

Fees and Refund Policy

Preamble

Tuggerah Lakes Community College Incorporated, trading as TLK Community College ('the College'), is committed to the application of a fair and reasonable fees and refund policy. Through the application of this policy, the College makes prospective students and clients aware of College's fees, charges and refund arrangements before accepting enrolment.

Scope

This policy applies to fees, charges and refunds that relate to the College's provision of education and training. The policy applies to students undertaking training with government subsidies, students and clients paying full fees and students paying concession fees.

Definitions

Credit: means retaining student fees or charges for application to a future course.

Credit Transfer: is a process that provides students with consistent credit outcomes for Units of Competency based on identified equivalence in content and learning outcomes between matched units.

Fee-for-service: means any enrolment where a student is not eligible for subsidies through government or any other funding body.

Nationally Recognised Training: means any training course or program under the Australian Qualifications Framework leading to vocational qualifications and credentials.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL): means an assessment process that involves assessment of a student's relevant prior learning (including formal, informal and non-formal learning experiences) to determine the extent to which the student already meets Unit/s of Competency requirements.

Refund: means returning all or part of a fee or charge paid by the student.

Smart and Skilled: refers to the NSW Government's entitlement model of subsidised training that may be available for eligible students. Maximum student enrolment positions apply according to funding limits.

Smart and Skilled Provider Calculator: refers to a NSW Government online calculator which the College accesses to determine Smart and Skilled student fees and subsidies.

Smart and Skilled Adult and Community Education (ACE) Community Service Obligation (CSO) Program: refers to a NSW Government subsidised program that provides for training and support that cannot be effectively addressed through normal Smart and Skilled entitlements. The program includes College grants for specific types of training and support for disadvantaged learners, regional and remote communities and hard to service communities.

The New South Wales (NSW) Skills List: refers to a list of Qualifications eligible for Smart and Skilled subsidy.

Transfer: means the re-allocation of enrolment fees from one course to another course.

Policy Statement

The College will collect and administer fees, charges and refunds in accordance with the provisions of applicable legislative and contractual requirements.

Notification of Fees and Charges

The College will advise each student of any fees, resource costs, incidental expenses and other charges that apply to the study program before the student enrolls. Where an employer is paying for an employee's enrolment, the College will also provide this information to the employer.

Fee-For-Service Programs

The College advises fees and any additional charges and resource costs in course promotional materials for its fee-for-service programs. Promotional materials may include Course Guides and information packages, the College's website, quotes and pre-course invoices.

Smart and Skilled Courses

The College may require students to pay incidental expenses and other relevant charges in addition to the Smart and Skilled fee for subsidised courses. The College publishes these costs on its website and will ensure that students are aware of these costs prior to enrolment.

Other Subsidised Programs

For all other government subsidised training programs, the College will advise each student of any subsidy the government provides, additional fees, incidental expenses and other charges that apply to the study program before the student enrolls. Where an employer is supporting an employee's enrolment, the College will also provide this information to the employer.

Fees and Charges

Course Fees

The College determines course fees for its fee-for-service training provision. For government subsidised programs, the program contract may stipulate the fees that a student is to pay.

Smart and Skilled Fees

Students enrolling with Smart and Skilled subsidies must pay the relevant fee as set out in the NSW Skills List. The College will calculate the relevant fee using the Smart and Skilled Provider Calculator, the student's eligibility criteria and any applicable Recognition of Prior Learning and Credit Transfer arrangements.

Smart and Skilled Adult and Community Education (ACE) Community Service Obligation (CSO) Program Fees

Students enrolling with Smart and Skilled ACE CSO subsidies must pay fees set under Smart and Skilled conditions. The College will calculate the relevant fee using Smart and Skilled ACE CSO Operating Guidelines, the student's eligibility criteria and any applicable Recognition of Prior Learning and Credit Transfer arrangements.

Fees for Other Subsidised Programs

Students enrolling with any other subsidy must pay any fees that the relevant funding body sets out in its guidelines.

Fee Concessions and Exemptions

Fee-for-Service Concessions

The College offers a ten dollar (\$10) concession for non-accredited arts, leisure, lifestyle, well-being and computer courses. Students are eligible for this concession if they:

- Receive a government funded pension or benefit of any kind (for example, Commonwealth Seniors Health Card or Low Income Health Care Card) or
- Receive a Centrelink benefit or AUSTUDY/ABSTUDY or
- Hold a NSW Seniors Card.

Smart and Skilled Fee Concessions

Students who are eligible for a concession fee include Commonwealth welfare recipients or a dependant child, spouse or partner of a Commonwealth welfare recipient. Students seeking a concession must provide the following proof of eligibility:

- A letter from the Department of Human Services (Centrelink) confirming receipt of the benefit clearly showing the Centrelink Reference Number (CRN) or
- A current concession card that shows the CRN or
- A current Centrelink income statement which clearly shows the benefit or allowance category and the CRN or
- Any other evidence that clearly shows the CRN and the benefit or allowance category or
- For people applying for Austudy or Newstart allowance, an approval letter from Centrelink that shows the CRN and indicates the commencement date of their benefit is within two weeks of their enrolment or two weeks within the date of the first class attendance or participation in training.

Smart and Skilled Fee Exemptions

Students who qualify for a fee exemption for Smart and Skilled subsidised courses are:

- Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People
- People with a disability (that is people who meet the disability fee exemption criteria, including the dependent child, spouse or partner or a recipient of a Disability Support Pension).

Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students must meet the Smart and Skilled personal and program eligibility criteria.

A student with a disability must declare their previous enrolments in a Smart and Skilled qualification in a calendar year.

Adult and Community Education (ACE) Community Service Obligation (CSO) Program Concessions and Exemptions

Fee concessions will be available for students who are Commonwealth welfare recipients and their dependents.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students will not pay a fee to enrol in an ACE CSO program.

Students who meet the Smart and Skilled disability definition will not pay a fee for the first ACE CSO program they commence in a calendar year. A concession fee will apply for any subsequent training program where the student commences in the same calendar year. These fees will also apply for a dependent of a Disability Support benefit holder.

Credit Transfer (CT) Fees

This section applies only to fee-for-service enrolments.

There is no fee to submit a Credit Transfer (CT) application. See Pre-Enrolment Information and Student Handbook for full details. Students seeking CT should complete a *Credit Transfer Application Form* available on the College website www.tlkcc.com.au or from reception. Unit codes must match for the College to award CT.

The College will apply a fee reduction for fee-for-service students with successful CT applications. This will reduce the fee for applicable Units of Competency by one hundred percent (100%) of the normal cost for each unit. The College will apply the fee reduction to a student's second invoice payment for the course. The College will refund the difference between the fee reduction and any fee overpayment by the student, where this occurs.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Fees

This section applies only to fee-for-service enrolments.

A pre-assessment meeting fee of one hundred and fifty dollars (\$150) applies to Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Applications and is payable on submission of an *RPL Application Form*. The College will supply an RPL Kit containing the form to students who nominate for RPL assessment on their enrolment form. See Pre-Enrolment Information and Student Handbook for full details.

If the RPL application is successful, the student will be eligible for a fee reduction. This will reduce the fee of applicable Units of Competency by fifty percent (50%) of the normal cost for each, with the resulting fee incorporating the cost of assessment and administration. The College will apply the fee reduction to a student's second invoice payment for the course. The College will refund the difference between the fee reduction and any fee overpayment by the student, where this occurs.

Fees for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Credit Transfer (CT) For Government Subsidised Courses

Where an eligible student achieves Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) or Credit Transfer (CT) for one or more Units of Competency, the College will adjust the qualification price to determine a new student fee according to the program guidelines.

Resitting Assessment Fees

A student has two opportunities to satisfactorily complete each assessment task for an accredited unit within the normal enrolment fee. If a student fails to achieve a satisfactory result on the second attempt, they may re-sit the assessment task a third time at a cost of one hundred dollars (\$100) per assessment task. After three failed attempts to achieve a satisfactory result, a student must re-enrol in the unit of study at the normal enrolment fee.

Course Transfer Fees

A student may apply to transfer course fees to another course by giving at least five (5) working days' notice, before the commencement date, of their intention to cancel the enrolment. A twenty five dollar (\$25) transfer fee will apply.

The transfer fee does not apply to students accessing training under Smart and Skilled subsidies who withdraw before the cut-off date.

Alternatively, a student may apply for a credit of course fees by giving at least five (5) working days' notice, before the commencement date, of their intention to cancel the enrolment. A twenty five dollar (\$25) administration charge will apply, and the College will hold the remaining prepaid fees in credit until the student chooses an alternative course.

The Business Manager or delegate will assess any request where the student gives less than five (5) working days' notice and may allow enrolment in the next offering of the same course where a cancellation with less than five (5) working days' notice was received, free of further charges if there is a space available. In this instance, the student must call the College in the week prior to the next commencement date to ascertain if the option is available.

The College permits only one transfer per term for each student, unless the transfer relates to any course the College cancels for any reason. In this case, the transfer fee will not apply.

Fees and charges are not transferable to other students or other institutions.

Fees for Accredited Training Statement of Attainments and/or Qualification Testamurs (including Record of Results)

Originals (first issue): the College will issue a Statement of Attainment or Qualification Testamur (including a Record of Results) to students who complete accredited training at no additional cost.

Replacement Documents: if a student requests a replacement document following the first issue, a fifty five dollar (\$55) replacement fee applies for each Statement of Attainment or Qualification Testamur (including Record of Results). To obtain a replacement, the student should complete an *Application for Re-Issue of Certificate Form*, available at www.tlkcc.com.au or from College reception.

Non-Accredited Training Statement of Participation: a Statement of Participation is available for students seeking a record for non-accredited course attendance. A student may request a Statement of Participation at the time of enrolment by selecting the option on the enrolment form or within twelve (12) months of course completion. The fee is fifteen dollars (\$15) per individual certificate (unless course documentation indicates that the course fee includes a Statement of Participation).

Students must maintain eighty percent (80%) attendance to be eligible for a Statement of Participation. Students who request the Statement after course completion must complete a *Statement of Participation Application Form* form available on the College website www.tlkcc.com.au/forms or at reception. Payment for the Statement applies at either the time of enrolment or on application.

Other Fees and Charges

Other fees and charges may apply to courses and, depending on the program, these charges may include:

- An administration charge
- Enrolment fees
- Incidental expenses, which may include:
 - the cost of essential equipment and other items that the student may choose to acquire from the College, or from a supplier other than the College, where these items become the student's physical property retained on completion of training and not consumed during the training (such as toolkits) or
 - an optional charge for an item that is not essential for the student to complete the training or
 - an optional charge for an alternative form of access to an item or service that is an essential component of the training, but that the College otherwise makes readily available to students at no charge
- Items that the student consumes or transforms during the course
- Mandatory uniforms or protective clothing for some work-placement programs

- Photocopying
- Textbooks

Additional charges may also apply for:

- Non-payment of fees
- Overdue fees
- Dishonoured cheque fees.

Any equipment or property that the student either purchases separately or pays for as part of course fees becomes the student's property.

Payment Arrangements

Payment arrangements align to courses and may vary depending upon factors such as length of course, student cohort or government contract guidelines.

It is a College requirement that where course fees, administrative or other charges apply, students must pay these items by the due date. This requirement applies irrespective of the availability and receipt of government subsidies by an employer, school, or student.

The College will accept cash, EFTPOS, money order, direct bank deposit, credit card, bank cheque or personal cheque.

Payment Plans

The College may make payment plans available for students whose inability to afford the entire cost of their study program on enrolment may cause disadvantage. The College uses the EzyPay system to manage payment plans. The Business Manager must approval all payment plans.

Recovery of Outstanding Fees

Students must pay all fees and charges by the due date. Failure to pay fees and charges may result in any or all of the following until the student pays the full amount:

- Suspension from attending or participating in the course
- Exclusion from assessment activities
- Withholding of certification documentation
- Termination of the enrolment
- Exclusion from any future enrolments at the College.

The College will remind students who fail to pay fees of their obligation to do so and of the possible consequences of non-payment.

The College may refer fees and charges remaining unpaid after ninety (90) days from the due date to a debt collection agency.

Fee Assurance Statement

The College is required to protect fees that a student pays in advance for nationally recognised training. The requirement protects individuals should the College cease to operate and consequently not be able to complete or offer a course of study in which the student has a prepaid enrolment. To meet this regulation, the College will accept payment of not more than fifteen hundred dollars (\$1,500) from a student prior to course commencement. Following course commencement, the College may require payment of additional fees in advance from the student, but the total prepaid amount must not exceed fifteen hundred dollars (\$1,500) at any time.

Completion Guarantee

The College is committed to making every reasonable effort to ensure that when students enrol with the College they can complete their study program. The College will only commence a course when there are sufficient students enrolled for the course to be viable. Should the College decide to cancel a course due to limited enrolments, the College will return all prepaid fees for that course to students.

Once a course commences, the College guarantees to complete the course within the period advertised. Where circumstances arise beyond the College's control, that force the College to discontinue the course, the College guarantees that it will:

- Refund any fees a student has paid for modules or units not delivered
- Issue Statements of Attainment for all the work successfully completed and
- Assist the student, to the best of the Colleges' ability, to transfer to an equivalent course with another Registered Training Organisation.

Circumstances beyond the College's control may include a trainer becoming ill or resigning unexpectedly, the College's inability to source a replacement tutor or when continuing student numbers fall below viability levels.

Refunds

The College will refund all or part of a student's course fees if:

- The College cancels a course for any reason
- A student withdraws before the cut-off date for withdrawal without penalty
- The Business Manager determines that course delivery did not meet the reasonable expectations of the student
- A student re-enrols only to repeat a unit or module with a not-yet-competent result and the student subsequently successfully appeals the original decision
- The College agrees that the student has medical, hardship or other extenuating circumstance preventing their attendance
- A student has overpaid the course fee
- The College has granted Credit Transfer (CT) or Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) after enrolment and the fee recalculation is lower than the fee the student has already paid.

Refunds for Smart and Skilled Enrolment Withdrawal

This section only applies to students accessing courses with Smart and Skilled subsidies.

The College will determine a cut-off date without penalty, for each Smart and Skilled program it offers, by which a student can withdraw his/her enrolment and receive a refund of all fees. The College will advise the student of this date before the student enrolls in the study program. If a student withdraws after the cut-off date, the College will provide the student with a statement of fees that includes all fees applied and any applicable fee refund.

If a student withdraws from training, not of their own accord, the College will refund any prepaid fees for units that the student has yet to complete. This situation may occur if the College closes or no longer offers training under Smart and Skilled subsidies.

If a student withdraws from a qualification having completed all the requirements for a lower level qualification, the student will not be eligible for a fee refund of the difference between the applicable fees for each qualification.

Non-Refundable Circumstances

The College will not usually refund course fees where the student requests the refund because they:

- Changed their mind about attending the course after enrolment
- Changed employment
- Changed work hours
- Moved out of the area and/or relocated or
- Were made redundant or retrenched.

Approving Refunds

Where a student overpays a course fee or the College cancels a course, administration staff may authorise refunds according to this policy.

The Business Manager must approve all other refunds. Exemptions to the refund conditions may occur where the Business Manager agrees that the student has extenuating circumstances or compassionate grounds for an exemption.

Publication of Fees and Refunds Policy

The College will publish all or part of this policy for public viewing in the College's Course Guides, with course pre-enrolment information and on the College's website at www.tlkcc.com.au/policies.

Students' Rights to Appeal Decisions

If a student is not satisfied with a College decision about fees or refunds, the student may appeal that decision using the College's Student and Client Complaints and Appeals (Consumer Protection) Policy. This policy and the availability of complaints and appeals processes does not remove a student's right to take action under Australian consumer protection law.

College Administrative Responsibilities

- The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is responsible for:
 - Developing and periodically reviewing the Fees and Refund Policy
 - Ensuring College employees and independent contractors comply with the Policy
 - Ensuring College employees understand and comply with requirements of any relevant funding body
- The Business Manager is responsible for:
 - Researching and setting fair and reasonable course fees in accordance with this policy and legislative requirements
- Coordinators are responsible for:
 - Providing accurate information on fees and charges for courses that fall into their area of responsibility to students and staff
 - Ensuring that the relevant excerpts from this policy are published in College marketing materials (such as the College Course Guide) and on the College's website
- The Finance Support Officer via the Business Manager is responsible for ensuring:
 - That refund payments are authorised and paid in a timely manner according to legal requirements
 - College staff adheres to the fee assurance arrangements as outlined
- Administrative officers are responsible for applying this policy when:
 - Accepting fees and charges payments

- Processing refunds, credits and transfers.

Compliance

The College's Fees and Refunds Policy and related procedures shall contribute to compliance with the following legislation and regulations:

- Competition and Consumer Act 2010
- Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations 2015.