

Higher Education Tuition Fees, Payments, HELP, Refund and Review Procedure

Approved by: Higher Education Academic Council

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Section 1. Purpose

1.1 This procedure outlines the requirements in relation to payment of tuition fees by domestic students for TAFE NSW Higher Education courses. While elements of this procedure relate to international students, international students should refer to the TAFE NSW International Student policies page on the TAFE NSW website for information about tuition fees and refunds.

Section 2. Scope and Audience

2.1 This procedure covers payments, withdrawals, refunds, recredits and remittances associated with the delivery of subjects in accredited TAFE NSW Higher Education courses.

2.2 This procedure applies to all domestic students enrolled in an accredited TAFE NSW Higher Education course.

2.3 In relation to tuition fees, international students studying on a Student Visa (Subclass 500) are subject to the terms and conditions outlined on the TAFE NSW International Student Application Form which meet the ESOS Act (2000) and National Code of Practice (2018) requirements.

Section 3. Procedure

Overview

3.1 TAFE NSW Higher Education domestic students are charged a tuition fee for each subject (unit of study) in which they are enrolled.

3.2 TAFE NSW Higher Education domestic students can choose to either pay tuition fees up front or, if they meet eligibility criteria, choose to defer the payment of tuition fees by taking out a FEE-HELP or HECS-HELP loan.

3.3 The implementation of FEE-HELP or HECS-HELP by TAFE NSW Higher Education complies with the provisions of the Higher Education Support Act 2003 and other related legislative instruments.

3.4 All TAFE NSW Higher Education tuition fees and charges for both domestic and international students are reviewed on a yearly basis and are subject to change.

3.5 Students pay the tuition fee applicable to the subject in the current year of enrolment in the subject, not the fee applicable at the time of original enrolment into the course.

Key dates

3.6 The timing of tuition fee payments for accredited TAFE NSW Higher Education qualifications by domestic students is structured around a series of key dates as per below.

3.7 Start Date – the first date of the semester.

3.8 Administration Date – the date by which time a domestic student must have:

- a paid their tuition fees up front; or
- b paid a proportion of their tuition fees up front and indicated that they intend to apply for HELP assistance to cover the balance; or
- c indicated that they intend to apply for HELP assistance to cover the full cost of the subject.

3.9 Census Date – the date by which:

- a a domestic student intending to access HELP assistance needs to submit a Request for a HELP Loan Form (eCAF);
- b the absolute deadline for a domestic student who chooses to pay their tuition fees upfront;
- c a domestic student must formally withdraw from a subject without incurring a HELP debt; or
- d a domestic student who has paid their tuition fees up front must formally withdraw from a subject in order to be eligible to apply for a refund.

3.10 End Date – the last date of the semester, ie: the last day of the final assessment week.

3.11 Any student (domestic or international) who has not paid their tuition fees upfront, or who has not applied for a HELP loan for an accredited TAFE NSW Higher Education qualification by census date will be excluded from the subject/s for which tuition fees are payable and is not permitted to attend class or submit assessments.

3.12 Any student (domestic or international) with outstanding tuition fees will not be allowed to re-enrol and continue their studies until outstanding tuition fees have been paid in full.

3.13 Any student (domestic or international) with outstanding tuition fees will not be eligible to graduate until outstanding tuition fees have been paid in full.

Higher Education microcredentials

3.14 In addition to accredited qualifications, TAFE NSW offers a number of short courses referred to as microcredentials.

3.15 Students enrolling in TAFE NSW Higher Education microcredentials are not eligible for FEE-HELP and must pay their tuition fees in full prior to the commencement of classes. Census date provisions do not apply to students enrolled in TAFE NSW Higher Education microcredentials.

3.16 A student who wishes to withdraw from a TAFE NSW Higher Education microcredential must withdraw officially using the TAFE NSW Higher Education withdrawal form. Failure to attend classes is not considered an official withdrawal.

3.17 A student who officially withdraws prior from a TAFE NSW Higher Education microcredential to the commencement of timetabled classes will be eligible for a refund of tuition fees.

- 3.18 A student who officially withdraws from a TAFE NSW Higher Education microcredential after the commencement of timetabled classes will not be eligible for a refund of tuition fees.
- 3.19 Students who withdraw from a TAFE NSW Higher Education microcredential are not entitled to a refund of incidental fees.

Tuition fee provisions for students enrolled in an accredited qualification

- 3.20 TAFE NSW Higher Education accredited qualifications are offered on a full fee-paying basis.
- 3.21 The tuition fee is the charge levied on all students for each subject they enrol in.
- 3.22 Domestic students will be charged the same tuition fee irrespective of whether they pay up front or utilise HELP assistance.
- 3.23 Domestic students will incur a liability for tuition fees after the Census Date.
- 3.24 TAFE NSW Higher Education will publish the tuition fees on its website in accordance with regulatory requirements.

Incidental fees

- 3.25 In accordance with the HESA Act, TAFE NSW Higher Education is able to charge for certain incidental fees, (eg: charges for field trips).

Payments

- 3.26 TAFE NSW does not accept cash payments for any tuition or incidental fees.
- 3.27 Domestic students enrolled in accredited qualifications not intending to seek HELP assistance are required to pay the tuition fee for the subjects in which they are enrolled, on or before the Administrative Date.
- 3.28 Domestic students enrolled in accredited qualifications intending to apply for HELP assistance:
 - a must submit a Request for HELP Assistance (eCAF) at the time of initial course enrolment, and no later than the Census Date; and
 - b will incur a HELP debt on the day immediately following the Census Date.
- 3.29 Students enrolled in accredited qualifications who pay their tuition fees using HELP assistance will repay their HELP debt through the Australian taxation system once they reach the mandated income threshold.

Withdrawal provisions for students enrolled in an accredited qualification

- 3.30 Domestic students who wish to withdraw from a course and/or subject must formally notify their Course Coordinator in writing of their decision to withdraw using the TAFE NSW Higher Education Withdrawal Form.

- 3.31 Domestic students who do not formally withdraw in accordance with this procedure or who formally withdraw after census date will be liable for tuition fees or the HELP liability for the subject/s subject to special circumstances provisions.
- 3.32 International students who wish to withdraw from a course and/or subject must first discuss their intentions with the TAFE NSW International Team. If the withdrawal is approved, they must then formally notify their Course Coordinator in writing of their decision to withdraw using the TAFE NSW Higher Education Withdrawal Form.

Refunds/Recredits after census date for students enrolled in an accredited qualification

- 3.33 Domestic students who withdraw from a subject after the Census Date due to special circumstances may be eligible to have their tuition fees for the subject refunded if paid up-front or their HELP balance for the subject recited.
- 3.34 Domestic students must formally apply for a refund or recredit of their tuition fees/HELP balance for the subject due to special circumstances using the Application to Recredit a HELP Balance form within 12 months of the last date of attendance, or within 12 months of the end of the period of study in which the subject was, or was to be, undertaken. TAFE NSW Higher Education has the discretion to waive the 12 months requirement if it is satisfied that the application to withdraw could not be made within the time limits because of the nature of the student's special circumstances.
- 3.35 All applications from domestic students for refund of tuition fees or recredit of a HELP balance for a subject after Census Date due to special circumstances must be submitted by the student to the Customer Service desk at their campus of enrolment or via the TAFE NSW website (Contact Us).
- 3.36 The application for a refund of tuition fees or recredit of their HELP balance for a subject should include independent supporting documentation to substantiate the claim.
- 3.37 Each application for a refund of a domestic student's tuition fees or recredit of a HELP balance for a subject will be examined and determined on its merits. TAFE NSW will consider the student's claim, together with any independent supporting documentary evidence that substantiates the claim.
- 3.38 Where TAFE NSW is satisfied that special circumstances apply, a refund of the student's tuition fees or recredit of the HELP balance for the subject will be made.
- 3.39 If the decision results in a refund or recredit, Student Services Finance will forward a request to the TAFE NSW Student Loans Unit to adjust the student record with the Commonwealth Government and the Australian Taxation Office.
- 3.40 Where a domestic student's application for a refund of their tuition fees or recredit of a HELP balance for a subject is unsuccessful, the student has the right to request a review of the decision.

Special circumstances provisions for students enrolled in an accredited qualification

3.41 The range of special circumstances which may apply are governed by the HESA Act 2003 and can include those that:

- a are beyond a student's control, and
- b do not make full impact until on or after the census date, and
- c make it impracticable for the student to complete the subject requirements.

3.42 Special circumstances do not include:

- a lack of knowledge or understanding of tuition fee requirements or the requirements for HELP assistance; or
- b a student's incapacity to repay a HELP debt.

Refund and re-credit review provisions for students enrolled in an accredited qualification

3.43 Where a domestic student's application for a refund of tuition fees or re-credit of their HELP balance for a subject due to special circumstances is unsuccessful, the student has the right to request a review of the decision. The time limit for applying for a review of the decision is 28 days from the day the student first received notice of the decision.

3.44 The review will be conducted by the Senior Manager Student Finance TAFE NSW or their delegate who will not be the same officer who made the original decision declining the student's request to refund the tuition fees or re-credit a HELP balance. The delegate will hold a position at a more senior level than the officer who made the original decision.

3.45 If the decision results in a refund or recredit being approved, the Student Services Finance Unit will forward a request to the TAFE NSW Student Loans Unit to adjust the student record with the Commonwealth Government and the Australian Taxation Office.

3.46 The Senior Manager Student Finance will notify the student, in writing, of the outcome of the review process and provide reasons for making the decision within the available options.

3.47 The Senior Manager Student Finance will advise students whose application for review is unsuccessful of their right to appeal to the Administrative Review Tribunal (ART) for a review of the outcome. Students who have self-paid are not eligible to appeal to the ART.

3.48 In relation to consideration of appeals by the ART, the Manager Student Loans Unit will be the contact person for the Commonwealth Department of Education for appeals through the ART.

3.49 Students can access further information about the review of HELP decisions on the Commonwealth Study Assist website.

Section 4. Monitoring

4.1 This procedure will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains fit for purpose and satisfies legislative and compliance obligations.

4.2 This procedure does not replace or modify any other responsibilities which may arise under other higher education provider policies or under statute or any other law.

Section 5. Responsibilities

Position	Responsibility
Key staff	<p>Key TAFE NSW personnel with responsibility for implementing this procedure are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Manager Student Administration Services; - Senior Manager Student Finance; - Manager Student Loans Unit; - Senior Manager Student Data and Reporting.

Section 6. Governance information

Governance	Details
Related policies	<p>This procedure is governed by the:</p> <p>TAFE NSW Higher Education Tuition Fees, Payments, HELP, Refunds and Review Policy</p>
Related documents	<p>This procedure is to be read together with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - TAFE NSW Assessment Policy - TAFE NSW Customer Complaints Policy - TAFE NSW Higher Education Assessment Procedure - TAFE NSW Higher Education Qualifications Pathway and Credit Policy and Procedure - TAFE NSW International Student Application Form
Accountable Officer	Senior Manager Higher Education
Responsible Officer	Senior Manager Higher Education
Content Manager number	PROJ26/20
Next review date	November 2026

Section 7. Definitions

Word	Definition
Administration Date	The date by which tuition fees are payable as specified in the TAFE NSW Higher Education academic calendar.
Census Date	The deadline for payment of tuition fees and/or withdrawal from a subject without a fee penalty. Census date is as specified in the TAFE NSW Higher Education academic calendar.
Course	A TAFE NSW Higher Education program comprising a group of subjects that must be successfully completed in order to complete the course and graduate from the course.
eCAF	Electronic Commonwealth Assistance Form. The online form to be completed by domestic students when applying for HELP assistance.
Eligible Student	A student who is entitled to HELP assistance in accordance with the citizenship and residency requirements.
End Date	Subject end date as specified in the TAFE NSW Higher Education academic calendar.
ESOS Act	Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000
FEE-HELP	A Commonwealth loan scheme to help eligible fee paying students pay all or part of their tuition fees.
HECS-HELP	A Commonwealth loan scheme to help eligible fee paying students pay all or part of their tuition fees.
HELP	Higher Education Loan Program – the Commonwealth government's student loans schemes including FEE-HELP and HECS-HELP.
HESA	The Higher Education Support Act 2003. This is the Commonwealth legislation governing HELP.
Incidental Fees	A charge for a good or service additional to the tuition fee, eg: field trips.
LMS	The Learning Management System, such as Moodle, is the online method of distributing learner resources, assessment information and teacher communications to students.
Microcredential	A short non-accredited course providing a specific skill outcome.
Recredit Recommending Delegate	The Recredit Recommending Delegate considers the applications and provides a recommendation to the Recredit Approving Delegate.

Word	Definition
Senior Manager Student Finance	The TAFE NSW manager with responsibility for assessing an application to review a decision not to re-credit a HELP debt.
Special Circumstances	Special conditions, defined by the Commonwealth, which will entitle a HELP debt to be reversed, or tuition fees refunded, if a domestic student withdraws after census date.
Start Date	Subject start date as specified in the TAFE NSW Higher Education academic calendar.
Student Management System	The digital system used by TAFE NSW to manage student records including student enrolment, academic progress and course completion documentation. Often referred to as SMS.
Subject	A unit of study comprising learning outcomes and assessment requirements. Completion of a course is dependent on successful completion of requisite subjects.
TAFE NSW Higher Education	TAFE NSW Higher Education is the registered trading name of the Technical and Further Education Commission as a higher education provider.
Tuition Fee	The fee charged for each subject, not including any incidental fees.
Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency (TEQSA)	The national regulator of higher education in Australia.
Unit of Study	A single TAFE NSW Higher Education subject.

Section 8. Document history

No.	Effective	Approved by	Amendment
1	1 January 2026	Senior Manager Higher Education	Converted procedure to new format.