

FEE-HELP Tuition Fee Refund Policy

Policy Information

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| Policy Name: | FEE-HELP Tuition Fee Refund |
| Policy Number: | 524 |
| Current Version: | 4.1 – 11/05/2012 |
| Purpose: | The purpose of this policy is to provide a set of guidelines and rules surrounding the withdrawal of students from units of study, and the financial implication in regard to Institute set fines and their FEE-HELP debt. |
| Scope: | This policy applies to all persons studying under courses of study at SBIT, irrespective of whether or not the person has chosen to access FEE-HELP assistance for their tuition fees. |
| Exceptions: | VET courses of study are governed by the VET FEE-HELP Tuition Fee Refund Policy No. 526 |
| Policy Owner: | Director, Support Services |
| Policy Author: | FEE-HELP Coordinator, Student Administration, Derek Phillips |
| Related policies and legislation: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Higher Education Support Act 2003 (HESA) http://www.comlaw.gov.au/comlaw/Legislation/ActCompilation1.nsf/0/91FD9474C87B50A0CA256F85000DF57/\$file/HigherEducationSupport2003WD02.pdf ▪ Administrative Information for Higher Education Providers: Student Support http://www.deewr.gov.au/HigherEducation/Resources/Documents/AIPFeb2010.pdf ▪ Higher Education Provider Guidelines http://www.comlaw.gov.au/ComLaw/Legislation/LegislativeInstrumentCompilation1.nsf/0/46B98EE0BB072499CA2573E7000797C8/\$file/HEPGuidelinesCompilation_14Jan.pdf ▪ Student Ability to Withdraw from Classes within 21 Days of Close of Study Policy No. 513 ▪ Refund and Fee Exemption Policy No. 510 ▪ FEE-HELP Review and Re-crediting Policy No. 522 |
| Internal procedures guided by this policy: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ SBIT Procedure No. 5022 – FEE-HELP Review and Re-crediting Procedure |

Policy

1.0 Key dates

1.1 Census Date

The Census Date for a unit of study is the closing date for a student to apply for FEE-HELP assistance for that unit of study. SBIT will set a Census Date for each unit of study it provides or proposes to provide in accordance with *HESA* [s104-4(5) & s169-25(1)].

The Census Date will occur no less than 20% of the way through the period of delivery in which the unit of study is being undertaken by students. This will include student breaks, assessment and examination periods.

1.2 Administration Date

The Administration Date is used by SBIT as the deadline for which completion of online enrolment and submission of the *Request for FEE-HELP Assistance* form is required by Student Administration and Services. After the Administration Date the 'Late Enrolment' financial penalty/fine will apply to all persons seeking to enrol in a unit of study.

The Administration Date is also the deadline for which to make any changes to unit of study enrolments, including withdrawing from these units, without incurring a 'Change Enrolment' financial penalty/fine for each unit of study affected.

The Administration Date does not override the Census Date in terms of a student incurring financial liability to the Commonwealth for those units of study in to which they are enrolled.

The Administration Date will be set for each unit of study in accordance with the fairness provisions of *HESA* [s19-30].

1.3 Withdrawal Date

The Withdrawal Date is used by SBIT as the deadline to withdraw from units of study without receiving academic penalty (i.e. students will receive a fail grade on their academic results).

The Withdrawal Date is set at 21 days from close of study for each unit of study.

2.0 Refunds

The *HESA* [s 169-15 (3)] specifies that a student enrolled in a unit of study, is entitled to a refund of their tuition fees if they withdraw from their studies on or before the Census Date.

Accordingly, SBIT will repay to a student any payment of the student's tuition fees against a unit/s of study that the student made on or before the Census Date if the student is no longer enrolled in the unit/s of study at the end of the Census Date.

However, this will not apply if:

- the student is no longer enrolled in the unit/s at the end of the Census Date because SBIT has ceased to provide the unit/s as a result of ceasing to provide the course of which the unit/s of study formed part; and
- the Tuition Assurance requirements applied to SBIT at the time that SBIT ceased to provide the unit/s of study; and
- the student chose the option designated under those requirements as Course Assurance in relation to the unit/s of study.

SBIT will refund any upfront payments made by the person towards incidental fees, unless the goods have been received or the services provided; in these cases these fees are non-refundable.

3.0 Financial Penalty/Fine

SBIT is entitled to charge a fine or penalty in circumstances where a student withdraws from their unit/s of study prior to the Census Date but after the Administration Date by which these changes are required.

This fine may only be imposed as a disincentive, and not for the purpose of raising revenue or covering costs.

Accordingly, SBIT will charge a student a financial penalty (fine) if the student withdraws from a unit/s of study or changes their enrolment by dropping unit/s of study if the student does so after the Administration Date, being the start of study for that unit of study.

SBIT is entitled to charge a financial penalty/fine for any actions undertaken in relation to unit of study enrolments, if these actions occur after the set Administration Date.

This financial penalty/fine may only be imposed as a disincentive, and not for the purpose of raising revenue or covering costs.

Accordingly, SBIT will charge a student a 'Change Enrolment' financial penalty/fine for each unit of study that a student changes or withdraws from if the student does so after the Administration Date. SBIT will also charge a 'Late Enrolment' financial penalty/fine for enrolments or submission of the [Application for FEE-HELP Assistance](#) after the Administration Date.

These fines will be applied per unit of study, with relevant fines published through the SBIT website www.southbank.edu.au/fee-help

4.0 Withdrawal from Units of Study or Change of Enrolment

A student may at any time during a semester, cancel enrolment for the semester or amend it by withdrawing from one or more units of study.

However, the cancellation of enrolment may be subject to academic penalty and/or financial penalty as follows:

- 4.1 Withdrawal from unit/s of study or change of enrolment prior to the Administration Date:
 - (a) no academic penalty; and
 - (b) no financial penalty/fine.
- 4.2 Withdrawal from unit/s of study or change of enrolment after the Administration Date but before the Census Date:
 - (a) no academic penalty;
 - (b) financial penalty/fine.
- 4.3 Withdrawal from unit/s of study or change of enrolment after the Census Date but prior to the Withdrawal Date:
 - (a) no academic penalty;
 - (b) full financial liability to the Commonwealth Government.
- 4.4 Withdrawal from unit/s of study or change of enrolment after the Census Date and after the Withdrawal Date:
 - (a) academic penalty;
 - (b) full financial liability to the Commonwealth Government.

5.0 Appeals

A student may apply to SBIT to have their FEE-HELP balance re-credited and FEE-HELP debt remitted, in special circumstances.

Any student who withdraws from a unit/s of study after the Census Date will be referred to the [FEE-HELP Review and Re-crediting Policy No. 522](#), and be advised that they may submit a [QF138 Application to Re-credit FEE-HELP Balance – Higher Education Students](#).

Glossary of Terms/Definitions

| Terms | Definitions |
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| The Act | Higher Education Support Act 2003 |
| Administration Date | Under the provisions of the <i>Act</i> , SBIT may set an earlier date than the Census Date, called an 'Administration Date' for a unit of study. This must not disadvantage students as outlined in the fairness provisions of the <i>Act</i> . SBIT may set this earlier date as the deadline for completion of online enrolment or submission of the <i>Request for FEE-HELP Assistance</i> and enrolment forms, and changes to enrolment, including withdrawing from a unit of study. If persons seeking to enrol do not meet this earlier date, SBIT may charge a late fee or financial penalty for that unit of study, providing the fine or penalty is imposed principally as a disincentive and not in order to raise revenue or cover administrative costs. It is the responsibility of students to ensure they are aware if SBIT has set an earlier Administration Date, as the deadline for enrolling in units of study. |
| Census Date | SBIT is required to set a Census Date for each unit of study that it provides or proposes to provide which is FEE-HELP eligible. This is the last date that a person seeking to enrol can submit a <i>Request for FEE-HELP Assistance</i> form for units of study for which they are seeking FEE-HELP assistance. Students who withdraw from their unit of study on or before the Census Date will not incur a FEE-HELP debt. |
| Course of study | A structured and integrated course of education, usually consisting of a number of units of study, including subjects which lead to a Higher Education award of Associate Degree or Degree. |
| DEEWR | The Commonwealth Government's Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. |
| FEE-HELP | FEE-HELP is a Commonwealth Government loan scheme which assists eligible students to pay their Tuition Fees, and can cover all or part of the student's Tuition Fees for units of study which form part of a higher education award undertaken with a body which is approved as a Higher Education Provider under the <i>Higher Education Support Act 2003</i> (HESA). |
| FEE-HELP Provider | An organisation that is approved under the <i>Higher Education Support Act 2003</i> (HESA) to provide higher education courses of study and to offer FEE-HELP to its students. |
| HESA | Higher Education Support Act 2003 |
| Incidental Fees | <p>A fee is incidental to studies if it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ is for a good or service that is not essential to the unit or course of study; ▪ is for an alternative form/s of access to a good or service that is an essential component of the course of study but is otherwise made readily available at no additional fee by SBIT; ▪ is for an essential good or service that the student has the choice of acquiring from a supplier other than SBIT and is for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - equipment or items which become the physical property of the student and are not consumed during the course of study; or - food, transport and accommodation costs associated with the provision of field trips that form part of the course of study; ▪ is a fine or penalty, provided it is imposed principally as a disincentive and not in order to raise revenue or cover administrative costs. <p>FEE-HELP Assistance does not cover incidental fees. Incidental fees are paid upfront by any SBIT student.</p> |
| Request for FEE-HELP Assistance | The form that must be completed in order for a student to apply for FEE-HELP assistance for units of study with a SBIT. |
| Student | A person who is enrolled in a course/unit of study with Southbank Institute of Technology. |

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| Tuition fee | Any fee payable to SBIT by a person enrolled with, or applying for enrolment with, SBIT. It may also include any fee payable to SBIT in respect of the granting of an award, however does not include any fee that is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ payable in respect of an organisation of students, or of students and other persons; or ▪ payable in respect of the provision to students of amenities or services that are not of an academic nature; or ▪ payable in respect of residential accommodation; or ▪ determined to be a fee of a kind that is incidental to studies that may be undertaken with SBIT, as described under 'Incidental Fees'; or ▪ a student contribution amount payable in respect of a student. |
| Unit of Study | A unit of study forms part of a course of study for which a person may enrol with a provider, and obtain FEE-HELP. |
| Withdrawal Date | An additional date set, after which students who withdraw from the unit will receive academic penalty, i.e. a fail grade. |

Revision History

| Revision Date: | Status: (Draft/Final) | Summary of Changes | Prepared/Approved By: | Revision #: |
|----------------|--------------------------|--|---------------------------------|-------------|
| 02/09/2009 | Final | Initial Document | FEE-HELP Coordinator | 01 |
| 12/10/2009 | Final | Change made to the Administration Date | FEE-HELP Project Coordinator | 02 |
| 15/02/10 | Final | Changes to VET encompasses in this policy | FEE-HELP Coordinator | 03 |
| 12/05/2011 | Final | Reviewed with updates to policy owner and author and change to new policy template | FEE-HELP Coordinator | 04 |
| 11/05/2012 | Final | Reviewed. No changes required to policy. Updated owner and author | FEE-HELP Coordinator | 4.1 |

Distribution

- All Directors
- All educational staff dealing with VET students or persons seeking to enrol
- All non-educational staff dealing with VET students or persons seeking to enrol
- Staff, students and persons seeking to enrol at SBIT