



University  
Centre  
Somerset

Part of Bridgwater & Taunton College

# HIGHER EDUCATION

## Compensation and Refund Policy

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Approved by:	SMT
Date:	May 2018 - updated April 2019
Approved by OfS:	May version approved by OfS Sept 2018

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## **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 This policy has been introduced to comply with the Office for Students (OfS) requirements of registration, for University Centre Somerset (UCS), part of Bridgwater and Taunton College (BTC) to be added to the Register of HE Providers. It is an ongoing condition of registration for all UK HE Providers that a Compensation and Refund Policy, which has been approved by the OfS, is in place and is available on the website for students to access. This policy was approved by the OfS in 2018.

## **2 Policy Statement**

- 2.1 This policy should be read in conjunction with our Terms and Conditions and **Student Protection Plan (“Plan”)**. In the event of any conflict between this policy and the Student Contract and/or Plan then the Terms and Conditions shall take priority, then the Plan and then this policy.

## **3 Scope**

- 3.1 This policy applies if you are a student studying with UCS and you pay fees to us directly. If your programme is delivered on a franchised basis and you pay fees directly to a partner university you should look to the Compensation and Refund Policy of the partner institution. At the time of writing this only applies to students on Oxford Brookes University programmes.

## **4 Purpose**

- 4.1 Our Terms and Conditions explain that, in exceptional circumstances, it may be necessary for UCS to revise the content or delivery of programmes or discontinue or suspend programmes, often in circumstances outside our control.
- 4.2 It is possible we may also cancel a programme before it starts when we judge that it will not be viable for academic, regulatory, legal, commercial, financial or other reasons. If you have applied for a UCS programme, but have not yet enrolled, you will be notified (in accordance with UCAS deadlines where appropriate) and provided with advice and guidance to source an alternative suitable programme.

These instances are rare. We work hard to anticipate any changes to our provision so as to minimise disruption to you and to enable you to complete your studies as intended. We explain how we will do this in our Student Protection Plan. However, after exploring all possible options, there may be occasions where it is not possible for us to preserve the continuation of your study or, even if your study can continue it will be significantly disrupted.

In these cases, you may be eligible for a refund of fees and other payments made to UCS/BTC, in full or in part, and/or compensation for other losses you have incurred.

- 4.3 UCS does not accept any liability for any consequential or other economic loss (including loss of profits, loss of goodwill or loss of opportunity) resulting from any of the matters covered by this policy. Only foreseeable loss will be covered by the University Centre/BTC.
- 4.4 Requests for refunds and compensation would only apply where UCS has failed to provide reasonable actions under the plan.

- 4.5 We will consider eligibility for refund and/or compensation on a case by case basis and will take into account factors including (but not limited to):
- The scale and impact of the matters affecting you
  - Travel or accommodation costs (e.g. you have to transfer to another provider)
  - Maintenance costs (e.g. childcare if student contact sessions have to be delivered at times outside the normal University teaching day/week)
  - What mitigation we have put in place that you may or may not have taken advantage of – including the provisions set out in the Student Protection Plan
  - How much of your programme you have completed
  - What is reasonable in all of the circumstances
- 4.6 Eligibility for refund and/or compensation, and the amounts to be awarded, will be considered by the Director for Staff and Quality Services. We may ask you to provide evidence of costs which you have incurred for which you are seeking compensation. You will be advised about what will happen and what you will need to do at the appropriate time.
- 4.7 If you are unhappy with the action UCS has taken to deal with issues of refund and compensation and in particular disruption to or cessation of your study, then you may use the HE Student Complaints Procedure to raise your concerns, (or relevant partner policies as stipulated in the policy). UCS hopes the above procedure will satisfactorily resolve your problem. Very occasionally this may not be the case; in this instance, you are able to ask the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) to review your complaint and the way in which it has been handled. You can only refer your complaint to the OIA when you have exhausted the HE complaints procedure.
- 4.8 This policy does not cover instances where you may be considering withdrawing from or interrupting your studies for personal reasons. If you are thinking about this, please get in contact with your personal tutor and seek advice - just talking to someone may be enough to put you back on track. Students choose to interrupt study or withdraw for a variety of reasons and we may be able to help.
- 4.9 If you decide that you do not want to continue with your studies in this academic year, it is important that you correctly withdraw or interrupt study as there are academic and financial implications that you need to consider. For international students there will also be implications with regard to your visa.

## 5 Review of Policy

- 5.1 This Policy is considered by the HE Senate (which includes student and Governor representation). The Compensation and Refund Policy is made available to all students and prospective students via the UCS website [www.somerset.ac.uk](http://www.somerset.ac.uk). The Director of Staff and Quality Services is responsible for ensuring staff are aware of and implement the Student Protection Plan and the Compensation and Refund Policy.
- 5.2 We will review this policy and update and amend as required. We reserve the right to amend this policy from time to time based on legal or regulatory change affecting you or us or best practice in the higher education sector.