Student Refund Policy
PL025

PURPOSE
The Student Refund policy describes how TAFE Queensland South West fulfils its statutory obligations towards informing students and staff regarding the provision of fee refunds to students and / or organisations.

BACKGROUND
As a National VET Regulated Registered Training Organisation TAFE Queensland South West is required to describe and publish its refund policy. Specific legislation and government policy provide further details in relation to the provision of refunds.

SCOPE
This policy is applicable to:
1. Individual domestic and overseas students for fees and charges of Units and programs;
2. Any third party or guarantor responsible for a student's fees and charges of the Unit or program.

DEFINITIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unit</td>
<td>Means Unit of competency or module or subject within a qualification or accredited program.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Program</td>
<td>Means the qualification, skill set or accredited program that may be awarded upon successful completion of all required Units.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Materials</td>
<td>May be hard copy resources, computer files or disks, USB or anything that has been developed and provided as a student resource for the study of the program.</td>
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<td>Commencement date</td>
<td>A Unit or program is deemed to have started if the individual start of study date has passed and the delivery of the program has commenced. On-line delivery is said to have commenced if the program is open in the on-line environment for the individual student. Distance learning is said to have commenced when the student has received materials.</td>
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| Census Date      | Each Unit that you study has its own Census Date. It's important to know your Census to date as it is the deadline to:  

- Apply for a VET FEE-HELP loan
- Withdraw from your enrolment to be able to obtain a refund (all program types)  

**What happens if you miss the Census Date?**  
Withdrawing past the Census Date leaves you financially responsible to the Commonwealth for the fees. |
| VET FEE-HELP     | Commonwealth Government loan scheme which assists eligible students to pay their tuition fees, when they enrol in a VET program of study undertaken with TAFE Queensland South West which is approved as a VET provider under Schedule 1A of the Higher Education Support Act (HESA) 2003. |

POLICY
Accepting an application for refund at the Customer Service Centre does not indicate approval.

No refund application will be considered after the Start of Study for the Unit has passed except in limited circumstances as outlined below.

**Student moneys are not refundable except for the following circumstances:**

1. **Refund if Unit or program cancelled by TAFE Queensland South West**
   - If TAFE Queensland South West cancels a Unit or program all fees paid will be fully refunded for the Unit or program.

Provider Default
If (in the unlikely event) TAFE Queensland South West is unable to deliver a Program in full, students will be offered:

- a refund (or in the case of VET FEE-HELP assisted programs after the Census Date – re-crediting) of the entire tuition fee paid to date; or
- a place with another suitable provider able to provide the same or equivalent program at no extra cost (subject to the student agreeing to specific terms and conditions of the other provider).

2. Refund if enrolment cancelled before Unit or program starts - Administration fee applies - $40

If a student cancels enrolment in a Unit or program before it starts, TAFE Queensland South West must refund the fees the student paid for the Unit or program after deducting an administration fee of $40 for all Units cancelled at the same time.

(This section does not apply if a student is enrolling at the same time into other Unit/s of study).

3. No Refund after commencement of classes (Start of Study)

There is no refund after a student has commenced their study, except in limited circumstances as listed. An administration fee of $40 applies. In exceptional circumstances it may be waived.

If any of the following things happen while a student is undertaking a Unit, the student may apply to TAFE Queensland South West for a refund of fees for the Unit.

a) The student accepts a place offered through the Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre; no administration fee applicable.
b) The student is enrolled as an apprentice or trainee and their apprenticeship/traineeship has been cancelled resulting in their withdrawal from the Program.
c) Within the first two (2) weeks of commencing the Program (Start of Study) the student transfers their enrolment to a different Program with TAFE Queensland South West, their fees paid may be proportionally credited to fees in the new Program.
d) The student enrolled in a full fee Program and has subsequently gained employment as an apprentice / trainee and will be transferring their enrolment to an equivalent enrolment with TAFE Queensland South West under the apprenticeship / traineeship.
e) The student is granted a credit transfer for Unit. Student must apply within five (5) weeks of enrolment. No administration fee applicable.
f) The student suffers a serious illness or injury after the start of the Unit, preventing the student from completing the Unit *(supporting evidence from a medical practitioner will be required).
g) Exceptional circumstances beyond a student’s control, which could not be foreseen prior to enrolment, preventing the student from completing the Unit. **(see further details below).

*Being unwell for one (1) week of the term, does not provide evidence of being unable to complete the Unit. The student must make every effort to complete the Unit including requesting an extension, before consideration will be given regarding a refund. Any application for refund based on medical grounds must include a doctor’s certificate and indicate that it is reasonable to state that the illness/injury prevented completion of the Unit, and that it was not a pre-existing condition.

**Exceptional circumstances beyond a student’s control do not include the normal changes of personal circumstances, like moving house or change of relationship and living arrangements, or changing your level of commitment to completing the contracted study.

VET FEE HELP

If you withdraw formally prior to the Census Date you will receive a refund to your VET FEE-HELP consisting of a 100% refund of your tuition fee. If you are deferring payments through VET FEE-HELP, no debt will be incurred with the Commonwealth Government.

To find out your Census Date, check your enrolment record for the actual Census Date for your Unit/s or the VET FEE-HELP Schedule.

For further information about VET FEE-HELP refer to our website:

VET FEE-HELP - TAFE Queensland South West
Overseas Students (CRICOS) Note all fees are in Australian dollar amount (AUD)

Visa

- Where the initial student visa application is rejected prior to program commencement, TAFE Queensland South West will refund tuition fees paid. The refund application must be supported by a copy of the visa rejection letter from the Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP).
- Where the student visa application is rejected after program commencement, TAFE Queensland South West will charge pro-rata tuition fees for the period of study.
- The terms of this agreement, with regard to withdrawal from study, also apply where:
  - An overseas student is granted permanent resident status.
  - An application for a visa extension is rejected or DIBP cancels the overseas student’s existing visa.
  - An overseas student withdraws or cancels their program before commencing any subsequent semester of studies.
- If an overseas student has paid directly to an Overseas Student Health Cover provider, and requires a refund for Overseas Student Health Cover, the overseas student must contact their health fund provider to arrange their own refund.

Formal Program/s

- If an overseas student withdraws or receives a Letter of Release from their principal program for any reason, excluding visa rejection:
  a) Up to and including 28 days before program commencement:
     - If the overseas student has paid the full semester tuition fee, TAFE Queensland South West will refund the semester tuition fees paid, less a $500 administration fee.
  b) After program commencement:
     - TAFE Queensland South West will not refund tuition fees except in the event of death of the overseas student. Such refunds will be calculated based on the amount of study already completed.

Appeal

- Overseas students may appeal refund decisions by writing to the General Manager, within seven (7) calendar days of receiving written notification. Any refund due to a fault of TAFE Queensland South West, as the registered provider, is covered by the provisions of Education Services of Overseas Student Act 2000 (Cth) as amended.

Overseas students may refer to Australian Education International (AEI) for additional information, email aei@innovation.gov.au

Student Payment Plans

If a student withdraws after commencement of their Unit, any outstanding payments on a contracted payment plan are immediately due and payable. (Note the details on the payment plan contract). Debt recovery processes will apply to outstanding fees on payment plans.

Note: The student must advise of their withdrawal and may apply for a refund of fees paid or a credit of outstanding fees on their payment plan, through the Customer Service Centre or via their Student Experience Officer, if the student believes they have evidence of exceptional circumstances.

No refund application will be considered after the commencement date (Start of Study) for the Unit has passed and all outstanding fees will be put through the debt recovery processes.

The Manager Finance and Reporting may refund/credit a portion of the fees after a Unit has commenced where adequate written evidence is provided of exceptional circumstances, which prevent a student completing. A student must make all reasonable attempts to complete including requesting an extension. An administration fee of $40 will be deducted for all Units to which the application relates. In some cases, the administration fee will cancel out any approved refund.

Transfer of Enrolment

There is no transfer of enrolment available between TAFE Queensland Regions. Students who are withdrawing from one region will need to contact the Customer Service Centre to discuss options.

Applications for Refund

The TAFE Queensland South West Executive Director Finance and Corporate Services or delegate will review applications for refunds according to this policy and will give written notice in the case of a refusal providing a reason.
The student may, within seven (7) calendar days after the written notice is given, appeal the decision for a reconsideration of the refusal. Refund appeals will be heard by a more senior staff member (a TAFE Queensland South West staff member more senior than the staff member who refused the original application).

Refund appeals under this policy do not remove the right of a student to take action under Australia’s consumer protection laws.

**Payment of Refunds**

Approved refunds will be paid within four (4) weeks of receiving a completed and accurate refund application.

**COMPLIANCE REFERENCES**

*National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011 (Cth)* Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations 2011 – SNR 22.2

User Choice 2010-2015 Policy s2.6

Certificate 3 Guarantee Program Policy 2013-2014 s3.5

*National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students (Cth)* Part D, Standard 3

*Higher Education Support Act 2003 (Cth)* – VET Guidelines 2013 s3.6.5

**POLICY APPROVAL**

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<tr>
<th>Owned By:</th>
<th>Phillip Bell</th>
<th>Date: 24/10/2014</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Position:</td>
<td>Executive Director Finance and Corporate Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Authorised by:</td>
<td>Trevor Schwenke</td>
<td>Date: 24/10/2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Position</td>
<td>General Manager TAFE Queensland South West</td>
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