

Student Withdrawal and Refund of Course Fees Procedure

1 Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure that student withdrawals and refunds are processed accurately, consistently and in a timely manner in accordance the Refund of Course Fees Policy. This procedure relates to domestic students only.

2 Scope

This procedure applies to all domestic students who withdraw from any Institute course and all staff.

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4 Definitions

ACRONYM / Term	Definition
Apparent Withdrawal	A student has stopped their training without fully completing their course but has not officially notified SuniTAFE of their withdrawal.
Attended Hours	Reportable student contact hours using an Institute derived withdrawal method. This derived amount is reported to HESG when withdrawal is applied.
Census Date	A date by which enrolment can be cancelled without incurring tuition fees (or VET Student Loan debt) for the course or part of the course.
Deferral	A student has stopped their training without fully completing the course and has negotiated an agreement of their intention to return to training at a later date with SuniTAFE.
Domestic Student	An individual that is an Australian citizen, a New Zealand citizen or a holder of a permanent visa.
Enrolment Activity End Date (EAED)	The date on which training activity and assessment ends for a module or unit of competency enrolment. The Enrolment Activity End Date must be on or after the Enrolment Activity Start Date, include the assessment period, and cover all training delivery and all assessment activities. For Apprentices, this includes employer confirmation of competency.
Formal Withdrawal	A student has stopped their training without fully completing their enrolment and has given notification to SuniTAFE of their withdrawal.
Materials Fee	A fee charged to recover the cost of providing goods or materials which are retained or consumed by the student as his/her personal property.

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Paid Fees	<p>Paid fees are defined as one of the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> paid their fees in full at enrolment entered into a formal agreement to pay fees by instalments entered into a formal agreement for an employer/third party to pay fees on behalf of the student.
Participation/Attendance	Student Management System process to record either participation or block attendance of commencement and progression of the unit of competency.
Tuition Fee	A compulsory academic fee payable for accredited programs.
VET Student Loans	An income contingent loan scheme for the VET sector that is part of the Higher Education Loan Program.

5 Actions

5.1 Formal Withdrawal

- 5.1.1 A formal withdrawal is initiated where a student requests a withdrawal by completing the *Student Withdrawal and Refund Request Form*.
- 5.1.2 Where a student verbally advises of their intent to withdraw, a delegated staff member may complete the *Student Withdrawal Request Refund Form* verifying the verbal request of the student.
- 5.1.3 The student may request to:
- 5.1.3.1 Withdraw from the course and discontinue study;
 - 5.1.3.2 Withdraw from some enrolled units and continue participating in the course; or
 - 5.1.3.3 Defer from study and withdraw from all enrolled units with the intention of returning to study.
 - Deferral of study is not available to trainees, apprentices, short course or VETDSS/Auspice students.
 - A period of up to 6 months may be approved for deferral of studies where the student is re-engaging within the next calendar year.
 - Deferrals will only be considered where the student has commenced the course and participation has been recorded for the current year in a least one unit of competency.

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- 5.1.4 A student withdrawing or deferring from a government subsidised course will be advised that future training options and eligibility for government training under the Skills First program will be impacted.
- 5.1.5 The teacher, Business Manager or Retention Officer will discuss the request with the student and attempt to resolve issues that may be preventing the student from continuing studies.
- 5.1.5.1 Where the student cannot be re-engaged, and the withdrawal proceeds, teachers are responsible for ensuring:
- i. participation/attendance and results are recorded accurately with the Student Management System; and
 - ii. evidence is uploaded to the student evidence drive to support hours to be claimed for funding under the Skills First Contract.
- 5.1.5.2 Business Managers are responsible for verifying hours claimed for commenced units on the *SMS Withdrawal Form*.
- 5.1.6 *Student Withdrawal and Refund Request Forms* must be forwarded with the approved *SMS Withdrawal Form* to Education Support for processing within five days of the date requested by the student.
- 5.1.6.1 The Enrolment Activity End Date of withdrawn units will be recorded as the requested withdrawal date indicated on the *Student Withdrawal and Refund Request Form* by the student.
- 5.1.7 The Retention Officer must be notified where an Early School Leaver withdraws from the course. Refer to *Early School Leaver Procedure*.

5.2 Apparent Withdrawal

- 5.2.1 An apparent withdrawal occurs when a student has engaged in some learning activity, and then stops attending or submitting assessments without notification.
- 5.2.2 Teachers, Business Managers or the Retention Officer will initiate the withdrawal process where it is determined a student:
- i. is not progressing through the course as required;
 - ii. has not completed units/course prior to the end of the reporting year and an Assessment Pending result is not approved; or
 - iii. has not re-engaged to complete enrolled units where their traineeship or apprenticeship contract is cancelled.

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- 5.2.3 Attempts will be made to re-engage the student prior to initiating the withdrawal process.
- 5.2.4 The Retention Officer will initiate withdraw of students where attempts to re-engage are not successful, including when a student does not return following a period of deferral. Refer to *Student Retention Procedure*.
- 5.2.5 Where a student has not re-engaged and attempts to contact the student have been unsuccessful, a withdrawal is to be initiated.
- 5.2.5.1 The *SMS Withdrawal Form* must be completed and forwarded to the Education Support Office for processing.
- 5.2.5.2 Teachers are responsible for ensuring:
- i. Participation/attendance and results are accurate with the Student Management System; and
 - ii. Evidence is uploaded to the student evidence drive to support hours claimed for funding under the Skills First Contract.
- 5.2.5.3 Business Managers are responsible for verifying hours claimed on commenced units.
- 5.2.5.4 The Enrolment Activity End Date of each unit must reflect the last date of engagement of the student and acceptable Evidence of Participation is retained.
- 5.2.6 The Retention Officer will be notified where the early school leaver is withdrawn from their course. Refer to *Early School Leaver Procedure*.
- 5.2.7 The Skills and Job Centre Coordinator will initiate the withdrawal of a student under a school contract arrangement on receipt of a contract variation notice from the school.
- 5.2.8 The Administration Manager can authorise a withdrawal where the student is not currently enrolled in any units and the withdrawal is at course level where it has been deemed the student is no longer a continuing student.

5.3 Processing the Withdrawal

- 5.3.1 Processing of formal withdrawals within the Student Management System must occur no later than 5 days of the date requested by the student on the *Student Withdrawal and Refund Request Form*.

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5.3.2 Processing of apparent withdrawals within the Student Management System must occur no later than two months from the date of the last engagement by the student.

5.3.2.1 Where the two month period of an apparent withdrawal occurs across years, a dated file note should be added to the last point of Evidence of Participation and the unit Activity End Date should be changed to 1 January of the current year.

5.3.3 All withdrawals will be processed in the Student Management System by Education Support Officers.

5.3.3.1 Education Support Officers will be responsible for:

- i. validating that all supporting evidence is provided and that all documents are completed correctly prior to processing the;
- ii. processing the withdrawal within five business days within the Student Management System;
- iii. issuing students with correspondence confirming the withdrawal;
- iv. processing Statement of Attainment and results as outlined in the *Certificate Issuance Procedure*; and
- v. retaining all student records as per the *Records Management Procedure*.

5.4 Cancellations

5.4.1 A cancellation of a student's enrolment, rather than a withdrawal, will be initiated where:

5.4.1.1 The course is cancelled by the Institute prior to course commencement;

5.4.1.2 There is an administrative error in the units enrolled at the time of enrolment; or

5.4.1.3 The teacher has incorrectly indicated the units of study for the student at time of enrolment.

5.4.2 Cancellations can only be processed where there has been no participation recorded for the units cancelled.

5.4.3 Cancellations are processed within the Student Management System by Enrolment Advisors.

5.5 Refunds

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- 5.5.1 Education Support Officers are responsible for calculating refunds as per the Institute's *Refund of Course Fee Policy* to students.
- 5.5.2 Where a student has fees outstanding and payable to the Institute at the time of withdrawal, all or part of the refund will be used to reduce the outstanding debt. Should any outstanding debt remain after all credits have been applied, the debt must be paid in full in line with the Institute's financial terms and conditions.
- 5.5.3 Payment plans will be adjusted where required and students notified.

5.6 Refunds on Full Qualification Courses

- 5.6.1 Where a student has enrolled in a course that is cancelled by the Institute prior to course commencement, a full refund of tuition and material fees will be granted.
- 5.6.2 Where a student is enrolled in a program that is cancelled by the Institute after commencement, the Institute will refund tuition and material fees on units not commenced or partially completed.
 - 5.6.2.1 Students will be provided with at least 28 days to initiate grievances procedures before the cancellation takes effect.
 - 5.6.2.2 Final cancellation will not take effect until any grievances initiated by the student are completed.
- 5.6.3 Where a student withdraws, prior to a unit commencing less than or equal to thirty days from unit commencement, the Institute will provide a refund on unused tuition and material on units commenced and full refund on tuition and materials on units not commenced.
- 5.6.4 Where a student withdraws from a unit after thirty (30) days from the unit commencement the Institute will provide no refund on tuition and refund of unused materials on units commenced and a full refund on tuition and materials on units not commenced.

5.7 Refunds on Short Courses, Skills Sets and Non-accredited training

- 5.7.1 Where a student is enrolled in a course that has been cancelled by the Institute prior to commencement a full refund of fees paid will be granted.
- 5.7.2 Where a student is enrolled in a program is cancelled by the Institute after commencement, the Institute will refund full tuition and material fees on units not commenced or partially completed.
- 5.7.3 Where a student withdraws greater than or equal to five days prior to the course commencing, the Institute will refund paid fees.

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5.7.4 Where a student withdraws less than five days prior to course commencement the Institute will provide no refund of tuition paid and a refund of unused materials.

5.8 Industry, Subcontracted and School Agreements

5.8.1 Refund conditions are detailed in contracts or agreement between the Institute and organisation.

5.9 Processing a Refund

5.9.1 Finance Officers will process refunds in the Student Management System and refunds allocated to the student will be calculated as per the *Institute's Refund of Course Fees Policy*.

5.10 VET Student Loan Refunds

5.10.1 Where students have accessed a VET Student Loan for tuition, the census date for the student's original enrolment into the unit of study withdrawing will determine the refund provided.

5.10.1.1 Where the census date has passed, the student will still be liable for the tuition fees.

5.10.1.2 In all instances, the student will be eligible for pro-rate refund on unused material fees.

5.10.2 As per the *VET Student Loan Procedure*, a student may apply to have their VET Student Loan debt revoked.

5.11 Student Withdrawal Correspondence

5.11.1 The Institute will provide correspondence to students following withdrawal, including the date of withdrawal from studies, unit/s of study or course withdrawn and refund details.

5.11.2 Students that have an approved deferral will be provided details of their return to study.

5.11.3 Students will be informed that their enrolment in a Victorian government subsidised program (or part thereof, and regardless of completion) will affect their future training options and eligibility for further Victorian government subsidised training.

5.11.4 Where the student has accessed VET Student Loans for tuition, correspondence will also include relevant census dates and will advise if a debt has been incurred.

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6 Associated Documents

- Certificate Issuance Policy
- Enrolment Policy
- Enrolment Procedure
- Participation and Attendance Procedure
- Refund of Course Fee Policy
- Skills First Contract
- Student Retention Procedure

7 References

- Higher Education Support Act 2003
- National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011
- VET Student Loans Act 2016

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
Student Withdrawal and Refund Request Form/SMS Withdrawal Form and supporting evidence	Student Administration	Manager, Administration	7 years

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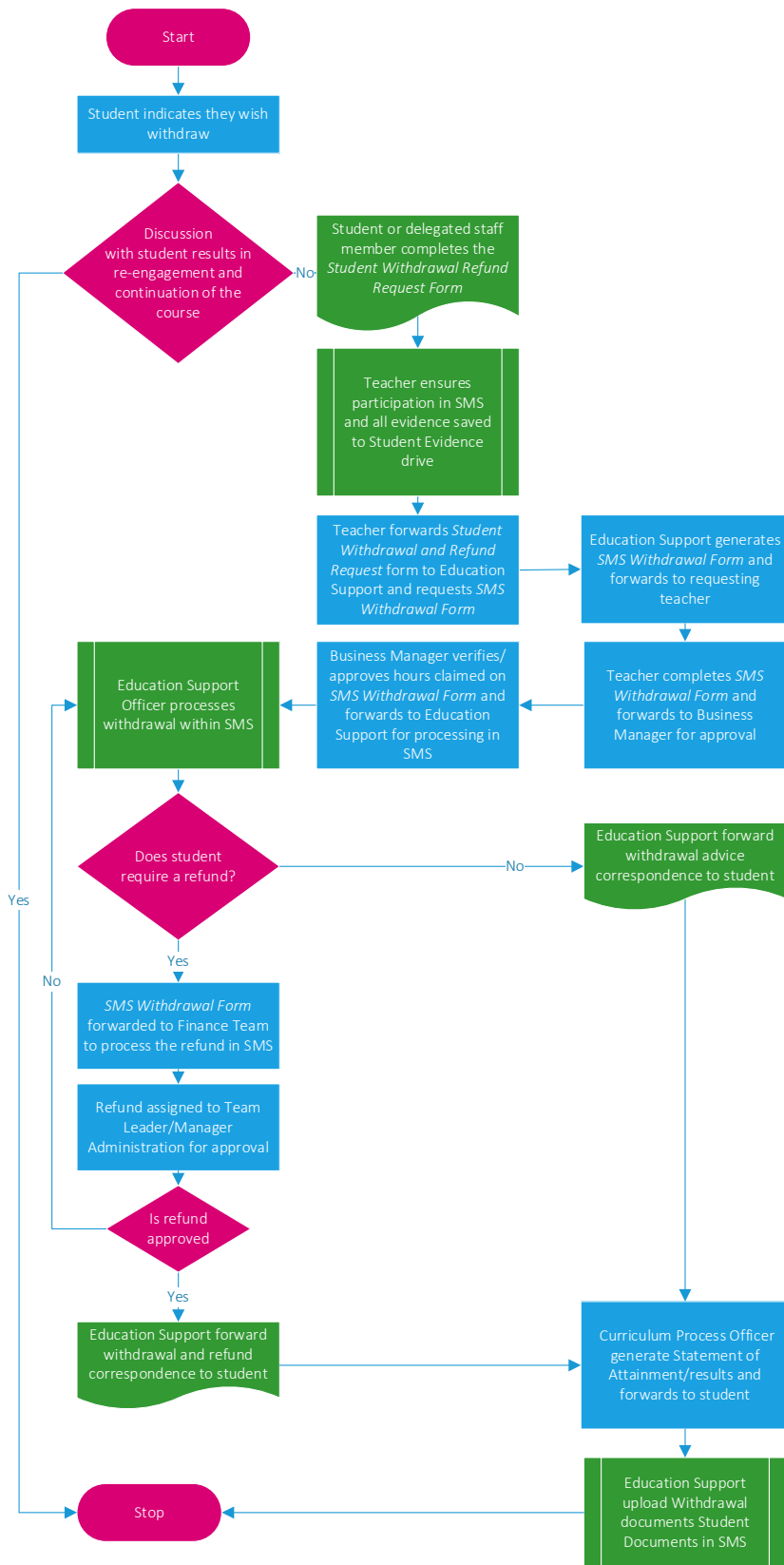
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9 Appendix 1: Formal Withdrawal Flowchart



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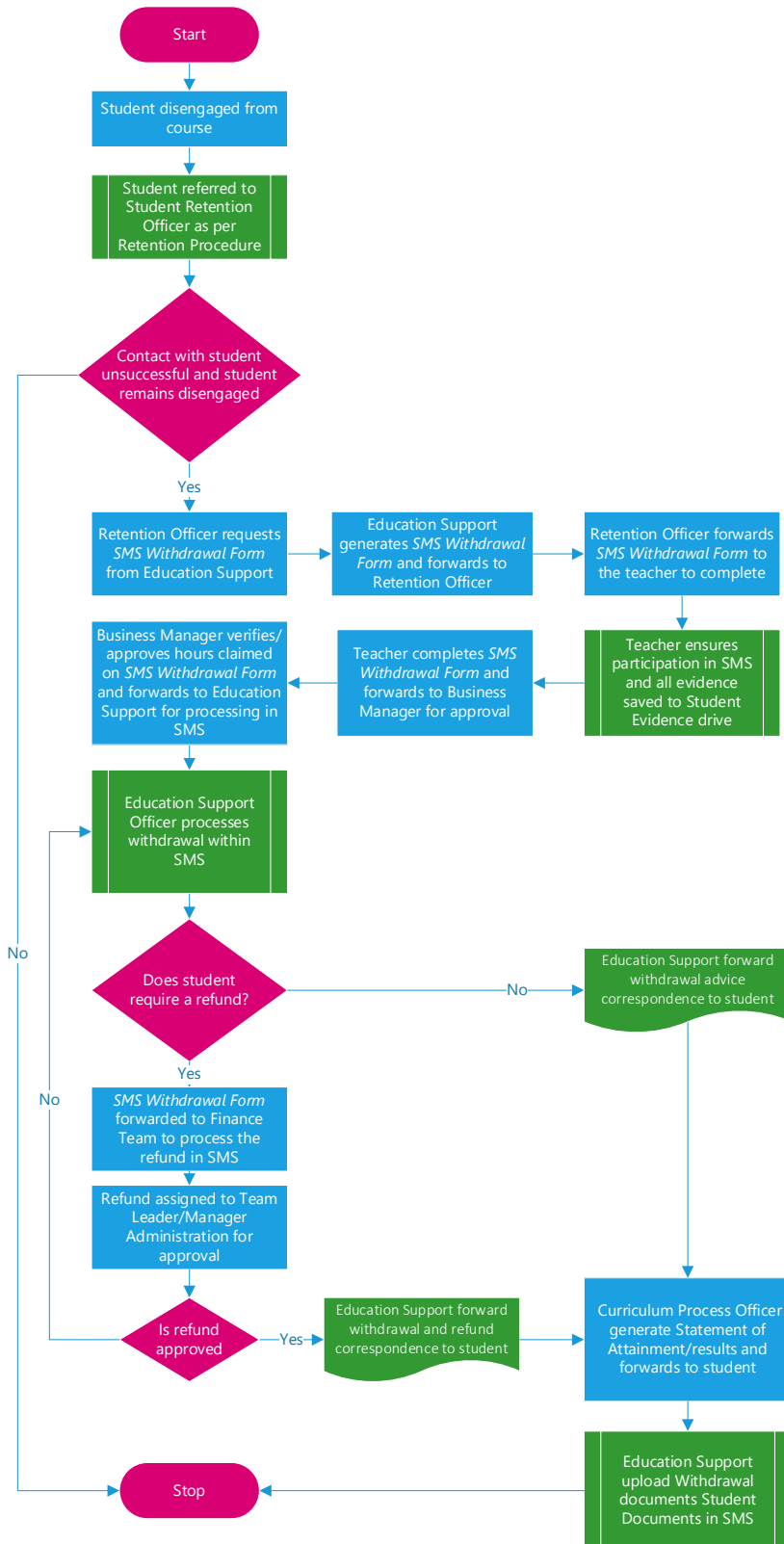
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10 Appendix 2: Apparent Withdrawal Flowchart



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