UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

NOTES FOR GUIDANCE 2026-27

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Applications for the Remission of the University Fee

Notes for Guidance for Staff and Students 2026-27

These guidance notes are intended to complement the relevant University Ordinances. They relate to decisions taken by the Fee Remission Panel in 2025-26, and do not themselves constitute a set of regulations. Nor should they be taken to imply that, given a particular set of circumstances, the Panel will automatically reach a particular decision. All applications are considered on their individual merits, and the Panel retains discretion to take account of all relevant circumstances.

The relevant regulations can be found in Statutes and Ordinances, Ch.1
http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/univ/so/

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1 Introduction

1.1 The Fee Remission Panel

Since September 2023, the Fee Remission Panel has been responsible for considering applications for remission of the University tuition fee that previously fell under the remit of the Examination Access and Mitigation Committee (EAMC) and the Postgraduate Committee.

The Panel has the following overarching aims:

- To endeavour to ensure parity of treatment between applicants to the Panel who share similar circumstances, whilst recognising that each case is individual.
- To ensure that, particularly in relation to disregarding terms and repeating a period of study, an applicant is **neither** advantaged **nor disadvantaged** in comparison with other students.

1.2 Eligibility

The Panel considers applications from colleges on behalf of undergraduate and postgraduate students currently registered on a course at the University of Cambridge.

To support the Panel's aims and the consistent application of University policy, the Fee Remission Panel may consider information supplied by the student in applications to other University-administered hardship funds and central funders, for example Cambridge Trust and Cambridge Bursary Scheme, where this is relevant to assessing the student's financial circumstances.

Applicants are expected to utilise all reasonable sources of funding available to them, including student loans where eligible, before applying for University financial support.

Students who have not taken out a student loan due to their religious beliefs should note that the UK Fatwa Council has published guidance stating that student loans are permissible.

1.3 Purpose of fee remission

The Panel may consider applications for fee remission for a limited number of terms where unforeseen circumstances beyond a student's control result in significant financial hardship or unexpected fee liability which could not reasonably have been anticipated.

As fee remission is not designed to be a mechanism to reduce student debt, students are expected to have applied for and taken up all sources of funding and financial support for which they are eligible before an application is submitted. This includes statutory student finance or equivalent government-funded student support, regardless of whether the student is already funded by a scholarship, bursary, studentship or sponsor.

The Panel is very unlikely to remit fees where a student has not taken up the full amount of statutory student finance or equivalent government-funded student support available to them.

The Panel may also take into account whether unexpected procedural, administrative or regulatory circumstances beyond the student's control resulted in additional fee liability that could not reasonably have been anticipated when the liability was incurred.

Remission for more than three terms would be extremely unlikely. In the case of undergraduates, the Panel is very unlikely to remit fees once a student has fulfilled the requirement to qualify for their BA Degree. Graduation may be delayed in cases of outstanding tuition fee debt in accordance with the policy for non-payment of tuition fees (Ordinances, Ch. I).

1.4 Disregarding terms and fee remission

In exceptional circumstances, the Panel may consider remitting the fee for a term in which a student has resided ***a little*** over the normal limit of **21 days** and has then gone out of residence and where it is clear that the student intends to return to repeat the term when they have recovered.

Where a student has received approval for future term(s) of study to be intermitted / disregarded, no fees will be due for the term(s) in question. Fees will still be due for any term(s) of intermission retrospectively approved, unless there are other unexpected changes in the student's financial circumstances that merit a fee remission application.

Fee remissions as an outcome of a successful application for an exemption of terms for a postgraduate research student (PGR) who transfers into the University will be added automatically to a student's record without the need for a separate application.
Where a student is permitted to undertake an extended period of study (EPS, or 'one year over two') by the EAMC, the student's fees for year one of the EPS will be automatically remitted and therefore no separate application for a fee waiver is required[1].

1.5 Discretionary fee waiver – forced migrants

The University and Colleges have agreed to apply a discretionary waiver of the difference between the Home and Overseas fee for forced migrant students who narrowly missed gaining the necessary immigration status by the qualifying date. This policy applies to all affected students, regardless of course or year of study.

This does not change the fee status for these students, who remain Overseas for fee status purposes. Applications for a waiver in such cases should be submitted to the Panel for formal consideration.

[1] Since 2024-25, the timing of fee payments for students studying 'one year over two' has been adjusted to bring the University into line with Student Finance England policy, which states that the tuition fee should be charged in the academic year in which the student completes a year of their course.

2 How to make an application

2.1 Considerations - completing the form

The Panel only considers applications made through the college on the student's behalf, except in the most exceptional circumstances. Such cases should be discussed with the Secretary of the Fee Remission Panel, Alison McKeegan, at feestatusandpolicy@admin.cam.ac.uk

The application form must be completed in full and include a tutorial signature. The College should satisfy itself that the student has complied with the funding requirements set out in section 1.3 of the guidance before submitting an application.

The student should provide evidence that they have applied for all statutory student finance, government-funded student support and other sources of funding for which they may reasonably be eligible, including funding available in their country of nationality or ordinary residence. This requirement applies regardless of whether the student is already funded by a scholarship, bursary or sponsor.

The College should ensure that the Tutor and/or Senior Tutor has reviewed appropriate evidence supporting both the student's financial circumstances and the circumstances giving rise to the application. This evidence does not normally need to be submitted to the Panel.

However, the following documents must be included with the application where applicable:

- evidence of approval of any relevant intermission or withdrawal by the Examination Access and Mitigation Committee (EAMC), the Postgraduate Committee, or another authorised University body;

- evidence of the outcome of any application to the student's principal tuition fee funder for additional funding relating to the period for which remission is sought;

- where statutory student finance or equivalent government-funded student support has been refused, evidence of that decision.

The Secretary of the Fee Remission Panel may request additional information or evidence from the student's College to assist the Panel in reaching a decision on an application. Applications may be deferred pending receipt of further information requested by the Panel.

The Tutor will be expected to explain:

- why the College supports the application;
- why the requested level of remission is appropriate;
- what financial support the College has provided or considered;
- whether payment plans have been explored;
- whether the student can complete the course if remission is approved; and
- whether further fee remission or applications for University hardship support are likely to be required.

2.2 Application deadlines

The Panel expects students and Colleges to submit any fee remission application before the end of the academic year that includes the first term for which remission is being requested.
If the term(s) for which remission is requested fall within the student's final year of study, the application must be submitted before the last Fee Remission Panel meeting in the student's final term. The end of the course is defined as the date of the student's final examination or their thesis submission deadline.

In exceptional circumstances where this timeline cannot be met, the student's Tutor should discuss the situation with the Secretary of the Fee Remission Panel as early as possible.

2.3 Use of the Student Hardship Fund as a fee bursary

In exceptional circumstances, the Fee Remission Panel may approve support from the Student Hardship Fund for students who have applied for fee remission on the grounds of financial hardship, rather than (for example) University procedural delays, and who would otherwise meet the Panel's criteria.

Support will be provided as a fee bursary rather than fee remission. Where approved, the Fund will cover the University's share of the agreed tuition fee shortfall. The practical effect for the student is the same: they will not be required to pay the term(s) or proportion of fees covered by the award.

This arrangement is intended for cases where a student's inability to pay arises solely from financial hardship and where support is necessary to enable them to continue their studies. Applications will be considered on their individual merits, taking account of the student's financial circumstances and any other sources of support available.

Students do not need to distinguish between fee remission and a hardship-funded fee bursary when seeking assistance. The Panel will determine the most appropriate mechanism where support is approved.

Admissions and College staff considering a fee-related hardship case, or requiring advice on how the arrangements operate in practice, should contact the Secretary of the Fee Remission Panel, Alison McKeegan, at feestatusandpolicy@admin.cam.ac.uk before making commitments to applicants or students.

The use of the Student Hardship Fund for this purpose is subject to annual review and may be amended or withdrawn in light of available resources, demand, and institutional policy.

3 How the Panel considers applications

Applications for remission of the University Fee are dealt with during a meeting of the Fee Remission Panel, which is held approximately once every two months.

The meeting date and application deadlines can be found on Student Registry's website: https://www.studentregistry.admin.cam.ac.uk/fee-remission .

Completed applications should be sent to the Secretary at feestatusandpolicy@admin.cam.ac.uk

The Panel will take the following factors into account when considering applications:

- the nature and severity of the circumstances giving rise to the application, including any procedural, administrative or regulatory circumstances that resulted in unexpected fee liability;
- the evidence provided in support of the application;
- the steps taken to obtain funding from other sources;
- the student's current financial position;
- financial support available from the College;
- the student's outstanding tuition fee liability;
- the viability of the student's funding plan for completion of their course; and
- fairness and consistency with previous decisions.

4 Review procedure

Details of the Review Procedure and form can be found online and requests for review should be submitted on the Review Request form within 14 days of the formal decision being issued. Requests for Review are encouraged to be submitted as soon as possible and not left until the day of the deadline. It is particularly important for this purpose that the College keep records of when it communicates the Panel's decisions to a student. In instances where the Panel has declined an application or offers an alternative to the allowance sought, it is essential that the decision is conveyed to the student as soon as possible.

The review will be of a procedural nature i.e. the Reviewer will consider whether in reaching its decision(s), the Panel has observed the relevant Ordinances and these Notes of Guidance and whether or not it has come to a reasonable decision in that context.

The Review Procedure is the final stage before the student may take their case to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator.

5 Key contacts

Students should contact their College Tutor for advice in the first instance. University and College offices should direct any questions to the Secretary of the Fee Remission Panel, Alison McKeegan, at feestatusandpolicy@admin.cam.ac.uk .