

Refund Policy and Procedure for International and Domestic Students

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Responsible Officer	Finance Manager
Approving authority	Board of Directors
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Related Documents	Student Complaint and Appeal Policy and Procedure Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act) International Student Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation of Study Policy and Procedure Statement of Tuition Assurance
HESF (Threshold Standards) 2021	1.1.1; 1.1.2; 7.2.4

1. Purpose

The Australian Institute of Higher Education Pty Ltd (AIH) ensures that the conditions and processes for international and domestic students to apply for a refund of tuition fees is equitable and complies with government regulations.

2. Principles

The key principles informing this Policy and Procedure are:

- AIH recognises that, on occasion, there may be circumstances that warrant a refund of tuition fees collected by the Institution.
- Tuition fee refund applications will be processed fairly and equitably.
- This refund Policy and Procedure do not remove the right of the student to take further action under Australia's consumer protection laws.

3. Context

AIH recognises that changes to the personal circumstances of a student may impact on their ability to continue in their studies. Students may withdraw from their studies and be eligible for a refund in accordance with this Policy and Procedure.

4. Scope

This Policy and Procedure applies to all international and domestic students of the Institute.

5. Definitions

See the *AIH Glossary of Terms* for definitions.

6. Policy Details

6.1 Student Refunds Prior to Course Commencement

The Institute will provide a full refund of any tuition fees paid upon receipt of evidence if:

- Approval of an Australian student visa, lodged from offshore, is delayed for reasons beyond the student's control and the student cannot defer the course;
- The offer of a place at the Institute is withdrawn; or
- The course which was applied for is no longer offered.

The Institute will provide a refund of any tuition fees paid, less an administration fee of \$500, if:

- A student accepts an offer and pays a deposit but, prior to the CoE being issued, decides not to proceed with the application;
- A student withdraws a visa application before a decision is made by the Department of Home Affairs and the withdrawal is deemed by the Institute to be for compassionate or compelling circumstances; or
- A student's application for an Australian student visa is refused and the student is yet to commence their course.

Students who withdraw after a CoE is issued, excluding those whose circumstances are outlined above, will be eligible for a refund in accordance with the table below:

Withdrawal Notification Period	Amount Refundable
4 weeks (28 days) or more before course commencement date	Tuition fees paid less 50% of tuition fees due for the first 4 units of the course *
Before the course commencement date, but less than 4 weeks (28 days) before the course commencement date	Tuition fees paid less 75% of tuition fees due for the first 4 units of the course *
On or after the course commencement date	No refund available

Where a student has paid less than the tuition fees due for the first 4 units of the course at the time of withdrawal, the refund will be calculated in accordance with the table above. Should the calculated non-refundable amount be more than the amount paid by the student, the student will not be eligible for any refund. If the calculated non-refundable amount is less than the amount paid by the student, the student will only be refunded the difference.

Students should note that some non-tuition fees may not be refundable, such as administrative fees (e.g., enrolment or late payment fees), fees for airport transfers, accommodation services and overseas student health cover.

6.2 Student Refunds After Course Commencement

The Institute will refund tuition fees according to the table below:

Withdrawal Notification Period	Amount Refundable
<i>Withdrawal from single unit only</i>	
Prior to unit commencement date	100% of unit tuition fees paid will be credited toward future units in the course
Upon or after unit commencement date	No refund or tuition credit is available
<i>Withdrawal from course</i>	
Less than 4 units of the Principal Course of Study completed.	No refund available
4 or more units of the Principal Course of Study completed and withdrawal is made 28 days (or greater) prior to the commencement date for the next compulsory study block.	100% of unused tuition fees paid
4 or more units of the Principal Course of Study completed and withdrawal is made less than 28 days prior to the commencement date for the next compulsory study block.	100% of unused tuition fees paid less tuition fee for 1 unit of the course.

Should the calculated non-refundable amount be more than the amount paid by the student, the student will not be eligible for any refund. If the calculated non-refundable amount is less than the amount paid by the student, the student will only be refunded the difference.

6.3 Refund Unavailable

The Institute will not provide any refund where:

- the student withdrawal is in breach of a student's visa conditions and/or Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act), including the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (National Code) standards,
- the terms and conditions of the enrolment agreement entered into by the student and the Institute are breached, including breach of the Institute's policies (for example, for non-commencement);
- the student is found to have supplied fraudulent, forged or deliberately misleading documentation to the Institution;
- the student's enrolment is cancelled by the Institute, including cancellation caused by a breach of student visa conditions, illegal or unlawful conduct by the student; or for serious academic or behavioural misconduct;
- the request is submitted after the student has had their enrolment terminated due to non-payment of course fees; or
- the student visa is refused or cancelled by the Department of Home Affairs due to the submission of fraudulent documents by or on behalf of the student.

6.4 Compassionate grounds

Students may apply for a refund of tuition fees under compassionate grounds or in other extraordinary circumstances. Such applications must be made in writing.

The Institute may provide a refund of tuition fees if it is satisfied that special circumstances apply where:

- these circumstances were beyond the student's control; and
- these circumstances did not make their full impact on the student until on, or after the census date for the unit(s) of study in question; and
- these circumstances were such that it was impracticable for the student to complete the requirements for the unit(s) of study in question in the period during which the student undertook or was to undertake the unit(s).

For circumstances to be beyond a student's control, the situation should be that which a reasonable person would consider is not due to the student's action or inaction, either direct or indirect, and for which the student is not responsible. The situation must be unusual, uncommon or abnormal to be considered special circumstances.

6.5 Payment of Approved Refunds

All approved refunds will be paid within 28 days from the date of receipt of the written request. All refunds are paid in Australian dollars into the bank account nominated in the written request. Refunds will only be paid directly to the student and not to third parties such as a student's agent. The Institute will not authorise tuition fee transfers to any other institution or to other students.

6.6 Tuition Protection

International Students

In the unlikely event that the Institute is unable to deliver a course in full, students enrolled in that course will be offered a refund of their unspent tuition fees which were received by the Institute. This refund will be paid within 14 days of the day on which the course ceased being provided in accordance with the ***Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act)***.

As an alternative, students may be offered enrolment in an alternative course at no extra cost within 14 days. Students have the right to choose whether they would prefer a refund of their unspent tuition fees or to accept a place in another course. If a student chooses to be placed into another course, the student will be issued a new offer letter with their new provider.

If the Institute is unable to provide a refund or place a student into an alternative, then the Tuition Protection Service (TPS) will assist students in finding an alternative course or to obtain refunds if a suitable alternative course is not found.

Domestic Students

Domestic students should refer to the Statement of Tuition Assurance for further information.

6.7 Complaints and Appeals

This Policy and 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. Appeals against the outcome of a refund request may be made under the ***Student Complaint and Appeal Policy and Procedure***.

7. Actions and Responsibilities

7.1 Applying for a Refund

All applications for refunds must be made using the Institute’s Refund Request Application Form, and submitted to Accounts (accounts@aih.edu.au) for processing.

Accounts will assess the refund request in accordance with the Refund Policy and Procedure for International and Domestic Students.

Accounts will notify the student in writing within 14 days of the outcome of their refund request.

7.2 Evidence Required

Where a student is requesting a refund due to special circumstances such as those listed in this Policy and Procedure, supporting evidence is required.

Supporting evidence may include but is not limited to:

- A medical certificate,
- A psychologist report,
- A death certificate, or
- A letter from the Department of Home Affairs.

7.3 Withdrawing or Deferring a Course

Students should refer to the International Student Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation of Study Policy and Procedure for further information on how to withdraw or defer a course.

8. Legislation

This Policy and Procedure comply with the Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act).

In addition, this Policy complies with Higher Education Standards Framework standard 1.1.2 (Admission), which specifies that:

1.1.2 The admissions process ensures that, prior to enrolment and before fees are accepted, students are informed of their rights and obligations, including:

- a. all charges associated with their proposed studies as known at the time and advice on the potential for changes in charges during their studies
- b. policies, arrangements and potential eligibility for credit for prior learning, and
- c. policies on changes to or withdrawal from offers, acceptance and enrolment, tuition protection and refunds of charges.

9. Version Control

This Policy has been endorsed by the Australian Institute of Higher Education Board of Directors as at July 2024 and is reviewed every 3 years. The Policy and Procedure is published and available on the Australian Institute of Higher Education website <http://www.aih.edu.au/> under ‘Policies and Procedures’.

Change and Version Control				
Version	Authored by	Brief Description of the changes	Date Approved:	Effective Date:

2016-2	Registrar	Updated template.	6 July 2016	6 August 2016
2017-1	Ms. McCoy	Revised rules.	1 March 2017	6 March 2017
2020.1	Karim Mardini	Updated for Study Periods	22 April 2020	22 April 2020
2020.2	Michelle Willoughby	Updated for commencing students	12 May 2020	12 May 2020
2020.3	Academic Success Manager/Chief Executive Officer	Minor updates: formatting and proofed for student comprehension.	24 September 2020	25 September 2020
2021.1	Karim Mardini/ Michelle Willoughby CEO	Review of Policy; Amendment to sections 6.1 and 6.2 Refund prior and after the Commencement of Study to include Blocks during Study Period; Proofed for student comprehension.	22 April 2021	22 April 2021
2022.1	Registrar	Updated Higher Education Standards Framework [Threshold Standard] 2021	25 May 2022	26 May 2022
2022.2	CEO/Accounts Manager	Inclusion of paragraph to cover a fee for withdrawal of Visa application	28 September 2022	29 September 2022
2023.1	COO	Review and updated to support block delivery of units and updated fees and charges policy. Updated the policy owner and responsible officer, formatting and proofed for student comprehension.	9 October 2023	10 October 2023
2024.1	CFO/Finance Manager	Combined Policy and Procedure documents; updated for currency	30 July 2024	31 July 2024