

Fees and Charges Policy and Procedure

Compliance Focus

ASQA Standards, Clauses: Clause 5.3,7.3

National Code 2018, Standard 1-3, 6,7 ,10, 11

Policy Purpose

The purpose of this policy and its associated procedure is to outline the approach when calculating fees and charges applicable to a course and how a student will be informed prior to enrolment of all course costs. A fee for services provided to a student undertaking training ensures obligations are met under State and Federal Legislation, Funding Body contracts and VET Regulatory requirements.

Policy Scope

This policy applies to all students enrolled in full or part qualifications, short courses and skill sets. All staff are to adhere to this policy and associated procedure. The General Manager will provide guidance and advice to all staff on the policy.

Policy Overview

This policy ensures that all students are aware of the fees and charges associated with enrolment in a course or other services. This policy also provides the guidelines for the eligibility and assessment of refunds. We must ensure the protection of all fees and aim to provide clear and accessible information to students about fees and charges prior to and throughout their enrolment. Each qualification, unit of competency, skill set, or accredited course offered has a specific course fee. The course fee is the maximum fee that may be charged to the student for their chosen training program.

Policy

The CEO and or General Manager is responsible for approving the Fees and Charges. As a minimum the Fees and charges are to include and be published on our website:

- Skills First Contract, the student tuition fees as published are subject to change given individual circumstances at enrolment.
- The total amount of all fees including course fees and concession fees.
- Administration fees
- Material fees and any other charges for enrolling in a training program.
- Payment terms, including the timing and amount of fees to be paid.
- VET Student Loans will not be approved for students who do not meet eligibility requirements, and a VET Student Loan gives rise to a VETSL debt that continues to be a debt due to the Commonwealth. The maximum Tuition Fee for this course for Non Subsidised Students is \$15,000. The maximum amount covered under this course's VET Student Loans program is \$18,097.
- Dollar figures in above statement change annually and need to be updated to reflect
- The fees and charges for additional services
- Sundries fees (non-tuition) such as uniforms
- Replacement qualification parchment or statement of results
- Re-assessment fees

Replacement of text and training workbooks

Students who require replacement of issued textbooks or training workbooks will be liable for additional charges to cover the costs of replacement. Where a student has purchased a text or training workbooks and subsequently cancels their enrolment, we will not refund monies for the text unless a written request for a refund is received, and we are satisfied that the text is in as-new

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condition. For a full list of replacement charges please refer to our Schedule of Fees and Charges as detailed within the Student Handbook.

Giving notice of enrolment cancellation

A student who wishes to cancel their enrolment must give notice in writing. This may be via email or letter. Our staff who are approached with initial notice of cancellation are to ensure the student understands their rights with regards to the refunding of fees. The student is also to be advised of other options such as suspending the enrolment and re-commencing in another scheduled training program. Students who give written notice to cancel their enrolment and who are eligible for a refund are to be provided with a "Refund Request Form." Students who may not be eligible but are requesting a refund should also be provided with the request form so the request can be carefully considered by the CEO/General Manager or nominated delegate.

Policy Statements

The following Policy statements are an overarching view of the process undertaken to ensure obligations under State and Federal Legislation, Funding Body contracts and VET Regulatory Body requirements for charging fees are met. A clear and concise procedure to guide staff on maintaining compliance in their daily tasks supports the policy statements.

1. Commitments

- Set fee and fee concessions approved by the General Manager or CEO within the guidelines issued by the funding and regulatory bodies.
- Compliance with funding body Contract Terms & Conditions about Fees for courses
- Apply and be compliant with Section 55 of the **VET Student Loans Act** when applying fees and charges for an approved VET Student Loan Course
- Apply and be compliant with Part A Clause 5.2 of **Guidelines about Fees (as per annual update)** for the Skills First Program related courses.
- Will have a 6 week grace period for students to present a valid concession card dated and valid from the commencement of course.
- Publish all indicative fees associated with government subsidised training on its website.
- Provide students at application stage of the enrolment process a statement of fees pertaining to their individual circumstances including any exemptions, concessions, or waivers.
 - Statement of Fees that includes, at minimum:
 - - the code, title and currency of the program;
 - - the total cost to them for their program, taking into account any Fee Concession or Fee Waiver entitlement;
 - - the approximate value of the government contribution expressed in dollars; and
 - - any other applicable fees, such as student services, amenities, goods or materials.
- Not accept fees until a student has been deemed suitable and accepted a written course offer.
- Not accept more than \$1500 up front for any tuition fees for services yet to be delivered.
- Fees are reflective all applicable credit transfers and successful RPL.
- Maintain a 5 working days cooling off period from the date of enrolment into any course.
- Not allow a transfer of course fees to another person.
- Will not retrospectively change or adjust the tuition fee for an enrolled individual unless student has accepted or owed a refund.

2. Cost of enrolment

How much to pay is determined by whether a student is eligible for a government-subsidised place or not, the course, and any concession or fee waiver entitlements.

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All students are required to pay a tuition fee and where applicable a material fee. Student enrolments are not valid until fees have been paid or an arrangement to pay is in place with either the student or students' employer.

As per the Student Entry Policy and Procedure, VFA Learning will determine a student's eligibility for available funding options at the time of application and in accordance with the requirements of the applicable funding arrangements.

3. Fees paid in advance.

Prior to commencement or on commencement of a course, VFA Learning cannot accept payment of more than \$1,000 from a student. Following course commencement VFA Learning can collect further fees in advance if at any time the total amount paid for services yet to be delivered does not exceed \$1,500. Students will be advised of this requirement at the time of enrolment.

4. Tuition Fees

Fees are payable when a student has received a confirmation of enrolment. The initial fee payment must be made prior to commencing training or within 7-30 (VETis contract requirements) days of receiving an invoice. If fees are not paid in accordance with the agreed fee schedule the right exists to discontinue training. The current fees and charges are published on the website within the current schedule of fees and charges. A returning student may incur additional fees.

Concessions for applicants that meet the Government-subsidised funding criteria mean course fees payable are equal to 20 per cent of VFA Learnings published standard Skills First Tuition fee.

Skills First Aboriginal Access fee waiver

Students who self-identify as being of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent are able to access the Skills First Aboriginal Access fee waiver. No tuition fee will be charged to the student, irrespective of the course level, for individuals who self-identify as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent. Other course fees, such as material fees, can be charged.

Please note:

Enrolment for eligible students is under the Skills First Program and may affect access to further Government-subsidised training and will be communicated to the applicant.

5. VET Student Loans (VSL)- Tuition Fees

A VET Student Loan is *not* Government funding, it is a **personal debt** under a student loan scheme. Approved students for a VET student loan, the Australian Government will pay a student's tuition fees on their behalf. The loan cap of the qualification a student enrolls in determines the limit they can borrow – Compulsory repayments through the Australian Taxation Office are required when student's income exceeds a specified amount.

Students can access VSL to pay the amount of any tuition fees for a course up to the designated maximum VSL loan cap band, provided the amount does not exceed their HELP loan limit.

If a qualification costs more than the "VSL Course Loan Cap", it does not prevent a student from enrolling into that qualification, it requires the student to pay the difference – referred to as the "GAP Payment" to VFA Learning in accordance with our payment arrangements – please refer to item eight (8) below.

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In accordance with subsection 98(1) of the Rules, VFA must provide students with information prior to enrolment, including about tuition fees and other fees that apply to the course, and about their rights and obligations when enrolling in a course and applying for a VSL.

6. Fee periods

Each year by August, VFA Learning undertakes review of its fees and charges and updates their website, **Course Flyer** and **Indicative Tuition Fees and Charges** accordingly.

In determining and setting fee periods for a course, VFA will ensure the following:

- the fees to be covered by VET student loans, and any other tuition fees, are to be reasonably apportioned over:
- the fee periods for the course; the parts of the course included in the fee periods;
- None of the tuition fees for the course are to be payable outside a fee period for the course.
- chooses 3 or more fee periods (census points VSL for an approved course);
- may choose different fee periods for different students.
- sequential and together equal the duration of the course;
- of equal, or approximately equal, length based on the estimated duration of the course; each contain at least one census day for the course.

7. Recognition of Prior Learning

Fee for RPL (as determined) for application and indicative tuition fee per scheduled hour as per the Indicative Statement of Fees for government-funded students and (as determined) per unit Fee for Service

8. Fee Payment Options

All fees are payable at the time of enrolment. Payment methods include cash, EFTPOS, cheque or credit card, direct debit or applying for a VET Student Loan.

VET Student Loans

VET Student Loans is available for students enrolling in a VET Student Loans/FEE-HELP approved course (at the Diploma level or higher). This is an income contingent, interest free, loan scheme via the Australian Government to defer paying any tuition fees until your income exceeds a specified amount. You would still have to pay the applicable, materials and other non-tuition fees at the time of enrolment. To be eligible for VET Student Loans/FEE-HELP you must be:

- An Australian Citizen, or
- A Permanent Humanitarian Visa holder who will be resident in Australia for the duration of the unit, or
- A New Zealand citizen under specific circumstances.

Note: Conditions apply. Additional information on VET Student Loans & FEE-HELP can be found in the VET Student Loans & FEE HELP Information books at <http://studyassist.gov.au/sites/StudyAssist/>.

Payment Plans – Debit Success

Direct debit is available on all courses, excluding international students. There is no minimum amount to access direct debit.

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Direct debit agreements can be up to the duration of enrolment with the option of weekly, fortnightly or monthly payments administered through DebitSuccess. DebitSuccess has an administration fee of (as determined) (paid with the first payment)

- The direct debit agreement must end within 12 months of the payment plan commencement, or before the course end date, whichever occurs first. Extensions may be approved by the Campus Manager in the event of Financial Hardship
- Students must complete and sign the DebitSuccess contract.
- If the student is under 18 when applying for the payment plan, a guarantor form must be completed, and the DebitSuccess contract counter signed by a parent or guardian.
- If the bank account or credit card payment details are not those of the student applying for the payment plan, the 'owner' of the account must complete and sign a Direct Debit Authority form.
- DebitSuccess administration fees are not refundable for any withdrawal.
- Students entering a DebitSuccess agreement remain liable for their payments when they withdraw after 28 days from commencing their course for the year.
- If a student defaults on the DebitSuccess agreement, VFA Learning has the right to suspend the enrolment and restrict access to classes, assessments and other activities until the default is rectified.
- VFA Learning will withhold any certification or result statements until the course has been paid in full.

9. Student's Rights as a Consumer

As a student purchasing training and assessment services from VFA Learning, students have consumer rights under the Australian Consumer Law. This may include a statutory cooling off period (which VFA Learning exceeds) for any payment students have made to VFA Learning.

Students can find out more information on their consumer rights at:

<https://consumer.gov.au/>

10. Late Payment of Fees

Where a student is 14 days overdue with payments, VFA Learning reserves the right to suspend training services until payment brings fees up to date.

Students who are experiencing difficulty in paying their fees should contact their Career Consultant to discuss their situation and alternative arrangements for payment during their period of difficulty.

For long-term outstanding amounts, VFA Learning reserves the right to utilise the services of a debt recovery agency to ensure the collection of all fees. In cases where outstanding payments cannot be resolved, VFA Learning reserves the right to withdraw the student from their qualification.

11. Schedule of Fees

The CEO and General Manager are responsible for approving the Schedule of Fees and Charges and is to include:

- The total amount of all fees including tuition, material, and other charges for enrolling in a training program.

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- To honour a commitment to deliver services and complete the training and or assessment once the student has commenced study.
- Any discounts, fee reductions or exemptions available
- Fees and charges for additional services such as issuance of a replacement qualification and the options available to students who are deemed not yet competent on completion.

12. Miscellaneous Charges

These may include:

- Re-issuing a certificate after it has been initially issued to a student.
- Replacing issued learning materials which a student has lost or damaged.
- Re-assessment services

These miscellaneous charges are to be clearly specified in the Schedule of Fees and Charges and to state whether GST applies. All miscellaneous charges are to be based on a cost recovery basis and are not intended to be a source of profit. All relevant information is located in the Student Handbook

13. Fees paid in advance

Prior to commencement or on commencement of a course, payment of more than \$1,500 from a student cannot be accepted. Following course commencement, we can collect further fees in advance if at any time the total amount paid for services yet to be delivered does not exceed \$1,500. Students will be advised of this requirement at the time of enrolment.

14. Student Complaints About Fees or Refunds

Students who are unhappy with the arrangements for the collection and refunding of tuition fees are entitled to lodge a complaint. This should occur in accordance with the complaints policy.

Related Documents

- Equal and Fair Treatment Policy and Procedure
- Withdrawals and Refunds Policy and Procedure
- Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure
- Student Entry Policy and Procedure
- Fee Schedule on website
- Student Handbook
- RPL Policy and Procedure
- Credit Transfer Policy and Procedure

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Responsible Officer

The responsible officer for the implementation of this Policy is the General Manager.

Publishing details

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|---|---|
| Document Name | Fees and Charges Policy |
| Approved by | General Manager |
| Date of Approval | 20/05/2024 |
| Version | 5 |
| Summary of content (new) or amendments (revised) | Updated procedure, all changes will be captured in the Continuous improvement and Version Control Registers. Changed logo to remove CRICOS registration number. 20.4.2024 |
| Next Review Date | 20/05/2025 |

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| 1. Action | 2. Details | 3. Responsibility | 4. Related Documentation |
|--|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish Fees | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review all fees and charges yearly in August ○ Where fees and charges are to be updated inform General Manager ○ Fees and Charges published on website ○ Fees updated on MYSKILLS and Skills Gateway | Compliance Team | VFA Learning Website MYSKILLS Skills Gateway |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amend Fees and Charges | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Amend fees and charges in Application and Enrolment Form ○ Upload amended Application and Enrolment Form onto VETNet ○ Inform stakeholders of changes to Application and Enrolment Form via a Notification of Change ○ Where required train applicable staff on amendment ○ Funding Models in VETtrak updated to reflect changes in fees and charges by Head of Compliance - Data | Head of Compliance - Data | Application and Enrolment Form Notification of Change |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review VET Student Loans Census Dates | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review VET Student Loans Tuition Fees and Census dates yearly by August ○ Create VET Student Loans Tuition Fees and Census Dates document for each intake each calendar year ○ Publish document on website ○ Upload document onto VETNet ○ Inform stakeholders of changes via a Notification of Change ○ Where required train applicable staff on amendment | Compliance Team Careers Consultants | VET Student Loans Tuition Fees and Census Notification of Change |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advise Student of Fees | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Advise student of fees and charges in information sessions, application interviews and provide a statement of fees prior to enrolment ○ Inform student of fee paying options, including VET Student Loans, Study Loans and Direct Debit ○ Apply concessions to Certificate IV and lower qualifications if student has valid and current Health Care Card, Pensioner Concession Card or Veteran's Gold Card at the time of commencement ○ A grace period of 6 weeks can be applied for a student to produce their valid concession card, if this passes, a photocopy of the valid card at the time of enrolment must be taken ○ Compliance staff to adjust VETtrak, issue new Statement of Fees, update any financial systems, update student data spreadsheets to reflect concession type | Careers Consultants Compliance Team | Online Application Form VET Student Loans information |

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| 1. Action | 2. Details | 3. Responsibility | 4. Related Documentation |
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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Copy of valid concession card must be given to Compliance to process ○ Adjust course fees if RPL/Credit Transfers apply | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement of Fees – prior to enrolment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Send Statement of Fees and Letter of Offer to Student via email with attachments as per letter requirements via VETtrak/ VTDocs ○ Letter of Offer email is saved against the student in VETtrak/VTDocs ○ Student accepts Letter of Offer and completes enrolment process and pays fees or confirms VET Student Loan request ○ Monies received are processed and receipt provided to student ○ Enrolment Confirmation 'Welcome Letter' sent to student via email and is saved against the student in VETtrak/ VTDocs ○ Compliance to update the Student File Checklist | <p>Administration Staff</p> <p>Careers Consultant</p> | <p>Online Enrolment Form</p> <p>Statement of Fees</p> <p>Letter of Offer</p> <p>Welcome Letter</p> <p>Student File Checklist</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrolment VET Student Loans | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Statement of Covered Fees sent to student 14 days prior to census date ○ Invitation to create eCAF sent to student ○ CAN notice sent to student within 28 days post census date ○ Copy of Statement of Covered Fees and CAN Notice is saved against student in VETtrak/ VTDocs ○ Compliance to update Student File Checklist | <p>Compliance Team</p> | <p>Statement of Covered Fees</p> <p>CAN notice</p> <p>Student File Checklist</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charging Miscellaneous Fees | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ When applicable Operational Manager authorises the charging of Miscellaneous fees ○ Invoice for miscellaneous fee is sent via email to student ○ Monies received are processed and receipt provided to student ○ Copy of invoice and saved against student in VETtrak/ VTDocs | <p>Operational Manager</p> <p>Administration Staff</p> | <p>Invoice via VETtrak</p> |