

Fees and Refunds - Policy and Procedure

Policy Owner: Managing Director

PURPOSE

To ensure a clear, consistent and compliant approach to the management and disclosure of fees, charges and refunds

SCOPE

All student facing team members, and all prospective, enrolled and completed students who have paid fees or charges to the College, including Student Loan and state funding schemes.

POLICY

1. AUSTRALIS OBLIGATIONS AND COMMITMENT TO TRAINING SERVICES

- Australis is committed to fully informing prospects and students on:
 - Tuition and other fees and charges related to the enrolment.
 - Payment options including any applicable loan or funding schemes.
 - Terms and conditions, timing and amount of fees, non-refundable deposits, administration fees.
 - Any applicable cooling off periods.
 - Adjustments to tuition fees where a Credit Transfer or RPL application is approved.
 - Items that may incur additional costs to the student where relevant e.g. costs to attend placement or clinic days, uniforms, health and vaccination requirements, police or working with children checks, referrals to support networks or study programs not provided by the College.
 - Charges that relate to withdrawals, enrolment variations and refunds.
- Australis is committed to its financial obligations to students via:
 - Holding public liability insurance.
 - Demonstrating financial viability as required by state and federal regulators.
 - Publishing this policy on its website.
- Where Australis is unable to deliver a course to enrolled students, with the students consent we will seek to arrange a transfer to another appropriate training provider. If the student does not consent, they may change courses or unit(s) or obtain a refund for units of competency paid for but not able to be completed due to Australis ceasing to provide that course or specific unit.

Note: Refunds are not provided where the student has been provided the training and assessment but has not yet gained competency in the unit of competency.

- As an approved VET Student Loan (VSL) provider, Australis is required to comply with the interim arrangements for students enrolled under VSL. (Refer to the Statement of Tuition Assurance for Exempt VSL Providers australiscollege.edu.au/students/.)
- In the event there are changes to agreed services, Australis will inform the student as soon as practicable.
- Australis only accept pre-paid tuition fees of up to \$1,500 (excluding corporate negotiated transactions with employers), or the maximum amount approved by Australis' tuition assurance arrangements.

2. PAYMENT OPTIONS

DIRECT FEE-PAYING OPTION (ALSO CALLED 'FEE FOR SERVICE' OR FFS).

- Students may prepay tuition fees of up to \$1,500 (for non-corporate enrolments).
- Where payment plans are offered, they are typically payable over the official course duration. Approval is solely at Australis' discretion and Terms and Conditions and eligibility requirements apply. If payment is late course access may be suspended or cancelled as per the Student Handbook. A late fee may also be charged (refer to the Withdrawal, Cancellation and Variation Policy).
- Students receiving Commonwealth assistance may apply to have their tuition fees paid via Centrepay, whereby the Department of Human Services will make fortnightly tuition payments on their behalf.

STUDY LOANS.

- Australis is an approved education provider with Study Loans; a private loan scheme for eligible students in approved courses. The student applies directly with Study Loans who on approval will progressively release the tuition fee to Australis as the student progresses through the course.
- Australis do not charge additional fees for students using Study Loans, however, Study Loans directly charge the student fees including an establishment fee, drawdown fees, management fees and late fees if applicable. Refer to <https://studyloans.com.au/students/#the-loan>.
- Failure to make repayments or proceed through the course will result in Cancellation. (Refer to Withdrawal, Cancellation and Variation Policy.)

VET STUDENT LOAN (VSL).

- Before enrolling VSL applicants will be advised of all fees including tuition (covered fees), gap fees, loan fees and any other course related equipment the student may need to access during their enrolment. Refer to [Students/Schedule of Tuition Fees](#).
- Some students may be required to pay additional (gap) fees not covered by the advertised fees or the "covered fees" under the tuition fee schedule for the VSL scheme. Any gap fees are discussed at pre-enrolment and require the student's authorisation via a course declaration prior to enrolment.
- Students applying for a VSL are issued with a written statement for covered fees under this loan agreement on their course declaration and on the VSL notice.
- A two-day cooling off period applies.

QUEENSLAND CERTIFICATE 3 GUARANTEE AND HIGHER-LEVEL SKILLS.

- Co-contribution fees for students enrolling under these Queensland government programs are published on the Australis website.

QUEENSLAND USER CHOICE.

- Student and employer co-contribution fees are published on the Australis College website and are outlined in further detail in the Traineeship Training and Administration Procedure.

3. NON-PAYMENT OR OVERDUE TUITION FEES

- For fee for service, enrolments are not finalised until upfront tuition fees have been paid.
- Students who withdraw from the course with fees still owing will not receive certification for completed unit(s) until all fees are paid.
- Outstanding fee payments will result in course access being suspended, and if not rectified, the student's enrolment will be cancelled in accordance with the Student handbook.

4. RESUBMISSION FEES

- Students deemed not yet competent in a unit of competency after two submission attempts may be required to re-enrol in those components of the course if they wish to continue their studies. The re-enrolment fee will be as per the relevant unit/module price applicable at that time.

5. RE-ENROLMENT FEES

- Enrolments that expire before the student graduates are deemed to be an 'Expired Enrolment.' (Refer to the Withdrawal, Cancellation and Variation Policy.)
- Any student who wishes to continue after their enrolment has expired will need to re-enrol in the units they still wish to attain. This can be done in several different ways as detailed in the Student Handbook.
- Re-enrolling will incur additional costs as per the advertised prices at that time and will require agreement to a new course declaration with potentially different terms and conditions and costs to the original enrolment. Re-enrolments are generally not able to access further state funding or VSL.
- VSL students who fail to complete their course by the completion date are deemed expired and might not be able to access VSL to continue that course. A re-enrolment requires acknowledgement of new enrolment terms and conditions and fees.

6. REPLACEMENT CERTIFICATION

- Students requiring a replacement Certificate or Statement of Attainment are required to email their request to Student Services and will be subject to paying the prescribed replacement fee on the Form (subject to change).

7. REFUND OF TUITION FEES

- All refund requests are subject to approval by a Review Officer in accordance with the Access and Equity Policy to ensure a fair and equitable process to all students.
- Fees will not be refunded under the following circumstances:
 - Once the program has commenced for 'Per Subject' enrolments or professional development subjects
 - Once the VSL census date has passed, unless subject to Special Circumstances as detailed under VSL legislation.
 - For Payment Plans, any fees paid or due prior to the cancellation date will not be refunded. Any fees under the payment plan that have not fallen due as at the date of cancellation will not be payable by the student.
 - Upfront payments are not refundable. For this reason, any student concerned with changing their mind or potentially not completing is encouraged to use a payment plan rather than making upfront payments.
 - Regardless of the above, there is no refund for any subjects the student has commenced, received resources for, or accessed through online learning platforms.
 - Where the student has been provided with training and assessment but has not met the standard to gain competency in the unit of competency.
 - If a student has submitted work that has been plagiarised or falsified.
 - If the student has breached enrolment terms and conditions as per their Course Declaration, Student Handbook(s) and the Code of Conduct Policy.
 - If a student enrolment has Expired.
- The only exceptions to this policy are:
 - Where the student's application for enrolment is declined by Australis College.

- Where Australis cancel a unit in which the student has enrolled or where the commencement of a course is postponed for more than four weeks.
- Where a student has applied for VSL.
- Refunds processed under a Direct Fee arrangement are subject to an administration fee as advertised at the time of the claim.
- Refunds will be processed within ten business days from the date of approval, students will be notified of the decision in writing within 30 calendar days of receiving the refund request.

8. REFUND OF CO-CONTRIBUTION FEES (CERT 3 GUARANTEE AND HIGHER-LEVEL SKILLS)

- Fees will not be refunded under the circumstances outlined at [7](#) for students enrolled in Certificate 3 Guarantee and Higher Level Skills.
- Should a refund be granted and processed, receipt of payment must be retained showing the name of the student, date and amount of refund including the unit(s) of competency.
- Refer to the Traineeship Agreement and Handbook and Traineeship Training and Administration Procedure for refunds relating to Traineeships.

9. APPLICATION FOR REMISSION OF VETSL DEBT

- Refunds of a student's VETSL debt can only be granted where:
 - a) The student has grounds for special circumstances as defined by the VET Student Loans Act 2016 (refer to the Special Circumstances Policy for VET Student Loans students), OR
 - b) The College ceases to provide the course, or part of the course, after the student commenced, but before the scheduled completion date, meaning the student is unable to complete the requirements for the course as per their enrolment conditions, or where it is impractical for the student under the Tuition Assurance Arrangement to finish the course or an equivalent course. (Refer to VET Student Loan VET Tuition Assurance Policy.)

10. APPEALING A DECISION

- If a student is dissatisfied with the outcome related to Fees, Charges and Refunds, they may submit an appeal. Refer to the 'Grievances, Complaints, Appeals Policy and Procedure'.
- Complaints and Appeals that proceed to third party investigation and resolution may incur a cost to the student under a Full fee paying agreement.

11. CREDIT CARD INFORMATION

- Any Credit Card details received will be de-identified and destroyed once payment has been processed.
- Any electronic communication containing Credit Card information will also be permanently deleted.

PROCEDURE

1. FEES AND CHARGES INFORMATION ON ENQUIRY AND DURING ENROLMENT.

- 1.1 All fees, charges, payment options, terms and conditions are outlined on the course pages of the College website and is also discussed during the enrolment interview (where applicable).
- 1.2 At enrolment, students are sent a Course Declaration outlining all applicable tuition fees, enrolment terms and conditions and other fees or resources they may need to pay or acquire in addition to their tuition fee. This document must be signed and returned by the student before their enrolment is finalised.

- 1.3 Students choosing to pay tuition fees upfront without applying for loan/state funding are emailed an invoice. Payment must be received prior to the enrolment being formally activated. Payment options may include Credit Card, Direct Debit or Cheque depending on the course, amounts and payment options selected. A surcharge applies to Credit Card payments.
- 1.4 Payment plans are available for specific courses, typically over the course duration via automated regular payments on authorisation from the student.
- 1.5 Students who have applied for loan or state funding are emailed fee notices.
- 1.6 Following enrolment, all fees and charges enquires are to be directed to Student Services.

2. REFUND APPLICATIONS AND REPLACEMENT CERTIFICATES.

- 2.1 Refund requests/applications are to be submitted to student.services@australiscollege.edu.au.
- 2.2 VFH/VSL refund requests are to be managed under the 'Special Circumstances for Review for VET Student Loans Students' or the 'VSL Tuition Assurance Policy' to explain the application process, time frames for applying and evidence required to support the re-credit of VETSL debts.
- 2.3 Refunds associated with a complaint against the College must also be forwarded to the Quality department. Refer to the 'Grievances, Complaints, Appeals Policy and Procedure'.
- 2.4 Replacement certificates are requested from Student Services and will incur a fee advised at the time of enquiry.

3. INVESTIGATING ELIGIBILITY FOR A REFUND.

- 3.1 Student Services in consultation with an Executive Manager will review the refund application for eligibility against the principles in this Policy and state/federal regulations that apply.
- 3.2 The student's enrolment and file notes will be reviewed in determining a decision.

4. REFUND OUTCOME.

- 4.1 A written outcome will be emailed outlining the reasons for the approval/rejection of the refund.
- 4.2 The response must advise the student of the option to submit an Appeal if they disagree with the decision and reasons provided.
- 4.3 Approved refunds will notify the student to expect the refund to be processed within 10 business days.
- 4.4 The approval is to be forwarded to Finance for processing.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

Executive Management

- Responsible for ensuring financial obligations to students, state and federal regulators are being complied with.

Quality

- May assist Student Services with the review of refund applications.

Faculties

- Assesses student eligibility for re-enrolment options where a course has expired.

Student Services

- Communicate accurate payment options, fees and charges to students to assist them in making an informed choice on their course/study options.
- Quality checks data for accurate payment processing.
- Investigates refund applications.

Student Support/ Student Recruitment

- Communicate accurate payment options, fees and charges to students to assist them in making an informed choice on their course/study options.
- Refer students to the website for further information on relevant policies, procedures and associated forms.

Finance

- Process payments and refund requests within a timely manner or as stated in policies and procedures.

Marketing

- Ensures all marketing material including the website and course brochures display accurate information on payment options, fees and charges.
- Publish current policies and procedures on the website, freely accessible to students.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS AND INFORMATION

- A list of applicable legislation is detailed within the legislation tab in the Quality Management Register.
- CT – Credit Transfer.
- RPL – Recognition of Prior Learning.
- FFS – Fee for Service; students that are self-funded.
- Environment, Health and Safety – refer to the Health and Safety Policy.
- Internal recordkeeping, communication and training – refer to the Communication, Training and Recordkeeping Procedure.
- Student Handbook.
- Course Declaration.
- Student Code of Conduct Policy.
- Access and Equity Policy.
- Complaints, Grievances and Appeals Policy.
- Withdrawal, Cancellation and Variation Policy.
- Schedule of Tuition Fees.
- Re-enrolment Form.
- Rolling re-enrolment Form.
- Public Liability Insurance Certificate.
- Special Circumstances and Review Policy for VET Student Loans Students.
- VET Student Loan Special Circumstances Form.
- VSL Special Circumstances Review Outcome Form.
- VET Student Loan Statement of Tuition Assurance for Exempt VSL Providers.