**Estates & Facilities**

**Student Accommodation Debt**

**Policy**

1

2



**1. Introduction**

**2. Purpose**

**3. Principles**

**4. Scope**

**5. Roles and Responsibilities**

**6. Support to Students**

**7. Accommodation Fees – Contractual Arrangements**

**8. Training**

**9. Exceptions**

**10. Amendments**

**11. Terms of Reference**

**12. Information and Resources**

**POLICY**

# Introduction

The University of Wolverhampton is committed to developing and maintaining constructive relations with its employees. This Policy has been approved by the University’ Financial Committee and Executive Board. It sets out the University’s requirements to manage the student accommodation and minimise the debt to the University. It will advocate students to engage with accommodation for them to set up payment plans and seek assistance from the relevant departments at an early stage to ensure the students are managing their finances and not allowing themselves to get into financial difficulty.

# Purpose and modifications

This policy has been reviewed as the current procedure has been in situ for four years. The process of how this is managed has been reviewed in conjunction with Finance and the Students’ Union, the areas that have been amended are within the actual process to reflect the instalments due dates, of which have been modified to fall in line with the current Academic Year. There have been no fundamental changes to the Policy content.

# Principles

The objectives of this policy are to ensure that the University has a fair and transparent Accommodation Debt Policy that assists students to reduce any accommodation debt they may have incurred, together with a collaborative approach working with Finance and the Students’ Union to ensure that all students receive a professional unified service.

The implementation of this policy is in accordance with the University’s core values which are to be Ethical, Respectful, Transparent, Inclusive, and fair, Challenging, Confident, Collaborative, Professional.

# Scope

The University Accommodation Debt Policy applies to all students who reside within University Accommodation. The responsibilities and organisational arrangements for the Accommodation Debt Policy fall with a variety of personnel within the Estates and Facilities Hub Staff and the Finance Department.

University Staff who fail to adhere to the terms of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. Employees of the University including those who are within a probationary

# 5. Roles and Responsibilities Managers

**5.1 Estates and Facilities Management**

The Management Team of the Facilities & Support Information Hubs are responsible for ensuring staff and students alike are aware of the policy & procedure on behalf of the Estates & Facilities Support Services.

**5.2 Estates and Facilities Administration Staff**

Estates and Facilities administration staff are responsible for ensuring that the policy and procedure is adhered to and ensuring that this is a clear & transparent process.

**5.3 Finance**

The Finance Income Team are responsible for the management of the financial records of each student account, ensuring all payments are processed and allocated against the accommodation accounts.

At the point of any debt referral to the nominated external debt collection company, will be wholly managed by the Finance department. All financial processes will be undertaken in a clear and transparent manner.

**5.4 Students**

Students are responsible for the payment of their accommodation fees and adhering to the current payment schedules in place.

# Support to Students

In applying the policy, the University will always seek to be sympathetic to and understanding of individual students’ financial circumstances. However, for the University to do so, students must engage in dialogue with the University if they are experiencing difficulties.

Action to enforce settlement of debt for outstanding accommodation fees and charges may be taken against all current and former students who have failed to engage with the University to find a solution to settle any outstanding debts or who have failed to honour agreements to pay.

Students experiencing difficulties in paying any fees and charges should seek help at the earliest opportunity through contacting:

* Facilities Information Hubs at each site.
* Students to log a call on E: Vision
* Student funding office, who will provide information on several related issues; they can be contacting money@wlv.ac.uk
* Students’ Union, the Advice and Support Centre offers confidential and impartial advice in relation to money and debt advice; they can be contacted at [www.wolvesunion.org/advice/enquiry](http://www.wolvesunion.org/advice/enquiry) ,Tel: 01902 322038 for any appointments to be made.
* Contacting the Finance department by emailing, Incomesection@wlv.ac.uk

**6.1 Communication with Students**

The main form of communication from the University to the students regarding outstanding accommodation fees will be via the student's nominated email address. In accordance with the terms set out in the Student Charter, it is expected that students make sure their email address and contact details are kept up to date to enable the University to communicate with them when necessary.

Where necessary posted communications may be used, posted communication are normally sent to the student's term-time address during the standard term and to be student's home address at other times. However, the University reserves the right to send communications to either or both addresses, within our outside standard term dates, as appropriate. Students are expected to collect or arrange to forward mail where appropriate.

Students are responsible for ensuring they notify the University immediately if there is any change in either their home or term-time address. Students can use e-vision (the University's online facilities) to notify change of address. The University's central records will then be updated.

# Accommodation Fees – Contractual Obligations.

Accommodation offered by the University is dependent upon the student signing a Licence Agreement for the period of their study “Residential Year” and paying a £300 Advanced Rent Payment. The Advanced Rent Payment will be deducted from the sum of the final instalment payment due in April.

Returning students that hold a Licence Agreement for the previous academic year are not required to pay the £300 Advanced Rent Payment and they will be required to pay the April instalment in full.

**7.1 Outstanding Debt, Fees, and Charges**

Students are personally responsible for ensuring that all accommodation fees, fines, and other charges are paid. In accepting the offer of accommodation, the student accepts a contractual liability to pay the accommodation fee fines and other charges on time. In the event of failure to pay any outstanding fees the student will be processed through the debt recovery procedure and incur an additional referral fee of £200 for this to be managed through the external debt collection agency.

# Training

Training is equipping staff, students (and others where appropriate) with the relevant skills required for/with this procedure. Training relating to this policy and briefing will be made available in a range of formats according to the needs of the trainee and different groups of staff, students, and others.

# Exceptions

There are no exceptions to this Policy.

# Amendments

This Policy was approved by the University’s Executive Board/Board of Governors in 2022. The University may change this Policy at any time, and where appropriate. Where a policy is not due for review, but is found to require updating, it will remain published, unless the reasons for review render it obsolete.

# Terms of Reference

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| **Term** | **Description** |
| The document is for the 2023/2024 & 24/25 academic years and will be updated in June 2025 | The document is to highlight to staff & students the process if students have a debt relating to their accommodation |

1. **Information and Resources**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies and guidance (delete if N/A) (If listing policies, link out to the University Policy Hub [WLV Policies - University of Wolverhampton](https://www.wlv.ac.uk/about-us/corporate-information/wlv-policies/))

Contact

For general queries, please contact the University 01902 321268 by email or phone. Email: cityaccommodationhub@wlv.ac.uk

For general queries, please contact the University Corporate Compliance Team via email: compliance@wlv.ac.uk.

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| **VERSION** | Version 2.1 | **AUTHOR/OWNER** | Bec Woolley Business Support & Quality Assurance Manager |
| **Approved Date** | September 2022 | **Approved By** |  UEB |
| **Next Review Date with UEB** | September 2025 | Last review date | Sept 2023 |