



HIGHER EDUCATION

Chichester College Group Student Loans, Registration and Withdrawals Process 2017-2020



Quality Code Part C Information about Higher Education Provision, ESG Standards (1.4, 1.8), Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) and Office for Independent Adjudicator (OIA) as at June 2017.

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Higher Education

Student Loans, Registration and Withdrawals Process

Summary

The document is intended to clarify the process for the registration of student loan agreements with the Student Loans Company (SLC), confirming attendance with Student Finance England (SFE) and withdrawing students from Higher Education Programmes.

Documenting this process, which relates to enrolled students only, will enable all staff to respond to a 'Change of Circumstances' which leads to a student leaving a course before the completion of an academic year.

Deadlines are proposed on behalf of the SLC/HEI to reduce cases of unsolicited claims of fees and subsequently affect future financial agreements with their applicants/clients.

Students have an entitlement to a 14 day cooling off period having accepted an offer of a place. Any student who chooses to leave or reject their place within 14 days of having accepted an offer of a place will not be subject to any charge and the college will not apply to SFE for tuition fees.

Students must be informed that if they withdraw after the college has registered their attendance with SFE, a percentage of the tuition fees will be retained by the college and therefore they will be in debt to SFE for that amount. Furthermore, that debt will be considered as a year of the 4 year maximum entitlement under the SFE scheme. Therefore a student who wishes to move to a four year programme having started at the college may find that they are not covered by the SFE scheme for the whole programme.

Enrolment

No student should be exempt from payment once they are fully enrolled and attending a Higher Education Programme funded by HEFCE, unless 'Mitigating' Circumstances are recorded and a fee waiver has been sanctioned by the Director of Finance.

All students who are relying upon an SFE loan/maintenance award to finance their course must register with Student Finance England, where they are eligible for funding and meet the requirements set by Student Finance England.

All students who are relying upon an SFE loan/maintenance to finance their course should have a letter of approval from SFE, which they are required to produce at enrolment, together with ID to prove that the loan agreement is theirs to use.

Whenever students who are applying for a loan do not have the letter of approval, they can sign a liability clause and enrol with a deposit of £100 (Registrar reserves the right to change this amount).

Students who are not using a Loan for their fees will be given a direct debit mandate and required to pay a deposit which is one sixth of the full fee of the academic year. Student Records and Funding will guide students in the payment of fees by Direct Debit.

It is vital that the student signs and understands the declaration that they remain responsible for all payments of the course fees regardless of which method they use to enrol.

Key Responsibilities

Responsibility for enrolment: Student Records and Funding

Responsibility for recovery of unpaid fees: College Finance Department

The final deadline for enrolment is normally 30th September of any academic year

Registration

The start date of the academic year for all new students will be recorded for the purpose of funding by SFE the same date as the Higher Education induction date. Responsibility for start and completion dates relating to qualifications remains with Student Records and Funding and the Curriculum Heads of Learning.

Student Loan Agreements are evaluated and matched to Student Enrolments using internal College Systems and then the college takes the first step in its claim to SFE for the fees incurred by the Student by registration of said Student with SFE.

It is imperative that students are both enrolled and registered with SFE before any other action is taken to 'claim' a fee from the SLC/SFE. Only when a student's loan agreement has satisfied Student Records and Funding/Nominated Staff member of Student Support does the next step of "Attendance Confirmation" take place.

Students who accept an offer of a place at the beginning of the academic year are entitled to a 14 day cooling off period before the process of registration with SFE can begin.

Key Responsibilities

Responsibility for registration: Student Finance

Responsibility for collection of Loans Papers during enrolment: Student Records and Funding

Responsibility for sharing information with Finance Department: Student Records and Funding

Deadline for registrations is normally the end of the first 4 weeks of the course

Confirmation of Attendance

Students must understand that once their attendance is confirmed, the tuition fee will be claimed and they will have used their allocated fees and loan regardless of actual attendance or completion of the year.

The circumstances under which students may withdraw with reduced or no liability for the tuition fee is covered in the section headed withdrawals.

Finance Team confirm student attendance 12 weeks after course start (and not before 1st November) for all students with SFE Loan Agreements. Where the records match and there is no concern about the student, attendance will be recorded with SFE and the tuition fee claimed. Very late starters will be allowed 14 day cooling off before student attendance is confirmed.

HE Student Advisor who will notify the Finance Team before 4th week of any student with attendance lower than 75% or who is undergoing a referral with a view to exclusion.

Those students will not have attendance confirmed until HE Student Advisor confirms that the referral process is complete. If the student is to continue on their course, their attendance will be registered with SFE.

Key Responsibilities

Responsibility for confirmation of attendance: Finance

Deadline for confirmation of attendance: 12 weeks after course start and not before 1st November. Very late starters will be allowed 14 day cooling off before student attendance is confirmed.

Students who are registered for a Student Loan and wish to withdraw

COC or 'Change of Circumstances' when recorded and submitted to the SLC's HEI for approval must clearly state when a fee is being charged to a student with the full understanding that this will affect future availability of loans when applying for any future courses.

The student will meet with the HE Student Advisor and relevant Course Leader. The HE Student Advisor will inform all parties in writing that the student wishes to withdraw from their course, citing the reason. The student must confirm in writing to the HE Student Advisor their decision to withdraw. Once that process is complete the student should be withdrawn on Internal College Systems.

If the student decides to withdraw the following process applies:

Option One:

Should a student have mitigating circumstances and effectively unable to partake in the course which they have enrolled onto, upon the approval of Director of Finance, will have a 'non-attendance' and fees waived to £0.00 when COC registered with SFE.

Option Two:

Should a student suspend their completion of the course with a view to returning in a consecutive academic year, a 'Suspension of Studies' will be recorded by Student Records and Funding, and when the student returns, complete a 'Continuance' COC with SFE. The fees and supportive funding will be held upon request for release at a later date.

Option Three:

Student is not completing the course and has attended part of the course. A 'withdraw' with a full liability for fees will be recorded with SFE. Fee reductions as outlined below apply.

Should a successful appeal be made to the Director of Finance be made, a 'Waiver' must be recorded with SFE.

If the student decides to withdraw the following process applies:

Students withdrawing having enrolled and up until the first day of term 2: 25% of the tuition fee to be retained by the college

Students withdrawing after the first day of term 2 up until the last day of February: 50% of the tuition fee to be retained by the college

Students withdrawing after the first day of March: 100% of the tuition fee to be retained by the college.

All reduced fee liabilities to be approved by the Director of Finance. Please note that this schedule is in line with current guidance from Student Finance England.

Key Responsibilities

Responsibility for informing Student Records and Funding: HE Student Advisor and Head of Learning

Responsibility for withdraw from enrolment: Student Records and Funding

Responsibility for sharing information with Finance Department: Student Records and Funding

Responsibility for COC registrations with SFE: Finance

Approval of Waiver of Fees: Director of Finance

Deadline: End of the first 4 weeks of the course

Students who are Self-funding and wish to withdraw

Should a student be funding their fees without the support of a student loan, they will be still liable for fees at a graded/staggered rate according to length of their attendance of said course. Furthermore they must be informed that this liability may affect availability of student finance for future courses.

The student will meet with the HE Student Advisor and Course Leader. The HE Student Advisor will inform all parties in writing that the student wishes to withdraw from their course, citing the reason. If there is a reduced fee, the Director of Finance's approval is required. Once that process is complete the student should be withdrawn on EBS.

If the student decides to withdraw the following process applies:

Students withdrawing having enrolled and up until the first day of term 2: 25% of the tuition fee to be retained by the college

Students withdrawing after the first day of term 2 up until the last day of February: 50% of the tuition fee to be retained by the college

Students withdrawing after the first day of March: 100% of the tuition fee to be retained by the college.

Key Responsibilities

Responsibility for informing Student Records and Funding: HE Student Advisor and Head of Learning

Responsibility for withdraw from enrolment: Student Records and Funding

Responsibility for sharing information with Finance Department: Student Records and Funding