

REFUNDS POLICY

1 Introduction

Orbital South Colleges (comprising East Surrey College, John Ruskin college and the Reigate School of Art) assumes that all prospective students will have carefully considered the potential costs involved in taking up a course before making the decision to enrol. These costs will include, but are not limited to:

- course tuition fees payable to the College
- resource fees (e.g. materials for practical sessions) payable to the College
- qualification / registration fees payable to awarding bodies and external organisations.
- other costs that may be incurred for additional educational visits, criminal records bureau checks and other incidental charges where relevant.

2 Refund Eligibility

- If a course is cancelled by the Colleges, all fees (or pro-rated part paid) will automatically be refunded.
- If, following enrolment, additional information and supporting documentation determines a student is entitled to full funding in line with the current year Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), Funding Guidance, fees will be refunded.
- The College group runs its programmes only if the courses recruit viable student numbers, in students leaving the course midterm, the cost of running the course becomes unaffordable, affecting the College's ability to run its programmes in the future. For this reason the College policy is to refuse any refunds except in the most serious circumstances. These circumstances comprise of illness, or other significant untoward events, which mean that the student cannot continue with the course, then course, resource and qualification fees may only be refunded on the presentation of evidence of a medical certificate or substantial independent evidence and at the discretion of the Chief Operating Officer or the Principals at either College. An administration fee of £30.00 will be applied. External qualification fees will not be refunded and a resource fee refund will take account of materials used and educational visits.
- Fees will not be refunded where a course closure is temporary due to power failure, extreme weather, sudden staff sickness, fire, flood or industrial action. In the event of a cancelled session, the College will endeavour to ensure that any missed content is covered in the remaining available weeks.

The College complies with the Consumer Contracts Regulations (CCRs) regarding the sale of products or services to consumers. More detailed information regarding the CCR's can be found on the Office of Fair Trading website at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2013/3134/contents/made>.

3 University/Higher Education Programs of Study

The relationship between Higher Education students and the College is governed by consumer law. The competition & Markets Authority provide advice on the information that needs to be provided to prospective HE students prior to application and between the application and offer stages. Guidance is also given on the complaints handling process and cancellation rights (see DSR's information above) applicable to HE programs.

Possible outcomes from a complaints process relating to a HE study program may include either a full or partial refund of the total costs incurred.

4 Student Protection Plan

The Office for Students (OfS) requires the College to publish a Student Protection Plan incorporating an assessment of the range of risks to the continuation of study for our students, the risk mitigation measures we have in place and the arrangements for supporting you in the event that the college is no longer able to preserve continuation of study. This includes policies and procedures that the College has in place to ensure students are not financially disadvantaged in the event that due to any of the identified risks occurring, they are not able to continue their studies here.

5 Payment

The College will always endeavour to make refund payments as quickly as possible, but students should be aware that under normal circumstances it may take up to 3 weeks to fully process a refund.

- Refunds are payable by BACS, cheque or credit / debit card.
- Please note we can only process a refund to a credit / debit card if it was the initial method of payment taken, and only to the same card used in that transaction.
- Where a course has been paid for by an Advanced Learner Loan, the College has to inform the Student Loans Company (SLC) via its website of a Change in Circumstance – Fees Charged. The amount is automatically adjusted.
- Cash refunds cannot be made unless in exceptional circumstances authorised by the Chief Operating Officer.

6 Access to Policy

This Policy is available on the College Intranet.

7 Training and Guidance

Questions about this Policy and/or Procedure and requests for training, guidance or information on this Policy and/or Procedure, should be directed to the HR Team.

8 Mechanisms for Feedback

Constructive comment on the continued improvement of this policy is welcomed and should be forwarded to the Chief Operating Officer.

OSC48

9 References

Consumer Contract Regulations, Student Protection Plan 2019/20

10 Produced by: Head of Finance & Resources **Date:** February 2019

11 Reviewed by: Directorate **Date:** March 2019

12 Approved by: Finance and Resources Committee **Date:** March 2019

13 Approved by: Corporation Board **Date:** March 2019

14 Review by: March 2020

15 Policy Code: OSC48