

# POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH DEGREES

## Tuition Fees Charging and Refund Policy

### 2025/26

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Summary/Description:	The Postgraduate Research Degrees Tuition Fees Charging and Refund Policy sets out the guiding tuition fee policy for research students, including how fees are applied, how payment is obtained, and what sanctions apply when payments are missed.

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## 1. Tuition Fee Liability

**1.1** Studying for a research degree of Master of Philosophy (MPhil), Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) or Doctor of Education (EdD) at the University of Greenwich requires students to pay full tuition fees at the prevailing level corresponding to their fees assessment status and mode of study, for the duration of their studies. Duration of study is defined as the period from when a student registers with the university as a postgraduate research student to the date when:

- i) the student makes their formal submission for examination via form RDA6a/b<sup>1</sup>, or
- ii) The Faculty Research Degrees Committee either approves a formal application from the student to withdraw from their studies or approves a formal application made by the supervisors to withdraw a student from their studies.

### **Important note:**

This document does not apply to research students studying in the Medway School of Pharmacy and only section 1.2 of this policy applies to students studying on MA/MSc Research/by Research programmes. For further information relating to tuition fees for the MA/MSc Research/by Research programmes, refer to the [Student Fees and Funding pages](#) of our website. The provisions of the relevant university Charging and Refund Policy for undergraduate and postgraduate taught students will apply to any tuition fee refund (e.g. in the event of withdrawal) or compensation that may be payable to students on MA/MSc Research/by Research programmes can be accessed [here](#).

**1.2** Tuition fees for research students are charged per annum:

Tuition fees for research students are charged per annum and will rise annually for students by no more than RPIX +3% (Retail Price Index excluding mortgage interest payments +3%).

For **Home Postgraduate Research Students** assessed as paying fees at the home rate undertaking an **MPhil, PhD or an MA/MSc by Research programme**, tuition fees are subject to an annual fee setting exercise and will rise annually in line with the fees as set annually by UK Research and Innovation, which are available at [here](#).

For **Overseas students** paying fees at the **international rate**, tuition fees are subject to an annual fee setting exercise and will rise annually by no more than RPIX +3% (Retail Price Index excluding mortgage interest payments +3%). For example, if a student's fees rate in 2022/23 had been £15,100 and RPIX = 5% their fee increased in 2023/24 to £16,300, as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} 5\% + 3\% &= 8\% \\ £15,100 \times (8 \div 100) &= £1,200 \\ £15,100 + £1,200 &= £16,300 \end{aligned}$$

Please note that RPIX will change annually. Any increase in the fees rate for students reflects the increased cost of delivering the course in subsequent years.

The tuition fees for international students who will be studying on a full-time basis outside of the United Kingdom (UK) will be half the corresponding fees for international students who study on a full-time basis at one of the main university campuses. This does not apply to international students who are based at one of the main university campuses but who spend periods of time studying outside of the UK as part of their approved programme of research.

The level of fees applicable for home students for the current year of study can be accessed [here](#).

**1.3** Should such a student fail to submit their draft thesis to the Research & Enterprise Training Institute for examination within the maximum registration period as set out in the university's '*Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Research Awards*', an extension to registration must be sought from the Faculty Research Degrees Committee. Should an extension to registration be approved, tuition fees will become payable until the thesis is formally submitted to RETI for examination in accordance with sections 1.1 and 1.2 above.

## **2. Registration and Payment of Tuition Fees**

### **2.1 Registration with the university**

All students, including staff, who are officially engaged in studies leading to the award of a research degree, are required to formally register with the university as a research student on commencement of their studies, and also re-register at the start of each academic year, for as long as they are permitted to study to meet the requirements of their award, irrespective of whether tuition fees are payable (i.e., if a student is awaiting examination or awaiting award). Failure to re-register for each academic year will result in a student's record becoming inactive and the student may be withdrawn from their programme of study. It should be noted there is maximum registration periods for the award of research degrees, as set out in the '*Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Research Awards*', which is available [here](#).

### **2.2 Tuition fees due on initial registration**

Where tuition fees are payable in accordance with the terms set out in the offer letter, commencement on the programme to become a research student is contingent on the payment of these tuition fees in accordance with the university's standard payment policy, which can be viewed [here](#). For year 1 only, such fees will be determined on a pro-rata basis of the applicable annual fees based on the period between the date of registration and the end of the relevant academic year. For example, a student registering in January 2025 will be charged fees up to the 31 August 2025 (i.e., 8 months of the 12 months fees).

### **2.3 Tuition fees due on annual re-registration**

Research students are required to re-register with the university at the start of each academic year, for the period from 1 September to 31 August. Re-registration will be contingent on payment of the annual tuition fees applicable for that year of study, in accordance with the university's standard payment policy, which can be viewed at [here](#).

***Please note, that final year research students will be charged the full fees regardless of original start date.***

### **2.4 Tuition fees due on expiry of PhD Scholarships**

When a Vice-Chancellor PhD Scholarship or Professorial PhD Scholarship expires, relevant tuition fees become payable from the day following the expiry date until the point where the thesis is formally submitted to the RETI for examination. In the academic year the

scholarship expires, fees will be charged on a pro-rata basis from the day after expiration to the 31 August of that academic year. Subsequent year's fees will be charged in line with section 2.3 until submission of the thesis for examination, following which the fees charging policy as set out in section 4 will apply.

## **2.5 Tuition fees due where a student changes mode of study**

Where a research student changes their mode of study (i.e., from full-time to part-time or part-time to full-time), the following will apply:

- i) If the change of mode occurs just prior to or at the start of the next academic year, the standard annual tuition fees relevant to the new mode of study will be charged from that point onwards.
- ii) If the change of mode occurs part way through an academic year, the tuition fees will be charged pro-rata to the full-time rate for the number of months studied in full-time mode and pro-rata to the part-time rate for the number of months studied in part-time mode.

## **3. Exceptions**

### **3.1 Students in receipt of a Vice-Chancellor's PhD Scholarship or Professorial PhD Scholarship**

For students who are in receipt of a Vice-Chancellor's PhD Scholarship or a Professorial PhD Scholarship, the fees charging will be as follows:

- i) Full-time Home students will be exempt from paying tuition fees for the three-year period they are in receipt of the scholarship.
- ii) For students who are classified as overseas students, the overall fees will be reduced by the equivalent of the home student fees. The student is responsible for paying the difference between the home and overseas fees.
- iii) Once the Scholarship expires, full tuition fees at the applicable rate will become payable as set out in section 2.4, irrespective of whether further financial support is secured through funding from another source. The exception to this is if the student meets the eligibility criteria for the 'Reduced tuition fees scheme' as set out in section 3.2.

Where a full-time student is in receipt of a Scholarship and where they are permitted to submit their thesis for examination to the RETI, on an exceptional basis, prior to the end of the three-year period, they will continue to be exempt from tuition fees until the three-year period expires. Once the scholarship expires, they will then become liable for tuition fees in accordance with section 4.

**Please note, if a home research student changes mode of study to part-time, the Vice Chancellor's Scholarship will be pro rata to cover the remaining entitlement.**

See below an illustration/example for a full-time home student awarded a Vice Chancellor's Scholarship (VCS) for 3 years, who then subsequently changes their mode of study after their second year of study, will have their VCS applied as follows:

- Full-time Year 1 Tuition fees are £5,000. VCS of £5,000 will be applied
- Full-time Year 2 Tuition fees are £5,500 VCS of £5,500 will be applied
- Part-time Year 3 Tuition fees are £3,000 VCS of £3,000 will be applied

- Part-time Year 4 Tuition fees are £3,500 VCS of £3,500 will be applied
- The figures used in the illustration above are fictitious, showing yearly fees increased.

### **3.2 Reduced Tuition Fees Scheme (RTFS)**

For eligible students, the university operates a 'Reduced Tuition Fees Scheme' which has the objective of encouraging full-time doctoral students to complete their studies within four years and part-time students to complete their studies within six/seven years of study.

The scheme is open to eligible students entering their fourth year of full-time study or their sixth year of part-time study. A student can only benefit from this scheme once during their studies.

In the case of students on a four-year scholarship funded where the first year of registration is an organised training year, typically as part of the UKRI funded doctoral training programme, then this first year will be discounted when considering eligibility for this scheme.

The scheme operates as follows:

- i) Students who commenced their programme post 1 February 2017, have successfully transferred from MPhil to PhD (where applicable) and completed the research phase of their programme within:
  - three years and will be writing, completing, and submitting their thesis in their fourth year of full-time registration, or
  - five years and will be writing, completing, and submitting their thesis in their sixth year of part-time registration.

Students can apply to pay a fixed reduced tuition for year four for full-time students and year six and seven for part-time students, subject to the submission of the Reduced Tuition Fees Scheme application form and presentation of demonstrable evidence (RDA4 form or Logbook) to confirm this is the case.

***Please note, part-time students would have had to submit an application for reduced fees within 28 days of entering their sixth year.***

- ii) To apply for the scheme, students are required to complete the application form, which may be accessed [here](#). The completed form must be submitted to their first Supervisor for support, and subsequently to their Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor for approval, along with the demonstrable evidence set out in section 3.2i). Once approved, the form and demonstrable evidence to support eligibility should be submitted via the [researchstudentfinance@greenwich.ac.uk](mailto:researchstudentfinance@greenwich.ac.uk) for processing. This process must be completed within 28 calendar days of the research student officially entering their fourth year of fulltime study or sixth of part-time study, as defined by the original date of their registration as a research student with the university, not the date they complete their re-registration for the qualifying academic year.
- iii) Students who are granted a one-year reduced tuition fees and do not submit their thesis for examination within that year, will not qualify for such reduced fees in any subsequent years of study and will be required to pay full fees at the published annual rate for the relevant academic year, in line with section 2.3.

- iv) Full-time students who are granted a one-year reduced tuition fees and do not submit their thesis for examination during their fourth year of study, will not be permitted to transfer to part-time study at the beginning of their fifth year as a matter of course, simply as a means of reducing their tuition fees liability.
- v) Where a student is eligible for the reduced tuition fees scheme and receives authorisation from their Faculty to re-register late for the qualifying academic year, having failed to re-register within the required timeframe stipulated by the university, continued eligibility for the reduced tuition fee scheme will be dependent on whether the application process for the scheme was completed in accordance with section 3.2 ii). If it is determined the application was submitted in accordance with section 3.2 ii), the reduced tuition fee will then be applied from the date the student officially enters their qualifying year, not the date the student completes their re-registration for that year (i.e. If the student enters their fourth year of full-time study in September but does not re-register until November, the fee will still be applied from the September). If the application process is not completed within the required timeframe set out in section 3.2 ii), the student will not be eligible for the scheme and will be liable for the full relevant annual tuition fees, in line with section 2.3.
- vi) The current rate payable for those students who are approved as eligible for this scheme is £500 for the year, irrespective of their mode of study and fees assessment status. This rate will be reviewed annually in line with the fees setting requirements.
- vii) Qualifying part-time students are permitted two years for writing up at a reduced fee.
- viii) The fee will be reduced to £250 per year for part-time students for a maximum of two years.
- ix) Where a student has paid the officially approved reduced tuition fees for the year(s) and submits their thesis for examination part way through the course of the qualifying year or withdraws, the student will not be entitled to a pro-rata refund of the reduced tuition fees, as referred to in sections 4.1 and 5.2.

**x) Reduced tuition fees scheme where a student changes mode of study.**

- i) If a student changes their mode of study AFTER the original eligibility period has passed, they will not be able to apply under the new mode of study eligibility criteria. For example: If a student changes from full-time to part-time after end of year 3 of study and has not applied for the reduced tuition fees scheme when entering their 4<sup>th</sup> year of study, they will not be able to apply when entering their sixth year as a part-time student
- ii) If a full-time student changes to part-time mode of study PRIOR to reaching the eligibility period (i.e. entering the 4<sup>th</sup> year of study), then student will be able to apply for the reduced tuition fees scheme subject to satisfying all the eligibility conditions when they reach the 6<sup>th</sup> year of part-time study.
- iii) If a full-time student changes to part-time mode of study PRIOR to reaching the eligibility period (i.e. entering the 4<sup>th</sup> year of study), then eligibility for the RTFS scheme will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the [Research Student Finance Team](#). PGR student finance will liaise with RETI to determine the new academic maximum registration dates and total tuition fee liability will be considered before a decision is made.

**xi) Changes to Mode of Study during the RTFS period**

If a student changes their mode of study during the approved RTFS period, the RTFS scheme will be permitted to run as awarded. There will be no pro-rata or extensions allowed. If a draft thesis has not been submitted by the end of the approved period, the relevant tuition fees will become applicable. There will be no future eligibility for the scheme as a student can only benefit from the scheme once during their studies.

**xii) Ed(D) students**

- i) Start/end dates are calculated from the commencement of teaching in their given year (as noted by the Faculty Research Degrees Committee), and not their CN hold date.
- ii) Part-time Ed(D) students have a maximum registration period of 72 months (6 years) so eligibility will be from the start of their **6th** year of study as defined by the start date as stated in i).

### **3.3 University staff registered on a research degree programme after 1 September 2012**

Staff who are registered with the university on a research programme leading to an award of a research degree after 1 September 2012 are also considered as research students and are subject to the payment of tuition fees in accordance with the *current 'Partial Fee Exemption Scheme – Policy and Arrangements for Staff Studying on University Programmes'*, which can be viewed [here](#).

Should such a member of staff fail to formally submit the thesis to RETI for examination within the maximum registration period relevant to their mode of study, tuition fees payable will be in line with section 1 above, except when the payment of tuition fees remains in line with the 'Partial Fee Exemption Scheme' referred to in this section.

### **3.4 Doctorate by Published Work (PhD) and Higher Doctorates (DSc, DTech, DLitt, LLD)**

For those eligible to undertake a Doctorate by Published Work (PhD) or Higher Doctorate (see the [Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Research Awards](#) for eligibility), a flat administration fee of £1000.00 is payable.

For university staff members, the amount payable by the candidate and/or the faculty will be determined by the university's Partial Fee Exemption Scheme Policy and whether the member of staff is deemed to be operating under Category A (sponsorship) or Category B (partial fee exemption).

For those who hold an honorary position with the university, the full administration fee of £1000.00 is payable.

## **4. Tuition Fees Following Examination Outcomes**

### **4.1 Tuition fees following submission of a thesis**

During the academic year, a research student is due to submit their thesis for examination, tuition fees will continue to be charged according to section 2.3 until the RDA6a/b and accompanying thesis have been submitted to the Research & Enterprise Training Institute for examination. Tuition fees will then be recalculated on a pro-rata basis of the annual tuition fees, from the start of the relevant academic year to the point where the student has officially submitted the RDA6a/b and accompanying thesis to the Research & Enterprise Training Institute for examination. Any overpayment of tuition fees identified will be held until



completion, as further charges may be incurred because of the examination outcome, as set out in section 4.2.

**Note:** Tuition fees will not be calculated on a pro-rata basis, as above, for students who submit their thesis for examination during the year they are in receipt of an approved Reduced Tuition Fees as set out in section 3.2.

## **4.2 Tuition fees following the outcome of an examination**

The tuition fees following the outcome of the examination are as follows:

- i) **Minor amendments** – Where the examiners' recommendation requires the student to undertake minor amendments and corrections to their thesis, students are normally given 3 months, from the date they receive the official notification of the examination outcome and required amendments, to complete and submit these amendments for the examiner's approval, as set out in the university's *Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Research Awards*. Research students will not be liable to pay tuition fees during the 3-month period permitted, but if a student exceeds the 3-month period, tuition fees will be charged pro-rata to the applicable annual tuition fees for each month in excess of the 3 months permitted until the point the amendments is officially submitted to RETI.
- ii) **Major amendments** – Where the examiners' recommendation requires the student to undertake major amendments to their thesis and submit these amendments for their approval within a year, as set out in the university's *Academic Regulations for Research Awards*, students will be liable to pay the annual tuition fees applicable for this period and payment is due in line with the university's standard payment policy, which can be viewed [here](#). If a student submits their amendments for approval prior to the one-year deadline and the amendments are approved by the examiners, they will be reimbursed on a pro-rata basis for each month that was paid for but not used to undertake the amendments. For example, if a student is examined in April and has one year to complete major amendments and submits their completed amendments for approval by the examiners in the December, if they have paid the full annual tuition fees, they will be reimbursed for four months of tuition fees, from January to April.

**Note:** Where a research student is still in receipt of a Vice-Chancellor's or Professorial Scholarship when they commence their major amendments, the same tuition fees charging and payment policy as stated above applies, except the annual tuition fees will be charged pro rata to the number of months from when the scholarship ceases to the end of the relevant year permitted for completing the amendments.

- iii) **Re-submission and/or re-examination** – Where the examiner's recommendation requires the student to re-submit their thesis within a year, as set out in the university's *Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Research Awards*, students will be liable to pay the annual tuition fees applicable for this period and payment is due in line with the university's standard payment policy, which can be viewed [here](#). If a student submits their revised thesis prior to the one-year deadline and it is approved by the examiners, they will be reimbursed on a pro-rata basis for each month that was paid for but not used for re-submission. For example, if a student is examined in April and has one year to re-submit and re-submits their revised thesis in the December for consideration by the examiners, if they have paid the full annual tuition fees, they will be reimbursed for four months of tuition fees, from January to April.

**Note:** Where a research student is still in receipt of a Vice-Chancellor's or Professorial Scholarship when they commence their re-submission and/or re-examination year, the same tuition fees charging and payment policy as stated above applies, except the annual tuition fees will be charged pro-rata to the number of months from when the scholarship ceases to the end of the relevant year permitted for re-submission and/or re-examination.

### **4.3 Completion of studies**

Should a research student's tuition fees account be in credit following the calculation of the tuition fees due on completion of studies according to the processes set out in sections 4.1 and 4.2, the university will refund any credit identified.

## **5. Interruption and Withdrawal from Studies**

### **5.1 Interruption from studies**

#### **5.1.1 Current interruption from studies**

Should a Faculty Research Degrees Committee support a formal application made by a research student to interrupt their studies during the academic session they are currently registered for, tuition fees for the academic session the interruption applies to will be calculated pro-rata to the number of months they were actively registered for. Where the student has paid more than the months they were actively registered for, they may request any credit identified within that academic year be refunded to them. Where a student does not request a refund, any tuition fees credit identified will be held as a deposit and credited towards future years of study.

#### **5.1.2 Retrospective interruption from studies**

Should a Faculty Research Degrees Committee exceptionally support a formal application made by a research student to retrospectively interrupt studies for a previous academic session, tuition fees for the academic session the interruption applies to will be calculated pro-rata to the number of months they were actively registered for. Where the student has paid more than the months they were actively registered for, any credit identified will not be refunded to the student and will instead be deducted from tuition fees due in their current or returning year of study.

### **5.2 Withdrawal from studies**

**5.2.1** Should the Faculty Research Degrees Committee support a formal application made by a research student to withdraw from their studies, or from the supervisors to withdraw a research student from their studies, within 14 days of the student completing registration in full with the university for their first year of study, the student will not be liable for tuition fees and shall receive a full refund of any tuition fees paid for the academic year. Where a research student withdraws after 14 days during their first year and during any subsequent years of study, tuition fees will be charged in accordance with section 5.2.2.

**5.2.2** Should the Faculty Research Degrees Committee either approve an application from a research student to withdraw from their studies, or from the supervisors to withdraw a

research student from their studies, tuition fees will be charged pro-rata the annual fees for the number of months the student was actively registered. Where the student has paid more than the number of months they were actively registered for, any credit identified will be refunded to the student.

Note: Tuition fees will not be calculated pro-rata, as above, for students who withdraw during the year they receive an approved Reduced Tuition Fees as set out in section 3.2.

## **6. Appeals and Complaints**

### **6.1 Appeal of an examination decision**

Where a research student submits an appeal in line with the procedures outlined in the, *Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure (Postgraduate Research Awards)* which can be viewed [here](#), the student will not incur further tuition fees whilst the appeal is under review. Tuition fees will then be charged based on the outcome of the appeal.

### **6.2 Complaints**

Where a research student submits a formal complaint in line with the procedures outlined in the *Student Complaints Procedure*, which can be viewed [here](#), the student will continue to be charged tuition fees in accordance with sections 1–4.

## **7. Debt Policy and Procedures**

Research students are subject to the university's policy and procedure for the non-payment of tuition fees as detailed in the Appendix.

## **8. Other Fees Structure**

Some postgraduate research programmes within Faculties will incur additional fees to cover the cost of consumable items used in undertaking a research programme. These are sometimes referred to as Bench Fees and may vary according to discipline and Faculty. Such fees should not be confused with Tuition Fees that have been the focus of this document. The level of such fees is set locally by the Faculty and are payable directly by the student or sponsor to the Faculty. Students are therefore advised to contact their faculty office about the applicability, level, and payment of such fees.

## **9. Loss of Supervision or Closure of Programmes**

### **9.1 General**

**9.1.1** This section applies to the exceptional situations where:

- The university is unable to continue with a postgraduate research programme; or
- A postgraduate research student's supervisor leaves the university, and it is not possible to assign the student to another supervisor at the university due to the highly specialised nature of the student's research project.

**9.1.2** This section applies to students who pay their own tuition fees and to students whose tuition fees are paid by a sponsor.

- 9.1.3** If payment was made by a third party, any refund due will be made directly to the third party. All refunds will be returned to the payment originating account. Any compensation will be paid to the student.
- 9.1.4** Where payments have originated from outside of the UK, any refund will be made to the overseas postal address or account from which it originated. Any compensation will be paid to the student.
- 9.1.5** If you believe that you are due a refund or compensation under this section and the refund or compensation has not been offered by the university, please contact the University Secretary at [universitysecretary@greenwich.ac.uk](mailto:universitysecretary@greenwich.ac.uk).

## **9.2 Loss of supervision**

- 9.2.1** Where a postgraduate research student's supervisor leaves the university, we will normally reassign the student to a suitable alternative supervisor from within the university.
- 9.2.2** In the exceptional circumstance that no suitable alternative supervision can be found within the university, we will work with the student to identify the most suitable replacement supervisor at another provider. The university will refund all tuition fees for periods of study that are not taken into account by the new provider and will provide compensation for reasonably incurred additional maintenance or travel costs that the student cannot reasonably avoid because of their transfer to the other provider, with claims for compensation to be considered on an individual basis.
- 9.2.3** Where the postgraduate research student received a bursary/scholarship from the university, the university will honour the full amount of the bursary/scholarship (for as long as the student continues under the replacement programme) subject to the student continuing to meet the university's eligibility criteria for the bursary/scholarship.

## **9.3 Closure of a programme**

- 9.3.1** If a postgraduate research programme is to be closed, the university will consult with students before it is closed and will take all reasonable steps to ensure continuation of study. Usually, this will be by the university arranging to 'teach out' the programme. Where the university is unable to teach out a programme, the university will assist the student in transferring to a different programme at the university or to a programme at another provider.
- 9.3.2** If because of a postgraduate research programme closing the student transfers to another provider or decides to transfer to a different programme within the university, the university will refund all tuition fees for periods of study that are not taken into account by the new provider (or on the new programme at the university) and will provide compensation for reasonably incurred additional maintenance or travel costs that the student cannot reasonably avoid. As each situation and students' individual circumstances will be different, it is not possible to specify in advance what compensation would be appropriate, but the university's intention is that if additional costs are reasonable and the student acts in a reasonable manner to minimise their losses, the university will seek to ensure that the student is not out of pocket because of the transfer.

**9.3.3** If because of a postgraduate research programme closing the student transfers to another provider (or another programme within the university) and the student received a bursary/scholarship from the university, the university will honour the full amount of the bursary/scholarship (for so long as the student continues the replacement programme) subject to the student continuing to meet the university's eligibility criteria for the bursary/scholarship.

**9.3.4** In the exceptional circumstance that a postgraduate research programme is closed, and the university is not able to preserve continuation of study, the university will refund all tuition fees and any other fees (as described in section 8) that are applicable and will pay the student reasonable compensation for maintenance costs and time lost. As each situation and students' individual circumstances will be different, it is not possible to specify in advance what compensation would be available, but the university's intention is that as long as the student acts in a reasonable manner to minimise their losses, the university will seek to ensure that they are not out of pocket.

## **10. Complaints**

Complaints relating to the operation of this policy will be considered under the university's Student Complaints Procedure on this [link](#).

## **Appendix**

We advise that you read this section carefully as it contains important information about the university's policies and procedures regarding non-Payment of tuition fees for postgraduate research students from academic year 2025 -26.

**Students** are people registered on to any programme of study at the university or at one of its partners where the University of Greenwich is responsible for the collection of the tuition fee.

**Tuition fee debt** is an outstanding payment owed to the university in respect of tuition fees, this includes but is not limited to:

- An outstanding tuition fee payment from a previous year or programme of study;
- Non-payment of tuition fees for the current year, which have had not been paid by an agreed (instalment) date:

**Non-payment of fees** includes but is not limited to:

- Failure to make payments on a due date;
- Payments made which are subsequently not honoured or are reclaimed; for example when the bank cannot pay the university the money as there were not enough funds in the account.
- Where payments have been made or are due to be made, for example by a sponsor or student support or student loan provider, and either of the following circumstances apply:
- The payments are not made by a due date,
- Where the payment(s) have been made, they are insufficient to cover the tuition fees due or where they are subsequently withdrawn by the provider;
- Where a student has applied to a student support provider but has failed to provide the necessary documentation to the provider and/or does not supply the university with adequate information to substantiate that their application is still being assessed;
- Where a student registers under the provisions for students waiting for a decision from a UK government support provider and they are subsequently not eligible for support;

**This policy explains the sanctions:**

- Which are applied to students' accounts in the event of the non-payment of tuition fees;
- Where students have received support from a funding provider and due to previous study the university would not normally expect them to be eligible for such funds;
- Where a process required as part of students' application for funds (for example, US Federal Aid) has not been completed.

## **Students with Unforeseen Circumstances**

Students who are experiencing unforeseen financial difficulties in paying their tuition fees after they have registered onto the programme for that academic year should seek help at the earliest possible opportunity. We can then discuss what your options may be and see if there is assistance that can be provided to you.

You can also contact your Students' Union for advice if you are experiencing financial difficulties. The university will be sympathetic and will assist where it can, however, the quality of teaching is dependent upon funding and in the interest of equity for all paying students, the university must therefore act to recover all outstanding debts.

In exceptional circumstances, which are supported by documentary evidence, a student may be permitted to defer payments. These arrangements may only be made by the Student Fees & Funding Team following individual consultation. The university will consider requests for payment plans under the following grounds:

- Bereavement of a family member who is responsible for payment.
- Difficulty in transferring funds due to significant grounds – conflict, natural/humanitarian disasters.
- Hospitalisation preventing the physical ability to pay fees.

Students should log the request under our [Digital Student Centre](#):

- Reasons why they are unable to pay their tuition fee on the due date;
- Specify the date by which they will make the payment;
- Explain why sufficient funds will be available at this time;
- All of which will need to be supported by documentary evidence (including third party documentary evidence)

Letters from friends or relatives are not acceptable if presented as the only evidence.

Should a student wish to discuss their situation with a Student Finance Adviser at the university an appointment can be made.

Students will normally receive a reply from Student fees & Funding in writing advising one of the following:

- An acceptance of the student's proposal with conditions or,
- A decline email or,
- A request for further information or to attend an appointment.

Students whose requests are declined may appeal in writing to the Senior Student Finance Manager or their nominee whose decision will be final.

Any exceptional payment agreements given to students will normally have the standard due payment date as the last working day of the month on which it has been agreed that the payment should be made.

Should the re-negotiated payment date not be met, any exceptional payment agreement made will be cancelled, the full outstanding balance will become due, and students will fall under sanctions for the non-payment of tuition fees as detailed below.

Students will not normally be permitted to carry tuition fees into the next academic year.

We will aim to answer such requests within 15 working days, so students are advised to contact us as swiftly as possible to avoid unnecessary sanctions being applied to their accounts.

### **Procedures and Sanctions Applied for Non-Payment of Tuition Fees**

Once you have registered at the University of Greenwich, you agree to pay your fees by the detailed payment deadlines.

To successfully meet a payment deadline, you must pay the necessary amount through an approved method and the funds must be received by the university on or before the deadline.

Following a payment, the university cannot be held responsible for funds not showing on your record during what would be considered a standard transaction timescale for the type of payment method used and when considering when the payment was made (e.g., factoring public or bank holidays).

If you pay the necessary amount through an approved method on or before the payment deadline but the funds are not received by the university by the payment deadline, you may be considered to have missed the deadline and subject to this procedure.

If you pay the necessary amount through a method not supported by the university, the university is not liable for any delays in being able to locate and apply the payment against your record prior to the payment deadlines or prior to sanctions being applied.

If you do not pay the full amount expected by the payment deadline you will be regarded as having missed the payment deadline, regardless of any partial payments made on time.

If you miss a payment deadline the university will start the debt management procedure in stages and will contact you via email and/or text message to arrange payment.

If you miss a payment deadline the university will apply General Sanctions for non-payment of fees immediately, and additional sanctions may be applied.

The debt management procedure will stop only if you bring your tuition fee account up to date or an exceptional payment plan has been approved.

A request for an extension to pay your outstanding tuition or request for an exceptional payment plan will not pause the debt management procedure unless it has been formally approved by the university.

If an exceptional payment plan or extension has been approved, but you fail to keep to the new deadlines, the debt management procedure will apply.

The following debt management process for collection of the unpaid fees will be undertaken by the university:

**Stage 1:** Debt Email 1 sent **7 calendar days** after you miss your payment plan deadline and debt management has been activated.



The email will inform you of future sanctions that will be applied to your student account if your tuition fee balance remains unpaid.

**Additional Sanctions:** No sanctions applied at this time.

**Stage 2:** Debt Email 2 sent **14 calendar days** after you miss your payment plan deadline.

You will be reminded of the outstanding balance and potential sanctions.

**Additional Sanctions:** No sanctions applied at this time.

**Stage 3:** Debt Email 3 sent **21 calendar days** after you miss your payment plan deadline.

This restriction will block your access to certain university services, for example library, computing and viewing of student records via the Portal. This will prevent students from: accessing coursework header sheets; the ability to hand in/electronically submit coursework; obtaining student letters for bank or building societies; view academic profile, grades, marks online. These restrictions will remain until payment in full for the outstanding tuition fee has been received or an exceptional payment plan has been granted by the university.

**Additional Sanction:** System and services access revoked.

**Stage 4:** Debt Email 4 sent **28 calendar days** after you miss your payment plan deadline.

Students who fail to make payment in full of the outstanding tuition fees or obtain an exceptional payment plan will become liable for withdrawal and have their details sent to the Executive Director of Student & Academic Services and the Chief Financial Officer who will consider if the student is to be withdrawn for non-payment of outstanding tuition fees. Students can be withdrawn at any point after this notification without further warning.

**Additional Sanctions:** Withdrawal.

Stage	Timescale	Description	Additional Sanctions
<b>Stage 1</b>	Sent <b>7 Calendar days</b> once payment plan deadline missed (and debt management is active)	The email will inform you of future sanctions that will be applied to your student account if your tuition fee balance remains unpaid.	<b>None</b>
<b>Stage 2</b>	Sent <b>14 calendar days</b> after you	You will be reminded of the outstanding balance and potential sanctions.	<b>None</b>

	miss your payment plan deadline.		
<b>Stage 3</b>	Sent <b>21 calendar days</b> after you miss your payment plan deadline.	This restriction will block your access to certain university services, for example library, computing and viewing of student records via the Portal. This will prevent students from: accessing coursework header sheets; the ability to hand in/electronically submit coursework; view academic profile, grades, marks online. These restrictions will remain until payment in full for the outstanding tuition fee has been received or an exceptional payment plan has been granted by the university.	<b>System and Service Access Revoked</b>
<b>Stage 4</b>	Sent <b>28 calendar days</b> after you miss your payment plan deadline.	You will be considered for withdrawal from your course.	<b>Withdrawal</b>

9.1 Students who make payment in full or have an exceptional payment plan agreed before the withdrawal date will have their access to services reinstated.

### **General Sanctions Applied for Non-Payment of Fees**

Students who miss a payment deadline will be subject to our Procedures and Sanctions for the non-payment of tuition fees.

If you are subject to our Procedures and Sanctions for the non-payment of tuition fees the following sanctions will apply automatically regardless of which stage, you are in.

These general sanctions will continue to be applied if you interrupt or withdraw from the university.

These general sanctions will continue to be applied if you are interrupted or withdrawn by the university.

These general sanctions will continue if you apply to rejoin the University of Greenwich at a later date but fail to bring your tuition fee account up to date.

- i. **Transcripts/certificates** – Students who owe tuition fees will be unable to view, share or order any award documentation via our Digital Document Service until the debt has been cleared.

- ii. **Registration** – Students with a prior year debt or debt from a previous programme will not be allowed to re-register until acceptable arrangements are made for this debt to be cleared in full.
- iii. **Student Letters** – Students who owe tuition fees will be unable to request letters confirming their student status, including letters used to open bank or building society accounts, letters used in support of council tax exemption or otherwise confirm their status as a registered student.
- iv. **Immigration** – Students who require a student visa to study in the UK are subject to the university's policy on [Sponsorship of International Students for Visa Purposes](#). In accordance with this policy, students who are withdrawn from the university due to non-payment of fees will have their student visa sponsorship withdrawn.
- v. **Attendance at graduation** – Students who have not paid their tuition fees in full will not be allowed to attend the university's Graduation ceremonies, until the debt is paid in full. Once the debt has been cleared students should contact [awards@gre.ac.uk](mailto:awards@gre.ac.uk) to see if it is possible for them to attend a future ceremony.

### **External debt agencies**

If you do not engage with our debt management process and fail to settle any outstanding fees, the university will reserve the right to refer the debt and the student's information to an external debt collection agency to take legal action to recover the debt.

### **Annual threshold for tuition fee debts**

The university will set a threshold each year for tuition debts above which the sanctions detailed above will apply. Students who have a debt under this threshold who remain in debt at the end of the academic year will be sent an email and will not be permitted to re-register, receive their transcript or certificate or attend their graduation ceremony until acceptable arrangements for payment have been made.

Students can check their tuition fee accounts and make online payments via the university student portal.

How to make payments on the University student portal:

- Log in to the Student portal
- Navigate to the 'Student Records
- Click the link on Check accounts, make online payments
- Select the option: 'Check accounts, Make online payments again'
- Click on Programme fee transactions (tuition fees etc..), enter the payment amount, add it to the basket and follow the payment instructions

### **Data Protection**

No part of this policy or procedure shall preclude a current or former student from making a formal request to see data held on them. Further information on data subject rights is available [here](#).