residency categories are also applicable for students enrolled on a small number of postgraduate courses, such as the Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE), which are eligible for SLC funding, and which are linked to the undergraduate fee rate.

\*\* Non-UK EU students who are registered at the University in 2018-19 (as either a new or continuing student) will continue to be charged a fee rate in line with NI or Home students, for all subsequent years of study of the course they are registered on in 2018-19.



### **3.5 Admit Term**

The level of fees will be determined, based on the first year that a student commenced his/her studies at the University ie, the Admit Term, and will be linked to the Programme of Study. In subsequent years, fees will be subject to an inflationary increase, unless explicitly stated otherwise.

### **3.6 Review of Tuition Fee Calculation**

An applicant or student who is dissatisfied with their fee calculation may submit a request for review to the Director of Finance. The grounds on which a review may be sought is that, arising from the initial assessment, one or more of the five criteria which determines the tuition fee calculation, is incorrect (see Sections 3.1 – 3.5 above).

An applicant or student must submit a request for review in writing to the Director of Finance within 10 working days of the communication of the fee and should set out evidence to support the grounds for review. The letter should make reference to which criteria, are being challenged. Details of any supporting documentation should also be provided with the letter.

The Director of Finance will consider the request for review and will undertake further enquiries as are deemed necessary and provide a written response, normally within 15 working days of the request for review.

## **4. TUITION FEES AND RELATED CHARGES BILLING AND COLLECTIONS**

Each student in attendance at the University for a course shall pay:

- (i) an annual composite fee which covers tuition, examinations (resit examination charges are applied separately), a premium for personal accident insurance and membership of the Students' Union; and
- (ii) such other charges as may be prescribed, including graduation.

Details of all tuition fees and related charges are provided in the Tuition Fees and Related Charges Schedule for the relevant academic year, available on [www.qub.ac.uk/tuitionfees](http://www.qub.ac.uk/tuitionfees).

A student is liable for the full tuition fee at the point of completion of enrolment and registration. Should there be a change in the student's enrolments following completion of enrolment and registration which results in a change in their tuition fee, then the student is liable for the revised tuition fee. The following section provides details of the options available to students, with regard to the payment of their tuition fee.

Amounts due at enrolment and registration must be paid, in order to complete the enrolment and registration process. This includes a non-refundable payment of 25% of the calculated tuition fee. Instalments due on future dates must be paid, in accordance with the agreed payment plan (eg Direct Debit) whether or not an invoice is raised. The requirement for a non-refundable payment also applies to sponsors.

All related charges, if incurred, will be due immediately and cannot be paid using the Direct Debit option. This includes the Thesis Only (Writing Up) Charge and the Exam-Only Charge.

In the event of a Direct Debit failing, the tuition fee outstanding will be payable in full. In such circumstances, the University reserves the right to remove the student from the Direct Debit Scheme and apply an administration charge.

A student will not be considered fully financially registered for a term until payment arrangements have been made. Details of how the student can fulfil this requirement are provided in the following sections.

#### 4.1 NI/GB/EU Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught Students

The current arrangements for the payment of University tuition fees allow eligible students, to apply for a tuition fee loan from the SLC. Details of fee payment options for all NI/GB/EU Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught students, including those eligible students who are entitled to a fee loan, are outlined in the table below:

**Table 1: NI/GB/EU Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught Fees – Payment Options**

<b>Options</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Defer fees – SLC loan	Student must apply to the SLC
Pay full fees at enrolment and registration	25% is non-refundable*
Combination	SLC*/Sponsor/Balance payable in full at enrolment and registration
Direct Debit	25% Payment at enrolment and registration (non-refundable**) 3 further payments (November, January, March)
Sponsor	Evidence of sponsorship or scholarship from a government or other official organisation must be provided at enrolment and registration.

\*The non-refundable percentage of fees will increase at various points during the academic year. Further details can be found in Tables 6 and 7, for full-time and part-time students, respectively.

If the fee assessed is for less than £300, the full amount must be paid directly to the University.

#### 4.2 NI/GB/EU Postgraduate Research Students

Research students should note that the full fee for the remaining part of the academic year will be calculated on registration. This full amount will appear on the student's account even if there is a Leave of Absence planned or a Thesis submission is anticipated. The total fees owed to the University will then be re-calculated once the Leave of Absence has commenced or the thesis submitted.

For sponsored research students, evidence of sponsorship or scholarship from a government or other official organisation must be provided at registration. Any remaining, balance, not being met from a third party, must be remitted to the University by direct payment or Direct Debit, within the necessary timeline. The indicative payment due dates for Postgraduate Research Students are summarised in the Table below:

**Table 2: Postgraduate Research Fees – Indicative Payment Due Dates**

	<b>Enrolment Period between 1 October – 31 May</b>	<b>Enrolment period between 1 June – 30 September</b>
Fee due (25% of the original calculated fee for the academic year)	Payable at enrolment and registration	Payable at enrolment and registration
Balance of the original calculated fee for the academic year	Payable either at enrolment and registration, or by direct debit	Payable at enrolment and registration (direct debit option not available)

If the first enrolment of a student did not take place at the beginning of an academic year, in subsequent years, the student will be required to enrol at the start of the academic year, and the first payment (non-refundable) will be due on 1 October.

For students whose personal fee liability is greater than £300, the following methods of payment are available.

**Table 3: Postgraduate Research Fees – Payment Options**

<b>Options</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Pay full fees at enrolment and registration	
Direct Debit	25% payment of the original calculated fee for the academic year at enrolment and registration 3 further bi-monthly payments based on the enrolment date and the pro-rated fee for the year.
Sponsor	Evidence of sponsorship or scholarship from a government or other official organisation must be provided at enrolment and registration.

In the event of a Direct Debit failing, the tuition fee outstanding will be payable in full. In such circumstances, the University reserves the right to remove the student from the Direct Debit Scheme and apply an administration charge.

#### **4.3 International Students**

As a condition of completing the enrolment and registration process, all international students must comply with the following payment arrangements, as outlined in Table 4 below.

**Table 4: International Student Fees - Payment Options**

<b>Options</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Pay full fees at enrolment and registration	25% is non-refundable*
Direct Debit	25% Payment at enrolment and registration (non-refundable*) 3 further payments (November, January, March)
Sponsor	Evidence of sponsorship or scholarship from a government or other official organisation, must be provided at enrolment and registration.

\*The non-refundable percentage of fees will increase at various points during the academic year. Further details can be found in Tables 6 and 7, for full-time and part-time students, respectively.

#### **4.4 International and Non-UK EU Distance Learning Students**

In order to accommodate international and non-UK EU distance learning students who cannot easily avail of the Direct Debit payment option, details of payment options are outlined in Table 5 overleaf.

**Table 5: International and Non-UK EU Distance Learning Student Fees - Payment Options**

<b>Options</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Pay full fees at enrolment and registration	25% is non-refundable*
Payment Plan	25% Payment at enrolment and registration (non-refundable*) 3 further payments (November, January, March)
Direct Debit	25% Payment at enrolment and registration (non-refundable*) 3 further payments (November, January, March)
Sponsor	Evidence of sponsorship or scholarship from a government or other official organisation, must be provided at enrolment and registration.

\*The non-refundable percentage of fees will increase at various points during the academic year. Further details can be found in Tables 6 and 7, for full-time and part-time students, respectively.

## **5. WITHDRAWALS AND REFUNDS**

The purpose of the following section is to ensure a robust and consistent approach to the application of withdrawals and refunds. The following guiding principles have been applied:

- students should pay a proportion of fees due, for modules which they have enrolled on and which have been held for them
- students should not be required to pay a full fee for modules they have not attended, and from which they have withdrawn in advance
- students should not receive a refund for modules which they have completed and for which they have received a grade (the outcome of the grade is irrelevant).

### **5.1 Dropped Modules**

No fee refund will apply if a full-time student drops modules and still meets the criteria for a full-time student. This is because the full-time fee will continue to apply.

If a full-time student drops modules and meets the criteria for a part-time student, a fee refund may be applicable.

### **5.2 Withdrawals**

Any student may, on a voluntary or required basis, withdraw either permanently or temporarily from the University or programme of study at any point in the year.

The following sections are relevant in the context of assessing the fee implications of withdrawals and refunds.

#### **5.2.1 Full-time Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught Students**

The date when a student withdraws will affect the level of tuition fees which may be refunded, and it may also affect his/her student loan. Fee adjustments are calculated with reference to the date of withdrawal from the University, not the last date of attendance, and cannot be actioned if the withdrawal procedure has not been followed correctly. Table 6 overleaf, demonstrates how the adjustment is calculated.

**Table 6: Fee Liability Dates**

<b>Attendance/SLC Liability Point</b>	<b>Normal Effective Date</b>	<b>Fees due to the University</b>
<b>Completion of Enrolment and Registration (non-refundable)</b>	<b>September/October</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>Second Liability Date</b>	<b>7 January 2019</b>	<b>50%</b>
<b>Final Liability Date</b>	<b>1 April 2019</b>	<b>100%</b>

### **5.2.2 Part-time Undergraduate and Part-time Postgraduate Taught Students**

Fees for part-time students are calculated by semester. Further details of the withdrawal and module drop policy, for part-time students, are outlined in Section 5.4.2 below.

### **5.2.3 Postgraduate Research Students**

The tuition fee liability for a Postgraduate Research student withdrawal, or a Temporary Leave of Absence, is based on the official date of withdrawal in the academic year, and a refund will be issued, if appropriate. The tuition fee is calculated for a month, if a student is deemed to be in attendance on, or after, the 5<sup>th</sup> of that month.

## **5.3 Refunds**

Refund entitlements will be based on the fee liability dates, as outlined in Table 6 above. Refunds will not be available on exam, resit or thesis only charges. For appeals in relation to a student's refund entitlement see Section 11.

## **5.4 Modules Changes**

### **5.4.1 Full-time Students**

The fee for full-time students, who swap or drop modules, and who continue to satisfy the minimum CATS point requirement for full-time students, will not change, ie it will remain at the full-time level. Full-time students will be entitled to swap and drop modules, within a two week period, post enrolment and registration. After this date, only DASA can approve the dropping of modules.

### **5.4.2 Part-time Students – Withdrawal Policy and Module Drop Policy**

Fees for part-time students are assessed by semester (or module). Therefore separate fees will be assessed, depending on whether a student has enrolled in Autumn, Spring, Summer or Full Year modules, and each type of module will be subject to a specific withdrawal policy. This policy will apply to the dropping of individual modules, as well as a full withdrawal from a semester or academic year, when studying in a part-time mode.

The part-time withdrawal and module drop policy will also apply where a full-time student drops to a part-time load and remains in attendance in the academic year. The modules dropped will have drop charges calculated based on the dates detailed in Table 7. Table 7 overleaf illustrates the withdrawal and module drop rates, by semester, together with fee due percentages.

**Table 7: Withdrawal and Module Drop Dates and Fee Implications**

<b>Withdrawal and Module Drop Dates</b>				<b>Fee due to the University</b>
<b>Autumn Modules</b>	<b>Spring Modules</b>	<b>Summer Modules</b>	<b>Full Year Modules</b>	
Completion of Enrolment and Registration	Completion of Enrolment and Registration	Completion of Enrolment and Registration	Completion of Enrolment and Registration	25%
From 1 November 2018	From 1 March 2019	From 1 July 2019	From 1 November 2018	50%
			From 1 March 2019	75%
From 1 December 2018	From 1 April 2019	From 1 August 2019	From 1 April 2019	100%

It should be noted that it is the student's responsibility to ensure that his/her enrolment is correct by the end of the period in which he/she is allowed to swap. This will require him/her to validate the information available via self service and to contact the relevant School(s) immediately if there are questions or concerns. In normal circumstances, an incorrect enrolment on the student's record will not entitle the student to a refund after the cut off date for swapping modules.

### **5.5 Deceased Student Policy**

Whilst it is rare, there are occasions when a registered student dies part way through their course so that a tuition fee adjustment may be due. Full account is taken of the individual circumstances of each case and there is appropriate consultation with a relevant member of staff in the student's School.

The tuition fee account for self funded students who have not paid any tuition fees at the time of their death is adjusted to ensure that no debt is pursued.

### **5.6 Exceptional Circumstances**

Where a student is experiencing circumstances which significantly impact their ability to engage with their studies they are required to inform their School, at the earliest opportunity.

The University's General Regulations include guidance on exceptional circumstances for unforeseeable or unpreventable events or circumstances beyond a student's control.

<http://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/AcademicStudentAffairs/AcademicAffairs/StudentGuidance/ExceptionalCircumstances-AStudentGuide/>

However, to meet the threshold for an adjustment to tuition fee liability there must be clear evidence of a significant negative impact on the student's ability to engage with their studies over the period of the semester and/or academic year. It should be noted that financial problems and work related pressures are not deemed to be exceptional circumstances.

### **Tuition Fee Liability Review Group**

The Tuition Fee Liability Review Group, which is made up of representatives from the Finance and Academic and Student Affairs Directorates, will consider requests for adjustments to a student's tuition fee liability, based on exceptional circumstances.

A student must ask that their School submit a request on their behalf to the Tuition Fee Liability Review Group for consideration. All requests must have the support of the relevant School.

The request should make reference to the exceptional circumstances experienced, their timing, duration and the impact they have had on the student's ability to engage with their studies. Supporting documentation must also be provided which clearly substantiates the circumstances. Documentary evidence which is contemporary with events, rather than retrospective, is required.

The Group will undertake further enquiries as are deemed necessary. Once all required information has been provided, the Group will make a decision and will send a written response to the School, normally within 20 working days. In some circumstances the decision of the Group may require that the student complete a fitness to study check before returning to study.

If a student is dissatisfied with the Group's decision they may submit an appeal, details of which are set out in Section 11.3 below.

## **6. DEPOSITS**

Where an applicant deemed international for tuition fee purposes has met all the course entry requirements and has accepted an unconditional offer of a place to study on a one-year postgraduate taught course, they are normally required to pay a mandatory deposit towards their tuition fees. A deposit payment will be required before a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) for visa/immigration purposes can be issued.

Following payment of this deposit, with the correct supporting documentation, a receipt will be issued by the Student Finance Office against such payment, which can be presented in support of a visa application.

If the visa application is successful, but the student chooses not to accept his/her place at the University, the deposit will not be refunded. The deposit will only be refunded if the student fails to obtain entry clearance from the UK immigration authorities to enter the UK as a student to undertake study at Queen's University.

International applicants who are in receipt of a full tuition fee scholarship are not required to pay the mandatory tuition fee deposit (evidence of the scholarship must be provided to Admissions).

In exceptional circumstances, eg the student is unable to take up his/her place on medical or visa grounds, the deposit may be refunded, although this will require the approval of Marketing, Recruitment Communications and Internationalisation Directorate.

There are a number of Postgraduate Taught courses where the offer issued to NI, EU and GB students is conditional on the payment of a deposit. Deposits are only refundable in certain circumstances. Full details will be provided when applying to the course.

## **7. SPONSORED STUDENTS**

In the event that a sponsor fails to pay tuition fees by a specified date, for each academic year at registration, the tuition fee liability will revert to the student.

## **8. RELATED CHARGES**

Details of all related charges are included in the Tuition Fees and Related Charges Schedule for the relevant academic year, and are available on [www.qub.ac.uk/tuitionfees](http://www.qub.ac.uk/tuitionfees).

## **9. DEBT COLLECTION POLICY**

In the event that a sponsor fails to pay tuition fees by a specified date, the tuition fee liability will revert to the student.

## **10. SUSPENSIONS**

### **10.1 Definition of Suspensions**

Failure to pay tuition fees and/or related charges, or make appropriate arrangements to pay tuition fees, by the relevant deadline, will lead to a student being suspended. Students under suspension will not be eligible to enrol or graduate. The University reserves the right to withhold a degree certificate or transcript from any student who is in debt to the University. Such a debt includes outstanding tuition fees and/or related charges owed to the University, as included in the Tuition Fees and Related Charges Schedule, available on [www.ac.uk/tuitionfees](http://www.ac.uk/tuitionfees). By withholding the degree certificate or transcript, the University will not be precluded from pursuing repayment of the debt by, for example, using a debt recovery agency.

### **10.2 Re-registration**

The University reserves the right to request payment in full prior to registration or re-registration from any student who has had a previous outstanding debt with the University.

## **11. FEE APPEALS PROCESS**

### **11.1 Background**

A student may wish to appeal the basis on which his/her fee has been calculated, or appeal a decision on a fee adjustment due to exceptional circumstances, made by the Tuition Fee Liability Review Group. Details of the basis for appeals are set out below.

#### **11.1.1 Calculation of Tuition Fee**

If an applicant or student is dissatisfied with the outcome of Stage 1 of the tuition fee calculation review process (see Section 3.6 above), they may appeal in writing to a Pro-Vice-Chancellor within 10 working days of the date of the letter stating the decision of the Director of Finance. Copies of previous correspondence and any supporting documentation should be included.

The grounds on which a fee may be appealed are as follows:

- New evidence has become available which was not taken into account, either at the time of the initial assessment, or the Review.
- There was a procedural irregularity in the process of determining one or more of the fee criteria.
- There has been an exceptional change in the circumstances of the student, affecting the fee calculation.

#### **11.1.2 Adjustment of Tuition Fee due to Exceptional Circumstances**

If a student is dissatisfied with the outcome of Stage 1 of the tuition fee liability review process (see Section 5.6 above), they may appeal in writing to the Director of Finance within 10 working days of having been notified of the Group's decision. Copies of previous correspondence and any supporting documentation should be included.



The only ground on which a review of the decision may be appealed is that new evidence has become available which was not taken into account at the time of the initial review.

## **11.2 Tuition Fee Appeals Panel**

An Appeals Panel shall be convened to meet within 25 working days of receipt of the Appeal. The Panel shall normally comprise:

- Pro-Vice-Chancellor, or nominee (Chair)
- Director of Academic and Student Affairs or Director of Marketing, Recruitment, Communications and Internationalisation; or nominee

The Appeals Panel may seek written evidence from any witness or person who in the Panel's judgement may have relevant information to contribute.

The Appeals Panel will be serviced by the Finance Directorate and a formal record of the meeting will be taken and retained. The Panel's decision will be communicated to the student or applicant within 5 working days of the Appeals Panel's meeting, and circulated to relevant Directorates and Schools.

There is no further appeal permitted beyond the Second stage appeal. However, a student who feels aggrieved by the final decision of the internal process may make a complaint to the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman <https://nipso.org.uk/nipso/about-us/who-we-are/>.

## **12. Additional Course Costs**

For some courses, students may be required to purchase specialist equipment, attend field courses or incur costs associated with placement years abroad. Where there are additional costs directly related to a particular course, these will be specifically set out in the Additional Course Costs Section of CourseFinder. The student will be responsible for payment of these costs.