

1 Purpose

The objective of this policy is to outline the conditions for the accurate and timely granting and processing of refunds of course fees to domestic students.

2 Scope

This policy applies to refunds of courses fees to domestic student enrolment fees.

3 Definitions

Acronym/Term	Definition
Cancelled Course	Where a determination is made that a scheduled intake of a course, whether it be a full course or short course will not be or will no longer be offered.
Census Date	The last day a student can formally withdraw their enrolment without incurring a VET Student Loan debt for the course/unit of study or receive a refund if paid course fees up-front.
Course Fees	Tuition and material fees charged for the delivery of training in a specific unit, program, course or short course.
Domestic Students	Students that are an Australian or New Zealand Citizens, Australian permanent residents or humanitarian visa holders; or Students that hold a current Visa, that is not a Student Visa, and has study rights for the duration of the course.
Fee Refund	The portion of paid course fees that are repaid to the student or sponsor as determined via the Withdrawal Refund Matrix.
National Register	www.training.gov.au
the website	www.sunitafe.edu.au
VET Course Assurance Option	In the instance that a course is cancelled and the student has taken out a VET Student Loan where a student is offered a place in a similar VET course of study with a second provider without any requirements to pay the second provider any tuition fee for any replacement VET units.
VET Student Loan	The Australian Government loan program that assists eligible students enrolled in approved higher level vocational education and training courses at approved course providers to pay their tuition fees.
VET Tuition Assurance Option	In the instance a course is cancelled and a student has taken out a VET Student Loan a refund of the student's upfront VET tuition fee payments and/or a reaccrediting of any VET Student Loan balance for any VET unit of study in which the student is enrolled or commences but does not complete because of ceasing to provide the VET course of study of which the unit forms part.

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4 Policy

4.1 Compliance with regulators

4.1.1 The Institute will comply with relevant laws and legislative requirements related to refund policies including obligations within:

- a) Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTO's); and
- b) Australian Consumer Law and customer guarantees.

4.2 Refund Information

4.2.1 The Institute will publish clear, current and accurate refund policies and information that are easy to understand on the website to support potential students in making an informed decision about the training product prior to submitting an enrolment application.

- a) Refund of Course Fees Policy
- b) Fee Protection Policy
- c) Student Withdrawal and Refund Procedure
- d) VET Student Loan Student Review Procedure
- e) Student Fee Refund Schedule
- f) Statement of VET Tuition Assurance
- g) Student Withdrawal Request
- h) Exceptional Circumstances – Application to Refund Fees Paid
- i) VET Student Loan – Application to Re-credit HELP Balance

4.2.2 The Institute will include the Student Fee Refund Schedule with the written information provided to potential students outlining fees to be paid for training prior to enrolment to support an informed decision about the training product.

4.2.3 The Institute will provide to students accessing a VET Student Loan with written information detailing the debt to be incurred and the census date for each unit at least 14 days prior to census dates, including information about how to withdraw.

4.3 Refunds

4.3.1 Refunds will not be provided where units are completed and final results have been granted.

4.3.2 The Student Fee Refund Schedule outlines the conditions for course fee refunds following a student withdrawal or course cancellation.

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STUDENT FEE REFUND SCHEDULE

Refund Reason / Situation	Timing of incident that led to the termination of the student's enrolment:	
<p>The Institute is unable to deliver the course to the student and the course is cancelled.</p> <p><i>*Course cancellation does not include circumstances where a course is superseded on the National Register and a student is offered enrolment in the replacement course.</i></p>	<p>Course is cancelled by the Institute prior to course start date</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refund of tuition fees. If a VET Student Loan has been accessed, the debt for tuition fees will not be deferred and HELP debt not incurred. • Refund of material fees. 	<p>Course is cancelled by the Institute after course start date</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refund of tuition fees of enrolled units not yet commenced or partially completed. If a VET Student Loan has been accessed, the VET Tuition Assurance or VET Course Assurance Option will be provided for units that are enrolled or have commenced but not yet completed. • Refund of material fees of enrolled units not commenced or partially completed. There is no refund of material fees for units successfully completed.
<p>A Withdrawal from a short course or non-accredited training is submitted to the Institute.</p>	<p>The request to withdraw is received up to and including five days prior to the scheduled course start date</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refund of tuition fees. • Refund of material fees only in the instance materials have not been issued to the student and become their property. 	<p>The request to withdraw is received up to four days prior or after the scheduled course start date</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No refund of tuition fees. • A refund of material fees only in the instance the materials have not been issued to the student and become their property. Refunds will not be provided where units are completed and final results are granted.
<p>A Withdrawal from a Skills Set, Certificate I to Certificate IV course is submitted to the Institute.</p> <p><i>*This includes where the request is to withdraw from the course or specific units.</i></p>	<p>The request to withdraw is received prior to and up to 30 days after unit commencement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refund of tuition fees. • Refund of material fees will be provided only in the instance the materials have not been issued to the student and become their property. Refunds will not be provided where units are completed and final results are granted. 	<p>The request to withdraw is received 31 days or more after unit commencement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No refund of tuition fees. • A refund of material fees will be provided only in the instance the materials have not been issued to the student and become their property. Refunds will not be provided where units are completed and final results are granted.
<p>A Withdrawal from a Diploma or Advanced Diploma course is submitted to the Institute.</p> <p><i>*This includes where the request is to withdraw from the course or specific units.</i></p>	<p>The request to withdraw is received prior to or on the course or unit census date.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refund of tuition fees paid upfront. • Tuition fee debt is not deferred to VET Student Loan. • Refund of material fees only in the instance materials have not been issued to the student and become their property. Refunds will not be provided where units are completed and final results are granted. 	<p>The request to withdraw is received after the course or unit census date.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No refunds or re-crediting of VET Student Loans debt. Students accessing a VET Student Loan for tuition fees will incur a HELP debt and their FEE HELP Limit will be reduced. • A refund of material fees will be provided only in the instance the materials have not been issued to the student and become their property. Refunds will not be provided where units are completed and final results are granted.
<p>Third Party Arrangements</p>	<p>Eligibility and specific conditions of course fee refunds of Industry/Subcontracted and School Agreements are determined within contracts or agreements between the Institute and the organisation.</p>	
<p>Administration Fees</p>	<p>In the event an administration fee is charged for the course a refund will only be provided where the Institute cancels the course prior to commencement.</p>	

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4.4 Administering Refunds

- 4.4.1 The assessment for a course fee refunds will be determined as part of the course withdrawal process.
- 4.4.2 Refunds will be processed by Administration within the Student Management System within 5 days following the provision of the nominated bank account.
- 4.4.3 Refunds will be paid to the person or organisation who originally paid the fees by direct deposit via:
- a) the nominated bank account within their Debit Success Customer Agreement; or
 - b) their nominated bank account indicated within the Refund Application.
- 4.4.4 Refunds may not be issued where a student or organisation has outstanding fees payable on their account.
- 4.4.5 The *Delegation of Authority Policy* defines the delegated authority for the approval of course fee refunds.

4.5 Exceptional Circumstances

- 4.5.1 If a student is unable to officially withdraw within the timeframes required for a refund due to extenuating circumstances an appeal with supporting evidence may be submitted in writing for consideration within 10 business days of the course commencement date addressed to the Senior Manager, Administration.
- 4.5.2 Students will be provided written communication of the decision of the outcome within 10 business days.

4.6 Complaints and Appeals

- 4.6.1 All students have the right, and will be supported, to access the Institute's Complaints and Appeals Policy in relation to refunds where they believe:
- a) a decision not to refund was unfair or unjust;
 - b) exceptional circumstances were not considered; or
 - c) a refund was not provided in line with Institute policy.

4.7 Deceased Students

- 4.7.1 The personal legal representative of the Deceased Estate must apply for any excess payments which are to be refunded.
- 4.7.2 Official documentation to support the claim including details of the nominated bank account for which the refund is payable must be provided.

5 Legislative Context

- Australian Consumer Law and Fair Trading Act 2012 (Cth)
- Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)

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- Higher Education Support Act 2003 (Cth)
- National Vocational Education and Training Regulator (Outcome Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations) Instrument 2025 (Cth)
- National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011 (Cth)
- Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)
- VET Student Loans Act 2016 (Cth)
- VET Student Loans Rules 2016 (Cth)

6 Associated documents

6.1 Associated Policies

- Admission and Enrolment Policy
- Delegation of Authority Policy
- Fee Protection Policy
- Student Fees Pricing Policy

6.2 Associated Procedures

- Student Withdrawal and Refund of Course Fees Procedure
- VET Student Loans Student Review Procedure

6.3 Associated Forms

- Exceptional Circumstances – Application to Refund Fees Paid
- Refund Application
- Student Withdrawal Request
- VET Student Loan – Application to Re-credit HELP Balance

6.4 Other associated documents

- Guidelines about Eligibility – *Skills First Program*
- Guidelines about Fees – *Skills First Program*
- TAFE VET Funding Contract – *Skills First Program*

7 Responsibility

The General Manager, Student Experience is responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy and its associated procedures and systems.

The Senior Manager, Administration is responsible for ensuring the accurate and timely processing of all refunds and communication to students in accordance with this policy.

8 Review Frequency

This policy is to be reviewed annually and remains in force as amended from time to time, until rescinded.

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