



# International Student Fee Payment and Refund Procedure

## 1 Purpose

To provide a procedure for international student fees payments to the Institute and the refund processes related to international students.

## 2 Scope

This Procedure applies to:

- International students holding a current Confirmation of Enrolment with the Institute (commencing, continuing or withdrawing student).
- Staff involved in receiving international student fees and the payment and refund of international tuition fees paid to the Institute.

The Procedure does not apply to fees received by Sunraysia Institute of TAFE on behalf of a partner training provider (such as holding deposits for partner programs).

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## 4 Definitions

ACRONYM / Term	Definition
<b>CoE</b>	Confirmation of Enrolment
<b>DET</b>	Department of Education and Training
<b>DHA</b>	Department of Home Affairs
<b>IAO</b>	International Administration Officer
<b>International Applicant</b>	A foreign national who intends to study in Australia.
<b>International Student</b>	A person holding an Australian Student visa and is defined as an 'Overseas Student' in the ESOS ACT
<b>ISU</b>	International Students Unit
<b>Payment Gateway</b>	Cohort Go payment platform offering international transfers via local banks, BPAY and credit or debit card payments for tuition fees.

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<b>PRISMS</b>	The Provider Registration and International Student Management System
<b>Tuition Deposit Fee</b>	An amount required to accept an offer of a place in a course. This amount must be received before a Confirmation of Enrolment can be provided and is applied to fee payments for future terms.

## 5 Actions

### 5.1 International Applicants Accepting an Offer from SuniTAFE

- 5.1.1 Accepted international applicants receive an International Student Offer and Acceptance Agreement which outlines the Tuition Deposit Fee due on acceptance and the accepted payment methods via the payment gateway. The Letter of Offer also outlines when future payments are due.
- 5.1.2 International applicants sign and return the International Student Offer and Acceptance Agreement and make payment of the Tuition Deposit Fee via the payment gateway.
- 5.1.3 ISU receives notification of payments made via the payment gateway when funds are received and settled. No further evidence is required by students prove payment of Tuition Deposit Fee.
- 5.1.4 If payment of the Tuition Deposit Fee is not made via the payment gateway, evidence to prove payment must be provided.
- 5.1.5 If payment occurs prior to the ISU receiving the signed International Student Offer and Acceptance Agreement the ISU contacts the international applicant/agent to inform them the signed International Student Offer and Acceptance Agreement must be received to process the acceptance.
- 5.1.6 All funds received by the Institute from International Students for Tuition Fee Deposits are included in Funds Received in Advance and not accessed by the Institute until the international applicant completes a Sunraysia Institute of TAFE Enrolment Application Form.
- 5.1.7 If an international student wishes to pay more than 50% of their course fees up-front for a course with a duration of 26 weeks or more, they must provide written confirmation of their choice to pre-pay more than required.
- 5.1.8 If an international applicant is not granted a student visa, the Tuition Deposit fee will be refunded less a \$250 administration fee.

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## 5.2 Continuing students

- 5.2.1 Invoices are emailed to international students via their student and personal email addresses two weeks prior to the due date (which is 2 weeks prior to starting each term).
- 5.2.2 Partial payments are accepted, however fees must be paid in full by the due date to avoid penalties or sanctions.
- 5.2.3 International students who fail to make full payment by the due date will be issued with a Sunraysia Institute of TAFE 'Notice of Intention to Report for Non Payment of Fees' stating that they will be reported to DHA via PRISMS and they are excluded from attending classes unless the payment situation is resolved. Students have 20 working days to resolve or access the Institute's Complaints and Appeals Procedure. If after the complaints and appeals process has been finalised and the decision to cancel has been upheld, the CoE will be cancelled for non-payment of fees.
- 5.2.4 International students with an outstanding balance on their account after the payment due date will be charged a penalty fee of \$50 per week for up to 3 weeks until the balance is paid in full.
- 5.2.5 International students who have not received an invoice will still be charged the penalty fee as they have agreed to the conditions of the Institute's 'International Student Fee Payment and Refund Policy'. The ISU will attempt to ensure that international students are aware of when invoices are sent out and the Tuition Fee due date by various methods of communication, including but not limited to email or text message.
- 5.2.6 International students can select to pay tuition fees in advance for the period(s) they wish. Advance payment of tuition fees protects the student against any fee increase that may be implemented. Students wishing to pre-pay for more than one term should advise the International Administration Officer.

## 5.3 Change of Course

- 5.3.1 All students with an approved Change of Course must pay a \$250 administration fee before their course change is finalised and CoEs can be issued.
- 5.3.2 When a currently enrolled international student is approved to change course, they are required to pay a Tuition Deposit Fee equal to one term's tuition fees for the new course.
- 5.3.3 If an international student changes course and has pre-paid fees based on the

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previous course, the pre-paid amount will be credited towards the new course. Any deficit will require the student to pay the balance before the course transfer can be finalised. Where a student changes to a course with lower fees, the funds will be allocated towards one or more periods.

## 5.4 Adding a course at the end of a program of studies

- 5.4.1 Students completing their current course and are requesting to continue studying in another program of studies must:
- Submit a new Application Form for International Students
  - Meet course entry requirements
  - Have successfully completed their previous course
  - Ensure the new qualification package is equivalent or higher to their highest qualification
  - Must pay one term's tuition fees in advance on acceptance of their offer
  - Must present evidence that they have Overseas Student Health Cover for the duration of the new program of studies

## 5.5 Fee Changes

- 5.5.1 The Institute reviews course prices annually and may implement changes in fees for international students.
- 5.5.2 International students who pre-pay tuition fees are protected against any price increase for the period that is pre-paid.
- 5.5.3 When implementing a price increase affecting currently enrolled students, the Institute will:
- Notify all affected students at least five weeks prior to the invoice with the price increase being sent.
  - Include information about the student's courses and relevant fees and provide an updated schedule of future payments.
  - Offer referral services to financial counselling for affected students.
  - Update relevant student management systems.

## 5.6 Receipts

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5.6.1 International students, new or continuing, who make a payment will be issued with a receipt:

- a) Within 3 days of the funds being received by the Institute if made by bank transfer or BPay.
- b) Immediately if payment is made directly at Student Administration.

## 5.7 Process for claiming refunds

5.7.1 Refund applications for full or partial refunds must:

- a) be made in writing on the International Student Withdrawal & Application for Refund Form
- b) set out the reasons for the application (full explanation to be attached to the International Student Withdrawal & Application for Refund Form); and
- c) be accompanied by supporting documents as may be appropriate; and be forwarded to International Students Unit.

5.7.2 The information provided by the student on the International Student Withdrawal and Application for Refund Form must include:

- a) the date of the claim (taken as the date the form was submitted);
- b) the student's full name;
- c) the student's ID
- d) the course in which the student was enrolled;
- e) the basis for making the claim (Reason for Refund);
- f) the bank details to which the refund is to be forwarded;
- g) the student's signature, and
- h) all documents relevant to the consideration of the claim.

**5.7.3** Refund applications will not be processed where the signature on the International Student Withdrawal & Application for Refund Form does not match the student's signature as shown on other documents provided by the student for admission to the Institute.

**5.7.4** Students in Australia at the time of applying for a refund may nominate an Australian bank account to have the refund paid into. Students who are overseas at the time of applying for a refund will need to nominate an overseas bank account in the student's name.

**5.7.5** All debts to the Sunraysia Institute of TAFE must have been paid before any refund can be calculated with any outstanding amounts to be deducted from the refund.

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**5.7.6** Where a student is dissatisfied with a decision to provide or not to provide a refund he or she may appeal that decision in accordance with the Institute's Complaints and Appeals Policy.

**5.7.7** This procedure, and the availability of complaints and appeals processes, does not remove the right of the student to take action under Australia's consumer protection laws.

## **5.8 Payment of refunds**

**5.8.1** After receiving the completed International Student Withdrawal & Refund Application Form from an international student, ISU staff will assess eligibility for a refund (see Appendix 1 Refund Table) against the International Student Fee Refund Policy. If the student is eligible for a refund, ISU staff will complete an Application for Refund form – available from financial services.

**5.8.2** Students without an Australian bank account will need to provide details of a foreign bank account in their name for an international electronic transfer payment.

**5.8.3** Refund to a person who is not the student - Refund needs to be processed to the same bank account the fee was originally paid from and evidence of the payment is provided.

**5.8.4** Applications for refunds for students must be authorised by the Manager International and approved by the General Manager Operations.

**5.8.5** The Institute will refund the amount within 4 weeks after receipt of the completed and signed International Student Withdrawal & Refund Application Form together with appropriate supporting documents.

**5.8.6** ISU staff will be responsible for reporting any changes about the student's enrolment via PRISMS as per the International Student Deferral, Suspension or Cancellation of Enrolment Policy and Procedure.

**5.8.7** The date of the notification for application for refund is the date the completed and signed International Student Application for Refund Form is received by the Sunraysia Institute of TAFE. A complete application includes all relevant supporting documentation.

## **5.9 Refund of Overseas Student Health Cover**

**5.9.1** Where the student has purchased health insurance directly from a provider, it will be the responsibility of the student to claim the OSHC from their health insurer.

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## 6 Associated Documents

- International Student Fee Payment & Refund Policy
- Notice of Intention to Report letter
- International Student Offer and Acceptance Agreement
- Tax Invoice
- Receipts
- International Student Withdrawal and Refund Application Form
- International Student Request for Release Form
- Change of Course Form
- International Student Application Form
- International Student Deferral, Suspension or Cancellation of Enrolment Procedure
- Assessment of Compassionate & Compelling Circumstances

## 7 References

- Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act)
- Education Services for Overseas Students Regulations 2001 (ESOS Regulations)
- National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education a20nd Training to Overseas Students (National Code)
- International Student Fee Payment & Refund Policy
- International Student Deferral, Suspension or Cancellation of Enrolment Policy

## 8 Forms / Record Keeping

All records generated by this procedure should be listed and must state title, location, responsible officer and minimum retention period.			
Title	Location	Responsible Officer	Minimum Retention Period
Invoices	Cohort Go / SMS	IAO	
Receipts	SMS	IAO	
Letter of Intent to Report	SMS	IAO	
International Student Offer and Acceptance Agreement	Cohort Go / SMS / Student File	IAO	
International Student Withdrawal and Refund Application Form	Cohort Go / SMS / Student File	IAO	
International Student Request for Release Form	Cohort Go / SMS / Student File	IAO	

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## 9 Appendix 1 – Refund Table

Refund Circumstance	Timing of Request	Refund Amount	Supporting Documents & Evidence
Visa refusal	Before course commencement	All tuition fees paid less Administration Fee (\$250)	Visa refusal notification from the Department of Home Affairs
	After course commencement	All tuition fees paid less fees incurred for any study period completed at the time of the refund request	Visa refusal notification from the Department of Home Affairs
Compassionate & Compelling Circumstances	Prior to course commencement (new students)	All payments or tuition fee deposit received for upcoming semester less Administration Fee (\$250)	Documented evidence or proof of compassionate and compelling circumstances which is accepted to the satisfaction of the Institute
	Prior to commencement of the next term (continuing students)	All payments for upcoming terms less Administration Fee (\$250)	Documented evidence or proof of compassionate and compelling circumstances which is accepted to the satisfaction of the Institute. Other evidence such as flight tickets and boarding passes, letter of offer from another institute, release letter as relevant to the situation.
	After the course or term has commenced	All payments for current & upcoming semesters less fees incurred for any study period completed at the time of the refund request	Documented evidence or proof of compassionate and compelling circumstances which is accepted to the satisfaction of the Institute. Other evidence such as flight tickets and boarding passes, letter of offer from another institute, release letter as relevant to the situation.
Withdrawal by student due to change of mind or where there is no evidence of compassionate and compelling circumstances (before or after a visa outcome)	More than 28 days before course or term commences	80% of fees paid in advance will be refunded	Letter from the student and evidence of visa cancellation (if after visa grant), evidence of request to withdraw visa application (if before visa outcome), Letter of Release and offer letter to another institute (student transfer), other evidence such as flight tickets and boarding passes.
	28 days or less before the course or term commences	No refund	
	On or after the day the course or term commences	No refund	
Institute withdraws a conditional offer due to student not satisfying the conditions attached to the conditional offer	At any time	All tuition fees paid less Administration Fee (\$250)	Withdrawal of offer letter from the Institute
Offer of place withdrawn by Institute before course commencement, due to course cancellation or postponement greater than 4 weeks or due to capacity limitations	At any time	Full refund of all fees paid in advance or offer of an alternate course	Letter from students – acceptance of alternate course or withdrawal

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