

Refund and Compensation Policy

June 2022



**Harper Adams
University**

Purpose of this policy

This document specifies the arrangements for refunds and/or compensation in the event that Harper Adams University is unable to support continuation of study for a module and/or course. The document contains an overview of the steps that the University will take if a module and/or course is discontinued and the extent of the financial provision that the University has in place to support any such requirement.

The purpose of this policy document is to ensure that all relevant members of staff and students have clarity on how the University would support a student if their course/module is discontinued.

Who is this policy for?

This policy is relevant to all registered students of Harper Adams University. The policy also confirms that the University will fulfil its legal obligations if delivery by an approved University partner cannot proceed.

What are our principles and our approach?

The steps outlined in this document are provided to give clarity to applicants over the steps that the University will take in the event that delivery of the module and/or course cannot be preserved.

This policy, and related policies, is available to applicants and students through the [Key Information Page](#). The University also offers support and guidance to students who may be concerned about their studies via the Course Managers/Course Tutors, Postgraduate Taught Programmes Manager and the Director of Postgraduate Research.

Who is responsible and what are our responsibilities?

The Academic Registrar is responsible for maintaining and updating this policy. The Programme Approvals Committee is responsible for the closure of courses and the withdrawal of modules, with the Chief Financial Officer (or nominee) responsible for ensuring that refunds and compensation payments are made to students.

Relationships with other policies

This policy is directly linked to the following Harper Adams Policies:

Accommodation Licence Agreement

[Admissions Policy](#)

[Break in Studies Policy](#) [Complaints Policy](#)

Fees and Charges as listed on the [Key Information Page](#)

[Student Protection Plan](#)

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1 Introduction - Refunds and Compensation Policy

The following notes the arrangements to refund tuition fees and other relevant costs to students and to provide compensation, where necessary, in the event the University is no longer able to preserve continuation of study.

2 Students who withdraw from their studies

Financial liability for fees is laid out in the fees and charges booklet, which is provided to all students via the University's [Key Information page](#).

For Undergraduates, the liability dates for tuition fees are specified in the fees and charges booklet with termly liability points.

Postgraduate students are liable for tuition fees for the costs of the modules they have studied up to the point of withdrawing.

Research students are liable for tuition fees on a pro-rata basis for the percentage of the academic year they have been a student at the point of withdrawing.

3 Students who are taking an approved break in studies

Financial liability is laid out in the fees and charges booklet, which is provided to all students. The same liability dates for tuition apply as for students withdrawing from their studies.

If a student has paid fees in excess of the liability specified in the fees and charges booklet at the point of withdrawal and/or break in studies, then a refund of any excess will be made to the student. If such fees have been paid by a sponsor or the Student Loans Company then the relevant excess will be refunded to the sponsor or Student Loans Company.

4 Accommodation

Financial liability for fees for accommodation is laid out in the fees and charges booklet, which is provided to all students. Students also enter into a licence and/or tenancy agreement with the University if they are taking up University accommodation which is clear about charges and liability.

5 Where the University is unable to provide continuation of study

The University's primary aim is to support students in continuing their studies. The University is also aware of its responsibilities and duties to students, as consumers, under the law. The steps which will be taken when continuation of study is under threat are laid out in the [Student Protection Plan](#) and students are referred to that plan for details of the possible circumstances considered and the steps the University would take – these steps are focused entirely upon ensuring that students are provided with every possible opportunity to complete their courses at the University.

However, the University acknowledges that there may be circumstances where it is unable to preserve continuation of study at the University, and/or where students suffer financial loss as a result of these circumstances. In the unlikely event that the University is in this position, the University will:

1. Take a student-centered approach to considering what action is required.
2. Take the steps outlined in the Student Protection Plan.

If the University is unable to preserve continuation of study affecting a group of students, the University will communicate with the affected students on the best way to assist them.

If the University is unable to preserve continuation of study for a single student, the University will communicate with the individual student on the best way to assist them.

The University may then take any one or more of the following actions as appropriate in the circumstances:

1. Repeat delivery of part or all of a course (if, for instance a core module or course has not been delivered in full).
2. Reduce the fees for the course (if, for instance the University is unable to provide certain core modules or a student has to transfer to another provider to complete a course as the University cannot complete it - this may require a refund of fees already paid).
3. Refund the fees for the whole of the course to the extent already paid (if, for instance, the University is no longer able to provide the course and students are also unable to complete their studies elsewhere).

Where a reduction in fees is given, the amount of the reduction will be proportionate to the issues involved. If, for instance, a student has to transfer to another provider to complete a course as a result of the University being unable to preserve continuation of study, the relevant proportion of fees payable may be the pro-rata amount relevant to the proportion of the course already studied.

In every case where the University is unable to preserve continuation of study, the University will:

1. Ensure all students receive the University award/qualification that recognises the stage that they have reached.
2. Offer students access to advice and support and information on their options.

6 Individuals who have suffered losses

Should students have suffered specific losses, financial or otherwise, as a direct result of the University being unable to preserve continuation of study, the University will consider each student's situation individually and award compensation appropriately.

Should students have suffered specific losses as a direct result of actions taken by the University to try and preserve continuation of study, such as moving the location of study or the method of learning, the University will consider each student's situation individually and award compensation appropriately.

The University acknowledges that students may suffer losses where the University is unable to provide continuation of study such as;

- Maintenance costs
- Lost time
- Additional tuition costs
- Travel costs as a result of relocation of provision

The University will take all steps possible to minimise such losses by providing support to students and putting into place alternative provision where possible (i.e. arranging transport / accounting for additional tuition costs when assessing appropriate refunds of University fees). Where such losses are unavoidable, the University will compensate students in accordance with this policy.

7 Courses provided in conjunction with other institutions/partners

The University complies with Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) requirements in respect of collaborative provision. Accordingly, those partnerships provide for specific student protection measures, with the aim of completing studies for students enrolled on courses. In the event that the continuation of study is not preserved for any such students, the University will consult with the partner institution and the affected students in order to agree the options open to the students and an appropriate compensation plan as appropriate.

8 Access to Learning Funds (Hardship Payments) and Scholarships

8.1 Access to Learning Funds

For students in receipt of funding through the Access to Learning Funds, where the University is unable to preserve continuation of study, any payments already paid to students through the Fund will remain with the students.

8.2 Scholarships

Scholarships available to students at the University are predominantly paid in the academic year in which they are awarded. There are around 150 scholarships awarded each year to students at the University varying in value between £1,000 and £18,000. In the very unlikely event that the University is unable to preserve continuation of study during a period in which a student has been awarded a scholarship, leading to a student having to transfer their studies to another provider and/or being unable to complete their course, the University would negotiate with the sponsor with a view to asking them to honour the scholarship funding, notwithstanding the change in circumstances. If a sponsor did not honour a scholarship in these circumstances, resulting in the student suffering a loss, the student could make a claim under the University Complaints Procedure.

9 Procedure for making a complaint about how the University has dealt with a situation where it has not been able to preserve continuation of study and/or making a claim for a refund or compensation

Students should follow the University Complaints Procedure if they are unhappy with the way in which the University has managed a situation where it has not been possible to preserve continuation of study, or has managed changes relating to trying to preserve service provision for continuation of study.

If students wish to make a claim for losses they will need to provide evidence to the University that they have suffered and/or will suffer the losses claimed.

If a student's claim for a refund or compensation is not resolved to the student's satisfaction then at the end of the complaints procedure they will be issued with a completion of procedures letter following which they will be able to make a complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA).

10 Payment of Refunds

If fees or charges were paid by debit or credit card or by a direct bank transfer, any refund will be made to the same account.

11 **Financial Provision for the application of Refunds and Compensation**

The University considers the risk of being unable to preserve continuation of study to be low. However, should students suffer losses as a result of any actions taken by the University to ensure continuation of study, giving rise to a liability for losses, then any of the following financial provisions may apply as appropriate;

- The University maintains significant Business Interruption Insurance to ensure that the operational needs of the University are appropriately covered .
- The University maintains a suitable reserve as approved by the Governing Body and reported in its Annual Report and Financial Statements. [The Annual Report and Financial Statements](#) can be viewed on the Harper Adams website.
- The University has a wholly owned campus which includes in excess of 490 hectares of farming land, student residences, university buildings and infrastructure, assets which could be sold if required to realise capital (subject to the approval of the Charity Commission where appropriate).
- In addition to the campus buildings the University also owns houses which could be sold on the open market (subject to charity commission approval) if required.
- The University has a wide range of livestock, seasonal standing crops, farm machinery, glasshouses and other assets which, (subject to the approval of the Charity Commission) could be sold to release funds if required.

Policy information

Date of last review	June 2022
Individual policy owner(s)	Academic Registrar
Collective oversight	Academic Board
Approval date	June 2022
Equality Impact Assessment approval date	June 2022
Date of next review	June 2025
Date and description of any minor amendments made:	
Updated link to current Fees and Charges information; Minor text updates in relation to overview of scholarships; Minor text updates in relation to Financial Provision	