



# TAFE NSW HIGHER EDUCATION TUITION FEES, PAYMENTS, HELP, REFUND AND REVIEW PROCEDURE

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## 1. Document history and details

Version 5: 7 December 2023

Commencement date: Semester 1 2024

## 2. Introduction

- 2.1 The purpose of this procedure is to outline requirements in relation to payment of tuition fees for TAFE NSW Higher Education courses.
- 2.2 TAFE NSW Higher Education students are charged a tuition fee for each subject (unit of study) in which they are enrolled.
- 2.3 TAFE NSW Higher Education students can choose to either pay tuition fees up front or, if they meet eligibility criteria, choose to defer the payment of tuition fees by taking out a FEE-HELP or HECS-HELP loan.
- 2.4 The implementation of FEE-HELP or HECS-HELP by TAFE NSW Higher Education complies with the provisions of the Higher Education Support Act 2003 and other related legislative instruments.
- 2.5 All TAFE NSW Higher Education tuition fees and charges are reviewed on a yearly basis and are subject to change.
- 2.6 Students pay the tuition fee applicable to the subject in the current year of enrolment in the subject, not the fee applicable at the time of original enrolment into the course.

## 3. Audience and applicability

- 3.1 This procedure covers payments, withdrawals, refunds, recredits and remittances associated with the delivery of subjects in accredited TAFE NSW Higher Education courses.
- 3.2 This procedure applies to all students enrolled in an accredited TAFE NSW Higher Education course.
- 3.3 International students are covered by this procedure but are also subject to the terms and conditions outlined on the TAFE NSW Higher Education international students' application form which meet the ESOS Act (2000) and National Code of Practice (2007) requirements.

## 4. Definitions

Term	Definition
<b>Administration Date</b>	As specified in the TAFE NSW Higher Education academic calendar. Refer 5.1 below.
<b>Census Date</b>	As specified in the TAFE NSW Higher Education academic calendar but no less than the 20% into the duration of a semester. Refer 5.1 below.
<b>Course</b>	A TAFE NSW Higher Education program comprising a group of subjects that must be successfully completed in order to complete the course and graduate from the course.
<b>eCAF</b>	Electronic Commonwealth Assistance Form. The online form to be completed by students when applying for HELP.
<b>Eligible Student</b>	A student who is entitled to HELP assistance in accordance with the citizenship and residency requirements.
<b>End Date</b>	As specified in the TAFE NSW Higher Education academic calendar. Refer 5.1 below.

<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>FEE-HELP</b>	A Commonwealth loan scheme to help eligible fee paying students pay all or part of their tuition fees.
<b>HECS-HELP</b>	A Commonwealth loan scheme to help eligible fee paying students pay all or part of their tuition fees.
<b>HELP</b>	Higher Education Loan Program – the Commonwealth government’s student loans schemes including FEE-HELP and HECS-HELP.
<b>HESA</b>	The Higher Education Support Act 2003. This is the Commonwealth legislation governing HELP.
<b>Incidental Fees</b>	A charge for a good or service additional to the tuition fee, eg: field trips.
<b>LMS</b>	The Learning Management System, such as Moodle, is the online method of distributing learner resources, assessment information and teacher communications to students.
<b>Recredit Approving Delegate</b>	The Recredit Approving Delegate considers the recommendation and approves/not approves the application for recredit.
<b>Recredit Recommending Delegate</b>	The Recredit Recommending Delegate considers the applications and provides a recommendation to the Recredit Approving Delegate.
<b>Senior Manager Student Finance</b>	The TAFE NSW manager with responsibility for assessing an application to review a decision not to re-credit a HELP debt.
<b>Special Circumstances</b>	Special conditions, defined by the Commonwealth, which will entitle a HELP debt to be reversed, or tuition fees refunded, if a student withdraws after census date.
<b>Start Date</b>	As specified in the TAFE NSW Higher Education academic calendar. Refer 5.1 below.
<b>Student Management System</b>	The digital system used by TAFE NSW to manage student records including student enrolment, academic progress and course completion documentation. Often referred to as SMS.
<b>Subject</b>	A unit of study comprising learning outcomes and assessment requirements. Completion of a course is dependent on successful completion of requisite subjects.
<b>TAFE NSW Higher Education</b>	TAFE NSW Higher Education is the registered trading name of the Technical and Further Education Commission as a higher education provider.
<b>Tuition Fee</b>	The fee charged for each subject, not including any incidental fees.
<b>TEQSA</b>	Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency. The national regulator of higher education in Australia.
<b>Unit of Study</b>	A single TAFE NSW Higher Education subject.

## **5. Key dates**

- 5.1 The timing of tuition fee payments is structured around a series of key dates. These are the:
- 5.1.1 Start Date – the first date of the semester;
  - 5.1.2 Administration Date – the date by which time a student must have:
    - a. paid their tuition fees up front; or
    - b. paid a proportion of their tuition fees up front and indicated that they intend to apply for HELP assistance to cover the balance; or
    - c. indicated that they intend to apply for HELP assistance to cover the full cost of the subject.
  - 5.1.3 Census Date – the date by which:
    - a. a student intending to access HELP assistance needs to submit a Request for a HELP Loan Form (eCAF);
    - b. the absolute deadline for a student who chooses to pay their tuition fees upfront;
    - c. a student must formally withdraw from a subject without incurring a HELP debt; or
    - d. a student who has paid their tuition fees up front must formally withdraw from a subject in order to be eligible to apply for a refund.
  - 5.1.4 End Date – the last date of the semester, ie: the last day of the final assessment week.
- 5.2 Students who have not paid their tuition fees upfront, or who have not applied for a HELP loan by census date will be excluded from the subject/s for which tuition fees are payable, and are not permitted to attend class or submit assessments.
- 5.3 Students with outstanding tuition fees will not be allowed to re-enrol and continue their studies until outstanding tuition fees have been paid in full.

## **6. Tuition fees**

- 6.1 TAFE NSW Higher Education courses are offered on a full fee-paying basis.
- 6.2 The tuition fee is the charge levied on all students for each subject they enrol in.
- 6.3 Domestic students will be charged the same tuition fee irrespective of whether they pay up front or utilise HELP assistance.
- 6.4 Domestic students will only incur a liability for tuition fees after the Census Date.
- 6.5 TAFE NSW Higher Education will publish the tuition fees on its website in accordance with the requirements of the HESA Act.

## **7. Incidental fees**

- 7.1 In accordance with the HESA Act, TAFE NSW Higher Education is able to charge for certain incidental fees, (eg: charges for field trips)

## **8. Payments**

- 8.1 TAFE NSW does not accept cash payments for any tuition or incidental fees.
- 8.2 Students not intending to seek HELP assistance are required to pay the tuition fee for the subjects in which they are enrolled, on or before the Administrative Date.

- 8.3 Students intending to apply for HELP assistance:
- a. must submit a Request for HELP Assistance (eCAF) on or before the Census Date; and
  - b. will incur a debt on the day immediately following the Census Date.
- 8.4 Students who pay their tuition fees using HELP assistance will repay their HELP debt through the Australian taxation system once they reach the mandated income threshold.

## **9. Withdrawals**

- 9.1 Students who withdraw from a course and/or subject must formally notify TAFE NSW Higher Education in writing of their decision to withdraw using the TAFE NSW Higher Education Withdrawal Form.
- 9.2 Students who do not formally withdraw in accordance with Section 9.1 or who formally withdraw after census date will be liable for tuition fees or the HELP liability for the subject/s subject to special circumstances provisions (Refer Section 12).

## **10. Refunds**

- 10.1 Students who formally withdraw from a subject on or before Census Date using the TAFE NSW Higher Education Withdrawal Form:
- a. will not incur a HELP debt for the subject; and
  - b. are eligible to request a refund for the subject if they paid their tuition fees up front.
- 10.2 Students who withdraw from a subject after the Census Date:
- a. will not be entitled to a refund of tuition fees for the subject if they have paid up front; or
  - b. will be liable for the HELP liability for the subject if they have applied for HELP assistance; or
  - c. will only be eligible for a refund of tuition fees for the subject or to have their HELP balance for the subject re-credited under special circumstances (see Sections 12.1 and 12.2).
- 10.3 Students who withdraw from a subject are not eligible for a refund of incidental fees.
- 10.4 A student cannot apply for a refund of tuition fees or re-credit of their HELP balance for a subject if they have successfully completed the subject.
- 10.5 A student cannot apply for a refund of tuition fees or a re-credit of their HELP balance for a subject if they have completed, but failed the subject.
- 10.6 Any refunds payable will only be made to the student or third party who made the original payment and will be by electronic funds transfer or by refund to the original credit card number.

## **11. Refunds/Recredits after census date**

- 11.1 A student who withdraws from a subject after the Census Date due to special circumstances (refer Section 12) may be eligible to have their tuition fees for the subject refunded if paid up-front or their HELP balance for the subject recredited.
- 11.2 A student must formally apply for a refund or recredit of their tuition fees/HELP balance for the subject due to special circumstances using the Application to Recredit a HELP Balance form within 12 months of the last date of attendance, or within 12 months of the end of the period of study in which the subject was, or was to be, undertaken. TAFE NSW Higher Education has

the discretion to waive the 12 months requirement if it is satisfied that the application to withdraw could not be made within the time limits because of the nature of the student's special circumstances.

- 11.3 All applications for refund of tuition fees or recredit of a HELP balance for a subject after census date due to special circumstances must be submitted by the student to the Customer Service desk at their campus of enrolment or via the TAFE NSW website (Contact Us).
- 11.4 The student's application for a refund of tuition fees or recredit of their HELP balance for a subject should include independent supporting documentation.
- 11.5 Each application for a refund of a student's tuition fees or recredit of a HELP balance for a subject will be examined and determined on its merits. TAFE NSW will consider the student's claim, together with any independent supporting documentary evidence that substantiates the claim.
- 11.6 Where TAFE NSW is satisfied that special circumstances apply (see Section 12), a refund of the student's tuition fees or recredit of the HELP balance for the subject will be made.
- 11.7 If the decision results in a refund or recredit, Student Services Finance must forward a request to the TAFE NSW Student Loans Unit to adjust the student record with the Commonwealth Government and the Australian Taxation Office.
- 11.8 Where a student's application for a refund of their tuition fees or recredit of a HELP balance for a subject is unsuccessful, the student has the right to request a review of the decision.

## **12. Special circumstances**

- 12.1 The range of special circumstances which may apply are governed by the HESA Act 2003, and can include those that:
  - beyond a student's control, and
  - do not make full impact until on or after the census date, and
  - make it impracticable for the student to complete the subject requirements.
- 12.2 Special circumstances do not include:
  - lack of knowledge or understanding of tuition fee requirements or the requirements for HELP assistance; or
  - a student's incapacity to repay a HELP debt.

## **13. Refund and re-credit review procedures**

- 13.1 Where a student's application for a refund of tuition fees or re-credit of their HELP balance for a subject due to special circumstances is unsuccessful, the student has the right to request a review of the decision. The time limit for applying for a review of the decision is 28 days from the day the student first received notice of the decision.
- 13.2 The review will be conducted by the Senior Manager Student Finance TAFE NSW or their delegate who will not be the same officer who made the original decision declining the student's request to refund the tuition fees or re-credit a HELP balance. The delegate will hold a position at a more senior level than the officer who made the original decision.
- 13.3 If the decision results in a refund or recredit being approved, the Student Services Finance Unit must forward a request to the TAFE NSW Student Loans Unit to adjust the student record with the Commonwealth Government and the Australian Taxation Office.

- 13.4 The Senior Manager Student Finance will notify the student, in writing, of the outcome of the review process and provide reasons for making the decision within the available options.
- 13.5 The Senior Manager Student Finance will advise students whose application for review is unsuccessful of their right to appeal to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT) for a review of the outcome. Students who have self-paid are not eligible to appeal to the AAT.
- 13.6 In relation to consideration of appeals by the AAT, the Manager Student Loans Unit will be the contact person for the Commonwealth Department of Education for appeals through the AAT.
- 13.7 Students can access further information about the review of HELP decisions on the Commonwealth Study Assist website.

## **14. Roles and responsibilities**

- 14.1 Key TAFE NSW personnel with responsibility for implementing this procedure are:
- Manager Student Administration Services;
  - Senior Manager Student Finance;
  - Manager Student Loans Unit;
  - Senior Manager Student Data and Reporting.
- 14.2 All TAFE NSW Higher Education students and staff need to be aware of their responsibility to comply with this procedure.
- 14.3 This procedure does not replace or modify any other responsibilities which may arise under other higher education provider policies or under statute or any other law.

## **15. Related documents**

TAFE NSW Assessment Policy

TAFE NSW Customer Complaints Policy

TAFE NSW Higher Education Assessment Procedure

TAFE NSW Higher Education Tuition Fees, Payments, HELP, Refunds and Review Policy

TAFE NSW Higher Education Qualifications Pathway and Credit Policy and Procedure

## **16. Monitoring and evaluation**

This procedure will be reviewed and updated regularly in line with the TAFE NSW Higher Education Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement Framework.

## **17. Publication of this procedure**

The current version of this procedure is published on the TAFE NSW internet.

## **18. Approval**

The TAFE NSW Higher Education Academic Council approved this version of this procedure on 7 December 2023.