

Your Rights as a Student: Consumer Law Guidance 2025/26

As a student, you have rights under consumer law when you apply to and study at college. This guide explains those rights, so you know what to expect and what you're entitled to.

Fair Trading Rules

Colleges must give you clear and honest information before you decide to apply. This includes details about the course, costs, and anything else that helps you make a good decision about what and where to study.

This important information (called "material information") must be easy to find, clear, and given to you in good time.

If you're an international, part-time, or distance learner, the college must give you information that matters to you, like visa rules or class schedules.

Colleges must think about students with disabilities and make sure they give accurate information about access to buildings and facilities.

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) has a list of key things colleges should tell you. You can find this list in their [advice for education providers](#).

Your Contract with the College

When you agree to study at college, you enter into a contract. This section explains the different types of contracts and your rights.

- **Distance contract:** If you apply online or without meeting college staff in person. You must get all the important information (as set out here: [The Consumer Contracts \(Information, Cancellation and Additional Charges\) Regulations 2013](#)) before you agree and a cancellation form.
- **Off-premises contract:** If you meet college staff somewhere other than the college and decide to apply. You must get all the important information (as set out here: [The Consumer Contracts \(Information, Cancellation and Additional Charges\) Regulations 2013](#)) and a cancellation form.
- **On-premises contract:** If you apply while at the college, you must be given key information (as set out here: [The Consumer Contracts \(Information, Cancellation and Additional Charges\) Regulations 2013](#)) before you accept the offer.

Once you've entered into your contract, the college should give you a copy of the contract.

Cancelling Your Contract

You can cancel a **distance** or **off-premises** contract within **14 days** of signing up (starting the day after you enter into the contract), without giving a reason. The college must refund any payments you've made. You don't have to use a special form to cancel, you can just tell the college clearly (even verbally) although it's a good idea to keep a record of your cancellation. Although a special form isn't necessary, you can use the following: [2526 02 - Consumer Law - Cancellation Form](#)

Important: You **cannot cancel an on-premises contract** under these rules. So, if you sign up while at the college, make sure you have all the information you need before agreeing.

The college can't start providing services before the 14 days are up unless you give clear permission.

Your Rights Under the Consumer Rights Act

Colleges must:

- Make their rules and terms easy to find and understand.
- Tell you about any important or surprising rules before you accept an offer.
- Avoid unfair rules, like:
 - Changing course content or fees without good reason.
 - Limiting their responsibility unfairly.
 - Taking your intellectual property without reason.
 - Charging you for services you didn't get.

For further information about your rights, please refer to CMA's [advice for education providers](#).