



Bolton College

Refunds and Compensation Policy 2024-25



Contents

1. Scope and Rationale.....3
2. Consumer Rights for the Academic Year3
3. Refund Requests4
4. Refund Request Process5
5. Compensation.....5
6. Right of Appeal6
7. Payments.....6
8. External References6

Programme / Business Area:	Finance
Prepared By:	Executive Director of Finance
Approval By:	SMT
This issue Updated:	June 2024
Next Review Date:	June 2025
College Website Link:	Refunds & Compensation Policy

1. Scope and Rationale

This policy sets out the terms of refunds, compensation and rights to appeal that Bolton College will consider paying to students who are affected by the withdrawal of a programme of study by the College.

Bolton College has published a Student Protection Plan (SPP) for HE students which sets out how continuation and quality of study will be preserved for registered and enrolled students if a risk to their continued study crystallises. The SPP is designed to assure all students that the College has appropriate arrangements in place to protect continuation of study. In all cases, tuition fees and other costs will only be refunded to the original fepayer/sponsor (whether Student Loans Company, individual student or sponsor of a student).

The College considers refunds and compensation to be a remedy of last resort and is committed to using its best endeavours to ensure all students are able to continue and complete their studies. It is however important to explain how the College will refund or compensate students if the College is unable to preserve that continuity of study.

2. Consumer Rights for the Academic Year

All fee paying students are entitled to a 14 day "cooling off" period from the start date of the course. Students are eligible to a full refund of fees paid, provided the course has not finished within the 14 days.

Where the student has never attended the course, they must give notification of intention to withdraw from the course in writing to customer.service@boltoncc.ac.uk

If the student has already attended the course but is withdrawing within the first 14 days they should notify their teacher who will process it through to the Head of Area to be withdrawn.

Refund request forms must include the following information:

- Student College ID number or Date of Birth
- Student full name
- Details of course withdrawing from
- Course ID code
- Course name
- Reason for withdrawal
- Refund amount requested

Students will automatically receive a refund with no deductions if:

- They have withdrawn on or before day 14 from the student start date (provided the course has not finished within the 14 days and this represents less than 50% of the duration of the course)
- If a course is cancelled, there is an administration error made by the College resulting in an overcharge to the students or a course start date is changed which means a student can no longer attend.

Note: should a student have any debt outstanding, owing from a current or previous enrolment, the College reserves the right to offset any repayments against any amounts owing before processing a refund.

All fees paid will be automatically refunded via BACS within 14 days from above event(s) on a best endeavour basis (it will take longer at peak times of the year).

Where a student has decided to pay the course fees through taking out an Advanced Learning Loan, refunds will be processed back to the Student Loans Company by the College only if the course is cancelled. For students paying by Advanced Learning Loan who leave after 14 days but before 42 days, they will incur a liability to the Student Loans Company (SLC) in accordance with SLC rules. However, the College will not pursue the student for the remainder of the course fee.

Refunds for the withdrawal of students who are apprentices will be based on an individual basis. Initial requests for a refund must be made to the Head of Apprenticeships and Employer Engagement: Apprenticeship.admin@boltoncc.ac.uk

Students enrolled and registered through the University of Bolton but taught at Bolton College will request refunds via the University. [Terms and Conditions of Enrolment - University of Bolton 2024-25](#)

The rules relating to refunds for students on full cost provision will vary on a case by case basis due to the varying lengths of courses.

The refund of fees resulting from a cancelled course will take place automatically and a request does not need to be made.

3. Refund Requests

After the 14 day cooling off period students may still request a refund.

Refund requests are only considered if one of the following criteria are met:

- The course duration is greater than 4 weeks with a fee of more than £300; and attendance was less than 25% at the point the student request a refund (any refund will be given after deductions of costs incurred by the College) and the refund application is submitted within 28 days from the student's last attendance
- Illness – this will require supporting medical evidence such as a doctor's letter stating you are unable to continue with your course for medical reasons. The [Refund Request Form](#), found on the Key Policies page, must be submitted within 28 days of the student's last attendance.

Failure to meet the above criteria will result in the Refund Request being rejected.

All refunds under Section 2 are subject to an administration fee of £50.

Students have the right to appeal to a refund request outcome (see section 4 below).

4. Refund Request Process

The student requesting a refund must send a fully completed and signed [refund request form](#) by e-mail along with all documents to refunds@boltoncc.ac.uk

If the refund request meets the College refund policy criteria, the refund is approved and passed for payment within 14 days.

If the refund request does not meet College refund policy criteria, a letter explaining the reason for the rejection, together with the original refund request form, will be emailed back to the student by the finance team. The letter will include information on the student's right to appeal.

If the refund request form is incomplete the finance team will email it back to the claimant stipulating what is needed to progress the request. The fully completed form, with all required evidence, should be emailed back to the finance team for reconsideration.

5. Compensation

Compensation will be provided when a recognisable loss is suffered by the student as a result of Bolton College not meeting its obligations to the student, such as non-continuation of study. In the event of programme closure, the College will treat communication and consultation with students registered on the programme as a priority.

This normally falls into two categories, either: (a) recompensing the student for wasted out-of-pocket expenses they have incurred, which were paid to someone other than Bolton College, such as travel costs, or (b) an amount to recompense for material disadvantage to the student arising from a failure of Bolton College to discharge its duties appropriately. Should a disruption to or non-continuation of study be unavoidable, we will seek to provide compensation in kind by offering a suitable alternative provision. Where this is not possible we will, where appropriate to the individual circumstances:

- ensure all students on the programme receive the award that recognises the stage they have reached;
- offer advice and support to help them decide if they should transfer to a different programme or transfer to a suitable alternative institution to complete the programme which is to be terminated;
- offer to pay reasonable travel costs to cover at least one visit per student to an alternative provider where non-continuation of study at Bolton College is confirmed;
- put in place a compensation plan relevant to the circumstances of the particular termination that includes provision for a refund of tuition fees and compensation in respect of additional costs reasonably incurred by students as a result of the termination, any change of programme and any relocation;
- provide any refunds due to the individual in line with the refunds section above
- ensure that any such plans prepared, for HE students, will take into account relevant guidance published by the Office for Students, the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education and Universities UK good practice.

BOLTON COLLEGE REFUNDS AND COMPENSATION POLICY

The College's priority will always be to ensure that students receive the education experience outlined in College course information (whether on-line or in hard copy format) and their learning agreement. Where as a result of an investigation through the Complaints Policy it is concluded that this has not been the case, appropriate financial or other compensation may be offered. The College is cognisant of OIA guidance on considering whether it is appropriate to recommend compensation payments to higher education students for distress and inconvenience and will refer to their guidance when developing individual compensation plans.

For a refund or compensation request in response to an issue or problem with your College course the [Complaints Policy](#) should be followed. In each case, you should explain in detail the issue/problem experienced and why you believe that you are entitled to a refund. If the issue/problem is substantiated you may receive a refund if this is deemed the appropriate resolution, subject to the authorisation of the Executive Director of Finance. If the claim is not substantiated you can appeal referring back to the Complaints Policy.

6. Right of Appeal

A student has the right to appeal against a refund request decision by e-mailing refunds@boltoncc.ac.uk. Students must provide full details, including copies of all documents, correspondence and original refund request form with the reason for the appeal.

The outcome of the appeal decision will be final.

7. Payments

Refunds will only be made to the bank and account holder (or other financial institution) that originally paid the tuition fee and will not be paid in cash or by cheque. This applies whether the student is in receipt of a tuition fee loan from the Student Loans Company, pays their own tuition fees or has their tuition fees paid by a sponsor.

8. External References

This policy has been designed with consideration of the guidance published by:

- The Office for Students
- The Office of the Independent Adjudicator
- CMA - UK higher education providers – advice on consumer protection law