POLICY 017
FINANCE

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Policy 017: FINANCE

1. PURPOSE

1.1 This policy outlines the arrangements for collection of student fees and charges. It covers sanctions which may be used in relation to students with overdue debts and is designed to ensure that all students are treated fairly, equitably and reasonably. Where arrangements apply specifically to international students, this will be made explicit in the paragraph wording.

1.2 It is the intention of this Policy to clearly outline fee liability for all students at ACM Guildford, ACM Birmingham and ACM London.

1.3 Students studying on short courses at ACM are required to pay the fees in full seven days prior to the commencement of their studies. No refund will be applicable should a student withdraw.

1.4 ACM follows the guidance of Student Finance England, which administers student loans on behalf of the Government. Information on this can be found on the Student Finance England website: http://www.practitioners.slc.co.uk/policy/

2. POLICY DETAILS

Tuition fee charges

2.1 The amount that you will pay in respect of tuition fees is dependent on the course and year of study that you attend during the academic year.

2.2 Fees at ACM are set on an annual basis each autumn for the following academic year, based on Government policy.

2.3 Tuition fees may increase for every new academic year for the duration of your course dependent on government policy and to take into account inflation linked to the retail price index and costs associated with delivery. Therefore, students may be charged different fees for subsequent years of their chosen programme of study. Any changes will be notified to students in a timely manner.

2.4 Tuition fees for each year of study, payment methods and due dates are outlined in the Fee Schedules for each programme.

2.5 Annual Tuition fees at ACM cover registration, first attempt tuition, and entrance to first attempt examinations. Note: the fees do not include those for graduation, which are payable to the awarding university, or any resit assessments or retake modules. Any study visits or

additional activities are not covered by tuition fees. Any additional fees for any second attempt teaching or retakes, will be confirmed at the point of relevance but will be set based on the relevant course fee and period of attendance required.

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2.6 Once enrolled, students are responsible for the payment of tuition fees and any other associated charges, including any amounts due from third parties which are not paid. Failure to settle fees on time will mean that ACM will withdraw access to relevant learning facilities and this may ultimately lead to deregistration from the University in the case of unpaid tuition fees.

2.7 ACM reserves the right to reassess any student's tuition fee liability should new information come to light that may affect the original assessment.

2.8 Should a student change Programme, Pathway, Modules or Level during the course of the year, a tuition fee review and relevant change of tuition fee charges may be incurred.

Tuition Fee payment types.

2.9 There are three tuition fee payment types:

(a) Fully funded by student loan - a student loan is available to cover the full tuition fee;
(b) Part-funded by student loan, and part self-financing - student loan only covers part of the tuition fee and student is self funding the remaining element.
(c) Fully self-financing - student is not eligible for student loan, or opts to self-fund the full tuition fee.

2.10 Students waiting for confirmation of funding from Student Finance England or equivalent will be classified as fully self-financing until confirmation of support is received. Students will be required to provide evidence that the loan application is in progress if funding is not in place at the start of the academic year.

2.11 Students aged 18 and under on the start date of their programme, studying on an FE course should be entitled to full government funding of tuition if the eligibility criteria is met. Students that have not secured government funding or that are aged 19 and over on the start date of their programme, will become personally responsible for the payment of tuition, unless a specific government funding plan exists.

Tuition Fee Liability

2.12 Students (or their parents or legal guardians for those students under the age of 18) become liable for the payment of the Annual Tuition Fee 14 days after the course start date, or 14 days after enrolling onto the programme where enrolment takes place after the course start date, having signed the terms and conditions.

2.13 ACM offers home students the facility to pay their full fee in instalments. Students must be aware of instalment payment dates, which are detailed on the *Fee Schedule* sent to each student following acceptance onto a programme of study.

2.14 Even where fees are payable by a third party, students remain personally liable to ACM for fees notified to them.

2.15 The overall fee liability is based on the annual course fee liability, not any instalment plan that may have been agreed.

2.16 Where a home student opts to pay their fees in full by the single upfront fee payment deadline, students will be offered a 10% discount on the Annual Tuition Fee. The discount will be removed if third party funding is later secured and the refund of the initial payment is requested. The discount described in this paragraph only applies to home students.

2.17 UK undergraduate and postgraduate students and students with Settled Status under the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) are responsible for ensuring that their application for financing from Student Finance England (SFE) or equivalent is made before the start of the academic year. Students must also ensure that any requests for further documentation and or information are complied with as soon as possible.

2.18 If an employer or a third party organisation is paying the tuition fees, the student will need to provide evidence of this in writing in line with the payment deadlines above. A purchase order (as provided by your Sponsor) containing your details including your student ID and the value of your sponsors' contribution should be emailed to studentfinance@acm.ac.uk

2.19 ACM reserves the right to reject sponsorship purchase orders or letters if they are not original documents, do not contain the correct information, or if they are found not to be issued by a recognisable third party organisation. All invoices issued by ACM must be settled in full within 30 days. If invoices are not paid in accordance with these terms the debt will revert to the student.

2.20 Fees paid by a relative or friend of the student is not considered to be a formal sponsorship. In this instance, the student will be considered to be self-financing.

Fee Liability, Change of Circumstances and Withdrawal from Programme

2.21 Tuition fee charges are determined on the basis of enrolment status and not actual attendance. This means that if a student stops attending, but does not formally withdraw or interrupt, the student will be liable for tuition fees up until the point in time that they officially notify ACM or are de-registered by ACM.

2.22 In order to officially withdraw or interrupt from a programme of study, the student must contact ACM to request a Change of Circumstance form, complete the form and submit it to registry@acm.ac.uk In the absence of written notification of a change, the student shall be deemed to be enrolled and, as such, liable for the payment of tuition fees for the academic year. Further details on the Change of Circumstances procedure can be found in ACM's Withdrawal, Interruption and Internal Transfer Policy.

2.23 The fee schedule for the relevant academic year confirms a student's individual fee liability based on the date of withdrawal or interruption. International students are required to pay each academic year's fees in full prior to the start date of the relevant academic year.

2.24 Where exceptional circumstances have arisen, ACM may review the fee liability for an individual student. Exceptional Circumstances would cover cases of bereavement, critical illness and other severe medical and social circumstances that would prevent a student being able to complete studies and benefit from the cost of education.

2.25 In the matter of the recovery of the outstanding programme fees, ACM will consider each student on a case-by-case basis. The options which may be applied in each case are:

- Fee remission, where students are permitted a part or full tuition fee waiver;

- Charge for the full Annual Tuition fee for the current academic year;

- Charge for the full Annual Tuition fee for all years of the program attended.

2.26 Where payment has been made in excess of the tuition fee charged (including non-refundable deposits) the overpayment will not be refunded for an interrupting student. Any credit balance may be carried forward to be applied against future tuition fee charges. The credit may be carried forward for up to one academic year.

2.27 When an interrupted student returns to study in the subsequent year, ACM will charge the student the relevant fee for that course and Year of Study for the relevant Academic year. This may result in a student incurring a higher or lower fee upon return.

Fee waivers, Scholarships and Bursaries

2.28 ACM offers fee waivers in the form of scholarships and bursaries. Details of these can be found on the ACM website or via separate communication. Please refer to the relevant terms and conditions.

2.29 Applicants who successfully secured a fee waiver, scholarships or Bursary and leave the course early or defer entry will have the funding provided by ACM pro-rata for the period attended.

Debt policy and procedures

2.30 Failure to pay tuition fees or any other charges on time may result in various connected services including access to tutorials, rehearsal space/studio bookings, and career development services being withdrawn, and access to ACM buildings may be denied.

2.31 ACM reserves the right to withhold award certificates and/or assessment results, where arrears of tuition fees exist.

2.32 Students who are unable to pay any fees or charges by the appropriate due date are encouraged to contact studentfinance@acm.ac.uk_ at the earliest opportunity, as help may be available. ACM will be sympathetic and assist where it can. However, the quality of teaching is dependent upon funding and so it must act to recover all outstanding debts. The Student Finance Team will be able to give advice on sources of funding available including Hardship loans.

2.33 If your financial circumstances change after you start your course, then you may be able to agree to a non-standard instalment plan. To find out, contact the Student Finance team:

- by email at studentfinance@acm.ac.uk
- by telephone on 01483 500804

Please note that documentary evidence to support your request will be required before it can be considered. Please have this information to hand when contacting us.

De-registration for non-payment of tuition fees

2.34 Students who fail to pay their tuition fees, maintain an agreed payment plan or provide confirmation of sponsorship will be suspended at the end of learning week six. For students who fail to pay their tuition fee instalments in Term 2, suspension will take place at the end of the sixth teaching week in Term 2. For students who fail to pay their tuition fee instalments in Term 3, suspension will take place at the end of the sixth teaching week in Term 3. The option to pay by instalments, available at the start of the academic year, may no longer be available.

2.35 Following suspension enacted for non-payment of tuition fees or for non-confirmation of sponsorship, ACM will start the de-registration process if no acceptable provisions have been made to secure funding, make payments or confirm sponsorship. Such provisions must be made within the six-week period following suspension for the de-registration process to be reviewed. Provisions must be evidenced and acceptable to ACM. It is the student's responsibility to keep ACM informed of their funding status and of any provisions being made to secure funding or sponsorship. The option to pay by instalments, available at the start of the academic year, may no longer be available.

2.36 Any student who has been de-registered will be liable for tuition fees up to the point of de-registration, as per paragraph 2.21 of this policy.

Late payment charges

2.37 Students who fail to pay their tuition fees or provide confirmation of sponsorship on or before payment deadlines will be subject to a £200.00 late payment charge. This late payment charge will be payable on each occurrence of default, including the first instalment.

Financial Holds

2.38 If you have a tuition fee debt that becomes overdue, holds will be applied to your student account automatically. Holds are designed to prevent access to certain facilities and services, depending on the age and value of the tuition fee debt. The hold types and their effects are as follows:

Hold severity	Effects of holds
Overdue tuition fee debt Stage 1	There is a financial obligation to ACM that takes place within the first six weeks of enrolment, within the first six weeks of Term 2 or within the first six weeks of Term 3 (whichever shall apply with regard to the debt). Payment or proof of sponsorship must be provided. No restrictions are applied.
Overdue tuition fee debt Stage 2	You will be suspended from your programme at Week 6 of your enrolment, at the sixth week of Term 2 or at the sixth week of Term 3 (whichever shall apply with regard to the debt). You will not be permitted to attend lectures or campus, or engage with any assessment activities. You will not be permitted to attend extra-curricular activities and any additional privileges (e.g. student ambassadorship) will be revoked for the duration of the suspension. During this suspension you will not be able to re-enrol, change modules or module components, or apply for a new programme. You will not be able to view your final assessment and grade results, and progressions and programme results.
Overdue tuition fee debt Stage 3	De-registration will take place at Week 12 of your enrolment, at the twelfth week of Term 2 or at the twelfth week of Term 3 (whichever shall apply to the debt). You will not be able to view your final assessment and grade results, and progressions and programme results. You will not be able to graduate if you have outstanding debts.

Returning students with debt

2.39 Students with outstanding debts from a previous academic year may not be permitted to re-enrol or resume their studies. All debts should be paid in full ahead of the following academic year.

External debt collection agencies

2.40 ACM reserves the right to refer debt in respect of any alumni or ex-student to a county court and/or external debt collection agency for recovery.

Refunds

2.41 If a self-financing student has paid up front for the academic year and subsequently chooses to withdraw or interrupt, the student can claim for a refund of any fees paid ahead of the liability point.

2.42 Refunds can only be applied for once the withdrawal process has been completed and any refund of tuition fees will take effect from the date the *Change Request* form is authorised. ACM's Student Engagement or Student Finance team will confirm the new fee liability as part of this change process.

2.43 Tuition fee refunds and other monies paid to ACM are only refunded to the individual or organisation that paid ACM originally. Refunds should be processed within 2 weeks of the request being received by ACM finance.

2.44 Where fees have been paid by the Student Loan Company, any refunds due will be paid to the Student Loans Company thereby reducing the value of the loan secured by the individual student.

2.45 ACM will confirm any fee changes to the Student Loans Company directly upon confirmation of a Change Request Form being submitted in writing.

2.46 For the purposes of tuition fees, only monies paid to ACM will be refunded. Any scholarships or fee waivers awarded by ACM will be excluded from any refund.

2.47 Refunds will not be made in cash or by banker's draft.

Anti-money laundering regulations

2.48 ACM will not accept any payment from persons or organisations unless they relate to a valid charge, levied or impending. This is to comply with UK Money Laundering regulations. Any suspicious payments and or refund requests may be reported to the appropriate regulating body.

2.49 ACM will not accept Tuition Fee payments in cash to ensure compliance with the UK Money Laundering regulations.

Library Charges, Materials and Other Equipment

2.50 Students using the Library and/or borrowing equipment of any type have an obligation to respect the rights of others by returning library and other equipment on time. To encourage this, fines are charged on items that are returned late and sanctions may be imposed for non-payment.

Fee Complaints

2.51 Students who wish to dispute a debt must submit their dispute within 21 days of receiving a request for payment. The dispute must be in writing and forwarded to studentfinance@acm.ac.uk Please include attachments of any supporting evidence. Any fee complaint will be handled in line with ACM's Student Complaints and Grievances Policy and Student Complaints and Grievances Procedure.

3. POLICY SCOPE

3.1 This Policy applies to students at ACM Guildford, ACM Birmingham and ACM London studying across all levels, less the exceptions outlined in 3.2 and 3.3 below.

3.2 This Policy does not apply to students studying at Level 2 or Level 3 who are aged 18 or under on the start date of their programme, and are eligible for UK government funding for FE programmes.

3.3 This Policy does not apply to students studying at Level 2 or Level 3 under an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) for which they are eligible for UK government funding.

4. RELATED POLICIES

- Withdrawal Interruption and Internal Transfer Policy
- Refunds and Compensation Policy
- Student Protection Plan

5. POLICY OWNER

5.1 This Policy is under the responsibility of the Academic Board. The responsible committee will ensure the cyclical review of this Policy is carried out under ACM's Quality Assurance Framework. The Academic Board delegates operational responsibility of this Policy to ACM's Finance and Registry departments.

6. DOCUMENT HISTORY AND NEXT REVIEW

Version	2.3
Approved on	18 July 2024
Approved by	Academic Board
Date of next review	August 2025