

# Higher Education Tuition Fees and Academic Related Charges 2021-2022



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<b>Policyholder:</b>	Student Fees and Funding Manager
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## Introduction

Leeds Conservatoire is a wholly owned subsidiary of Leeds City College and is registered separately as a publicly funded provider with the Office for Students. This policy applies to all new entry and continuing students who have completed registration and who are studying at Leeds Conservatoire. When a student registers on a course at Leeds Conservatoire, they become liable to pay tuition fees, those costs relating to learning and teaching. This policy sets out the tuition fee charging principles of Leeds Conservatoire and it explains how tuition fees will be recalculated from changes in circumstances that may arise during a course of study. Leeds Conservatoire operates under a shared service agreement with Leeds City College – see appendix 1 for departmental responsibilities.

## Equality Impact Assessment Information

The policy is considered to be neutral in that it will not adversely affect any stakeholders in any of the protected characteristic groups more than any other group. The main impact is an economic one on all students.

## Definitions

Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS)	Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) issued to international applicants and current international students who have fulfilled the necessary requirements for a Student Visa. The CAS reference number is required for student visa purposes.
Registration	Registration is the process whereby persons enrol with Leeds Conservatoire and provide relevant personal information and payment to become an officially recognised student of the institution.
EU (European) Student	Person who has right to live in the EU without restriction and is in the UK for the purpose of study. Not eligible for funding from Student Loans Company.
EU (European) Student – Settled Status	Person who has right to live in the EU without restriction and is in the UK for the purpose of study and been granted settled or pre-settled status under the EU Settlement Scheme eligible for student funding from Student Loans Company.
Fee status	Can be either Home, EU/ EU (Settled status), or International and refers to the level of fee a student pays for their course. The conservatoire will follow government regulations to determine which fee status will apply to a student.
Home Student	A British citizen or a person who has the right to live in the UK without restriction and has been living here for 3 years prior to starting the course. Eligible to apply for full funding from Student Loans Company.
International Student	Person who has travelled from their country of origin to the UK for the purpose of study on a Student Visa,

	not eligible for funding from Student Loans Company. Typically, will pay own fees or have a sponsor.
Island Student	Person who as the right to live in the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man and eligible for funding from Islands authorities.
Office for Students (OfS)	Independent regulator of Higher Education in England
Student Loans Company (SLC)	A not for profit company in the UK that provides financial support to students in universities and colleges in the UK

## Policy

Leeds Conservatoire is committed to providing a fair and transparent fee policy in respect of charges made to students and aims to show:

- How tuition fees are determined and what is included.
- How fee status is calculated
- Payment options
- Tuition fee liability points and how they are set.
- Tuition Fees for early withdrawals, suspensions and repeat year
- How refunds and discounts are applied

The conservatoire will achieve these aims by:

- Publishing tuition fees on its website and other communications, at the start of each application cycle, subject to formal approval by the Conservatoire Board.

- **HOW THE TUITION FEE RATES ARE DECIDED.**

### **Undergraduate**

**Home/ EU (Settled status)** - tuition fees are regulated by the Office for Students and there are three categories of registration which are linked to access to public funding. Leeds Conservatoire is an "Approved, (with fee cap) provider" and the tuition fees are capped at £9,250 for 2021. The conservatoire policy is to charge the maximum permitted for those who commenced their course of study, in year 0 or year 1, on or after 1st September 2017. This includes students who started a different course prior to 1st September 2017, but who transferred to a new course in year 0 or year 1 on or after 1st September 2017. Students who started their course prior to 1st September 2017 will be charged the previous fee cap of £9,000. Outgoing conservatoire students undertaking a year of study abroad under the **Erasmus** scheme are charged at 15% of the applicable fee for the year of study. (Tuition fee loans are automatically capped at this rate for Home students) Incoming Erasmus year students are not charged a tuition fee, due to the Erasmus agreement rules

Tuition fees for **International students/EU** are unregulated and are determined by market intelligence and recruitment levels.

Tuition fees for **Islands students** (Isle of Man and Channel Islands) are unregulated but the Island authorities will not fund fees in excess of the rate charged to home students.

**Postgraduate - Home, EU, International and Island** tuition fees are not capped and are determined by market intelligence and recruitment levels.

### **TUITION FEE INCREASES.**

Tuition fees for Home and Islands students, who commenced their course on or after 1st September 2017, may increase each year in line with inflation (RPIx), subject to maximum fee limits set out in regulations. For International students fees may increase subject to approval of the Leeds Conservatoire Board. The policy is to set the tuition fee at point of entry onto the 3-year undergraduate degree course and then it will remain fixed for the remainder of the course. The foundation (year 0) of the 4-year course is **not** included in the fixed rate of tuition fee.

#### **WHAT IS INCLUDED IN THE TUITION FEE.**

All appropriate teaching and learning towards your intended award. (This depends on the actual course undertaken - see the course descriptions for each programme on our website at: <https://www.leedsconservatoire.ac.uk/courses/undergraduate-study/undergraduate-courses/>

Workshops, masterclasses and visiting speakers/professionals

Library and computing facilities\*

Access to practice rooms, studios and performance spaces\*

Equipment and instrument loan\*

Admissions and course administration

Assessment, validation and graduation

Support, advice and wellbeing services

Careers, employability and Alumni services

Students' Union membership

\*In the event that services are unavailable, we will seek to provide a reasonable alternative that enables fulfilment of the learning outcomes.

#### **• DETERMINING TUITION FEE STATUS.**

Students on Higher Education programmes are required to pay the tuition fee appropriate to their programme of study, and according to their status, as a UK, EU, International or Islands Student. Publicly funded Higher Education Institutions are permitted to charge "International" rates to students who do not fulfil certain residence and immigration status requirements. The conservatoire has established procedures in place to determine fee status where this is not clear from the initial application. Since leaving the European Union, the UK government has confirmed its commitment to protect the rights of EEA and Swiss nationals and their family members under the **EU Settlement Scheme** to the same access to work, study, benefits and public services.

#### **STUDENTS WITH PREVIOUS EQUIVALENT LEVEL QUALIFICATIONS.**

Students studying for a second qualification at the same or a lower level are not eligible for public funding, with the exception of those who are eligible for the Disabled Students' Allowance, or those who are undertaking a Foundation degree. The conservatoire will charge the standard home fee to such students but they will not have access to the student funding system so are advised to contact the Student Fees and Funding staff in order to clarify their financial position prior to accepting a place at the conservatoire.

#### **• PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS.**

Students cannot be fully registered without an acceptable payment method being agreed. All students will be given information regarding acceptable payment methods and instalment options, as part of their joining instructions. These are reviewed from time to time, depending on funding methodologies. Tuition fee payment must be made in GBP £ Sterling.

**International students** will be required to pay the tuition fee in full before registration is completed, with the exception of those providing written evidence of payment by an official government or company sponsor, in which case the payment arrangements will be agreed

according to the timing of the receipt of the funds. Those requiring a CAS number to apply for a Student Visa will be required to pay 50% of the tuition fee before the issue of a CAS number, and 50% before registration. Where the visa application is declined, approved too late, or the applicant does not meet the offer conditions, the amount paid will be refunded, after deduction of an administration fee of **£50**. Those International students not requiring a visa will be required to pay in full at or before registration, unless otherwise agreed. Any currency conversion or bank charges are the responsibility of the student and cannot be deducted from the fee payable.

**Home/EU (settled status) students:** Students who wish to pay via the Tuition Fee Loan system must apply for the loan as soon as possible. If a student has not had their Tuition fee loan application approved by 1<sup>st</sup> December, an invoice will be sent to the student. Students whose tuition fees are being paid directly by a sponsor or third party must provide written evidence of this at or before registration. For those that are not in receipt of a tuition fee loan, the conservatoire may allow tuition fees to be paid in instalments by Direct Debit from a UK bank account. However, all such students must pay a minimum of 33% of the course fee before registration is completed.

- **TUITION FEE LIABILITY POINTS AND HOW THEY ARE SET.**

Tuition fee liability determines:

- When the cooling-off periods start
- When you become liable for tuition fees
- How much money you can have back if you leave or suspend your studies.

Liability points are set up in line with the SLC principles of 3 terms. If you're an undergraduate student in receipt of a tuition fee loan, these dates determine:

- When we send attendance confirmations to the Student Loans Company
- When you receive your maintenance payments.

All fees are subject to liability points, and your financial liability increases during the year.

- **TUITION FEES AND REFUNDS FOR EARLY WITHDRAWAL OR SUSPENSION.**

**Policy for all Undergraduate Home/EU (Settled status) and Islands students.**

Undergraduate students withdrawing or suspending from their course of study will be charged tuition fees based on liability periods in the academic year as follows:

Agreed date of withdrawal/suspension	Fee liability points	Percentage of fee liability
Prior to the start of week 3 of teaching, as indicated on the published academic calendar		Nil
Start of week 3 of as indicated on the published academic calendar	Liability 1 (L1)	25%
From the Monday following the Christmas vacation as indicated on the published academic calendar.	Liability 2 (L2)	50%
From the Monday following the Easter Vacation up to the end of the academic year, as indicated on the published academic calendar	Liability 3 (L3)	100%

**NB** The calendar weeks referred to are listed as teaching/assessment weeks, not the Celcat weeks.

Definition of withdrawal and suspension dates.

The vast majority of Home students are funded by the tuition fee loan system and the conservatoire is required to confirm the attendance of students before each loan instalment is paid. Students are considered to be in attendance and therefore liable for tuition fees until they

formally withdraw or suspend from their course of study. Simply not attending does not constitute withdrawal. Withdrawal is clarified in the Student Loans Company's "Student Information Service" service definition:

*A withdrawal refers to the point at which scheduled learning, teaching and assessment activities, and other active and on-going engagement ends, in agreement with the provider.*

A suspension is by mutual agreement, between the student, the conservatoire and our validating body, the University of Hull.

Students considering withdrawal or suspension should consult the Fees and Funding staff for advice regarding the financial consequences, before making a decision. Students will need to agree a withdrawal or suspension, and complete the relevant documentation, **prior to each main vacation period, (i.e. Christmas and Easter), if they wish to avoid tuition fee liability for the following terms.**

This applies to all students in this category, including those who are not in receipt of a tuition fee loan.

#### **Policy for Undergraduate International students.**

The conservatoire will operate a no refund policy for registered International students who withdraw early, from an Undergraduate course, with the following exceptions:

A refund may be considered, at the discretion of the Head of Student Services, where there are compelling personal reasons for the withdrawal.

**International students who suspend from their course of study before 1<sup>st</sup> December will be liable for 50% of tuition fees. Remaining 50% fees paid will be credited on account for when studies are resumed.**

If the student is being funded by an official external organisation on an instalment basis, which has curtailed the funding due to the withdrawal, no further instalments will be payable.

Where an international student has paid a deposit prior to applying for a Student Visa, but the visa application is subsequently declined or delayed beyond when it would be possible to register, the applicant will be entitled to a refund of the deposit, minus an administration fee of **£50** and any bank/currency exchange charges.

If the student wishes to request a refund on the grounds of quality, they must follow the complaints procedure to be considered for a refund.

#### **Policy for Home/EU (settled status)/Island Postgraduate students.**

Postgraduate courses are delivered over three trimesters and as such, our liability dates reflect this. Trimesters are indicated on the published academic calendar. Student will be charged the appropriate fee up to the end of the trimester in which they withdraw. See table below:

<b>Date of withdrawal (definition as per undergraduates)</b>	<b>Percentage of fee payable</b>
After registration and within 1st two weeks of teaching	0%
During trimester 1, as indicated on the published academic calendar	33%
During trimester 2, as indicated on the published academic calendar	66%
During trimester 3 (MA/MMus only) as indicated on the published academic calendar	100%

If the student wishes to request a refund on the grounds of quality, they must follow the complaints procedure to be considered for a refund

**Policy for International postgraduate students.**

The conservatoire will operate a no refund policy for registered International students who withdraw early from a Postgraduate course, with the following exceptions:

If the student wishes to request a refund on the grounds of quality, they must follow the complaints procedure to be considered for a refund.

A refund may be considered, at the discretion of the Head of Student Services, where there are compelling personal reasons for the withdrawal.

If the student is being funded by an official external organisation on an instalment basis, which has curtailed the funding due to the withdrawal, no further instalments will be payable.

Where an international student has paid a deposit prior to applying for a Student Visa, but the visa application is subsequently declined or delayed beyond when it would be possible to register, the applicant will be entitled to a refund of the deposit, minus an administration fee of **£50** and any bank/currency exchange charges.

Where an International Postgraduate student has been withdrawn from the course due to academic failure, and not permitted to proceed to the next stage, the fee relating to the trimester not undertaken will be refunded. (Fees are calculated pro-rata at one third of the full fee per semester).

**REFUNDS WHERE THERE IS AN OUTSTANDING DEBT – ALL STUDENTS.**

Where a student withdraws early and is entitled to a refund of tuition fees, the conservatoire will deduct the cost of any other outstanding debt from the refund at the behest of the student, **except** in the case where a student's fees are paid through a tuition fee loan. This would mainly apply to, for example, outstanding library replacement invoices, studio fines, or course fees for additional courses undertaken.

**FEES SCHOLARSHIPS AND EARLY WITHDRAWAL – ALL STUDENTS.**

Where a student who has been awarded a scholarship giving partial remission of fees, withdraws or suspends study before all instalments of the fee have been paid, the scholarship will not be counted and the fee charged will reflect the full amount owed, as per the relevant policy above.

**POLICY FOR STUDENTS TRANSFERRING IN AFTER REGISTERING AT ANOTHER HE PROVIDER.  
(Home/EU (settled status)/undergraduates with a tuition fee loan.)**

Undergraduates are only eligible for a tuition fee loan amounting to a percentage of the fee, at certain liability points, subject to the HE Provider confirming their attendance. The liability dates are at registration, and the start of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> terms as defined to the SLC for the purpose of tuition fee loans. If the HE provider confirms that the student is in attendance on the relevant date, the student is eligible for a proportion of the tuition fee loan and the HE provider is entitled to receive it as follows:

25% - payment on 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday in October

25% - payment on 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday in February

50% - payment 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday in May

If the conservatoire therefore offers a place to an applicant who has already registered on a course at another provider, the first provider will be entitled to receive the first 25% of the tuition fee loan. Therefore the fee charged to those transferring into the conservatoire under these circumstances will be 75% of the full amount.

**TUITION FEES FOR UNDERGRADUATES REPEATING A FULL ACADEMIC YEAR.**

For students who commenced their course from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2017 onwards, repeat years will be charged at the relevant rate for the year being repeated. For those who commenced their course

prior to 1<sup>st</sup> September 2017, repeat years will be charged at £9,000, if still registered on the same course.

#### **TUITION FEES FOR UNDERGRADUATES REPEATING PART OF AN ACADEMIC YEAR.**

Where an undergraduate student is undertaking fewer than 120 credits, but more than 60 credits, with attendance, tuition fees will be charged on a pro-rata basis per 10 credits, with the calculation based on the full fee payable, divided by 120.

- **WAIVERS AND DISCOUNTS**

The conservatoire may occasionally award full or partial fee waivers, as Scholarships, at the discretion of the Executive Leadership Team. Information about all types of scholarships are published on the website. An **Alumni discount** of 10% of the total tuition fee is available to students studying at postgraduate level, who have graduated from an undergraduate course at the conservatoire. Where students may be awarded or entitled to more than one fee reduction per year, these will be calculated to maximise benefit to the student. The International scholarship is awarded on the basis that it is subject to the student passing each year of study **without re-sits or repeat years**. The scholarship can be re-instated for subsequent years if the student then progresses without resit.

#### **REPLACEMENT RESULTS TRANSCRIPTS.**

A fee is charged to cover the administrative costs of producing and despatching replacement results transcripts or, in the case where Leeds Conservatoire does not have one on record, a confirmation of attendance letter. No discounts are available but a fee may be waived exceptionally at the discretion of the Head of Registry.

#### **REPLACEMENT ID CARDS.**

Access to the Conservatoire requires an ID card. There is no fee for the first replacement card. Students may be charged a fee to cover the cost of subsequent replacements at the discretion of the Head of Registry.

### **Procedure**

The policy is effected by appropriate procedures and guidance which are reviewed and signed off by the Office of Students and relevant Head of Department annually:

- Higher Education and Research Act 2017
- Education (Student Support) Regulations 2011 (2011/1986), as amended.
- Student Loans Company Student Information System service definition
- Leeds Conservatoire access and participation plan 2020-2025
- Leeds City College group financial regulations
- Leeds Conservatoire manual of financial procedures
- Leeds Conservatoire tuition fee debtor process

### **Breach of Policy**

#### **FAILURE TO PAY**

- Students are personally liable for payment of their tuition fees and if a student defaults on the agreed tuition fee payment plan, the tuition fee debtor process will be followed.

- Failure to pay the agreed tuition fees or to pay according to agreed arrangements may result in any, or all of the following actions, at the discretion of the Vice Principal:
  - No or limited access to the Conservatoire buildings or facilities.
  - No access to Student Services without an appointment
  - Removal of student ID card and/or rights associated with the card
  - Removal of access to Leeds Conservatoire email account and SPACE
  - Student not permitted to participate in any paid activity at the Conservatoire – e.g. student ambassador role.
- Students with outstanding tuition fee debts at the end of the course may not be permitted to graduate. This decision will be at the discretion of the Vice Principal after due consideration and recommendation by the Leeds Conservatoire Academic Council.
- Returning students with outstanding tuition fee debts, will not be permitted to register for the following academic year until debts have been paid.

The conservatoire will take reasonable steps to recover debts which may include the use of a debt collection agency and/ or other legal action. The conservatoire will however take all reasonable steps to advise and support students in financial difficulty. Any student who is in financial difficulty should seek advice from Student Services staff at the advertised times, as soon as possible.

## Appendix 1 Departmental Responsibilities

### LCC Finance Department:

- Responsible for monitoring, recording and reconciliation of tuition fees paid, on Leeds Conservatoire's systems.
- Invoicing and credit control.
- Liaison with Fees and Funding staff regarding SLC and other awarding authority tuition fee income.
- Updating the Conservatoire staff with regard to fee receipts made via all payment methods
- Liaison with the Conservatoire staff regarding prevention of access to the Conservatoire of students in default.

### Leeds Conservatoire Student Services:

- Managing the relationship with SLC on behalf of the Conservatoire.
- Communications to applicants and full time students regarding fees, discounts and waivers (i.e. Website, prospectus, funding booklet etc.),
- Annual review of tuition fee policy.
- Compiling joining instructions regarding payment of fees, fee remissions etc.
- Advice to full time students and applicants.
- Liaison with MIS and Registry regarding processes for online registration and for collection of fees.
- Tuition fee status decisions.
- Identifying those who have a tuition fee loan and those who need to pay their tuition fees.
- Processing of fee changes due to withdrawals, suspensions and transfers on the Conservatoire student record, and on the SLC system for those with tuition fee loans.
- Reconciling tuition fee loans and grants with amounts owed.
- Answering individual queries from full time students and applicants regarding fee payments, funding options and financial difficulties.

### Leeds Conservatoire Registry:

- Setting the fees up on the student record system at registration

- Taking tuition fee payments at the Student Enquiry Counter.
- Ensuring that the correct documentation is in place for students who are withdrawing / suspending or resuming studies and for keeping the Fees and Funding staff informed of student changes.

**Leeds Conservatoire MIS:**

- Populating and updating fees, waivers and exceptions information on the Conservatoire student record, prior to online and manual registration processes.

**Leeds Conservatoire Security staff:**

- Liaison with LCC Finance department, Student Services and Registry regarding access to the Conservatoire for students in default.