

Student Fee Refunds Policy and Procedure

Approving body	Governing Board
Date approved	27 Feb 2025
Date of effect	Commencement of operation
Next scheduled review	One year from policy commencement
Policy owner	Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
Policy contact	Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
Related Documents	Admission Policy and Procedure Student Fee Policy and Procedure Student Grievance Policy and Procedure Student Appeals Policy and Procedure Quality Assurance Framework
Higher Education Standards Framework (HESF) 2021 (Cth)	Standard 1.1.2 Standard 6.2.1 Standard 7.2.4
Other legislation	<i>Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000</i> (Cth) <i>National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018</i> (Cth) <i>Education Services for Overseas Students Regulations 2001</i> (Cth) <i>Education Services for Overseas Students (Calculation of Refund) Specification 2014</i> (Cth) <i>Education Services for Overseas Students Legislation Amendment (Tuition Protection Services and Other Measures) Act 2012</i> (Cth)

Purpose

1. This Student Refunds Policy and Procedure sets out the approach that Zenith Innovation Institute (**Zenith / the Institute**) will adopt in the event that students may require a refund of their paid tuition fees.
2. Fee refunds are necessary in specific circumstances including when students may not be able to complete all or part of the studies for which they have applied for /enrolled in due to:
 - (a) the student's personal circumstances changing causing the student to withdraw from a unit or course; or
 - (b) the Institute being unable to offer the course.

Scope

3. This Policy applies to all commencing and continuing students at the Institute and staff concerned with assessing student refund applications.

Policy

Principles

4. The Institute will refund tuition fees according to the following principles:
 - (a) students will be fully informed about tuition fees and this policy prior to their enrolment;
 - (b) the Institute approves refunds of tuition fees where the student has withdrawn from the course or units(s) within the specified time frames;
 - (c) students will receive refunds of tuition fees paid where the Institute cancels or fails to deliver a course or unit in which the student is enrolled; and
 - (d) the Institute will not refund student tuition fees paid where a refund application is submitted after the published census date except where the student can show compassionate or compelling circumstances as approved by the Institute.

Course withdrawal

5. In the event of course or unit withdrawal, a student who has paid tuition fees may be eligible for a refund in line with the following scenarios:
 - (a) a student who, in writing, withdraws from a course or unit on, or before, the Institute's census date, will receive a refund of all tuition fees;
 - (b) a student who is unable to continue studies after the census date within the teaching period may be eligible for a partial refund and will be eligible for refund of all tuition fees attached to units not commenced (unspent tuition fees);
 - (c) a student who withdraws from a unit after the census date will not be eligible for a refund of that unit; and
 - (d) a student who withdraws completely from the course after the census will receive a refund of tuition fees for units not commenced (unspent tuition fees).

Scenarios where no refund is possible

6. The Institute will not refund the tuition fees for units commenced for any student whose enrolment is terminated due to the student's misconduct, non-payment of outstanding debt owed to the Institute, or, for international students:
 - (a) there has been a breach of international student regulations;
 - (b) Zenith has cancelled their enrolment due to a breach of Zenith's policies and procedures; or
 - (c) the student did not comply with their required visa conditions.

Suspensions and Deferrals

7. A student who applies for suspension or deferral of studies must have their request approved prior to the census date to avoid incurring tuition costs.

8. If a suspension or deferral is approved before the census date, any tuition fees already paid will be transferred to the next available study period.
9. If a student does not return after a deferral period, any pre-paid tuition fees will be non-refundable unless compassionate or compelling circumstances apply
10. Suspensions or cancellations after the census date will not be eligible for a refund.

Non-Refundable Fees – Student Termination by Zenith

11. If a student is terminated by Zenith for misconduct (e.g., breach of policies or academic integrity), any tuition fees paid will not be refunded. This applies regardless of when the misconduct occurred.

Student Transfer and Refunds

12. If a student transfers to another provider before the census date, a full refund of any pre-paid tuition fees will be granted.
13. If a student transfers after the census date, they will incur a fee, and tuition for any commenced units will not be refunded.

Procedure

14. Students must submit refund applications by Week 4 before the census date. Refund applications received after this period will not be eligible except in compassionate or compelling circumstances.
15. All applications must be submitted using the Institute's Application for Refund Form, available on the Institute's website and from Campus Reception. Applications must include appropriate supporting documentation.
16. Applications must be submitted via email to the Admin Team at admin@zenithedu.com.au (TBA).
17. Only authorised and approved education agents may submit refund applications on behalf of students only if they have written authorisation from the student.

Student withdraws from course

18. All students seeking to withdraw from courses or units in which they are enrolled must complete the Discontinuation of Enrolment Form available on the website and from Campus Reception. Students may submit a Discontinuation of Enrolment Form and Application for Refund Form simultaneously where they submit prior to the published census date.
19. All applications for refund of tuition fees must be submitted by completing the Institute's Application for Refund Form available on the Institute's website and from Campus Reception. Applications for refunds should be accompanied by appropriate documentation supporting the case for refund.
20. Application forms should be submitted via email and will be reviewed and considered by the Student Services Manager. If a student is not satisfied with the decision made, appeals under the Institute's Student Appeals Policy and Procedure can be made.
21. Students may seek the support of any staff from Student Services in completing and submitting the Discontinuation of Enrolment Form and Application for Refund Form.

Refunds – Course is discontinued or Institute defaults

22. In the unlikely circumstance where the Institute is unable to deliver a course or unit, and the student does not accept Zenith's offer of enrolment in another course, whether at the Institute or with another registered higher education provider, the student is entitled to a refund of the unspent tuition fees.

International students¹

23. For international students, the Institute is required to refund an amount that must be calculated according to the following formula:²

$$\text{Refund amount} = \text{weekly tuition fee} \times \text{weeks in default}$$

Where:

$$\text{Weekly tuition fee} = \left(\frac{\text{total tuition fees for the course}}{\text{number of calendar days in the course}} \right) \times 7$$

$$\text{Weeks in default} = \frac{\text{no. of calendar days from the default period to the end of the period to which payment relates}}{7}$$

Refunds – International student default due to visa refusal

24. In this policy, student default has the meaning given under Section 47A of the ESOS Act (See the Definitions section below).

25. Where a student defaults because the application for a student visa is refused and the student has not commenced the course, the Institute must refund the amount calculated according to the following formula:³

$$\text{Refund amount} = \text{Total tuition fees MINUS lesser of the following amounts:}$$

$$5\% \text{ of the tuition fees paid by the student to the Institute or}$$

\$500

Where the student visa is refused after the student commences the course, the Institute must pay the refund amount calculated according to the following formula:⁴

$$\text{Refund amount} = \text{weekly tuition fee} \times \text{weeks in default}$$

Where:

¹ Examples of calculations can be found in *Explanatory Guidance on the Education Services for Overseas Students (Calculation of Refund) Specification 2014*, prepared by the Department of Education, Skills and Employment

² The formula is as specified in the *Education Services for Overseas Students (Calculation of Refund) Specification 2014* (Sections 5, 6 and 7) made under the ESOS Act on 26 June 2014.

³ The formula is as specified in the *Education Services for Overseas Students (Calculation of Refund) Specification 2014* (Section 9) made under the ESOS Act on 26 June 2014.

⁴ The formula is as specified in the *Education Services for Overseas Students (Calculation of Refund) Specification 2014* (Section 9) made under the ESOS Act on 26 June 2014.

$$\text{Weekly tuition fee} = \left(\frac{\text{total tuition fees for the course}}{\text{number of calendar days in the course}} \right) \times 7$$

$$\text{Weeks in default} = \frac{\text{no. of calendar days from the default period to the end of the period to which payment relates}}{7}$$

Payment of refunds

26. Refunds will be made within twenty (20) business days of receiving the refund application to:
 - (a) the student; or
 - (b) if a person (other than the student) is specified in the Written Agreement to receive any refund under this section, this person.
27. Approved applications for refund will include written notification to the student of how the refund was calculated.
28. The approved refunds will be paid back to the original source of payment.

Appeals

29. A student may appeal against a decision made under this Policy under the provisions of the *Student Appeals Policy and Procedure*.

Responsibilities

30. It is the responsibility of the Chief Executive Officer to ensure the currency and accuracy of this policy is maintained.
31. The Executive Management Committee will consider all requests for refunds in line with this policy.
32. The Student Services Team will assist students with refund request documentation; process requests for refunds; process outcomes of requests for refunds and update student records to reflect the outcome of the process.

Definitions

33. For the purposes of this Policy and Procedure, the following terms are defined as follows:

Term	Definition
Commencement date	is the date on which classes commence in any semester.
Census date	is the last day in each study period on which a student may vary enrolment into units without incurring an academic penalty and being liable for the full amount of fees associated with the unit.
Domestic student	is a student who is an Australian or New Zealand citizen or holds an Australian permanent visa.



Term	Definition
Executive Management Committee	This committee comprises of the CEO, Academic Dean, Registrar, Finance Manager, Marketing Manager, IT Manager
Institute default	is where the Institute fails to start providing a course to an international student at the location on the agreed starting day; or after the course starts but before it is completed, the course ceases to be provided to the student at the location; and the student has not withdrawn from the course before the default day.
International student	is any overseas student, including those who have student visas, temporary residency, bridging visas and provisional residency (as falling under the <i>Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act)</i>).
Non-tuition fees	are fees that are only indirectly related to the provision of a course.
Student default	has the meaning given under Section 47A of the ESOS Act, which is if: <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ 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) (and the Institute has not defaulted); or■ the student withdraws from the course (either before or after the agreed starting day); or■ the Institute refuses to provide, or continue providing, the course to the student because of one or more of the following events:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– the student failed to pay an amount he or she was liable to pay the Institute, directly or indirectly, in order to undertake the course;– the student breached a condition of his or her student visa; and– misbehaviour by the student (as upheld by the Institute's internal or external appeal processes).
Student Services Team	This team comprises of the Student Services Manager and Student Support Officers
Study period	is a discrete period of study within a course; one study period at the Institute is equivalent to one semester.
Tuition Protection Service (TPS)	is an initiative of the Australian Government to assist international students whose education providers are unable to fully deliver their course of study.
Tuition fees	are fees that are directly related to the provision of a course.
Written Agreement	is a document accompanying the Letter of Offer outlining the terms and conditions for enrolment into a course at the Institute and which a student must accept before, or at the same time as, payment of fees relating to the course.

Version history

Version	Changes	Approval Body	Approval Date
1.0	Original Policy	Governing Board	19 Sep 2024
1.1	Policy name updated from “Students Refund Policy and Procedure” to “Student Fee Refund Policy and Procedure” Point 20, replaced “Senior Management Team” with “Executive Management Committee” Added Suspensions and Deferrals, Transfers and Termination Added Point 14 to 17. Added Executive Management Committee and Student Support Team to definitions	GB	27 Feb 2025