

FEES AND REFUNDS POLICY AND PROCEDURES

PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

This policy and associated procedures outline Australian Federation College's approach to the effective and fair management of fees and refunds. This ensures that support is provided to students to assist them to complete their studies.

This policy and associated procedures the requirements of Standards 2.1 of the Outcome Standards for RTOs and marketing and advertising requirements, AQF certification documentation and prepaid fee protection measures in Compliance Standards, as well as Standards 2 and 3 of the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018, as well as the ESOS Act 2000 and the ESOS (Calculation of Refund) Instrument 2024.

POLICY STATEMENTS

INFORMATION ABOUT FEES

Australian Federation College is committed to providing students with information about all fees associated with a course, as well as its refund policy and processes.

Information regarding fees and refunds is available to prospective students through the **International Student Handbook**, **Course Brochure**, and the AFC website (www.afcollege.edu.au), accessible via the Downloads section.

Enrolling students are fully informed of all fees and the refund policy in the **Offer Letter and Student Agreement**.

The Offer Letter and Student Agreement includes details of all applicable fees, including the application fee, tuition and non-tuition fees and the payment schedule for such and payment options. It also describes the student's consumer rights, including the right to a cooling off period depending on the relevant state/territory requirements.

Students are advised of the potential for fees to change over the duration of their course.

Students are advised of any statutory cooling off period in their Offer Letter and Student Agreement.

All fees will be reviewed annually, and all marketing material and student information will be updated accordingly. New fees will generally only apply to incoming students.

Fees and Refunds Policy and Procedures

Additional fees that may apply in addition to tuition and non-tuition fees include:

ADDITIONAL FEES THAT MAY APPLY	AMOUNT
Deferral Fee	Nil
Re-assessment Fee (students have a total of 2 attempts without a fee, during the unit facilitation period, and any attempt thereafter will incur the stated fee).	\$100 per unit of competency
Assessment Late Submission Fee	\$100 per unit of competency
Late Payment Fee for Course Fee Instalments	A late payment fee of \$20 per week applies to each instalment that remains unpaid after its due date. <i>For example, if a student pays an instalment two (2) weeks after the due date, a late payment fee of \$40 (2 x \$20) will be charged in addition to the original instalment amount.</i>
Course Fee Instalment Deferral Processing Fee	\$50 (must be paid with deferral request)
Credit Transfer	Nil
RPL	- Application fee of \$250 - Each UOC RPL assessment fee \$500
Updating/ Amending CoE Details	\$50 per CoE
Change of Course Request (including Internal Course Transfer Request) Administration Fee	\$250
Unit Re-enrolment Fee	\$300 per unit
Reinstate Enrolment	\$250
Re-issuance of Records (Certificate and/or Transcript)	\$100
Student Card Re-issuance	\$20
Airport Pick-up Arrangement Fee	Will be advised upon request
Temporary Accommodation Arrangement Fee	Will be advised upon request
Loss of Library Books	Replacement cost no more than \$120.

FEE PROTECTION

Fees paid by students are protected as follows:

- Domestic students: students pay up to a maximum of \$1,500 in advance for services not yet provided.
- International students: international student fees are protected through the following mechanisms:
 - Maintaining a sufficient amount in Australian Federation College's account so that it is able to repay all tuition fees already paid.
 - Through membership of the Tuition Protection Scheme (TPS). The role of the TPS is to assist international students where the Registered Training Organisation is unable to fully deliver their course of study. The TPS ensures that international students are able to either complete their studies in another course or with another education provider or receive a refund of their unspent tuition fees.
 - In addition, international students are not required to pay more than 50% of course fees prior to commencement, except where a course is less than 26 weeks. However, any international student may choose to pay their fees in full or a greater amount than 50%.

PAYMENTS

- Payment options are specified in the **Offer Letter and the Student Written Agreement**.
- All fees must be paid by the due date specified on the invoice. Where a student is unable to make a payment by the specified due date, the student must contact Australian Federation College (AFC) prior to the due date to discuss alternative payment arrangements.

Any alternative arrangements are subject to approval and must be confirmed in writing.

- All payments must be made by bank transfer into the nominated account, the details of which are provided to students in the **Offer Letter and the Student Written Agreement**. AFC will maintain a sufficient amount in its designated account to enable the refund of all tuition fees already paid, in accordance with the Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (Cth) and related legislation.
- **A late payment fee of \$20 per week** applies to each tuition fee instalment that remains unpaid after its due date. The late payment fee is calculated from the day following the due date until the outstanding instalment is paid in full and is charged in addition to the original instalment amount.

The late payment fee is intended to cover additional administrative costs associated with managing overdue payments and does not constitute a penalty.

- Where fees remain overdue and the student has not contacted AFC to make alternative payment arrangements, AFC will issue written notices to the student in accordance with the following process:
 - **First Warning Letter**: issued if payment is not received within five (5) working days of the invoice due date.

Fees and Refunds Policy and Procedures

- **Second Warning Letter:** issued if payment is not received within five (5) working days of the First Warning Letter.
- **Notice of Intention to Report:** issued if payment is not received within five (5) working days of the Second Warning Letter.

Each notice will be provided in writing, will advise the student available support options, and the potential consequences of continued non-payment.

- Failing to pay an invoice within 20 working days of receipt of the Notice of Intention to Report letter will result in cancellation of the student's enrolment with Australian Federation College in accordance with its Deferral, Suspension and Cancellation Policy, the ESOS Act 2000, and the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018.
- Following cancellation of enrolment due to non-payment of fees, any outstanding debt may be referred to an external debt collection agency. Where a debt is referred to a third-party agency, the student may be liable for reasonable costs incurred in recovering the outstanding debt, including costs charged by the external agency, to the extent permitted by law.
- Records relating to student fees, invoices, payments, receipts, refunds, refund assessments, refund approvals and associated supporting documentation will be retained in accordance with applicable legislative, regulatory and organisational record retention requirements and will be readily accessible for audit, compliance and regulatory purposes.

CREDIT TRANSFER AND RPL

A reduction of fees can apply for any units granted through credit transfer and RPL. The course tuition fees should be divided by the number of units and then the reduction applied per unit for the applicable number of units. This should be shown on the invoice.

REFUNDS

Refunds for international students are calculated in accordance with the ESOS framework.

All application fees are non-refundable except where Australian Federation College cancels a course prior to commencement due to insufficient numbers or other unforeseen circumstances, including a sanction being imposed on Australian Federation College.

Where Australian Federation College cancels a course either before or after commencement, students will receive an automatic refund and do not need to complete the **Refund Application Form**. This will be provided within 10 working days of the default.

In all other circumstances, students are required to complete a Refund Application Form which can be accessed from our office or our website (www.afcollege.edu.au). This form must be submitted within 10 working days of the event that led to the request for the refund. The outcome of the refund assessment will be forwarded to the student in writing within 20 working days, as well as any applicable refund.

Refunds will be paid in Australian Dollars (AUD) to the person or entity from whom the original payment was received. Any refund issued will be limited to the net amount actually received by Australian Federation College.

The refund policy does not remove the right of the student to take further action under Australian Consumer Law.

PRISMS REFUND REPORTING

Australian Federation College (AFC) is committed to complying with all applicable Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000, National Code and PRISMS reporting requirements relating to international student refunds.

Where an international student refund is approved and processed, AFC will:

- Ensure refunds are assessed and processed within applicable legislative timeframes.
- Maintain complete and accurate records of all refund requests, assessments, approvals and payments.
- Review each refund transaction to determine whether any related PRISMS action is required.
- Complete any required PRISMS reporting or associated actions as soon as practicable following refund approval and payment.
- Retain evidence of all refund assessments, approvals, payments and PRISMS reporting actions.
- Maintain a Refund Register for all international student refunds.

AFC will conduct periodic reconciliation of refund transactions against student management system records, financial records and PRISMS records to ensure accuracy and completeness.

Any identified refund reporting discrepancies or omissions will be investigated, rectified and recorded through AFC's Continuous Improvement System.

DOMESTIC STUDENT REFUNDS

In addition to the above circumstances, refunds for domestic students will be calculated as follows:

CIRCUMSTANCE	REFUND DUE
Australian Federation College cancels course before commencement due to insufficient numbers or other unforeseen circumstances, including a sanction being imposed on Australian Federation College (known as provider default).	Full refund of all fees.
Australian Federation College cancels course due to unforeseen circumstances, including a sanction being imposed on Australian Federation College (known as provider default).	Application fee not refunded. Full refund of all unspent fees calculated as follows: Weekly tuition fee multiplied by the weeks in the default period (calculated from the date of default).

Fees and Refunds Policy and Procedures

CIRCUMSTANCE	REFUND DUE
Student withdraws with a written request 60 days or more prior to course commencement.	Except enrolment fee, refund of 90% of all other fees and charges.
Student withdraws with a written request 28 days or more prior to course commencement.	Except enrolment fee, refund of 80% of all other fees and charges.
Student withdraws with a written request 27 days or less prior to course commencement.	Except enrolment fee, refund of 70% of all other fees and charges.
Student withdraws after commencement.	No refund. Fees for full study period (term) to be paid.
Student's enrolment is cancelled due to disciplinary action.	No refund. Fees for full study period (term) to be paid.
The student has supplied incorrect or incomplete information causing Australian Federation College to withdraw the offer of the course prior to commencement.	No refund. Fees for full study period (term) to be paid.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT REFUNDS

In addition to the above circumstances, refunds for international students will be calculated as set out in the table below. Note the weekly tuition fee and weeks in the default period have the meaning as set in the ESOS (Calculation of Refund Instrument) 2024.

CIRCUMSTANCE	REFUND DUE
Australian Federation College cancels course before commencement.	Full refund of all fees.
Australian Federation College cancels course following commencement.	Full refund of all unspent fees calculated as follows: Weekly tuition fee multiplied by the weeks in the default period (calculated from the date of default).
Australian Federation College has not provided an Offer Letter and Student Agreement that meets the requirements of the National Code 2018.	Full refund of all unspent fees calculated as follows:

CIRCUMSTANCE	REFUND DUE
	Weekly tuition fee multiplied by the weeks in the default period (calculated from the date of default).
Student withdraws with a written request 60 days or more prior to course commencement.	Except enrolment fee, refund of 90% of all other fees and charges for a Study Period (Term).
Student withdraws with a written request 28 days or more prior to course commencement.	Except enrolment fee, refund of 80% of all other fees and charges for a Study Period (Term).
Student withdraws with a written request 27 days or less prior to course commencement.	Except enrolment fee, refund of 70% of all other fees and charges for a Study Period (Term).
The student does not commence on the agreed start date and has not previously withdrawn.	No refund. Fees for full Study Period (Term) to be paid to AFC.
Student withdraws after commencement or during course progression (on or after the instalment dates as per the 'Payment Schedule' written on the ' Offer Letter and Student Agreement_International Student ').	No refund. Full fees for the current instalment period to be paid to AFC (irrespective of the length of study undertaken for that fee instalment period).
Student's enrolment is cancelled due to disciplinary action.	No refund. Fees for full Study Period (Term) to be paid to AFC.
Student breaches a visa condition	No refund. Fees for full Study Period (Term) to be paid to AFC.
The student has supplied incorrect or incomplete information causing Australian Federation College to withdraw the offer of the course prior to commencement.	No refund. Fees for full Study Period (Term) to be paid to AFC.
The student is refused a visa because they did not start their course at the agreed location on the agreed starting day or they withdrew from their course with Australian Federation College or they did not pay an amount due.	No refund. Fees for full Study Period (Term) to be paid to AFC.
The student is refused a visa and therefore does not commence their course on the agreed starting day or withdraws from the course on or	The refund amount is calculated as follows: The total amount of all course fees (includes all tuition and non-tuition fees) received before the default day minus either 5% of the amount of

CIRCUMSTANCE	REFUND DUE
<p>before the agreed starting day because of the visa refusal.</p>	<p>course fees or \$500 – whichever is the lesser amount.</p> <p><i>As an example, if a student has paid AUD \$1,500 in total course fees and their student visa is refused, resulting in withdrawal on or before the course commencement date:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5% of \$1,500 = \$75 • As \$75 is less than \$500, the refund amount payable will be \$1,425.
<p>The student is refused a visa and has already commenced their course.</p>	<p>The refund amount is calculated as follows:</p> <p>The weekly tuition fee x weeks in the default period.</p> <p><i>As an example, if a student is studying a 40-week course. Each term is 10 weeks. The total fees for the student is \$10,000 in course fees and \$500 in material fees. The student pays the first term's course fees of \$2,500 plus the material fee of \$500. However, completes 2 weeks (14 days) of their course but then has their visa refused and withdraws from the course.</i></p> <p><i>The weekly course fees for this course amount to \$250 per week.</i></p> <p><i>The number of weeks in the default period is 8 weeks (56 days) i.e., to the end of the first term.</i></p> <p><i>The student is therefore eligible to receive a refund of \$2,000 i.e., the weekly course fees of \$250 x the number for weeks in the default period of 8 weeks.</i></p> <p><i>The student won't be eligible to have the material fees refunded.</i></p>

PROCEDURES

1. PROCESS INVOICES

- 1.1 Set up invoices in the accounting system and in the SMS as per the payment schedule in the signed **Offer Letter and Student Agreement**.
- 1.2 Send out payment reminder notices and invoices to students at least seven (7) days before the scheduled payment due date.

Fees and Refunds Policy and Procedures

- 1.3 Once the invoice has been paid, send out a receipt of payment from the accounting system.
- 1.4 Record payment in PRISMS following recording payment instructions included in the PRISMS user guide.
- 1.5 Keep all receipts of payments in Xero, SMS and on the shared drive for a minimum of 2 years after the student has completed their course.
Complete accurate and complete reconciliations in Xero and in SMS as required.

2. MANAGE OVERDUE FEES

- 2.1 Check accounting system for overdue payments.
- 2.2 Where invoices remain unpaid for five (5) working days after the due date and students failed to contact AFC to make an alternative payment arrangement within due date, send out a First Warning Letter for non-payment of fees.
- 2.3 If fees remain unpaid after a further 5 working days and students failed to contact AFC to make an alternative payment arrangement within this time, follow up with a Second Warning Letter for non-payment of fees.
- 2.4 If fees remain unpaid after a further 5 working days and students failed to contact AFC to make an alternative payment arrangement within this time, follow up with a Notice of Intention to Report for non-payment of fees.
- 2.5 Where the student does not pay their fees or appeal the decision within 20 working days of receipt of the Notice of Intention to Report letter, report AFC decision to cease enrolment for non-payment of fees on PRISMS according to the instructions provided in the PRISMS user guide.
- 2.6 Following cancellation of enrolment due to non-payment of fees, debt will be referred to a debt collection agency.

3. PROCESS REFUNDS

- 3.1 For provider default notify students in writing (following ASQA's guidelines for notifying students of a default published on their website) within 3 working days of the default occurring. Use **Student Notice of Default Form** to do so.
- 3.2 Transfer the refund to the person who made the payment.
- 3.3 Process all other refunds according to the refund table and on receipt of a request for refund from a student on **Application for Refund Form**.
All approved refunds must be made **within 28 days** to the varied and nominated account.
- 3.4 Update the accounting system (i.e. Xero), SMS and the shared drive with details of payments made.

3.5 For each international student refund, AFC must:

- Review the student's enrolment status and CoE status.
- Determine whether any PRISMS reporting or related action is required.
- Complete any required PRISMS action in accordance with applicable legislative and regulatory requirements.
- Save evidence of all actions completed on the student file and shared drive.
- Record completion of actions in the Refund Processing and PRISMS Reporting Checklist.

3.6 Refund Register.

AFC will maintain a Refund Register for all international student refunds.

The Refund Register will include, at minimum:

- Student name
- Student ID
- Course code & title
- CoE number
- Refund reason
- Refund amount
- Refund approval date
- Refund payment date
- PRISMS action completed (where applicable)
- Staff member responsible
- Relevant comments or notes

3.7 Refund Reconciliation.

The Administration Manager (or delegate) will undertake periodic reconciliation of:

- Approved refund applications
- Refund payments processed
- Student management system records
- Financial records
- PRISMS records

Where discrepancies are identified:

- The discrepancy must be investigated.
- Corrective actions must be undertaken as soon as practicable.
- Outcomes must be recorded through AFC's Continuous Improvement System.

3.8 Historical Refund Reporting Rectification.

Where AFC identifies historical refund reporting omissions or discrepancies, AFC will:

- Conduct a review of relevant student, financial and PRISMS records.
- Maintain a Historical Refund Reconciliation Register.
- Undertake corrective actions where required.
- Retain evidence of rectification activities.
- Record actions through AFC's Continuous Improvement System.

4. NOTIFY PROVIDER DEFAULT

Fees and Refunds Policy and Procedures

- 4.1 In relation to provider default, notify in writing ASQA and the TPS of the default within 3 working days of it occurring using the **Notice of Provider Default Form**.
- 4.2 Submit a **Notice of Discharge of Obligations** to ASQA and the TPS advising of the actions taking and within 7 days of completing all required actions.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Accounts Officer is responsible for:

- Creating, communicating and recording invoices & bills.
- Accurately and completely managing, recording and reporting financial information and evidence.
- Completely and accurately update financial records in Xero, SMS and on the shared drive.
- Issuing payment reminders.
- Following up on overdue fees and issuing warning letters as required.
- Discussing and adjusting student financial arrangements if required.
- Assist in assessing and approving refund applications within timeline and communicate outcomes and evidence as required.
- Maintaining accurate refund records.
- Recording approved refunds in the Refund Register.
- Maintaining refund payment evidence.
- Assisting with refund reconciliation activities.

The Academic Coordinator and/or Administration Manager (or a delegate) is responsible for:

- Issuing Notice of Intention to Report letter.
- Overseeing adjustment of student financial arrangements as required.
- Overseeing assessment and approval of refund applications.
- Overseeing following up on overdue fees and issuance of warning letters.
- Overseeing overall record keeping and compliance.
- Maintaining oversight of international student refund reporting requirements.
- Maintaining the Refund Register.
- Conducting periodic refund reconciliations.
- Reviewing refund-related compliance activities.
- Investigating refund reporting discrepancies and implementing corrective actions where required.

The CEO/PEO (or a delegate) is responsible for:

- Issuing refunds.
- Provider default notification.
- Overseeing overall QA and compliance
- Approving historical refund reporting rectification activities.
- Monitoring compliance risks associated with refund reporting obligations.
- Overseeing corrective and preventative actions arising from refund compliance reviews.
- Ensuring adequate resources are available to support compliance with ESOS and PRISMS refund reporting requirements.