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Alternative Format, Support, and Information

If you need this document in an alternative format, please see our [Contact Us](#) page (visit www.open.ac.uk/contact), call us on +44 (0)300 303 5303, or contact our student support teams via StudentHome if you are a current Open University student.

Contact us:

If you need support and guidance regarding this document, please [contact us](#) or call us on +44 (0)29 2047 1170.

Rydym yn croesawu cyswllt yn y Gymraeg. Welsh-speaking students are welcome to speak with a student support adviser in Welsh on +44 (0)29 2047 1170.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This document outlines how The Open University (“**We**”, “**Us**”, “**Our**”) assess and determine which fee students (“**You**”) need to pay in line with relevant UK regulations. This is called your fee status.
- 1.2. This document also sets out what you will need to do if your circumstances change and how this may affect your fee status.
- 1.3. For information about the Fee Rules that apply to you, see the relevant [Fee Rules](#) document.
- 1.4. This policy should be read alongside your [Conditions of Registration](#), which sets out the terms of the legal agreement between you and The Open University.

2. Scope

What this policy covers

2.1 This policy applies to all undergraduate and postgraduate taught students studying with us. It covers:

- How we determine your fee status, including the criteria and the process we follow to complete your fee assessment.
- How changes in your residency and immigration status may affect your fee status.
- The steps you need to take if your residency or immigration status changes.

What this policy does not cover

2.2 This policy does not cover the following:

- Specific fee amounts for modules or qualifications. These can be found in the [online prospectus](#).
- Information on our fee policies. Please refer to the [Fee Rules](#) for this information.
- Apprentices: Please contact the [Apprentice Enrolment and Support Team \(AEST\)](#).
- Microcredentials: Please see the [Conditions of Registration \(Microcredentials\)](#).
- Short courses: Please see the [Conditions of Registration \(Short Courses\)](#).
- Postgraduate Research Students: Please see the [Fee Rules Policy page](#) for the relevant policies.

3. Determining your fee status

- 3.1 To enable us to determine your fee status, you must provide information and evidence about your residency. This will include where you are ordinarily resident (including any planned residency changes), where you have previously resided, and your immigration status if you are a non-UK national resident in the UK.
- 3.2 Your ordinary residence is where you are ordinarily and lawfully resident on the relevant date. You are considered ordinarily resident in a country if you live there by choice for a settled purpose and conduct your day-to-day life there.
- 3.3 The relevant date for undergraduate students who are eligible for the England fee and are studying under the [Fee Rules \(Undergraduate\) England - For 2027 Cohort \(LLE\) Students](#), is the first day of the first Course Year of your module or qualification. Refer to section 3.6 for information on how to calculate the first day of your Course Year.
- 3.4 For all other students, the relevant date is the first day of the first Seasonal Academic Year (SAY) of your module or qualification.
- 3.5 The first day of the first SAY refers to the period within the academic year when your first module starts, such as Autumn, Winter, Spring, or Summer.
- **Autumn SAY:** If your first module starts between 1 August and 31 December, the first day of the SAY is 1 September or 1 August in Scotland.
 - **Winter SAY:** If your first module starts between 1 January and 31 March, the first day of the SAY is 1 January.
 - **Spring SAY:** If your first module starts between 1 April and 30 June, the first day of the SAY is 1 April.
 - **Summer SAY:** If your first module starts between 1 July and 31 July, the first day of the SAY is 1 July.

3.6 New and returning students in England who are studying courses which start after 1 January 2027 (as part of the LLE cohort) will fall under different regulations and a different 'relevant date' will apply. For the 2026/27 academic year, the applicable Course Year start dates run from 1 January 2027 to 31 July 2027, with later start dates being part of the 2027/28 academic year. The first day of the first Course Year refers to the date your course begins. This is based on the presentation code of your first module if you are studying a qualification, or your module if you are studying standalone:

- **27A** module presentation - **January Course Year**: If your first module is a 27A presentation, the first day of the Course Year is 1 January.
- **27B** module presentation - **February Course Year**: If your first module is a 27B presentation, the first day of the Course Year is 1 February.
- **27C** module presentation - **March Course Year**: If your first module is a 27C presentation, the first day of the Course Year is 1 March.
- **27D** module presentation - **April Course Year**: If your first module is a 27D presentation, the first day of the Course Year is 1 April.
- **27E** module presentation - **May Course Year**: If your first module is a 27E presentation, the first day of the Course Year is 1 May.
- **27F** module presentation - **June Course Year**: If your first module is a 27F presentation, the first day of the Course Year is 1 June.
- **27G** module presentation - **July Course Year**: If your first module is a 27G presentation, the first day of the Course Year is 1 July.

3.7 At The Open University, there are seven different fees:

- England fee
- Northern Ireland fee
- Scotland fee
- Wales fee

- Republic of Ireland (RoI) fee
- European fee
- Worldwide fee

3.8 Your residency and immigration status will determine which fee status applies to you.

4. Eligibility for a UK Nation fee

4.1 The UK Nation fees are England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales.

4.2 We use the applicable UK government regulations to assess and determine your fee status. To find out more about the residency requirements for your Nation please review the below UK government guidance and applicable funding authority eligibility criteria:

- [Eligibility for home fee status and student support in England](#)
- [Student Finance England \(SFE\)](#)
- [Eligibility for home fee status and student support in Wales](#)
- [Student Finance Wales \(SFW\) \(Fersiwn Gymraeg\)](#)
- [Eligibility for home fee status and student support in Scotland](#)
- [Student Awards Agency Scotland \(SAAS\)](#)
- [Eligibility for home fee status and student support in Northern Ireland](#)
- [Student Finance Northern Ireland \(SFNI\)](#)

5. Eligibility for the Republic of Ireland fee

5.1 If you are resident in the Republic of Ireland, you will be eligible for the Republic of Ireland fee.

6. Eligibility for the European fee

- 6.1 If you are resident in the European Union (EU), the European Economic Area (EEA), or Switzerland, you will be eligible for the European fee.
- 6.2 If you are resident in the UK but do not meet the eligibility for a UK Nation fee you will be eligible for the European fee.

7. Eligibility for the Worldwide fee

- 7.1 If you are resident outside of the UK, Republic of Ireland, EU, EEA, and Switzerland, you will be eligible for the Worldwide fee.

8. Fee assessment process

- 8.1 Based on the information you provide at the point of module enrolment, you might need to complete a fee assessment to determine your fee status. You will be sent a link to our fee assessment application form by email if this is required. Your fee status will only be confirmed after you have completed the application. It will be determined based on the information and evidence you provide. If you do not complete a fee assessment when required and we are unable to determine your fee status, you may not be permitted to study.

Evidence required

- 8.2 You will be asked to provide supporting evidence for your fee assessment application. This will include evidence about yourself and any relevant family members where applicable. The type of evidence you may need to provide includes:
- **Identification documents** such as a passport, national identity card, or driving licence.
 - **Immigration evidence** such as a share code to access your eVisa, an asylum seeker Application Registration Card (ARC), or other official documentation from the Home Office.

- **Proof of home address** to verify your residency. This must be a permanent address where you ordinarily reside and must not be a temporary or work-related address. Proof can be in the form of a utility bill, council tax statement, or bank statement.
- **Proof of your circumstances** such as a copy of your flight information, work contract, or armed forces documentation.

Lack of evidence

8.3 If the evidence you provide does not sufficiently demonstrate your residency or immigration status, you may be assigned an alternative fee status or not permitted to study. This applies even if you were initially allowed to register.

9. Changes to residency or immigration status

Notification

- 9.1 You must notify us of any changes to your residency or immigration status as soon as possible.
- 9.2 You are required to provide evidence of the change of immigration status, see section 8.2 above for more information.
- 9.3 You must notify us of any address changes and may be asked to provide documentation in line with your [Conditions of Registration](#).

Impact on fee status

- 9.4 If your residency changes, your fee status may also change.
- 9.5 In most cases, changes to your residency status will not impact the fees for the module(s) you are currently studying, but they will apply to any future modules.
- 9.6 Depending on the timing and nature of your change in residency, fee status changes may be backdated to the start of the current SAY or Course Year, or apply from the next module enrolment.

9.7 If your immigration status changes, your fee status may also change. This will apply if your immigration status change is defined as an event within the relevant UK government regulations and you fulfil the required residency criteria. Depending on the timing of your immigration status change, your fee status change may be backdated to the start of the current SAY or Course Year, or apply from the next module enrolment.

Impact on study

9.8 **Module availability:** Some modules may not be available if you move to a different country. This may affect your future qualification module planning, and potential professional accreditation or recognition. You should [contact us](#) for further advice about your specific situation.

9.9 **Cancelling your registration:** We may cancel your registration if the module and/or qualification is not available in the country in which you are resident. See Section E2 of your [Conditions of Registration](#) for further information.

10. Changes to your study

Continuing Student

10.1 You are considered a Continuing Student if any of the following apply when enrolling for your next module:

- You have incurred fee liability for a module linked to your qualification in either of the previous two SAYs or Course Years (whichever is applicable) and remain registered for the same qualification.
- You have incurred fee liability for a module linked to your qualification in the previous SAY or Course Year (whichever is applicable) and are now changing to a different qualification.
- You are eligible for the Northern Ireland, Scotland, or Wales fee, you have completed your registered undergraduate qualification and are topping up to the higher-level qualification in the next SAY.

10.2 If you maintain your status as a Continuing Student, your fee status will remain the same for the duration of your qualification. However, your fee status may change in the following circumstances:

- You are eligible for a UK fee and move outside of the UK.
- You are eligible for a Republic of Ireland fee and move outside of the UK and RoI.
- You are eligible for a European fee and move outside of our agreed study area (UK, RoI, EU, EEA, and Switzerland).
- You are eligible for a Worldwide fee and move into our agreed study area.
- You are resident in the UK on a European fee and your immigration status changes to a status that qualifies you for a UK fee.

Returning Student

10.3 Your fee status will be reassessed if you stop studying and later return. This is because you will be classed as a Returning Student. You are considered a Returning Student if any of the following apply when you enrol for your next module:

- You are studying a module on a standalone basis.
- You have not incurred fee liability for a module which forms part of your qualification for at least two full SAYs or Course Years (whichever is applicable).
- You have not incurred fee liability for a module which forms part of your qualification for one full SAY or Course Year (whichever is applicable) and you are returning to a different qualification.
- You are eligible for the Northern Ireland, Scotland, or Wales fee, you completed your registered qualification and are starting a new one that is not a top-up qualification.

- You are eligible for the England, European, Republic of Ireland or Worldwide fee and you have completed your registered qualification.
- You move from one level of study (e.g. undergraduate) to another (e.g. postgraduate).

11. Support and guidance

11.1 Contact us: You can contact our [student support teams](#) for information about the fee assessment process.

11.2 Queries and appeals process: If you believe your fee status has been assessed incorrectly, you can contact our [student support teams](#) to appeal the decision. We will review any further information or evidence you provide (see Section 8) and reassess your application. A decision will be reached within ten working days, and you will be informed of the outcome by email. For more information, please see the [Complaints and Appeals Procedure](#).

Related policies and legislation

- [Assessment Banking Rules](#)
- [Attendance and Participation Policy](#)
- [Changing Your Study Plans Policy](#)
- [Conditions of Registration](#)
- [Equality and Diversity Statement](#)
- [Fee Rules](#)
- [Refund and Compensation Policy](#)
- [Student Charter](#)
- [Student Complaints and Appeals Procedure](#)
- [Student Debt Policy](#)
- [Student Protection Plan](#)

Feedback

If you have any feedback on this policy, please email student-policy-compliance@open.ac.uk.

Charity statement

The Open University is incorporated by Royal Charter (RC 000391), an exempt charity in England and Wales and a charity registered in Scotland (SC 038302). The Open University is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority in relation to its secondary activity of credit broking.

About this Document

Summary of significant changes since previous version

- General updates made throughout the document to remove duplication, improve clarity and readability.
- New paragraph 3.3 to clarify the relevant date used for undergraduate students who are eligible for the England fee and are studying under the Fee Rules (Undergraduate) England 2027 Cohort (LLE).
- New paragraph 3.6 that explains how new and returning students in England who are studying courses which start after 1 January 2027 (as part of the LLE cohort) can calculate the first day of your Course Year.
- 'Impact on Fee Status' section paragraphs updated to explain how changes in residency or immigration status may affect your fee status.
- Definitions of Continuing Student and Returning Student updated to include reference to Course Year.

Document information

Version number: 1.0

Approved by: Delegate of Director, Academic Services

Effective from: 1 August 2026

Date for review: March 2027