

# Student Fees Policy

## Section 1 - Purpose and Context

- (1) Western Sydney University receives a large proportion of its funding from student fees either directly as tuition fees or indirectly as part of Commonwealth Government student funding and loan arrangements.
- (2) This policy applies to both commencing and continuing fee paying students.
- (3) This policy only relates to student tuition fees and the Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF) and identifies the requirements and arrangements for:
- a. the University to administer these fees
  - b. students to pay these fees and
  - c. the University to issue refunds.
- (4) Student fees are usually calculated on the basis of students' registration in a subject or subjects of study, although the University may set fees per program or term of study. Refer to the [Enrolment Policy](#) for the conditions of students' enrolment.

## Section 2 - Definitions

- (5) For the purpose of this policy definitions that apply can be found in the [Policy DDS Glossary](#), in addition to the following:
- a. Electronic Commonwealth Assistance Form (eCAF) refers to a legal document that the Government requires students to complete online at enrolment. It requires the student to declare that they have read all relevant information relating to being a Commonwealth supported student and that they are aware of their obligations as a Commonwealth supported student.
  - b. Commonwealth Assistance Notice (CAN) refers to the student's official record of fees charged, amounts paid, fees deferred and enrolment.
  - c. Commonwealth assisted student - means a domestic student who receives the discount rate for paying their student contribution amount or opts to defer part or all of their tuition fees (if in a full-fee paying program) or student contribution amount (if in a program that is Commonwealth supported). The government pays the amount outstanding as at the approved census date and the student then repays the amount through the Australian taxation system.
  - d. Commonwealth supported student means a domestic student who is enrolled in a program deemed by the University to be Commonwealth supported, i.e., the Government is subsidising the cost of the tuition fees for the student in that program.
  - e. Domestic student means a student who is an Australian Citizen, a New Zealand Citizen, holder of an Australian Permanent Resident Visa, or holder of a Humanitarian Visa (Refugee).
  - f. EFTSL (Equivalent Full Time Study Load) is the measure used to determine a student's study load. One (1.0) EFTSL is the study load, for a year, of a student undertaking a program on a full-time basis.

- g. Grandparenting refers to a legal mechanism used by the Commonwealth Government to ensure that the funding and fee charging conditions that students had at the commencement of their program are maintained during the period of their enrolment.
- h. Higher Degree Research (HDR) student means a student enrolled in a:
  - i. Masters (Honours) Degree
  - ii. Professional Doctorate
  - iii. Doctor of Letters or Doctor of Science or
  - iv. Doctor of Philosophy (PhD).
- i. Higher Education Loan Programme (HELP) refers to a range of loans offered by the Commonwealth Government to provide fee payment assistance to eligible students. Loans are for Australian citizens studying in Australia or overseas. Permanent residents studying in Australia who hold a humanitarian visa are also eligible. The current loans schemes are HECS-HELP (to defer undergraduate degree student contribution amounts), FEE- HELP (to defer primarily postgraduate tuition fees), SA-HELP to defer Student Service and Amenity Fees (SSAF), and OS-HELP (a loan to travel and study overseas on exchange).
- j. International student means a student who is not:
  - i. an Australian Citizen
  - ii. a New Zealand Citizen
  - iii. the holder of an Australian Permanent Resident Visa or
  - iv. the holder of a Humanitarian Visa (Refugee).
- k. Non-Award student means a student who is registered in subject(s) in one of the following (and not concurrently registered in a full award program at the University):
  - i. Non-Award undergraduate program; non-award postgraduate program; post census miscellaneous; or
  - ii. Cross institutional - studying one or more subjects as part of their award program at a higher education provider other than their home provider.
- l. Postgraduate coursework student means a student enrolled in a:
  - i. Graduate Certificate
  - ii. Graduate Diploma
  - iii. Postgraduate Certificate
  - iv. Postgraduate Diploma or
  - v. Masters (Coursework) Degree.
- m. Student contribution amount/liability means the amount a student is charged if they are an eligible Commonwealth supported student.
- n. Student Learning Entitlement (SLE) is 7 years of full-time subsidised study in Commonwealth Supported Places (CSP).
- o. Student Management System means the online student system for managing student enrolment at the University.
- p. Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF) refers to a compulsory fee charged to all students of the University, the rate of which is based on their study load. The fee is to support student services and amenities related to sporting and recreational activities, employment and career advice, health and welfare, study skills programs, orientation, child care, financial advice, overseas student services and food services.
- q. The College refers to Western Sydney University - The College.
- r. Undergraduate student means a student enrolled in a:
  - i. Diploma
  - ii. Associate Degree
  - iii. Bachelor Degree or

- iv. Bachelor (Honours) Degree.
- s. University includes University partner providers.
- t. Unique Student Identifier (USI) is the individual lifelong education number.

## Section 3 - Policy Statement

### Fees - General

- (6) The University sets student tuition fees and receives student fee payments within the parameters of Commonwealth legislation for both domestic and international students in research degrees, coursework award programs and non-award programs.
- (7) Different financial arrangements may apply to Commonwealth supported students, domestic fee paying students, international fee paying students, online students and sponsored students.
- (8) Fees are adjusted annually or when government legislation is changed.
- (9) All student fee liabilities are recorded on the Student Management System.
- (10) Service, miscellaneous and penalty fees may apply to students.
- (11) Students will be advised of their tuition fees each term.
- (12) Tuition fees are payable by the advised due date for each term.
- (13) The University reviews tuition fees on an annual basis for all fee paying programs and may increase these fees over the period of enrolment.
- (14) Any fee increases approved by the Vice-Chancellor and President will be effective from 1 January of each calendar year and will apply to all International, domestic and non-award fee paying students irrespective of the date of enrolment in that calendar year.
- (15) If students are enrolled in a fee paying program that is subject to an organisation sponsored contractual arrangement, this may prohibit annual tuition fee increases, and in such circumstances could be exempt from the fee policy stated above.
- (16) Fees are published annually when they have been approved by the Vice-Chancellor and President.

### Grandparenting or Transition of Funding Arrangements

- (17) From time to time, the Commonwealth government introduces changes to the legislation that impact on student funding arrangements. In most cases, the government will legislate that all eligible continuing students are provided with grandparented arrangements and conditions for their enrolment until a stipulated end date. The University will ensure that students who meet the criteria will be grandparented as per the Commonwealth government legislation.
- (18) From time to time, the University may decide that fees changes will not apply for specified cohorts of students and will ensure that students who meet the criteria will be grandparented subject to any overriding government requirement.

### Approved Census Dates

- (19) Each term has an approved census date which is published on the [Important dates webpage](#).

(20) Students must ensure that their enrolment is finalised by the approved census date for the term as this forms the basis for determining final tuition fees/student contribution liability.

(21) Census dates for the Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF) are set by the University and may differ from census dates for terms.

### **Advice of Enrolment and Tuition Fees/Student Contribution Liability**

(22) Students are able to access a Statement of Accounts (SoA) from the University student portal confirming their enrolment and student contribution liability/ tuition fees prior to the approved census date for the term.

(23) It is the student's personal responsibility to check this information and notify the University of any errors or omissions.

### **Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF)**

(24) The SSAF applies to all students of the University and The College unless listed on the [Fees and university costs webpage](#) as a cohort exempted from the fee or eligible for a reduced fee.

(25) Students will receive advice of their SSAF liability twice per year, or three times per year if the student is enrolled in Sydney City, College terms or Trimesters. The SSAF will be calculated on the basis of the EFTSL as follows:

- a. above 0.374: student will be charged the full-time study load rate for that half year period
- b. from 0.250 to 0.374: student will be charged the part-time study load rate for that half year period or
- c. less than 0.250: student will be charged a further discounted rate for that half year period.

(26) The SSAF is indexed annually.

(27) Students who pay the SSAF based on a part-time study load in a half year and subsequently vary their attendance pattern to full-time are required to pay the balance owing by the approved SSAF census date.

(28) Students who pay the SSAF based on a full-time study load in a half year and subsequently vary their attendance pattern to part-time will be refunded the difference automatically.

### **Fees for Commonwealth Supported Students Exceeding Award Requirements**

(29) Commonwealth supported students will be charged full tuition fees for subjects not contributing to the degree in which they are enrolled, or subjects in excess of requirements to complete the degree.

(30) Students wishing to register in such additional subjects will need to enrol on a non-award (full fee paying) basis.

(31) Checks will occur to monitor students deemed to be in excess of subjects and credit points required to complete their program. In cases where students have exceeded award requirements the University will charge full fees retrospectively for excess subjects studied. Refer to [Enrolment Policy](#).

### **Payment of Fees/Liabilities**

(32) Where a fee or charge is payable by a student to the University, the amount must be paid by the date stipulated for the particular item, which is normally the approved census date of the enrolled term, except for International students whose tuition fees are due by the start of term (unless otherwise notified).

(33) Payments will be allocated sequentially from the oldest fee liability to the most recent liability.

## **Extension of Time for Payment**

(34) The University does not grant extended time for payment of compulsory fees.

(35) Domestic Commonwealth supported students who are experiencing financial hardship are advised to apply to defer their student contribution payment and SSAF before the approved census date for the term.

(36) Domestic students in fee paying programs who are experiencing financial difficulties are advised to apply for FEE-HELP assistance (if eligible) before the approved census date of the term to defer their tuition liability and their SSAF.

(37) International students are required to pay compulsory fees by the due dates as part of their visa and Commonwealth government requirements.

(38) On occasion, the University may offer payment plans to International students experiencing extenuating circumstances who cannot pay their tuition fees by the due date.

(39) Payment plan applications are assessed by Data Integrity, Quality and Operations in accordance with eligibility criteria.

(40) A payment plan application will only be considered if it meets the following circumstances:

- a. Application is submitted prior to the payment due date
- b. Sufficient supporting evidence is provided evidencing extenuating circumstances
- c. Student can demonstrate capacity to meet payment plan instalment dates.

(41) Failure to comply with the terms and conditions of a payment plan may result in ineligibility for future payment plans or cancellation of enrolment.

(42) Appeals against the outcome of a payment plan application are assessed by the Senior Manager, Completion, Enrolment and Load Data.

## **Sanctions for Non-payment of Compulsory Fees**

(43) The University reserves the right to apply sanctions to students with debts to the University including the following:

- a. examination results will not be issued
- b. academic documents or records will not be provided
- c. enrolment in the program may be cancelled
- d. graduation will not be finalised
- e. access to University facilities and services including student learning platforms, the Library and information technology resources will be withheld.

(44) International students whose enrolment is cancelled will be reported to the Commonwealth Government as required by legislation.

## **Sponsored Students**

(45) If a sponsor is unable to meet the student's liability, the University will provide the student with the option of becoming a self-funded student and change the status of the student from sponsored to self-funded. If neither the student nor the sponsor is able to pay the outstanding liability by the due date, the University will apply the following sanctions:

- a. examination results will not be issued
- b. academic documents or records will not be provided
- c. enrolment in the current program may be cancelled
- d. registration for the following term will not be permitted and
- e. graduation will not be finalised.

## **Refund of Fees**

(46) Prior to the census date, all or part of a fee may be refunded. (Refer to the relevant student funding category in Section 4 for details).

(47) Tuition fees will only be refunded after the census date if extenuating circumstances apply (refer to Section 5 for details of criteria).

(48) The SSAF will not be refunded after the relevant census date under any circumstances.

(49) International students may be entitled to a full or partial refund of tuition fees in certain circumstances as described in Section 4, Part C.

# **Section 4 - Procedures**

(50) This section provides detailed fee administration requirements for various student funding categories.

## **Part A - Commonwealth Supported Students**

### **Eligibility for Commonwealth Support**

(51) Australian citizens, holders of Humanitarian Visas, New Zealand citizens and holders of Australian Permanent Resident Visas who are enrolled in programs deemed by the University to be Commonwealth supported are eligible to study as domestic students in Commonwealth supported places at the University if they also meet the Government's criteria in that they:

- a. Have a Unique student identifier (USI)
- b. Have sufficient Student learning entitlement available
- c. Meet the completion requirements
- d. Not undertake more than 2 years' worth of higher education study in 12 months.

(52) Australian citizens, holders of Humanitarian Visas, New Zealand citizens and holders of Australian Permanent Resident Visas need to continue to meet the above requirements in order to retain their Commonwealth supported place.

(53) International students, domestic students enrolled in full fee paying programs and students enrolled in non-award programs are not eligible for Commonwealth supported places.

### **Student Contribution Amounts**

(54) Student contribution amounts are levied at rates prescribed for the calendar year and are subject to review on an annual basis. The amounts are published in the booklet HECS-HELP which is available online. A student contribution liability will be incurred in each term, based on the student contribution amount and credit points of the subjects in which the student is registered.

## Electronic Commonwealth Assistance Forms (eCAF)

(55) Students enrolling in a Commonwealth supported program of study must submit a completed eCAF when they enrol in a program for the first time. This must be lodged by the approved census date for the term. Students who have not submitted an eCAF will be prevented from enrolling or will have their enrolment cancelled.

(56) Students must include their Tax File Number (TFN) on the eCAF if they are planning to defer their student contribution liability. Students must supply their TFN on the eCAF, or provide evidence that they have requested a TFN from the ATO, by the census date for the term. Students who have not supplied their TFN in the eCAF prior to census, or provided evidence that they have applied for a TFN prior to census, will need to pay their student contribution upfront by the due date to avoid being discontinued from their subject enrolment.

(57) Commonwealth supported students who wish to defer their SSAF payment must complete a separate eCAF by the prescribed date advertised on the [Student Services and Amenities Fee \(SSAF\) webpage](#) to be eligible for the loan (SA-HELP). If the TFN is not supplied on the SA-HELP form and student has not made payment by the due date, sanctions will be applied.

## CAF and Changing Programs

(58) The eCAF (excluding SSAF eCAF) is program specific, therefore all students changing program, either through an internal program transfer or via [UAC](#), must complete and lodge a new eCAF. A change of Field of Study (Major, Minor or Concentration) is not regarded as a change of program.

(59) The eCAF will not be accepted after the approved census date for the term in which the transferring student will commence. Refer to the [Program Transfer Policy](#) for details of transfers.

(60) Any eCAF submitted after the census date will mean that deferral of the student contribution liability will only occur for future terms.

## CAF and Change of Payment Options

(61) Students may change their payment options for future terms by submitting a new eCAF with their TFN by the approved census date for the term.

(62) Students do not need to lodge a new form if they decide to make upfront payments.

## Non-compliance with Commonwealth Support Requirements

(63) Commonwealth supported students can access information via the government's [StudyAssist website](#).

(64) It is the student's responsibility to ensure the requirements of being a Commonwealth supported student are understood and fulfilled. Students who are enrolled in a Commonwealth Supported Place who do not continue to meet the requirements of being Commonwealth supported will no longer be eligible for such a place.

(65) Students must have finalised enrolment by the approved census date, as stipulated in the [Enrolment Policy](#).

(66) Students who have not met Commonwealth support requirements, including the non-provision of an eCAF and proof of Australian Citizenship by the approved census date, will have their enrolment cancelled. Note that it is not necessary for students to submit a new eCAF each term unless they have changed to a different program or wish to provide their TFN.

(67) Students who have not supplied a valid TFN, or proof that they have applied for a TFN and have not made their student contribution payment in full by the approved census date will have their enrolment cancelled.

(68) Students who have not complied with Commonwealth support requirements by the approved census date, but who wish to continue studies in the current term, may seek approval from the Senior Manager, Completion, Enrolment and Load Data to enrol as non-award students (100% student contribution liability payable upfront).

(69) Students wishing to continue studies in future terms may apply to reinstate their enrolment in an award program only after all Commonwealth support requirements have been met.

### **Commonwealth Assistance Notice (CAN)**

(70) Within four weeks after the approved census date, Commonwealth supported students and students who have opted for HECS-HELP will be issued a CAN confirming their enrolment and student status as at the approved census date.

(71) Commonwealth supported students who have nominated for an SA-HELP loan to cover their SSAF liability will receive a separate CAN confirming their liability for the loan within four weeks after the due date.

(72) Students must notify the University in writing of any errors or omissions within 14 calendar days of the date of the CAN being issued.

### **Refund of Student Contribution Payments/SSAF**

(73) Commonwealth supported students who withdraw from a program prior to midnight on the approved census date will not incur a student contribution liability. If they have paid the student contribution liability for a subject or subjects prior to withdrawing, a full refund will be made after the approved census date.

(74) Commonwealth supported students who withdraw from a subject/s prior to midnight on the approved census date will not incur a student contribution liability for those subjects. If a student has paid their student contribution liability for a subject/s prior to withdrawing, a full refund for those subjects can be made upon submission of a refund request and confirmation of student bank details or approval for payment reversal. Students can alternatively choose to have the credit retained on their student record and applied to future fee liability.

(75) Following withdrawal of subjects before midnight on the approved census date, the SSAF will be recalculated and any overpayment will be refunded.

### **Remission of HECS-HELP and SA-HELP Debts Following Withdrawal after the Approved Census Date**

(76) Commonwealth supported students who withdraw from their program or subject/s after the approved census date will only receive a refund for paid student contribution fees if they have withdrawn due to extenuating circumstances and have received a successful outcome to their 'Withdrawal without Academic Penalty' application.

(77) Applications for refunds due to extenuating circumstances must be made within 12 months of the last day of the term in which the misadventure occurred (refer to the [Enrolment Policy](#)).

(78) Commonwealth assisted students who have deferred their student contribution liability and subsequently withdraw after the approved census date due to extenuating circumstances may apply for a remission of their student contribution liability. Applications should be made direct to the University after the withdrawal has been processed. Applications for remissions due to extenuating circumstances must be made within 12 months of the last day of the term in which misadventure occurred. Refer to the section Withdrawing from Subjects after the Approved Census Date in the [Enrolment Policy](#).

(79) A SSAF liability will not be refunded under any circumstances if the student withdraws after the approved census date.



(80) Refer to the [Fees and university costs webpage](#) for further details of remission of debt and the appeals process.

## **Part B - Domestic Tuition Fee Students**

(81) Non-Award enrolment and miscellaneous post census enrolment, is only offered on a full-fee paying basis.

(82) Students enrolling in non-award study will have their enrolment cancelled if they do not pay their tuition fees by the specified due date.

### **Financial Assistance - Commonwealth Assistance (FEE-HELP and SA-HELP)**

(83) Domestic fee paying students enrolled in award programs are eligible for Commonwealth assistance (FEE-HELP and SA-HELP) provided they are Australian citizens or holders of a Humanitarian Visa or New Zealand Special Category visa (SCV) holder and meet the residency requirements. Eligibility for FEE-HELP is based solely on the Higher Education Support Act (HESA) FEE-HELP guidelines. There is no requirement to advise any personal criteria in addition to the Commonwealth Assistance FEE-HELP application (except for New Zealand Special Category visa (SCV holders).

(84) The FEE-HELP form must be lodged prior to the approved census date for the term for which the loan is being sought.

(85) The SA-HELP form (for deferment of the SSAF liability) must be lodged prior to the specified due date for which the loan is being sought.

(86) Students who gain Australian Citizenship during the period of their enrolment will be deemed eligible for Commonwealth assistance (FEE-HELP) by providing originals or certified copies of their Australian Citizenship Certificate. Evidence of citizenship needs to be provided prior to census date in order to be eligible for FEE Help from that term onwards.

(87) After a student has been confirmed as a FEE-HELP student, they will have the option of deferring part or all of their payment, according to the guidelines, for the duration of their study in the program specified on the original form.

(88) A debt will only be incurred for the amount of tuition fees unpaid by the student at the approved census date.

(89) A SSAF debt will only be incurred for the amount of the SSAF unpaid by the student at the advertised due date, as determined by the University.

(90) Non-Award students are not eligible for Commonwealth assistance (FEE-HELP or SA-HELP) except for eligible cross institutional students.

### **Commonwealth Assistance Notice (CAN)**

(91) Within four weeks of the approved census date, eligible students who have opted for FEE-HELP will be issued a CAN confirming their enrolment and deferred fee liability.

(92) Within four weeks of the due date, eligible students who have opted for an SA-HELP loan to cover their SSAF liability will receive a separate CAN confirming their liability for this loan.

(93) Students must notify the University in writing of any errors or omissions within 14 calendar days of the date of the CAN being issued.

### **Non-payment of Fees**

(94) Students who have not completed payment of their tuition fees by the relevant due date will have their enrolment

cancelled.

(95) A student whose enrolment is cancelled for non-payment of compulsory fees may apply for re-instatement of their enrolment at the discretion of the Senior Manager, Completion, Enrolment and Load Data. Re-enrolment may incur higher fees or additional charges as determined by the University.

(96) A student who has not paid their SSAF by the due date will not have their enrolment cancelled, but will have sanctions imposed on them in accordance with this policy.

## **Refund of Fees**

(97) Domestic students who defer, withdraw or take an approved leave of absence from their program prior to the approved census date will automatically receive a refund for 100% of any tuition fees they have paid for the term prior to withdrawing.

(98) Domestic students who withdraw subjects from their program prior to the approved census date will be automatically refunded for any overpayment of tuition fees following the approved census date for the term.

(99) Domestic non-award students who withdraw from their non-award subject/s prior to the approved census date will be automatically refunded for any overpayment of tuition fees following the approved census date for the term. They will not receive any refund for paid application fees as these are non-refundable.

(100) Following withdrawal of subjects before midnight on the approved census date, the SSAF will be recalculated and any overpayment will be refunded, upon submission of a refund request and confirmation of student bank details or approval for payment reversal. Students can alternatively choose to have the credit retained on their student record and applied to future fee liability.

(101) Domestic students who withdraw after the approved census date will not receive a refund of their tuition fees unless they are able to prove they have endured extenuating circumstances.

(102) Applications for refunds in extenuating circumstances must be made within 12 months of the last day of the term in which the misadventure occurred (refer to Section 5).

## **Remission of FEE-HELP and SA-HELP Debts following Withdrawal after the Relevant Census Date**

(103) Commonwealth assisted students who withdraw from their program or subject/s after the relevant census date can only be refunded for upfront FEE-HELP payments if they have withdrawn due to extenuating circumstances.

(104) Applications for refunds in extenuating circumstances must be made within 12 months of the last day of the term in which the misadventure occurred (refer to Section 5).

(105) Commonwealth assisted students who have deferred their student contribution liability and subsequently withdraw after the relevant census date due to extenuating circumstances may apply for a remission of their student contribution liability. Applications should be made direct to the University after the withdrawal has been processed. Refer to the relevant section in the [Enrolment Policy](#).

(106) A SSAF liability will not be refunded under any circumstances if the student withdraws after the relevant census date for the term.

(107) Refer to the [Fees and university costs webpage](#) for more details of remission of debt and the appeals process.

## Part C - International Fee Students

(108) The fee conditions for University International students are provided as part of the University's International Offer Pack. These conditions are therefore part of the written agreement between each international student and the University. (refer also to the International Student Fees and Refunds Agreement)

(109) Tuition fees for international students will be reviewed annually and may be increased during the period of an international student's enrolment in a program. Such increases can be expected to conform with the estimated total program fee provided to the student prior to accepting the offer of enrolment.

### Non-payment of Tuition Fees - International Students

(110) International students who have not completed payment of their tuition fees by the payment due date (i.e., start of term) will have their enrolment cancelled.

(111) International students who are student visa holders who have not made payment by the due date will be issued with a notice of the University's intention to cancel their enrolment. International students have the right to appeal against cancellation and consequent reporting to the Commonwealth. Appeals must be lodged within 20 working days of the notification of intent to cancel enrolment being sent. Appeals will be considered by the Senior Manager, Completion, Enrolment and Load Data. If a student does not appeal, their Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) will be cancelled and they will be notified to contact the Department of Home Affairs to seek advice on the potential impact on their student visa. Students who are unsuccessful in their appeal will be notified via their student email. Students who were unsuccessful have the opportunity to appeal externally with the [NSW Ombudsman](#). Students who appeal externally with the [NSW Ombudsman](#) must notify the University in writing within 14 days of being notified of their unsuccessful internal appeal, that they have submitted an external appeal.

(112) International students who have satisfied the [NSW Ombudsman](#) that they should be permitted to continue studying, will be able to continue studying provided that all outstanding fees are paid prior to reinstatement.

(113) Students who are permitted to continue their enrolment must ensure that they still have a valid CoE.

(114) Students who are unsuccessful in their internal and external appeal, or who do not submit an appeal within the required timeframe, will have their enrolment cancelled. If the student wishes to continue their studies they will need to reapply to the University. If their application is successful, the student will be permitted to recommence in the following term.

### Refund of Fees for International Students

(115) The [Education Services for Overseas Students \(ESOS\) Act 2000](#) and the [National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students](#) mandate particular tuition fee refund entitlements for overseas students studying in Australia.

(116) These procedures are ESOS compliant and provide details of the grounds on which a student is eligible for a refund and to ensure overseas students' particular consumer rights are protected. (refer to the [International Student Fees and Refunds Agreement](#))

(117) The University provides all prospective overseas students with access to these procedures as part of the University's International offer pack and therefore forms part of the written agreement between each overseas student and the University. (refer to the [International Student Fees and Refunds Agreement](#))

(118) If a student wishes to resign from their studies at the University and request a refund, the student must complete the discontinuation or break from studies application.

(119) Student wishing to resign who have not yet completed six months of their principal program at the University will have their application considered by the Student Welfare Service, and if approved will grant a release from the program.

(120) Refunds to International students will not normally be approved if the student is a continuing student. Any credit on the student's record will apply to future term's tuition/SSAF fees.

(121) To apply for a refund of fees, a student must:

- a. submit a Refund request via [Western Now](#) outlining their reason for requesting a refund and supplying the required evidence and
- b. where they paid the fees, nominate either an overseas or Australian bank account into which the University will pay the refund, which may be the account of a third party, such as another education provider.

(122) Where a third party paid a student's fees, the University will refund the fees to that third party unless the third party authorises the University in writing to pay the refund to another person.

(123) The University:

- a. will assess applications for refunds in accordance with these procedures and the [International Student Fees and Refunds Agreement](#)
- b. will not split refund payments between two or more parties
- c. will notify a student in writing of the date and amount of a refund and
- d. will report all refunds to the Director, Tuition Protection Service on a student's Confirmation of Enrolment via PRISMS.

## **Part D - International Students who Obtain Permanent Resident Status**

(124) A student's change in status from temporary resident to permanent resident is recognised from the date the new visa is stamped in the student's passport, not the date on which application for permanent residency was lodged.

(125) Under Commonwealth government legislation, permanent residents are not eligible to obtain HECS-HELP, FEE-HELP or SA-HELP loans. All fees must be paid in full by the approved census date or enrolment will be cancelled.

(126) If the status of an International student changes from temporary resident to permanent resident, they must advise the University by the census date in order for their change in status to be recognised in that term. They must:

- a. provide a completed eCAF (if relevant to the program)
- b. provide proof of the change to permanent residency and
- c. pay any domestic tuition fees, as required.

(127) If a student has already paid tuition fees as an international student for a term, a full refund of fees paid for that term will be given provided the student has:

- a. obtained permanent resident status not later than the approved census date for the term, and submitted a completed eCAF by the relevant census date for the term and
- b. made arrangements to pay tuition fees as a local student and/or submitted a completed Commonwealth Assistance HECS or FEE-HELP Form (if eligible) by the relevant census date.

(128) If a student obtains permanent resident status after the relevant census date for the term, the student will

continue to be regarded as an international student for the remainder of the term. The student will be entitled to enrol as a domestic student and be liable for payment of domestic tuition fees from the commencement of the next term if the student provides evidence of their permanent resident status prior to that term's census date.

## Section 5 - Guidelines

(129) [Paying Your Fees webpage](#)

(130) [International Student Fees and Refunds Agreement](#)

(131) [Western Sydney University Indonesia Fees Schedule and Refund Procedure](#)

### **Withdrawal without Financial Penalty: Guidelines on what Constitutes Extenuating Circumstances**

(132) Extenuating circumstances are defined in Commonwealth Government guidelines to be events or circumstances which:

- a. are beyond the person's control, i.e., the person is not responsible, directly or indirectly, for the situation. These events or circumstances must be unusual, uncommon or abnormal and
- b. must not make the full impact on the person until on or after the census date where the situation occurred:
  - i. before the census date, but worsened after that day or
  - ii. before the census date, but the full effect or magnitude does not become apparent on or before that day or
  - iii. on or after the census date and
- c. where the outcome has made it impracticable for the student to complete the program requirements and they were unable to:
  - i. undertake the necessary private study required, or attend sufficient lectures or tutorials or meet other attendance requirements in order to meet the compulsory requirements or
  - ii. complete the required assessable work or
  - iii. sit the required examinations, or complete other program requirements because of their inability to meet the above.

(133) Students will need to prove their claim for extenuating circumstances by providing appropriate independent supporting documentation. The University will not approach doctors, hospitals, police, etc to obtain documentation on behalf of the student. The University may seek verification from these agencies that the certificate has been issued to the student.

## Status and Details

<b>Status</b>	Historic
<b>Effective Date</b>	15th May 2024
<b>Review Date</b>	14th March 2029
<b>Approval Authority</b>	Director, Governance Services
<b>Approval Date</b>	15th May 2024
<b>Expiry Date</b>	28th October 2024
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## Glossary Terms and Definitions

**"Award"** - The qualification granted to a student after completion of all the requirements of a higher education course.

**"Degree"** - An alternative term for 'Award'

**"Program"** - A program of study consisting of at least four subjects or 40 credit points leading to an award of the University (Foundation Studies Program, Undergraduate Preparation Program, Diploma, Advanced Diploma, Undergraduate Certificate, Associate Degree, Bachelor Degree, Bachelor Honours Degree, Graduate Certificate, Postgraduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma, Postgraduate Diploma and Masters by Coursework Degree) which when successfully completed is conferred on the graduand by the Board of Trustees.

**"Major"** - An approved sequence of subjects that make up a special focus within a program. The major may or may not form part of the degree title and appear on the student's testamur. Testamur majors are defined sequences of subjects in a focus area, which represents a significant area of study that the University wishes to recognise to highlight the graduate's area of specialisation.

**"Concentration"** - An approved sequence of subjects that makes up a further area of specialisation within a Major.

**"Minor"** - An approved sequence of subjects that makes up a shorter area of special focus (than a Major) within a program.

**"Subject"** - The subject of study in a program in which a student enrolls.

**"Field of Study"** - Collective term for the curricular components of an award program (Major, Minor, Concentration).

**"Term"** - A session at the University that runs for a set length of time during which teaching and assessments occur.

**"Non-Award"** - A subject offered by the University in which a student registers independently of one of the University's Award Programs, including: Non-Award undergraduate; Non-Award postgraduate; post census miscellaneous; or Cross institutional - one or more subjects that are part of an Award Program at another higher education provider.