



Policy on

HE Sanctions for Non-Payment of Tuition Fees

Approved on 30 June 2026

applies to enrolments from 1 July 2026

Approved by

Senior Leadership Team

Policy Title	HE Sanctions for Non-Payment of Tuition Fees
Document Owners	Chief Financial Officer
Directorates and Departments affected by this Policy	All Staff
Policy Effective From	July 2026
Next Review Date	June 2031

New College Durham is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, as well as vulnerable adults, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

If you require this document in an alternative format and/or language, please contact records@newdur.ac.uk

We review our policies regularly to update them and to ensure that they are accessible and fair to all. All policies are subject to equality impact assessments which are carried out to determine whether the policy has, or is likely to have, a different impact on those with protected characteristics. We are always keen to hear from anyone who wants to contribute to these impact assessments, and we welcome suggestions for improving the accessibility of fairness of this and all College policies.

Other policies and procedures mentioned in this document will be published on our [Website](#)

To make suggestions or to see further information please contact:

Michael Openshaw
Treasury Manager (Income)
income@newdur.ac.uk

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1. Scope and Purpose

This policy sets out how the College will respond to non-payment of tuition fees for Higher Education students. It ensures that any actions taken are fair, proportionate and transparent, and that students are given appropriate opportunities to resolve outstanding fees before sanctions are applied.

The Policy will apply to all Higher Education students of New College Durham who have not got a tuition fee payment arrangement in place for their programme.

2. Responsibilities

The Chief Financial Officer (CFO) is responsible for ensuring the College has a stated position in relation to Fee payment and that the relevant policies (see section 3) are communicated to students and prospective students. The CFO will also authorise appeals against withdrawals for non-payment of fees.

The Vice Principal responsible for HE (VPHE) is responsible for ensuring compliance with the OfS conditions for registration. The VPHE will also authorise appeals against withdrawals for non-payment of fees.

The Academic Registrar is responsible for ensuring the information published by the College complies with the law and for maintaining the HE Withdrawals Policy.

The Treasury Manager and the Academic Registrar are responsible for maintaining the HE Withdrawal Procedure.

Decisions relating to sanctions and appeals will be made by staff who have not been directly involved in the case wherever possible to ensure fairness and impartiality.

3. Relationship with the Law, Regulators and Other College Policies

This Policy will facilitate compliance with the conditions of registration for the Office for Students, the rules of the Student Loans Company and the requirements of Consumer Law.

This Policy should also be read in the context of the following College policies:

- Higher Education Tuition Fees Policy
- Refund and Compensation Policy

- Higher Education Withdrawals Policy
- Complaints Policy

Other policies and procedures mentioned in this document will be published on our [Website](#)

4. Policy Statement: Sanctions for Non-Payment of Tuition Fees

Where a student does not engage with the College to resolve outstanding tuition fee payments, the College may apply sanctions.

Sanctions will be applied in a fair, proportionate and transparent manner, taking into account the individual circumstances of the student.

The College will take reasonable steps to support students in resolving fee issues before applying sanctions, including offering payment plans and signposting to financial support.

Withdrawal from a programme will normally be considered a last resort where all reasonable steps to resolve the situation have been exhausted.

5. Procedure

Stage 1 - Enrolment

As part of the enrolment process a student will sign a learning agreement confirming that they have read and understood the College Tuition Fees Policy, Refund and Compensation Policy and Sanctions for Non-payment of Tuition fees available to view on the College Website/HE handbook. Students will be informed of the implications of 'Payment Pending' status, including any restrictions and the steps required to resolve this.

Students with 'Payment Pending' status will not be allowed to progress onto the next level of the programme, which will be clearly communicated.

Stage 2 - Finance

The enrolment status for students who do not have an arrangement in place to pay their Tuition Fees will remain 'Payment Pending' until such time that payment is made, or evidence can be identified from the Student Loans Company portal that their tuition fees will be paid through a Tuition Fee Loan. When the payment evidence has been provided the Income Team will remove the Payment Pending indicator.

Students are requested to provide evidence of tuition fee payment upon enrolment. If they are not in receipt of either a Tuition Fee Loan on the Student Loans Company (SLC) portal or they do not have an arrangement in place, then an invoice will be raised three weeks after their course commences. The Income Team will begin to follow the College's Debt Collection procedure until an arrangement to pay is put in place. Students without a satisfactory fee payment agreement will move to the next stage of the procedure, the consequences of which will be set out alongside the invoice and is also included in the College induction process.

The College will make reasonable efforts to contact students and support them in putting a payment arrangement in place before progressing to further stages.

Stage 3 – Finance

At the first tuition fee liability point, the Income Team will issue a reminder to all students whose status remains 'Payment Pending', confirming that continuation on their programme and award is dependent on the full payment of tuition fees or an agreed payment arrangement.

Where a student's status remains 'Payment Pending' at the second tuition fee liability point (typically three months from the course start date), the College may consider applying further action. This may include restricting access to study or, where appropriate, initiating withdrawal in line with the Higher Education Withdrawal Policy.

This approach may also apply earlier (for example, from the sixth week of the course) where it is known that a Tuition Fee Loan application has been rejected and no satisfactory alternative payment arrangement has been made.

Before any withdrawal is confirmed, the College will:

- Make reasonable efforts to contact the student and support them in resolving the outstanding fee issue
- Write to the student setting out the intention to withdraw, the reasons for this decision, and the process and deadline for appeal
- Allow a period of 14 College working days for the student to submit an appeal with supporting evidence

Following this period, and after consideration of any appeal and the individual circumstances of the student, the College may proceed with withdrawal where no satisfactory resolution has been reached. The student will be notified in writing of the final decision.

Stage 4 - Appeals

Students may Appeal against the intended withdrawal based on the following circumstances:

- Their Student Finance England application has been delayed.
- Their Student Finance England application has been rejected and they are appealing the decision made by the Student Loans Company.
- They are self-funding and are appealing on the basis of financial hardship.
- Their fees were due to be paid by an employer or sponsor and this support is no longer available.
- They can demonstrate exceptional circumstances.

Appeals should be made by the student in writing, with relevant supporting evidence, within 14 College working days of issue of the intention to withdraw. Appeals should be emailed to income@newdur.ac.uk who will liaise with both the Vice Principal, HE, Lifelong Learning and International Studies and the Chief Finance Officer.

Within five working days of the Appeal being received, the Vice Principal, HE, Lifelong Learning and International Studies and Chief Finance Officer will make a decision based on the information/evidence provided by the student. They may choose to **defer the sanction** or **confirm the withdrawal**.

If the Appeal is successful and therefore the Sanction is to be deferred:

- **The Income Team will write to the student with the outcome of their Appeal**, the letter will be copied to the Programme Team and CIS Helpdesk;
- The student's status will remain 'Payment Pending'.

If the Appeal is unsuccessful the student will be informed in writing by the Income Team.

Students who have outstanding tuition fees from a previous programme and wish to apply for a new programme at the New College Durham will not have their application processed.

The outcome of the appeal will be communicated in writing, including the reasons for the decision.

Appeals will be considered fairly and on the basis of the evidence provided.

Further appeals will be managed in accordance with the Higher Education Withdrawal Policy and, where appropriate, the Complaints Policy.

In all cases, decisions will be made on a fair and proportionate basis, taking into account individual circumstances, including evidence of engagement, financial hardship, or delays outside the student's control.

Stage 5 – Deferred Sanctions

Where a sanction has been deferred following a successful appeal, the College will continue to work with the student to agree a reasonable and achievable resolution to the outstanding fee position.

The student will remain in 'Payment Pending' status until such time that the tuition fee debt is resolved or a satisfactory payment arrangement is in place.

If the student remains 'Payment Pending' at the third tuition fee liability point, the Income Team will issue a formal notification confirming that, unless a suitable payment arrangement is agreed within 14 College working days, the College may apply a suspension of studies.

Any decision to suspend a student will be made in a fair and proportionate manner, taking into account the individual circumstances of the student. Where suspension is applied, this will be communicated in writing and will be implemented in line with College procedures.

During any prolonged period of suspension, the College will continue to engage with the student and support them in resolving their outstanding fees. Where appropriate, students will be supported to re-engage with their studies once the fee position has been resolved.

Following a prolonged suspension of studies, an Assessment Board will determine the appropriate point for the student to resume their studies. This may include a delayed return or deferral to a future intake.

If the outstanding tuition fee debt remains unresolved for a period of 12 calendar months following suspension, the College may proceed with withdrawal from the programme in line with the Higher Education Withdrawal Policy where no reasonable resolution has been reached. Students will have the right to appeal this decision in accordance with that policy.

Where tuition fee debt is cleared prior to withdrawal, the student's status will be reinstated, and relevant College teams will be notified to support the student's continuation on their programme.

The College will continue to pursue recovery of any outstanding debt through appropriate processes, including engagement with debt recovery partners where necessary.

Where students are suspended for reasons unrelated to outstanding fees (e.g. health or other personal circumstances) they remain liable for any tuition fees incurred for the period of study undertaken, unless a formal fee arrangement has been agreed.

Where a student has a non-fee sanction related suspension of studies for up to one academic year and has not settled their outstanding fees or entered an agreed payment arrangement, they will still be subject to the College's fee sanction process.

6. Student Protections

The College recognises that students may experience financial difficulty and will ensure that:

- Students are given reasonable opportunities to resolve outstanding fees
- Financial hardship is considered as part of decision-making
- Students are signposted to available financial support
- Decisions are made fairly and without discrimination
- Sanctions are proportionate to the circumstances

7. Evaluation and Review

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored annually and reviewed every five years in light of experience and best practice. This mechanism recognises that changes to legislation may prompt a review of the policy before the five years stipulated.