

Refund Policy and Procedure International Students

1 Purpose and Scope

This policy outlines the circumstances where a refund of tuition fees or charges related to study may apply for commencing and continuing students. It applies to international students undertaking AIE Institute's higher education courses who have paid tuition fees in advance. Administrative fees, incidental fees and fines are non-refundable. All dollar amounts referred to in this policy are in Australian Dollars, unless otherwise specified. This policy complies with the *National Code 2018*.

This policy does not apply to domestic students.

2 Objectives

The objectives of this policy are to:

- a. Provide transparent processes for refunds of tuition fees, where applicable
- b. Set out the circumstances where a full refund or a partial refund may apply
- c. Comply with relevant legislation.

3 Implementation

The CEO or delegates are responsible for implementing this policy.

Students should ensure they are familiar with AIE Institute's fees, charges and circumstances for refunds before accepting an offer for admission to AIE Institute's higher education courses.

Staff of AIE Institute who have access to information relating to fees applications must maintain the confidentiality of students' information in accordance with AIE Institute's *Privacy Policy and Procedure*. The disposal of records relating to fees applications should be in accordance with *Records Management Policy and Procedure*.

3.1 Non-refundable fees and charges

Table 1 lists the administrative and incidental fees and charges that are non-refundable. These are charged in addition to tuition fees. The current list is in Table 1 below but may vary from time to time. Please check the website for an up-to-date Fee Schedule.

4 Procedure

All refund requests, notifications of withdrawal, deferment or leaves of absence must be made in writing addressed to Student Administration as per the procedures outlined below and in the relevant related policies. Students can hand in the documents to Reception or email the documents to administration@aieinstitute.edu.au. The Head of School assesses the request and the Academic Manager assesses the academic circumstances. The outcome of the assessment is then forwarded to the CEO and CFO.

Table 1: Fees and charges for international students.

Fees and Charges	Amount
Credit transfer per unit	\$50
RPL assessment per unit	\$350.00
Late Payment Fee	\$10.00
Student ID Card or Replacement	\$20.00
Library Late Fee (hard copy books and journals)	\$1/day
Library Book Replacement	Current retail price + postage + currency exchange rate if applies
Printing charges	\$0.50/ one-side A4 page
Interim Unofficial Transcript	\$20.00 + postage
Official Transcript Replacement	\$20.00 + postage
Testamur Replacement	\$20.00 + postage
Late Withdrawal	N/A
Graduation Gown Hire	Charged according to current hire costs

4.1 Refunds Administration

A *Refund Payment Information Form* should be completed, together with any other relevant forms, such as for withdrawals and other circumstances. All sections of the form must be completed in full and should be accompanied by all relevant documentation. The form must be signed by the student or by the student's parent or guardian in circumstances where the student does not have the legal capacity to do so.

Students should provide payment details within 14 days of an event that qualifies the student for a refund (this timeframe does not limit a student's rights under the ESOS Act).

4.1.1 Deferment and leave of absence

New students may defer their studies after receiving a letter of offer. Refer to *Admissions Policy and Procedure* for details. Students should be aware that deferring, suspending or cancelling enrolment on any grounds may affect their visa. A registered provider is required to notify the relevant government department if they are deferring or suspending an international student's enrolment period, regardless of whether the duration has been affected. Refer to the section on 'Reduced course duration for international students' in *Admissions Policy and Procedure*.

If after approval of course deferment a student notifies AIE Institute in writing that they do not intend to take up the place, the tuition fees that were held in credit are refunded. Continuing students who wish to interrupt their studies and seek a refund should refer to the 'Withdrawal' section of this policy and procedure.

4.1.2 Withdrawal

Students who wish to withdraw from a unit or course should refer to *Admissions Policy and Procedure* for details of withdrawing from a unit or course. Students should be aware that deferring, suspending or cancelling enrolment on any grounds may affect a student's visa. A registered provider is required to notify the relevant government department if they are deferring or suspending an international student's enrolment period, regardless of whether the duration has been affected. Refer to the section on 'Reduced course duration for international students' in *Admissions Policy and Procedure*. Notices are not effective until received by Student Administration.

4.2 Refund eligibility

International students enrolled in a course can access a refund of their tuition fees under certain circumstances, which are outlined in Table 2. Table 3 outlines circumstances where refunds do not apply or may apply only under special circumstances.

Table 2: Refunds apply.

Circumstances	Refund	Process
Deferment of enrolment which has been approved.	A refund may apply or tuition fees may be held until the new commencement date.	Complete an <i>Application for Deferment Form</i> before commencing the course AND if applicable a <i>Refund Payment Information Form</i> .
Withdrawal from a unit or course before the Census Date for the Semester.	Full refund of tuition fees.	Complete an <i>Application for Withdrawal Form</i> AND a <i>Refund Payment Information Form</i> .
Student default: AIE Institute withdraws the offer of enrolment; for example, if the student fails to meet the entry requirements, such as the stated level of English, or provides incorrect or incomplete information.	Full refund of tuition fees.	The Head of School communicates withdrawal of offer to the student.
Student's initial visa application is rejected.	Full refund of tuition fees.	Complete a <i>Refund Payment Information Form</i> .
AIE Institute default (unable to deliver the unit): AIE Institute may offer students a place in an alternative course at AIE Institute or another registered provider. In such circumstances, there is no additional cost to the student, and a refund is not paid.	Full refund of tuition fees.	AIE Institute refunds the tuition fees in full to the student within 28 days; OR AIE Institute provides an alternative course for the student at the provider's expense, in which case no refund is given to the student; OR a tuition assurance scheme is activated.

Table 3: Refunds do not apply or special circumstances apply.

Circumstances	Refund	Process
Withdrawal from a unit or course after the Census Date due to Special Circumstances beyond the control of the student. See 4.3.1 Guidelines in this policy and procedure.	Possible	A student may submit an <i>Application for Withdrawal Form</i> , including request for special circumstances to apply AND a <i>Refund Payment Information Form</i> .
Withdrawal from a unit or course after the Census Date for the Semester, with NO special circumstances.	No refund	A student may submit an <i>Application for Withdrawal Form</i> .
Student default: • The course starts at the location on the agreed starting day, but the student does not start the course on that day and has not previously withdrawn (A student may be considered to have abandoned their course without notice where they fail to commence their course on the agreed start date and have not notified the AIE Institute, withdrawn, or obtained an approved deferral) • the student fails to pay the required tuition fees • the student breaches any condition of their student visa • misbehaviour by the student	No refund	A student may submit a <i>Refund Payment Information Form</i> ; however, if the circumstances fall within those listed in the first column, AIE Institute reserves the right not to provide a refund.
Where a student is found to have provided false or misleading information, made a false declaration on the application form, or submitted fraudulent, forged or deliberately misleading documentation in support of their application for admission, AIE Institute reserves the right to withdraw the offer of enrolment.	No refund	A student may submit a <i>Refund Payment Information Form</i> ; however, if the circumstances fall within those listed in the first column, AIE Institute reserves the right not to provide a refund.
Where a student's enrolment is cancelled for any of the following reasons • Failure to maintain satisfactory course progress; • Failure to maintain satisfactory attendance;	No refund	A student may submit a <i>Refund Payment Information Form</i> ; however, if the circumstances fall within those listed in the first column, AIE Institute reserves the right not to provide a refund.

• Failure to meet any other course requirements • Failure to pay course fees • illegal or unlawful conduct or is in breach of any enrolment conditions		
Visa cancelled due to actions of the student	No refund	A student may submit a <i>Refund Payment Information Form</i> ; however, if the circumstances fall within those listed in the first column, AIE Institute reserves the right not to provide a refund.
After submitting a formal complaint in accordance with <i>Student Grievance Policy and Procedure</i> .	Possible	Complete and submit a <i>Feedback Form</i> , together with relevant evidence AND a <i>Refund Payment Information Form</i> . Tuition fees may be refunded in full or in part, depending on the outcome of the grievance process.

Note: If a student does not provide account details for the processing of any payable refunds (if applicable), credit will be held towards future enrolment.

4.3 Special circumstances

Special Circumstances may apply to the student if AIE Institute is satisfied that the circumstances comply with 4.3.1 Guidelines. The student must have been enrolled in the unit or course and submitted a written application after the Census Date for special circumstances together with an Application for Withdrawal Form and supporting evidence.

4.3.1 Guidelines

The special circumstances:

- a. Were beyond the student's control, which is reasonably considered as not due to the student's action or inaction, either direct or indirect, and for which the student is not responsible, and:
 - I. Were unusual for the student
 - II. Made it impractical for the student to complete the requirements of the course/s
 - III. Did not occur until on or after the Census Date for the unit/s
 - IV. Where the circumstances occurred or existed before the Census Date, worsened or changed, such that their full effect was not apparent to the student until after that date.
- b. Would make it impractical for a student to complete the requirements of the course/s and may include (but are not limited to):
 - I. Medical circumstances that have changed to such an extent that the student is unable to continue studying, or new medical circumstances arose.

- II. Family/personal circumstances such as death, significant medical issues, unforeseen financial difficulties, or other circumstances that are unreasonable to expect a person to continue their studies.
- III. Employment related circumstances in which employment status or arrangements have changed so that the student is unable to continue their studies and this change is beyond their control.
- IV. Course related circumstances where AIE Institute has changed the unit offered, and the student is disadvantaged by either not being able to complete the unit, or not being given credit towards other units or courses.
- V. Extenuating circumstances of reasonable significance that interfere with the student's ability to meet a course's requirements. For example, carers' responsibilities, legal commitments, military service, accidents or natural disasters.

Special circumstances do not include:

- c. Lack of knowledge or understanding of this policy or government legislation
- d. Failure to follow correct procedures
- e. Academic ability that was less than expected.

Refunds under special circumstances are discretionary and are decided by AIE Institute (this discretion does not apply where refunds are required under the ESOS Act).

4.3.2 Supporting documentation

Students should ensure that their supporting documentation complies with AIE Institute's requirements and is:

- a. In English, or has been translated and certified as an official translation from an official authority
- b. An original document or certified by a Justice of the Peace or equivalent
- c. An original medical certificate that details the condition where medical circumstances apply
- d. A statutory declaration, where relevant
- e. A detailed account of the circumstances or events that are relevant to the application, including specific dates, and demonstrates how it meets the 'Special Circumstances' section of this policy
- f. A true and honest representation of the circumstances
- g. Other documentation requested by AIE Institute.

4.4 Payment of refunds

Refunds are made within 28 days of receipt of a complete *Refund Payment Information Form*. Incomplete forms may cause delays in processing refunds.

Refunds will be made in accordance with s47D of the *ESOS Act* and paid:

- a. In Australian dollars
- b. If the tuition fee was paid by credit card within the last 12 months, then under Australian banking regulations the refund must be credited to the credit card from which the fee was initially paid, if possible
- c. Directly to the student, or, if a person other than the student is specified in the agreement with AIE Institute to receive any refund, then the refund will be paid to that specified person
- d. Within 4 weeks after receiving a written claim from the student.

Student Administration records the transaction in the Student Records Management System.

4.4.1 Provider default

In the case of a provider default, the Tuition Protection Service (TPS) is an Australian Government placement and refund service to assist international students whose registered providers are unable to fully deliver their course of study. The TPS ensures international students can either:

- a. Complete their studies in another course or with another registered provider or
- b. Receive a refund of their unspent tuition fees.

4.4.2 Overseas Student Health Cover

International students are responsible for contacting their Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) provider directly to apply for an OSHC refund if applicable.

4.5 Appeals

Students may seek a review of any decision related to a refund decision by submitting an appeal to Student Administration within 28 days of receiving the notice. It must be accompanied by supporting documentation.

Executive Management consider appeals. Students are notified of the decision within 28 days of receiving the application. If students are not satisfied with the reviewed decision, then they can make an appeal to the Board of Directors as set out in *Student Grievance Policy and Procedure*, or seek an external review.

The right to make complaints and seek appeals of decisions and action under various processes does not affect the rights of the student to take action under the Australian Consumer Law if the Australian Consumer Law applies.

5 Definitions

Admission is the process for admitting an applicant into a program at AIE Institute, following a successful application and acceptance of the offer of a place in the program.

Applicant is a person who has already lodged an application to study a specific course. A prospective student is generally a person who is thinking about lodging and application to study a particular course.

Census Date is the date when a student's enrolment is finalised. If a student withdraws after the census date he/she will have to pay fees, or if the student has a FEE-HELP loan, will incur a debt.

Commencement Date is the official date at which the financial liability for courses is set and tuition fee is due for international students. Commencement dates are determined for each semester and are published on AIE Institute's website.

Credit transfer is a process that provides students with agreed and consistent credit outcomes for components of a qualification based on identified equivalence in content and learning outcomes between matched qualifications (Australian Qualifications Framework definition).

Course is a single program leading to an Australian higher education award.

Deferment is an agreement to allow an applicant to defer taking up the place he/she has been offered until a later time.

Domestic Student is an Australian Citizen, Australian permanent resident or a New Zealand citizen.

Entry Requirements are the entry requirements that an applicant must satisfy to be admitted.

International student means a person (whether within or outside Australia) who holds a student visa as defined by the ESOS Act, but does not include students of a kind prescribed in the ESOS Regulations.

Letter of Offer is the offer of a place in a program to a successful applicant.

Letter of Release for International Students is the release letter from a program within the first 6 months of study in the principal course to enable an international student to transfer to another registered provider.

Offer round/s refer to the series of dates on which offers of higher education places are issued to applicants throughout the year, whether through a tertiary admission centre or directly by a higher education provider.

Overseas student see International student.

Prospective Student is generally a person who is thinking about lodging and application to study a particular course.

Recognition of prior learning (RPL) is a process used to assess an individual's relevant prior learning (including formal, informal and non-formal learning) to determine the credit that may be granted towards completion of a qualification (adapted from Australian Qualifications Framework definition).

Student default is as defined in the ESOS Act s47A (1):

- (1) *An overseas student or intending overseas student defaults, in relation to a course at a location, if:*
 - (a) *the course starts at the location on the agreed starting day, but the student does not start the course on that day (and has not previously withdrawn); or*
 - (b) *the student withdraws from the course at the location (either before or after the agreed starting day); or*
 - (c) *the registered provider of the course refuses to provide, or continue providing, the course to the student at the location because of one or more of the following events:*
 - (i) *the student failed to pay an amount he or she was liable to pay the provider, directly or indirectly, in order to undertake the course;*
 - (ii) *the student breached a condition of his or her student visa;*
 - (iii) *misbehaviour by the student.*

TAC application is an application made through a tertiary admission centre, namely QTAC, UAC, VTAC, SATAC, TISC and University of Tasmania, in relation to applications to study in that state.

Tuition Fee is the fee for enrolment in a course determined by AIE Institute, and advised in both the *International Student Enrolment Form*, and the *Letter of Offer* attached to the *International Student Enrolment Form*, as being the tuition fees for the course (per semester).

Unit is a discrete unit of study, where a combination of units makes up a program of study.

Withdrawal is a formal procedure where a student decides to discontinue a course without the intention of returning or discontinues a unit with the intention of enrolling in it at a later date.

6 Related documents

The following policies and procedures are related to this policy:

- a. Admissions Policy and Procedure
- b. Fees Policy and Procedure
- c. Fee Schedule (International students)
- d. International Student Enrolment Form
- e. Letter of Offer
- f. Letter of Release for International Students

- g. Privacy Policy and Procedure
- h. Records Management Policy and Procedure
- i. Refund Payment Information Form
- j. Student Code of Conduct
- k. Student Grievance Policy and Procedure.

The following forms are related to this policy:

- l. Application for Deferment Form
- m. Application for Withdrawal Form

7 Review

Every three years.

8 Accountabilities

The Board of Directors is responsible for review and approval of this policy.

The policy is to be implemented via induction and training of staff and distribution to students and AIE Institute's higher education community via the website and other publications.