Refunds for domestic students in non-HELP/ VET Student Loan enabled courses

**Scope**
These procedures apply to domestic students enrolled in a fee-paying course that is not FEE-HELP or VET FEE-HELP/ VET Student Loan (VSL) enabled (Certificate III or Certificate IV).

These procedures do not apply to:
- International students
- Domestic students enrolled in a FEE-HELP or VET FEE-HELP/VSL enabled course, including those choosing to pay their tuition fees upfront
- Domestic students on the VET Student Loan.

**What is a non-HELP/VSL enabled course?**
Some Torrens University Australia courses cannot be funded using FEE-HELP, VET FEE-HELP or VET Student Loan, including all Certificate III and Certificate IV courses

- Some VET Diplomas and Advanced Diplomas are VSL enabled while HE Diplomas, Associate degrees, Bachelor degrees, Graduate Certificates, Graduate Diplomas and Master courses are all FEE-HELP\(^1\) enabled (see Refunds for domestic students in HELP/VSL-enabled courses)

**When is the Study Period start date?**
The term dates will be listed for each of your study periods on the Student Portal. The deadline for withdrawing is 14 calendar days prior to the Study Period starting.

**What is the difference between subject withdrawal and leave of absence?**
An Application for Withdrawal can be used when a student intends to keep studying some subjects in the upcoming study period, but wishes to change their subject choice by withdrawing from one or more subjects.

An Application for Leave of Absence form is used to request a period of leave from the course, with up to 12 months off prior to recommencing the course at a later date.

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\(^1\) The VET Student Loan replaced VET FEE-HELP from 01 January 2017. Only VET students on the VET FEE-HELP prior to change have been given the option to continue with VET FEE-HELP. is no longer available to students enrolling in a VET course commencing in 2017.
Processes for accessing a refund

There are three ways for a domestic student enrolled in a non-HELP/VSL enabled course to access a refund of their tuition fees:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Avenue for refund</th>
<th>Automatic refund/re-credit?</th>
<th>Relevant process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. By withdrawing from the course or submitting a leave of absence application at least 14 calendar days before the study period start date</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Students choosing to withdraw at least 14 calendar days before the study period starts and who have already paid for the subject will need to complete both an Application for Withdrawal or Application for Leave of Absence form and an Application for Refund form. If a student does not complete the Application for Refund, the refund will be held on their account as credit towards a future enrolment.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 2. By withdrawing from subjects less than 14 calendar days after the study period start date due to exceptional circumstances | No | Students affected by serious illness or exceptional circumstances that affected their study less than 14 calendar days prior to start date of the relevant study period may be eligible for a refund. Criteria are specified in the Domestic Student Fees Policy, and students must complete and submit the following:  
  • an Application for Withdrawal, and  
  • an Application for Extempating Circumstances Refund form and provide relevant documentary evidence. |
| 3. By lodging a formal complaint under the Student Complaints Policy | No | Occasionally a student’s tuition fees will be refunded in part or in total as the resolution of a formal complaint or grievance under the Student Complaints Policy. Students must complete a Formal Complaint form and provide relevant documentary evidence. |

1. **Withdrawing from the course or subject enrolments at least 14 calendar days before the study period start date**

Refunds prior to 14 calendar days before the study period start date are automatic for students enrolled in a non-HELP enabled course, as long as students complete and submit their Application for Withdrawal or Application for Leave of Absence form and lodge it with their Student Services Team 14 calendar days before the study period start date.

- Students who have already paid for the subject will have to complete both an Application for Withdrawal or Leave of Absence and an Application for Refund in order to receive a refund of the amount paid.
  - If a student only completes the Application for Withdrawal, and does not complete the Application for Refund, the refund will be held on their account as credit towards a future enrolment.
  - Refunds will be repaid to the person who originally paid the fees, including employers or third parties.
  - Refunds will be made within 20 working days from the date of request or the date of clearance of the original payment, whichever is later.
- Student Services will record the outcome of the application in the Student Records Management System.
- The Financial Controller (or delegated nominee) will follow up unclaimed refunds within four weeks.
Late forms received within 14 calendar days of the study period starting, or after the term has commenced will not be accepted.

2. **Withdrawing from subjects less than 14 calendar days prior to commencement of a course with evidence of exceptional circumstances**

A student seeking a refund due to exceptional circumstances must complete and submit an Application for Exceptional Circumstances Refund form, including supporting documents, to Campus Life Team (Student Services). By filling out this form a student is declaring that **serious illness or exceptional circumstances** affected their study less than 14 calendar days prior to commencement of the relevant study period. If proven, they will be eligible for a refund of tuition fees paid for the subjects affected by the circumstances.

To access a refund, a student needs to demonstrate that the circumstances:
- occurred 14 calendar days or less prior to the commencement of the relevant study period, or
- occur more than 14 calendar days prior to the commencement of the relevant study period but worsen after that day, or
- occurred more than 14 calendar days prior to the commencement of the relevant study period but the full effect or magnitude does not become apparent until on or after that day, and
- make it impracticable for the student to complete the requirements of the subjects.

The Head of Student Financial Services (or delegate) will review the application and determine whether or not the circumstances meet the criteria for a refund, and whether sufficient documentation has been provided to evidence the circumstances.

Students will be notified in writing of the outcome of their request within 10 working days of receipt of the application.
- If the exceptional circumstances application is **approved**, tuition fees will be refunded.
  - Refunds of any upfront fees will be repaid to the person who originally paid the fees, including employers or third parties. Refunds will be made within 20 working days from the date of request or the date of clearance of the original payment, whichever is the later. The student may also opt to have the money credited towards future study.
  - If the exceptional circumstances application is **rejected** then the student will have an option to appeal the decision within 20 working days of receiving the notification in line with the **Student Complaints Policy**.
- Student Services will record the outcome of the application in the Student Records Management System.
- The Financial Controller (or delegate) will follow up unclaimed refunds within four weeks.

**What is a serious illness?**
A serious illness is an unexpected illness of a serious nature, a recurrence of a chronic illness or an accident with a serious impact on a student’s health. Illnesses, disabilities or medical conditions that existed prior to the census date will not qualify as grounds for a refund unless the condition or disability has been compounded by an unexpected change, or an additional condition.

**What supporting documentation is needed for a serious illness?**
Supporting documentation must be an original letter or report on letterhead that
- is from a registered treating medical practitioner, registered health practitioner or approved specialist (depending on the nature of the condition); and
- specifies that the illness is serious; and
- specifies the date that the illness took effect.
What are exceptional circumstances?
Exceptional circumstances include compassionate circumstances such as hardship or trauma including the death or serious illness of a close family member, severe disruption to domestic arrangements, being a victim of crime or an accident.

What supporting documentation is needed for exceptional circumstances?
Supporting documentation must be an original letter or report on letterhead that is from:
- a University counsellor who has prior knowledge of the student’s circumstances; or
- a registered treating medical practitioner, registered health practitioner or approved specialist (depending on the nature of the condition); or
- a person qualified to assess and support the application (e.g. clergy providing grief counselling); or
- a funeral director (or death notice).

Supporting documentation will not be accepted from a student’s relatives or personal friends, or friends of the family.

What does not qualify as exceptional circumstances?
Exceptional circumstances such as religious observance or obligations, formal legal commitments, military service, service with a recognised emergency management service, representing your state or home nation at a significant sporting or cultural event or unforeseen and significant employment-related circumstances such as a move interstate at short notice will usually be managed through assessment modification rather than as exceptional circumstances application for refund.

What does not qualify as a serious illness?
Pregnancy will not qualify as a serious illness unless accompanied by confirmation from a registered treating medical practitioner that indicates that additional pregnancy-related or unrelated conditions were present that were considered serious in nature.

3. Refunds following a grievance under the Student Complaints Policy
Occasionally a student’s tuition fees will be refunded in part or in total as the resolution of a formal complaint or grievance under the Student Complaints Policy. Students must complete a Formal Complaint form and provide relevant documentary evidence.

- If a student is awarded a refund as part of the resolution of a grievance, complaint or appeal:
  - Refunds of any upfront fees will be paid to the person who originally paid the fees, including employers or third parties. Refunds will be made within 20 working days from the date of the finding in their favour
- Student Services will record the outcome of the application in the Student Records Management System.
- The Financial Controller (or delegate) will follow up unclaimed refunds within four weeks.

Summary of Refund Rules for domestic students in non-HELP/VSL enabled courses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REFUND TABLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student submits an Application for Withdrawal or Application for Leave of Absence form 14 calendar days or more prior to commencement of the study period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student fails to meet the conditions of an offer of admission, including a packaged offer pathway</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## REFUND TABLE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Refund</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>and withdraws within 14 days of receiving notification of failing to meet the condition</td>
<td>No refund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student submits an Application for Withdrawal or Application for Leave of Absence form no less than 14 calendar days of the study period commencing.</td>
<td>No refund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic student in non-HELP/VSL enabled course submits an Application for Withdrawal and Application for Exceptional Circumstances Refund form less than 14 calendar days prior to the start date.</td>
<td>A refund may be granted if the student meets the published Exceptional Circumstances criteria (<a href="#">Domestic Student Fees Policy</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All other circumstances</td>
<td>No refund</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Internal Review (Appeal)

Students who wish to request a review of the decision on their formal complaint relating to a refund requested or Exceptional Circumstances may do so under the [Student Complaints Policy](#). The following documents provide information on the process for lodging an internal review request:

- [Internal Review (Appeals) Procedure](#)
- [External Review Procedure](#)