

Briefing for Staff: Collection of Tuition and Rental Fees 2025/26

To be issued: October 2025

To be sent to: Executive Deans, Divisional Directors, Heads of Professional Services – for cascade to relevant staff in their areas.

Also to be shared: Finance webpage

Purpose

This briefing sets out the approach we are taking to collecting student tuition fees and rental fees in the 2025/26 academic year.

It also explains how staff can support any students who contact them about fee payments or debts owed to the University.

To understand more about how and when we communicate with students about debts during the academic year, please refer to the [Student Debt Recovery Policy](#).

What is Happening Now

In accordance with the published [Student Debt Recovery Policy 2025/26](#), the first reminder letters to students will be sent on 28 October 2025.

Context

Tuition fees account for over 50% of University income and fund our staff, teaching resources, library, infrastructure (including IT), and our campus facilities.

You can view how tuition fees are used here: [Where your tuition fee goes – Strategy and funding – About us – University of Sussex](#).

Most home undergraduate students have their tuition fees paid through Student Loans Company (SLC) payments made directly to the University.

Students who are self-funded or sponsored are required to pay fees in advance or via an approved instalment plan.

To maintain financial sustainability, we rely on all students to ensure tuition fees (and, where relevant, rental fees) are paid on time. The majority of students do so, allowing us to continue to provide high-quality teaching, learning, research, and student support.

Continuing Students

- Students with historic debt who wish to continue their studies in 2025/26 have been advised that they may make payments during the registration period.
- Students with non-academic debt (e.g. accommodation or library fees) may register but will not be permitted to attend graduation until the debt is cleared.
- Students with tuition fee debt that remains unpaid by 17 October 2025 will not be permitted to register and will be withdrawn. There is no flexibility around this date.

- International students unable to re-register due to tuition fee debt will be withdrawn, and the University must report this to UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) within 10 days. UKVI will then review their visa status, which is likely to be cancelled.
-

Students Expecting to Graduate in January 2026

- Postgraduate taught (PGT) students with resits or deferred dissertations to January 2026 (“students on continuation”) were, by exception, allowed to extend payment deadlines for 2024/25 debts to November 2025.
 - Students with material tuition fee debt have been informed they will only graduate once their debt is settled. They will receive a notification of marks for personal reference but not an official transcript.
 - International students who have not completed their degree before their visa expiry will be ineligible for the Graduate Route Visa. More information can be found on the [Visas and Immigration](#) webpage.
 - Students with non-academic debt only (e.g. rental fees) may graduate in absentia but cannot attend a ceremony until debts are cleared.
-

Students Leaving the University with Debt

Where debts remain outstanding and no payment agreement is reached after a student leaves, the University may refer cases to a debt collection agency.

Our Approach in 2025/26

The University Executive Team has approved the continuation of our current policy and procedures for 2025/26.

We will continue to balance the need to maximise income collection with our duty to support student wellbeing and enable students to continue their studies wherever possible.

The Student Debt Recovery Policy is available here: [Student Debt Recovery Policy](#)

Teams across Finance, Schools, DSE, Library, IT, and Communications will work together to ensure appropriate support and communication are in place.

In accordance with policy, proportionate sanctions will be enforced from October onwards, including:

- Withdrawal of IT and library access
 - Withdrawal from studies
 - Requirement to vacate University accommodation
 - Restriction from attending graduation ceremonies (for non-academic debt)
 - Withholding of degree awards (for tuition fee debt)
-

Supporting Our Students

All staff play an important role in supporting students affected by the fee collection process. The most effective way to help is to guide students to the appropriate University service and set clear expectations about what flexibility exists.

Economic pressures mean many students face genuine financial hardship, but University policy must be applied consistently to ensure fairness.

Please encourage students to engage early with Student Services and read the communications they receive.

Note: Student Services are based in the [Student Centre](#) (Refectory Road)

Staff should not contact services on behalf of individual students outside of referral protocols. While well-intentioned, this can cause delays and confusion and may give students unrealistic expectations of flexibility.

Signposting Guidance

1. Students Who *Have* the Funds but Are Having Payment Issues

- Contact: Finance directly.
 - In-person support: [Student Centre](#), Monday 27–Friday 31 October, 10am–3pm (walk-in).
 - Email: creditcontrol@sussex.ac.uk

Note: No new payment plans can be set up after 21 October. Students must pay as and when they can afford, ensuring full payment by the due date.

2. Students Who *Cannot* Afford to Pay

- There is no provision to waive, write off, or defer tuition fees to a future year.
- Advise students to explore a temporary withdrawal to resolve their financial situation.
- Information: [Student Hub](#) → Withdrawal and Support
- Students can contact the Student Advice team via [My Sussex](#) and discuss with their Academic Advisor.
- Students still in attendance on or after **23 January 2026** will incur further tuition debt — advise them to seek help early.

3. Students Checking Payment Status

- Students should email creditcontrol@sussex.ac.uk or visit the Finance desk in the Student Centre.
- Phone lines will remain closed to prioritise in-person and email support.

4. Students in Financial Hardship / SFE Issues

- Guidance and funding information: [Student Hub](#) → Money and Funding
- Contact: [My Sussex](#) → Money Advisor / Student Funding team

Note: This team cannot approve payment extensions

5. International Students with Visa Concerns

- Guidance: [Student Hub → Visa and Immigration](#)
- Contact: [My Sussex](#) → International Advice team

Note: This team cannot authorise payment extensions.

6. Students with Wellbeing or Welfare Challenges

- Refer students via existing internal referral protocols to the appropriate wellbeing service.

7. Students with Multiple or Unclear Needs

- Direct them to raise an enquiry via [My Sussex](#) to be connected with the appropriate team.
- In-person help: Student Centre Welcome & Triage team (8:30am–5pm weekdays) or call 01273 075700 (9am–4:30pm).
- Please note: Finance specialists are not accessible via Student Centre triage.

Other Common Queries

- **Tuition fee status:** <https://www.sussex.ac.uk/study/fees-funding/tuition-fees/fee-status>
 - **Continuation fees:** studentprogress@sussex.ac.uk
 - **Housing charges:** housing@sussex.ac.uk
-