



Wirral Met College

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Higher Education Payment Policy 2023/2024

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Student Programme Fees

1. Introduction

1.1 Programme fees are charged for the educational services and facilities provided in the delivery of a programme of study, subject to the student contract. The fee is an annual, consolidated charge for the provision of tuition, registration, learning resources, infrastructure, examination, assessment and graduation.

1.2 All programmes of study which lead to an award incur a programme fee. Programme fees are charged for all academic years of study, including failed academic years repeated in full or in part with or without attendance, with partial supervision, and with or without accepted extenuating circumstances.

2. Payment of fees & liability

2.1 Fees for Higher Education courses can be paid in a number of ways

- in full when you enrol.
- in instalments (Section 3)
- by the Student Loan Company in three disbursements (Section 4)
- by a sponsor (Section 5)

2.2 Where a suitable arrangement to pay programme fees has not been made by the third Wednesday in October of the relevant year (18th October in 2023) or where a student defaults on any programme fee or payment arrangement, the Finance Department will attempt to contact them by email, by letter and by phone. If we are unable to make contact and payment is still outstanding after 14 calendar days, the College will apply academic sanctions as described in section 7. The College may also deploy formal external debt recovery proceedings in cases where a student ceases to be registered and continues to owe tuition fees, which may ultimately result in County Court judgements.

2.3 Where students are experiencing difficulties in making payments, or wish to enquire about fees they should contact studentfinancial.support@wmc.ac.uk

3. Paying by Instalments

3.1 If you choose to pay for your fees by monthly instalments the full annual fee must be paid by 31st May in the academic year of study. If you set up your instalment plan at registration this will give you a maximum of 8 instalments.

4. Paying by Student Loan

4.1 Depending on where they normally live, students requiring financial support can make an application for a finance assessment with one of Student Finance England, Student Finance Wales, Student Finance Northern Ireland or the Student Awards Agency for Scotland. This may include an assessment for a maintenance grant and/or a maintenance loan and/or a loan for the payment of tuition fees. Students will in most cases be entitled to

apply for a non-means assessed loan from the Student Loan Company (SLC) to cover their tuition fees in full

4.2 Where a student is receiving a loan from the SLC for all or part of their programme fee, the SLC will make payment to the College in three disbursements, based on the loan liability points illustrated in the table below:

Student Loan Company Payment Dates	
<i>Payment made on your behalf to College</i>	<i>Attendance confirmed by College</i>
Third Wednesday in October (18/10/23)	Previous Thursday (11/10/23)
First Wednesday in February (07/02/2024)	Previous Thursday (01/02/2024)
First Wednesday in May (01/05/2024)	Previous Thursday (25/04/2024)

4.3 Students receiving a fee loan from the SLC will become liable for the loan identified in when they are confirmed as in attendance on each of the three liability dates.

4.4 Applicants on Undergraduate courses who withdraw from their studies within 14 days of registration will not be charged any fee. After this time payment will be expected in line with section 2.

5. Sponsorship

5.1 Where an external organisation (e.g. an employer rather than a friend, relative or the SLC) takes responsibility for payment of all or part of a student's programme, they must confirm this at enrolment in a signed letter on company headed paper. The letter should include the value and duration of the sponsorship together with a name and address of where the College should send the invoice. The College will keep this letter within its records. The College's Finance Department will invoice the organisation directly. Sponsored students are responsible for ensuring their fees are paid, and sponsors must pay in full within 30 days of being invoiced. Where fees remain outstanding after 30 days, the College will attempt to contact the sponsor by letter and by telephone. If payment is not made within a further 14 days, the student will become liable for the fees and academic sanctions in accordance within section 7 may be applied.

6. Programme Fee Refund Policy

6.1 The College will re-calculate the amount of programme fee to be charged in circumstances where a student chooses not to register on their programme, or to leave or suspend their programme during the academic session. In such an event, a student will have no claim to a refund of fees charged for any period they were registered during that session.

6.2 No programme fees will be charged to any applicant who fails to register on their programme of study having previously firmly accepted an unconditional offer.

6.3 If a student is removed from their programme due to disciplinary matters or lack of engagement, they will be refunded fees paid for the proportion of the programme they have not yet completed. This proportion will be determined based on records of attendance, work completed, and other input provided by college staff

6.4 Fees charged to registered students will be calculated based upon the date the College is formally informed of any change in registration. Students should therefore ensure that they advise both their personal tutor and the Student Finance team in writing of their intention to withdraw from the course.

6.5 Any refund due following the application of this policy will be made to the person or account from which the original payment was received.

7. Academic Sanctions

7.1 Where by 1st November 2023 students fail to enter into a suitable arrangement to pay programme fees or default on a payment arrangement the College will restrict access to all library and computing services. These sanctions will be requested by the Finance Department and remain in place until such time that a suitable arrangement to pay fees is in place and/or the outstanding account balance is settled. Students should allow up to 5 days by payments made to reach the college accounts. In addition to the payment clearance times stated above, students should also allow up to a further 2 working days for access to be reinstated fully.

N.B Loss of IT services due to financial suspension will not be accepted as part of any claim for mitigating circumstances to be taken into account by a Board of Examiners.

7.2 Students placed on academic sanctions are encouraged to discuss their academic standing with their personal tutor and to contact the Student Finance Team at the earliest available opportunity to discuss their financial position

7.3 Under normal circumstances, students will be prevented from re-registering for the next academic year of study until payment for outstanding programme fees from the previous academic year have been paid in full. In such cases, students will be deemed to have been financially suspended from their studies and will not receive any award for the proportion of study they have completed.

7.4 Students in debt to the College for fees by 31st May before the date of the award of a degree, diploma or certificate will be deemed ineligible to be presented for such an award. This will be communicated to the student by the Assistant Principal HE, Adult Education, Skills and Community Learning

7.5 The College will in all cases seek to adopt a proportional approach to the application of the academic sanctions identified in sections 7.3 and 7.4 and will undertake an annual risk-based review of all outstanding programme fee debts, the results of which it will use to inform its decision making before seeking to apply such academic sanctions.

7.6 Where a student in debt to the College for programme fees ceases to be a registered student of the College – and where all other avenues for debt collection have been exhausted – the College may also deploy formal external debt recovery proceedings, which may ultimately result in County Court judgement.

8. Fines and Charges for Damage/Loss

8.1 Where fines are levied and/or charges for damage/loss are raised, students will be invoiced directly.

8.2 Students must pay the fine and/or charge in full within 14 days of being invoiced, unless alternative arrangements are approved. Failure to pay the fine and/or charge in full within 14 days, or failure to have alternative arrangements approved within 14 days, will result in the College initiating formal debt collection procedures, before seeking to deploy formal external debt recovery proceedings once all avenues for collection have been exhausted. External proceedings may ultimately result in County Court judgements.

9. Help and Support

9.1 Students experiencing difficulties in making fee payments or who have any questions regarding the payment of fees or the fees that have been raised should contact the following:

Student Finance Team
Conway Park Campus
Europa Boulevard
Birkenhead
CH41 4NT

Studentfinancial.support@wmc.ac.uk

0151 551 7431/7432