

Policy and Procedure

Name:	Withdrawals, Deferrals and Refunds Policy & Procedure
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SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

To inform students and staff of Australian Institute of Management Education and Training (AIMET) policies and processes relating to course refunds, course withdrawals and course deferrals.

SCOPE

This Withdrawals, Deferrals and Refunds Policy and Procedure applies to all students as well as all staff involved either directly or indirectly with administering requests for course withdrawals, refunds, extensions and/or temporary suspension requests.

SECTION 2 – POLICY

PRINCIPLES

The Withdrawals and Refunds Policy and Procedure is guided by the principles of access, equity, fairness and timeliness.

AIMET is committed to:

- ensuring students that request to withdraw from a course and/or receive refunds are not victimised or discriminated against
- considering course withdrawal and refund requests in a consistent, transparent, objective and unbiased manner
- making all details of the procedures publicly available
- informing students of the policy pre-enrolment and advising students to read it at the commencement of a course
- specifying reasonable timelines for responses and reimbursement of monies at each stage of the process and monitoring of these timelines
- providing reasons and full explanation in writing for decisions and actions taken as part of the procedures
- keeping appropriate records of withdrawal and refund requests, including brief written outcome, within student files and allowing students access to their records
- ensuring that such records are treated as confidential
- reviewing the Withdrawals, Deferrals and Refunds process regularly
- AIM does not have financial, administrative or other barriers to a student withdrawing from the unit before the unit's census date.

LEGISLATION

All requests to Withdraw, Defer and/or obtain a Refund are actioned in accordance with the following Australian Government legislation:

- VET Guidelines 2015
- National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011
- Competition and Consumer Act 2010
- Fair Trading Act 1987 (NSW, WA, SA)
- Fair Trading Act 1999 (VIC)
- Fair Trading Act 1989 (QLD)
- Fair Trading Act 1992 (ACT)
- Fair Trading Act 1990 (TAS)
- Consumer Affairs and Fair Trading Act 2013 (NT)

SECTION 3 – PROCEDURE

WITHDRAWAL – STUDENTS ENROLLED IN NON-VET FEE-HELP ELIGIBLE COURSES

Withdrawals Procedure

1. At any time following enrolment in a course, and prior to the designated course end date, students may withdraw from a course by giving written notice to compliance@aim.com.au. It is essential that the student includes:
 - a. a detailed explanation of why they are requesting to withdraw from their course and/or request a refund
 - b. Any documentary evidence to support this request e.g. medical certificate, travel documents etc.
2. Any student that withdraws from a course may remain liable to pay the full course tuition fees, subject to the Refund policy.
3. Students that withdraw from a course prior to completing the qualification will be given recognition for any units satisfactorily completed up to the date of withdrawal, provided all fees due up until this date have been paid in full.
4. Note the maximum period of deferral is 12 months

Refund Policy and Related Procedure

1. All requests for refunds must be made in writing to compliance@aim.com.au.
2. AIM agrees to refund within 21 days of the receipt of written notice of withdrawal by the student (or parent or guardian if the student is under 18 years of age), tuition fees paid by or on behalf of the student less the amounts to be retained as agreed and as detailed below:
 - a. **Refunds payable for withdrawals prior to expiration of orientation period**
If a student withdraws from a course on or before the last day of the orientation period (i.e. on or before the 10th day following the course commencement date) a full refund of the fees will be made, less a cancellation fee equal to \$150 to cover administration costs
 - b. **Refunds payable for withdrawals between the expiration of orientation period and 30 days post-course commencement**
If a student withdraws from a course after the last day of the orientation period (i.e. on or after the 11th day following the course commencement date) but on or prior to the 30th day post-course commencement then a cancellation fee equivalent to 50% of the total course tuition fee will apply.
 - c. **No refund is payable for withdrawals more than 30 days following the course commencement date**
A cancellation fee equivalent to 100% of total course tuition fees will apply in this instance.
 - d. **Refunds payable for withdrawals due to illness or hardship**
In the case of a student who withdraws from a course or programme due to illness or extreme hardship, AIM may, at its discretion, allow a refund of the fees. The following conditions apply:
 - (i) The person concerned must produce satisfactory evidence of the circumstances of his/her withdrawal, such as medical certificates.
 - (ii) A cancellation fee equal to 25% of total course tuition fees will be withheld.
 - (iii) Withdrawal must take place prior to the expiration of the course.
 - e. **Refunds payable for units / courses that AIM can no longer provide**
Should AIM be unable to provide all units to meet the student's course completion schedule, either option (i) or (ii) below will apply:
 - (i) course fees paid will be refunded in full and no Statement of Attainment will be issued for any unit, or
 - (ii) course fees paid on any unavailable unit/s will be refunded, and a Statement of Attainment will be issued for satisfactorily completed units.

In the event that AIM cancels a full qualification / course for any reason, students enrolled at the time AIM announces the cancellation will be entitled to a full refund. This will not incur any administrative charges or penalties and will be paid within 2 weeks of the day on which the training ceased being provided.

f. Refunds payable where a student withdraws from a course following a serious act of misconduct

No refund of any monies paid will be granted in this instance.

WITHDRAWAL AND DEFERRAL – STUDENTS ENROLLED IN VET FEE-HELP ELIGIBLE COURSES

Withdrawals and Deferral Procedure

1. At any time following enrolment in a course, and prior to the designated course end date, students may withdraw or defer from a course by giving written notice to compliance@aim.com.au:
 - a. For pre-census withdrawals or deferrals students must confirm their request to withdraw
 - b. For post-census withdrawals or deferrals, students must confirm their request to withdraw and if a refund is required please refer to the Special Circumstances section of the policy below.
2. Any student that withdraws or defers from a course may remain liable to pay the full course tuition fees, subject to the Refund policy.
3. Students that withdraw or defer from a course prior to completing the qualification will be given recognition for any units satisfactorily completed up to the date of withdrawal, provided all fees due up until this date have been paid in full.
4. Deferrals are only granted for a maximum of 12 months

Refund Policy and Procedure

In the event of a student withdrawing from a VET unit of study on or before the census date for that unit of study:

1. 100% of tuition fees paid for that unit will be refunded to the student; and
2. The student will not incur a VET FEE-HELP debt.

The College will refund within 28 days of the receipt of written notice of withdrawal by the student, tuition fees paid by or on behalf of the student for the relevant units of study.

In the event of a student withdrawing from a unit of study after census date for that unit of study:

1. no refund is applicable; and/or
2. The student will incur a VET FEE-HELP debt.

A student who withdraws after the census date for a unit of study may apply for special consideration in line with the Student Review Procedures for Re-crediting a FEE-HELP Balance.

NOTE: The same pre and post census conditions apply when a student wishes to transfer their course. If a student has passed census date and wishes to transfer course, they should complete their currently enrolled units of study and then make the course transfer and where applicable the relevant units will be recognised towards the new qualification.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

How can a student apply to have their HELP debt removed under 'special circumstances'?

To re-credit FEE-HELP balance, a student must apply to AIMET under the 'special circumstances' provisions. The student must state what the 'special circumstances' were and why those particular circumstances prevented the student from successfully completing their unit(s) of study. Students should apply by giving written notice to compliance@aim.com.au

AIMET must be satisfied that special circumstances applied to that student and that the circumstances:

- were beyond the student's control; and
- did not make their full impact on the student until on or after the census date; and
- were such that it made it impracticable for the student to complete their unit(s) of study requirements.

AIMET will assess the student's application in accordance with the requirements of the Higher Education Support Act 2003 and its associated guidelines. It will be expected that the student is able to supply AIMET with independent, supporting documentation that supports the student's claim.

There are no provisions under the Higher Education Support Act 2003 for a student to have their debt removed if they have already successfully completed their unit of study. If a student withdraws from a unit after the census date because they changed their mind about studying, the student is still required to repay their HELP debt for that unit(s).

Application process

A student must apply directly to AIMET within the requisite timeframe (refer to Application time limit below) and indicate the unit(s) relevant to their application. A student's application must detail what the special circumstances were, and how/why the student believes those circumstances made it impracticable for them to complete those units. Students should apply by giving written notice to compliance@aim.com.au

Application time limit

The application must be submitted to AIMET within 12 months of their withdrawal day. The 'withdrawal day' is taken to be the day AIMET has specified in its notice to students as the day the student's withdrawal takes effect, or if the student has not officially withdrawn their enrolment, the student's 'withdrawal day' is taken to be the last day of the period in which the student was to undertake the unit. Under the Higher Education Support Act 2003, institutions/providers also have the discretion to extend this time limit if the institution/provider is satisfied that it was not possible for the student to submit an application within the 12 months.

EXTENSION

Students enrolled in VET qualifications may request an extension of up to three months in order to complete outstanding assessment items. The extension period will be added to the enrolment duration. Requests must be made in writing to compliance@aim.com.au and students will need to state the reason(s) for the extension.

DEFERRING HIGHER EDUCATION STUDY

A student that has been accepted for admission and enrolled to commence a unit of study, may seek to defer their studies - provided it is done so within the accepted time frames, and follows the documented procedure.

In order to defer a unit of study, you must complete and submit a Deferment Form. A request for deferral must occur before the census date for the unit of study.

If the application is received within the accepted timeframes using the documented procedure, there will be no academic penalty and the unit fees will be held in credit for up to one year. If the unit fees escalate in this time, the fees applied will remain at the original remitted amount.

A student who seeks to defer the commencement of studies after the specified timeframes will forfeit the unit fees and will have an incomplete status recorded on their academic record, unless there is sufficient evidence to support a claim of special circumstances.

Higher Education - Deferral and Withdrawal

	10 days+ before start	Prior to Census date	After Census Date	After end of Week 3
Action	Cancel enrolment	1. Deferment for up to one academic year 2. Withdrawal from unit	1. Deferment is no longer possible 2. Withdrawal from unit	1. Deferment is no longer possible 2. Withdrawal from unit
Result	Full refund	1. No academic penalty 2. 'W' (Withdraw) recorded on academic transcript	1. N/A 2. 'WF' (Withdrawal/Fail) recorded on academic transcript, unless special circumstances are accepted by the National Academic Director	1. 'WF' (Withdrawal/Fail) recorded on academic transcript, unless special circumstances are accepted by the National Academic Director 2. Grade of zero calculated towards GPA
Fees	Full refund	1. Deferral fee of \$250. Fees paid retained for one academic year 2. Withdrawal fee of \$250. Balance refunded.	1. No refund 2. Special circumstances should be drawn to the attention of the National Academic Director	1. No refund 2. Special circumstances should be drawn to the attention of the National Academic Director

SECTION 4 – REFERENCE AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION**DEFINITIONS**

Word/Term	Definition
Course commencement date	The date that is agreed between AIM and the student to be the first date for online course access of a particular student enrolment

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Document name	Document type	Location

SECTION 5 – GOVERNANCE**CHANGE HISTORY**

Version	Approval date	Approved by	Approved by	Change
1.2	21/06/2016	Director Customer Success	Head of Compliance VET	Updated policy into new template Updated to reflect RTO and AQF standards
1.3	30/06/2016	Director Customer Success	Head of Compliance VET	Updated Withdrawal and Deferral definitions to align to VET-FEE standards

Please note:

- Printing this document may make it obsolete
- For the latest version of this policy always check the Policy site located here <http://www.aim.com.au/training/student-information>