

Student Review Policy and Procedure for Re-crediting a FEE- HELP Balance

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HESF (Threshold Standards) 2021	1.1.2(c), 1.3.4, 2.4.2, 7.2.4
Visibility	Public

1. Purpose

The Australian Institute of Higher Education Pty Ltd ('the Institute') will conduct this Policy and Procedure in compliance with the Higher Education Provider Guidelines 2023 and the Higher Education Support Act 2003 (HESA).

For the purposes of this Procedure a domestic student (i.e., not an international student) who is enrolled in a course of study with the Institute may apply for a re-credit of their FEE-HELP balance in accordance with this Policy and Procedure.

The Institute will:

- set a census date for each unit of study that is no earlier than 20% of the way through the unit of study;
- ensure that all students are informed of the census date for each unit of study in the manner and by the date prescribed in the Higher Education Provider Guidelines and HESA;

- ensure that all students are informed of the review procedures for the re-crediting of a FEE-HELP balance.

2. Scope

This Policy and Procedure applies to domestic students accessing assistance through the Higher Education Loan Program (HELP), specifically those seeking a re-credit of their FEE-HELP balance in accordance with HESA and the Higher Education Provider Guidelines.

3. Policy Principles

3.1 Incurring a FEE-HELP Debt

A student who is, or would be, eligible for FEE-HELP and has requested FEE-HELP Assistance, who withdraws from a unit of study on or before the census date will not incur a FEE-HELP debt for the tuition fees for that unit of study. Any upfront tuition fees paid for that unit will be fully refunded.

Students who have requested FEE-HELP Assistance who remain enrolled after the published census date will incur a FEE-HELP debt for the units of study in which they are enrolled. A student who withdraws from a unit of study after the published census date for that unit will incur a FEE-HELP debt for that unit, unless they meet the special circumstances criteria in Section 3.3.

3.2 Re-crediting a FEE-HELP Balance

Students who withdraw from a unit of study after the published census date, or fail to complete a unit of study, may apply to have their FEE-HELP balance re-credited with respect to the unit if they believe special circumstances apply in accordance with the following procedures. Applications must be submitted in writing and supported by appropriate evidence (see Section 3.3).

3.3 Special Circumstances

If a student withdraws from a unit of study after the published census date for that unit or has been unable to successfully complete a unit of study and believes this was due to special circumstances, then the student may apply to have their FEE-HELP balance re-credited for the affected unit(s). Applications must be made in writing within 12 months of the withdrawal date (or later if the Institute is satisfied it was not possible to apply within that timeframe).

The Institute will re-credit the student's FEE-HELP balance 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).

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

Special circumstances do not include:

- lack of knowledge or understanding of requirements for FEE-HELP Assistance; or
- a student's incapacity to repay a FEE-HELP debt (repayments are income contingent, and students may apply to the Australian Taxation Office for a deferral of a compulsory repayment in certain circumstances).

4. Actions and Responsibilities

4.1 Procedures for Re-crediting a Student's FEE-HELP Balance

Each application for re-credit of a student's FEE-HELP balance will be examined and determined on its merits by considering a student's claim together with independent supporting documentation substantiating the claim. All decisions will be made in accordance with the criteria for special circumstances set out in Section 3.3.

Initial applications for the re-crediting of a student's FEE-HELP balance are to be made via email to the Registrar (r.miles@aih.edu.au).

A student must apply in writing to the Registrar within 12 months of the withdrawal date, or if the student has not withdrawn, within 12 months of the specified completion date of the unit of study. The Institute has the discretion to waive this requirement if it is satisfied that it was not possible for the application to be made within the 12-month period. Relevant supporting documentation will be required to substantiate the claim. Late applications accepted under this discretion will be assessed on the same basis as applications lodged within time.

The application for re-crediting a FEE-HELP balance must include details of the:

- The unit(s) of study for which a student is seeking to have a FEE-HELP balance re-credited and
- Special circumstances as referred to above, including supporting documentation.

The Registrar will consider the application within 28 days of receipt of the application and agree to such requests if they are satisfied that there were special circumstances in the student's case.

The Registrar shall advise the student of the outcome of the application within 28 days stating the reasons for the decision.

The Registrar shall also advise the student of their rights for a review of the decision if they are not satisfied with its outcome, including the timeframe for lodging a review request.

4.2 Review of a Decision

If a student is not satisfied with the decision made by the Registrar in relation to re-crediting their FEE-HELP balance, they may apply for a review of the decision within 28 days of the receipt of the original decision. The review shall be carried out by the Dean, who will consider the matter independently of the Registrar's original decision-making process.

Any such request must be submitted to the Dean via email (b.james@aih.edu.au), and:

- must be lodged within 28 days of receiving notice of the original decision; and
- must specify the reasons for making the request.

The Dean has discretion to accept a late request if satisfied that it was not possible for the student to apply within the 28-day timeframe.

The Dean will acknowledge receipt of an application for a review of the refusal to re-credit a FEE-HELP balance in writing within 10 working days and inform the applicant that if they have not advised the applicant of a decision within 45 days of having received the application for review, the Dean is taken to have confirmed the original decision.

The Dean will review the information from the original decision and then assess any new evidence provided by the student.

The Dean may request further information from the student if necessary.

The Dean may:

- confirm the decision;
- vary the decision; or
- set the decision aside and substitute a new decision.

Having made their decision, the Dean will provide written notice to the student of the decision, setting out the reasons for the decision, including reference to the evidence considered, and inform the student of their right to apply to the Administrative Review Tribunal (ART) if they disagree with the Review Decision, and timelines involved (see below).

4.3 Reconsideration by the Administrative Review Tribunal

At the time of the original decision, and any subsequent review decision, the student will be notified in writing of their review rights and responsibilities. If the student is not satisfied with the outcome, the relevant officer will inform them of their right to appeal to the Administrative Review Tribunal (ART).

Applications to the ART must be lodged within 28 calendar days of receiving written notice of the review decision. This time limitation may be extended in limited circumstances by order of the ART.

Full details of the application process, fees payable, and fee waiver options are available on the ART's website: <https://www.art.gov.au>. Students who are unable to pay the application fee should refer to the ART's fee waiver information. Applications cannot proceed until the fee has

been paid or waived. Fee waiver applications must be submitted directly to the ART. Students will be provided with the following contact information for the ART:

- Website: <https://www.art.gov.au>
- Contact Page: <https://www.art.gov.au/contact-us>
- Phone (within Australia): 1800 228 333
- Phone (outside Australia): +61 2 9276 5000
- Email: enquiries@art.gov.au
- Online Services Portal: <https://online.aat.gov.au>

The Secretary of the Department, or the Secretary’s delegate, will be the respondent for cases brought before the ART. Upon receiving notification from the ART, the Department will inform the Institute that an appeal has been lodged. Upon receipt of this notification, the Review Officer must provide the Department with copies of all relevant the documents within five (5) business days.

5. Version Control

This Policy and Procedure has been endorsed by the Australia Institute of Higher Education Academic Board as at October 2025 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:
2016-1	Registrar	Updated template. Revised rules.	6 July 2016	6 August 2016
2024.1	Head of Quality Assurance; Chief Financial Officer	Re-instated Policy and Procedure; revised and updated information for currency.	30 July 2024	31 July 2024
2025.1	Quality and Compliance Coordinator	Updated to align with HESA and HEP Guidelines by clarifying domestic student eligibility and refund before census, strengthening evidence and application requirements for re-credit, enhancing review and appeal processes including ART guidance, and aligning with relevant HESF standards.	31 October 2025	1 November 2025