

# Fee Adjustments Procedure

## Section 1 - Summary

(1) This Procedure details processes involved in the refunding, waiving, application of concession or payment time extensions on all or part of any fees and charges of students under specific circumstances, as identified in the [Fees and Charges Regulations 2013](#).

## Section 2 - Scope

(2) This Procedure applies to fee adjustments for onshore students, except those specified at Clause (4).

(3) This Procedure applies to the refunding, waiving, application of concession or extending of fees and charges that include:

- a. Onshore fees paid upfront
- b. Ancillary and material fees
- c. Student Services and Amenities Fees (SSAF), and
- d. Any other fees fixed under [Fees and Charges Regulations 2013](#)

(4) This Procedure excludes the refunding, adjustment or waiving of fees and charges for:

- a. Offshore student studying at offshore partner institutes
- b. Exchange Programs
- c. Study Aboard
- d. Students whose fees are paid via a loan or sponsorship
- e. Any other exempt Students as detailed within this Procedure.

(5) Fee Waivers at VU Sydney and VU Brisbane fall outside of this Procedure.

## Section 3 - Policy/Regulation

(6) [Fees and Charges Regulations 2013](#).

## Section 4 - Procedures

### Part A - Summary of Roles and Responsibilities

| Role    | Responsibilities   |
|---------|--|
| Student | Applies for a fee adjustment by completing necessary forms.<br>Supplies all relevant supporting documentation to demonstrate eligibility for the adjustment. |

| <b>Role</b>  | <b>Responsibilities</b>  |
|--|--|
| Senior Welfare Adviser   | Advises eligible students on criteria and eligibility for an Exceptional Circumstance Fee Extension.<br>Assesses and approves applications for Exceptional Circumstance Fee Extension.                           |
| Senior Manager, Student Equity & Advocacy  | Determines applications for review of a decision for Exceptional Circumstances Fee Extension.  |
| Director, Student Financials & Scholarships  | Approves or authorises the refunding of all or part of any fees and charges where a student has cause to cancel their enrolment.   |
| Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer                           | Approves refund of tuition fees after Census date for international students (excluding VU English) on extraordinary humanitarian grounds.   |
| General Manager, VU English  | Approves refund of tuition fees after course commencement date for VU English students on extraordinary humanitarian grounds.  |
| Director, Centre of VU Transitions   | Determines review applications for decisions concerning Fee Extensions for VU Transitions (including VU English).  |
| TAFE Administration team   | Assess an individual's eligibility for a concession at the time of releasing an offer to a student and ad hoc if student presents concession evidence after course commencement.                                 |
| Manager, Student Financials & Scholarships   | Reviews instances where a student disputes their fee obligation.<br>Determines review applications for decisions concerning fee refunds.<br>Determines review applications for decisions concerning fee waivers. |
| Student Financials and Scholarships team   | Processes fee adjustments in the Student Management System.  |
| Manager, Enrolments  | Reviews and approves requests for application of concession outside of enrolment and grace period.   |
| Finance Services   | Pays approved refunds.   |
| Associate Directors, Research Institute  | Assess and approve Fee Sponsorships for international higher degree by research students.  |
| Associate Director (Academic), VU Brisbane<br>Campus Operations Manager, VU Sydney | Approves fee refunds and fee extensions.   |
| Campus Director and Principal, VU Sydney and Brisbane                              | Determines review applications for decisions concerning fee refunds and fee extensions.  |
| University Librarian   | Determines applications for review of a library fine.  |

## **Part B - Fee extensions**

(7) The University acknowledges students may experience exceptional circumstances causing substantial and unforeseen financial hardship during their study. To assist, students may be eligible for an Exceptional Circumstances Fee Extension.

(8) To be eligible for an exceptional circumstances fee extension, students must demonstrate with evidence that unforeseen and exceptional circumstances have caused substantial financial hardship.

(9) The following students are eligible to apply for an exceptional circumstances fee extension:

- a. HE and VET International students
- b. Domestic VET students (Cert 1 - 4, Diploma and Advanced Diploma) who cannot defer fees via a VET Student Loan

## Application and Approval Process

(10) Applications must be made as outlined on the [Exceptional Circumstances Fee Extension](#) webpage.

(11) Senior Welfare Advisors assess applications in accordance with the criteria and may consult relevant VU business units to assist in making a determination.

(12) Student Welfare notifies the student of the decision and, if relevant, arranges for Student Administration to make the appropriate adjustment within the system.

(13) Applications for exceptional circumstance fee extensions for:

- a. VU Sydney students are assessed and approved by the Campus Operations Manager, VU Sydney.
- b. VU Brisbane students are assessed and approved by the Associate Director (Academic), VU Brisbane.

## Part C - Fee waivers

(14) The University must provide a tuition fee waiver to eligible VET students in accordance with the relevant guidelines issued by the Department of Education and Training. Tuition fee waivers are applied to:

- a. Eligible individuals presenting with relevant referral and enrolling under the Judy Lazarus Transition Centre initiative.
- b. Eligible individuals presenting with relevant referral and enrolling under the Young people on community based orders initiative.
- c. Eligible individuals presenting with relevant referral and enrolling under the Skills First Youth Access initiative.
- d. Eligible individuals who meet the requirements to enrol under the Free TAFE for Priority Courses initiative or JobTrainer initiative;
- e. Eligible individuals who identify as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent enrolling under the Skills First Aboriginal Access Fee Waiver.

(15) A waiver of the SSAF is available for VU staff members (employed on a time fraction of 0.5 or more) enrolled in study at VU, as per the [Professional Development and Performance Planning Procedure](#).

## Part D - Fee Refunds

(16) Where the student has cause to cancel their enrolment during the year the Director, Student Financials & Scholarships, or their nominee, may approve or authorise the refunding of all or part of any fees and charges.

### Prepaid Fee Protection

(17) Where the University is unable to continue delivering services for a TAFE course for which a student has prepaid fees in excess of \$1,500, the University will:

- a. implement student transition and/or teach-out arrangements in accordance with the [Courses Lifecycle - Course Cessation and Student Transition \(VET\) Procedure](#);
- b. where the student is placed into an equivalent course, ensure that all prepaid services are delivered at no additional cost to the student; or
- c. refund any prepaid fees exceeding the \$1,500 threshold for services not yet delivered.

## Tuition Fees

(18) Eligibility for tuition fee refunds is detailed in [Attachment 1: Tuition Fee Refund Eligibility](#).

## Other Refunds

**Table 1: Refund Eligibility Overview**

| Fee Type                                   | Eligible Students                                      | Refund Conditions  |
|--|--|--|
| Student Services and Amenities Fees (SSAF) | HE students and VET students (Diploma level and above) | Refund if withdrawal occurs before census date   |
|  | International Onshore Students                         | Eligibility detailed in <a href="#">Attachment 1: Tuition Fee Refund Eligibility</a>   |
|  | VET students (Certificate I-IV)                        | a. Full refund if withdrawal is before course start date<br>b. For continuing students, full refund if withdrawal is within 28 days from the unit availability start date. |
| Ancillary and Materials Fees               | Students who have withdrawn                            | Refund applies only if materials have not been received by students  |
| Overpayments                               | All students   | Overpaid tuition fees refunded upon application without penalty<br>VU English memo required for English language overpayments  |
| Overseas Student Health Cover              | International Onshore Students                         | Student to contact OSHC Health Cover provider  |

## Refund Application Process

**Table 2: Application Process**

| Student Category                 | Application Form   | Submission Method                                 |
|----------------------------------|--|---|
| Domestic Students                | <a href="#">A57 Domestic Student Refund Application form</a>     | Submit to VUHQ or email to AskVU                  |
| International Students           | <a href="#">Online Refund of International Student Fees form</a> | Complete via EAAMS Portal                         |
| VU Sydney & VU Brisbane Students | <a href="#">Request for Fee Refund International Students</a>    | <a href="#">submit your refund request online</a> |

## Processing of refunds

(19) Refunds will be processed within four (4) weeks of receiving a written claim, provided that all the relevant documentation has been received from the student and clause (20) observed.

(20) Before a refund can be processed, the funds covering the applied for refund amount must be available to the University, i.e. cheques and drafts cleared and telegraphic transfers received, credit card payments held for 30 days to ensure validity.

(21) A student who is granted leave of absence or reduced study load will have any tuition fees paid held as a credit on their account and treated as a payment against future study periods.

(22) Any notice given must be written in English and received by the University.

(23) Where the Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) premium has been previously paid to the University, it is the responsibility of the student to claim the OSHC refund from their insurer directly.

(24) Where a tuition fee has been paid by a sponsoring body or scholarship agency, any refund payable will be made to the sponsoring body or scholarship agency.

### **Refund of library fines**

(25) All library fines issued for recalled or lost items must be paid by the due date.

(26) Generally, no refund of fines will occur unless a fault in the basis for issuing the fine is established.

(27) If the student wishes to dispute the fine on the basis that they believe it was mistakenly issued (i.e. that an item was returned earlier than stated), or apply for a refund on exceptional grounds of financial or personal hardship, they may do so by contacting their most convenient campus library.

(28) The University Librarian (or their nominee) determines the matter. Where applicable, a refund will be paid to the student.

## **Part E - Fee Sponsorships**

(29) The University may offer a fee sponsorship (fee discount) for a cohort of students or an individual student if doing so:

- a. is part of a student recruitment or retention strategy;
- b. will bolster the University's strategic objectives; or
- c. is part of a general humanitarian or compassionate action.

(30) International Higher Degree by Research students should contact the Graduate Research School to discuss an application for Fee Sponsorship. The allocation of a fee sponsorship for an international higher degree by research student shall be in consultation with the Dean, Graduate Research School and Research Institute Associate Director or nominee. The Institute Associate Director or nominee has the authority to provide the outcome of a fee sponsorship request.

(31) Where a sponsorship (fee discount) for a cohort or individual is approved the discount is borne by the College or Research Institute (HE) or Teaching Centre (TAFE) for the course or unit.

(32) Where a sponsorship (fee discount) is applied, fees charged must cover all direct and administrative costs.

(33) Sponsorships issued by the University, VU International or VU English will be appropriately documented in order to maintain accountability and transparency.

## **Part F - Fee Concessions - VET**

(34) Students who provide valid concession evidence are entitled to a concession of 20% off the published government-subsidised tuition fee rate and the concession rate of SSAF, even if entering into a payment plan. Concessions do not apply to materials or ancillary fees.

### **Eligibility**

(35) The University must apply a concession in the following circumstances:

- a. An eligible government subsidised VET student who is enrolled in Skills Sets and qualifications at Certificate IV or below level who presents with valid evidence for a concession. Valid evidence for a concession is limited to:
  - i. Health Care Card issued by the Commonwealth; or
  - ii. Pensioner Concession Card; or

- iii. Veteran's Gold Card; or
  - iv. an alternative card or concession eligibility criterion approved by the Minister.
- b. Any individual enrolling in a TAFE course as a government subsidised student (at any course level) who self-identifies and declares that they are of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent) is entitled to the concession SSAF rate.
- c. An eligible government subsidised VET student who is an eligible Asylum Seeker.

(36) Eligibility for a concession is assessed at the time of enrolment and prior to training commencement. If the evidence of concession expires before the completion of the paid hours, the student is still entitled to a concession on their fees for the units they were enrolled into.

### **Evidence Requirements**

(37) Concession evidence must be:

- a. valid at the time of enrolment. If evidence is not available at enrolment, students may submit valid concession documentation within 28 days of the course commencement date for their current units. In such cases, the evidence must have been valid as of the course commencement date.
- b. submitted before course commencement or within the 28-day grace period. Where concession evidence is provided outside this timeframe, the concession can only be applied for any units not yet commenced.

(38) Concessions are applied as per the [2025 Guidelines about Fees - Skills First Program](#).

(39) Students provide concession evidence as part of their application through the Green ID verification service. Alternatively concession evidence can be presented at a [VUHQ](#) where a staff member will complete a declaration that they have sighted a valid concession. Under no circumstances are copies of concession cards to be retained.

## **Part G - Unpaid Fees**

(40) Where fees are not paid, the University may:

- a. Take action as described in Regulation 11 of the [Fees and Charges Regulations 2013](#) and Section 42 of the [Governance, Academic and Student Affairs Statute 2013](#) including:
  - i. withhold the person's assessment or examination results;
  - ii. withhold conferral of an award, including withholding the Notification of Completion, Academic Transcript, Australian Higher Education Graduation Statement (AHEGS), Statement of Attainment, or Testamur, in accordance with the [Awards Regulations Procedure](#);
  - iii. exclude the person from graduation;
  - iv. refuse to enrol the student; as well as,
  - v. suspend or cancel an existing enrolment.
- b. Refer the matter to debt collection, which may incur additional costs to the student;
- c. Initiate legal action.

(41) The University will inform the Department of Home Affairs where an international student's enrolment is cancelled or suspended due to non-payment of fees.

## **Part H - Reviews**

## Review of Fee-Related Decisions

| Scenario  | Reviewer   |
|---|--|
| Student disputes their fee obligation               | Manager, Student Financials & Scholarships or Campus Director and Principal (VU Sydney/Brisbane)   |
| Exceptional Circumstances Fee Extension not granted | Senior Manager, Student Equity and Advocacy; Director, Centre of VU Transitions (VU Transitions including VU English); or Campus Director and Principal (VU Sydney/Brisbane) |
| Fee waiver not granted                              | Manager, Student Financials & Scholarships   |
| Refund application not approved                     | Manager, Student Financials & Scholarships or Campus Director and Principal (VU Sydney/Brisbane)   |

(42) Applications for review should be submitted within 10 working days of the date the decision notification was sent to the student. The decision of the above delegates is final and there are no further appeal avenues within the University. However, external appeal avenues are available to all students who wish to dispute fee determinations on relevant legal grounds.

### Concession Applications Outside Standard Timeframes

(43) The Manager, Enrolments will assess concession requests submitted outside the enrolment or grace period, determine eligibility based on special circumstances, and record the outcome in Student One, including uploading documentation and applying the relevant comment to the student record.

## Section 5 - HESF/ASQA/ESOS Alignment

(44) HESF: Standards 1.1 Admission; 7.2 Information for Prospective and Current Students; 6.1.4 Corporate Governance.

(45) National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (Cth): Standard 6 Overseas Student Support Services. ESOS Act: Part 3 Division 2; Part 5 Division 2.

(46) Outcome Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations 2025: Standards 2.1 Information; 2.7 Feedback, Complaints and Appeals. Compliance Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations and FPP Requirements 2025: 18 Prepaid fee protection measures.

## Section 6 - Definitions

(47) Census Date – the census date in a teaching period (HE) or Study Period for Diploma and above courses (VET) is the date by which student's enrolment records are finalised for reporting to government for that teaching/study period. Further details are contained in [Attachment 2 - Census Dates](#).

(48) Domestic Student

(49) Fee

(50) Fine

(51) International Student (Onshore)

(52) Non-Tuition Fee

(53) Refund

(54) Student Services and Amenities Fees (SSAF)

(55) Tuition Fee

## Status and Details

|                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| <b>Status</b>              | Current  |
| <b>Effective Date</b>      | 21st November 2025   |
| <b>Review Date</b>         | 31st October 2028  |
| <b>Approval Authority</b>  | Vice-Chancellor  |
| <b>Approval Date</b>       | 31st October 2025  |
| <b>Expiry Date</b>         | Not Applicable   |
| <b>Accountable Officer</b> | Trish Roberts<br>Deputy Chief Financial Officer<br>trish.roberts@vu.edu.au               |
| <b>Responsible Officer</b> | Darrel Caulfield<br>Chief Student Officer and Registrar<br>darrel.caulfield@vu.edu.au    |
| <b>Enquiries Contact</b>   | Daniel Howells<br>Director, Student Finance and Scholarships<br>daniel.howells@vu.edu.au |

## Glossary Terms and Definitions

**"International Student (Onshore)"** - A person who has been granted a visa by the Department of Home Affairs which gives them study rights.

**"Student Services and Amenities Fees (SSAF)"** - A fee charged to support services and amenities to onshore students subject to Government legislation.

**"Domestic Student"** - A person who is an Australian or New Zealand citizen or holder of an Australian Permanent Resident Visa (including humanitarian visas).

**"Fee"** - The price established for delivery of all or part of a student's educational experience at VU, including tuition and non-tuition fees.

**"Fine"** - A disincentive charge levied to encourage students to perform actions in a timely and appropriate manner (e.g. library fines, late enrolment fines.)

**"Non-Tuition Fee"** - The price established for delivering a student's educational experience at VU, excluding tuition fees and fines. These may include ancillary and course materials fees (associated with the provision of services and/or goods retained by the student for use during their course), Student Services and Amenities Fees (SSAF), and other fees and charges (e.g. parking fees). International Students should refer to Section 7(3) of the Education Services for Overseas Students Regulations 2019 for further guidance.

**"Tuition Fee"** - The fees payable by a student to the University which is directly related to the teaching and assessment for a course or unit in which a student is enrolled. International Students should refer to Section 7(2) of the Education Services for Overseas Students Regulations 2019 for further guidance.

**"Refund"** - The repayment of monies owing by the University to a student.