Withdrawals and Refunds Policy

Policy number: CS05

Version: 3.8

Policy Owner: General Manager Organisational Services

Subject Expert: Director Client Services

Next review date: 18 June 2027

1. PURPOSE

The Withdrawals and Refunds Policy establishes the process to be followed for processing all claims by students for withdrawals and refunds of enrolment, tuition and resource fees charged by South Metropolitan TAFE.

2. SCOPE

This policy does not apply to international students. Refer to TAFE International Western Australia (TIWA) refund policy.

Students who have been enrolled with a Commonwealth VET Student Loan should be referred to the **CX01 Tuition Fee refund or re-credit for VET Student Loans enabled courses** policy if they are seeking to withdraw and apply for a refund/re-credit for their enrolment.

3. POLICY GOVERNANCE

- Department of Training and Workforce Development VET Fees & Charges Policy
- VET Student Loans Rules 2016
- Registration Standards for Registered Training Organisations (SRTOs) 2025

4. KEY TERMS – Refer to QMS Glossary for definitions

Census Date	The last day a student may withdraw from a VET Unit of Study in which they are enrolled without incurring a liability for tuition fees or a VET Student Loan debt.
SM TAFE (South Metropolitan TAFE)	Refers to South Metropolitan TAFE, “the Organisation” including all its campuses, departments, centres, business units, corporate units and delivery centres.
VET Course of Study	A qualification that has been approved by Department of Education as eligible for VET Student Loan Assistance.
VSL (VET Student Loan)	An income contingent Commonwealth loan scheme where eligible students may use to defer paying fees for units of study for their Vocational Education and Training (VET) enrolment. This student loan is part of the Higher Education Loan Program (HELP).

VET Unit of Study	A published unit of study that forms part of a VET Course of Study.

5. PRINCIPLES

SM TAFE will apply this policy within the Policy Guidelines for Publicly Funded Providers and Programs as published annually by the WA Department of Training and Workforce Development's (DTWD) VET Fees and Charges Policy.

5.1. Advice of Withdrawal

Students must be advised that written advice of withdrawal is required to ensure that:

- they may be eligible for a refund; or
- they do not incur a financial liability if the student withdraws prior to census dates under the Commonwealth Government's VET Student Loans program.

SM TAFE's Enrolment Terms and Conditions provided to students on enrolment outlines the requirement for written advice of withdrawal. At the time of enrolment, Customer Service staff need to remind students of the *Enrolment Terms and Conditions* particularly the importance of census dates and the need for formal withdrawal, especially when a student has a student loan.

If students do not officially withdraw within the specified time, they will remain liable for full payment of any outstanding fees.

Full refund

Students are entitled to a full refund of fees if one (1) of the following occurs:

- Cancellation or re-scheduling to an unsuitable time for the student of their course/qualification or module/unit of competency.
- The student has not been given a place due to maximum number of places being reached.
- Class cancelled by SM TAFE.
- Diploma/Advanced Diploma students withdrawing before their census dates.

5.2. Partial refunds: Profile and Fee for Service

Student withdrawals from profile funded courses must be treated differently to withdrawals from Fee for Service Courses.

5.2.1 Fee for Service course withdrawals

Students who withdraw from Fee for Service units/courses are not entitled to a refund once classes have commenced regardless of whether the census dates

have not passed unless the enrolment was for an approved Diploma/Advanced Diploma VET Student Loan approved course.

Special circumstances may be considered if the student is able to provide evidence of extenuating circumstances beyond their control. An application for special circumstances must be approved by the relevant Portfolio Manager and endorsed and signed off by the Executive Director before the application is sent to the Director, Client Service for final approval.

5.2.2 Profile course withdrawals

A student who withdraws from a profile funded course, for reasons other than those specified in section 5.1, **prior to or on their census dates**, will be eligible for a partial refund of the fees charged.

The proportion of refund will be calculated according to the guidelines in the DTWD VET Fees & Charges policy which is a full refund of the tuition fee for the unit; and:

- a full refund of the resource fee if the course is a Diploma or Advanced Diploma course; or
- 50% of the resource fee if the course is below Diploma level.

The twenty (20%) percent period is taken as starting from and includes the date of the first official class/attendance/contact for that VET module /unit of study.

5.3. Pro-rata refunds

Pro-rata refunds are not applicable to Fee for Service courses and not available for students on a VET Student Loan.

Withdrawals from profile courses may be supported by the Manager, Customer Services or the Director, Client Services if the application was made before census dates were reached.

Applications for refunds received after census dates will need to have the final approval of the Managing Director.

Application for refunds may be submitted during a profile course of delivery within the semester if a student withdraws for reasons that were beyond their control and as a result of these reasons, it was impossible or difficult for the student to continue their studies at SM TAFE.

Examples that will be considered as special circumstances include:

- Serious illness resulting in extended absence from classes;
- injury or disability that prevents the student from completing their program of study; or
- other exceptional reasons at the discretion of the accountable officer.

Students who are applying for special consideration must be able to provide evidence that the circumstances:

- Were beyond their control;

- did not have full impact on the student until on or after the census date for the unit(s) of study in question; and
- made it impracticable for the student to complete the requirements for the unit(s) of study in question.

All conditions must be met to be eligible for refund based on special consideration/ circumstances. Pre-existing illness may exclude the student from being considered for a refund.

A student who has opted to pay their fees by instalments will only be entitled to a refund if the total owed by the student is less than the refund due. In situations where a student owes more than the refund due, arrangements need to be made with the student for collection of the outstanding fees.

Due to the capping of tuition fee charges for some courses, full time students who withdraw from a proportion of their units may not, in some instances, be entitled to a refund or a refund of the full cost of the units from which they withdraw if the balance owed is still above the fee cap charge.

In all cases, the student should supply documentary proof of any claims (e.g., medical certificates), and copies should be retained with the CS040101 Enrolment Adjustment form.

Student enrolments **must not be cancelled** once students have attended classes.

5.4. No refunds

No refunds will apply in the following situations:

- Students withdraw after the census dates.
- Students withdraw from a Fee for Service unit/course once classes have commenced with the exception of the Diploma of Aviation where the VSL refund rules will apply.
- Discretionary fees unless the enrolled student is studying off campus or offshore.
- The $100 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) pre-interview assessment.
- Recognition of Prior Learning (Advanced Standing) course enrolment fees.

5.5. Discontinuance of course

In the event that SM TAFE ceases to provide a course after it starts but before it is completed, SM TAFE will work with DTWD and other registered providers to organise the placement of students into an equivalent course.

5.6. Discontinued Students

Students who have ceased to participate in classes, learning activities and/or assessments relating to the VET unit of study and have not officially withdrawn will be withdrawn at the conclusion of the unit of study and will be liable for the full payment of outstanding fees.

5.7. VET Course or Unit of Study Deferral

VET course or unit of study deferrals are not available.

6. DOCUMENTS SUPPORTING THIS POLICY

6.1. Policies

- CX03 Admission Policy for VET Student Loans Enabled Courses Policy
- CS04 Fees and Charges Policy

6.2. Procedures

- CX0101 Student Review Procedure for Re-Crediting a Student Loan Balance for Students on VET Student Loan Procedure
- CS0601 Enrolment Procedure
- CX0301 VET Student Loans Enrolment Procedure

6.3. Forms

- CX030101 Local Interview Assessment for Students Applying for a VET Student Loan Form
- CX030102 VET Student Loans Application Form
- CS040101 Enrolment Adjustment Form – Withdrawals and Transfers
- CX030001 Application for Special Circumstances Recredit Remission – Application Form
- CX030002 Application for Special Circumstances Recredit Remission – Assessment Form
- CX030003 Application for Special Circumstances Recredit Remission - Review of Decision Form
- CS040102 Financial Assistance Application Form
- CS040104 Department of Communities (DCP) Fee Waiver Application Form
- CS050003 Withdrawals & Refunds – Special Circumstances – Fee for Service Form
- CS050004 Withdrawals & Refunds – Special Circumstances – Profile Courses Form
- CS050005 Fee Waiver Request (Administration Adjustment) Form
- CS05006 Non Standard Student Enrolment Adjustment Form
- QD020201 Recognition of Prior Learning (Advanced Standing) Individual Student Enrolment Form
- QD020202 Recognition of Prior Learning (Advanced Standing) Group Enrolment Form

7. POLICY REVIEW AND COMMUNICATION

All staff will be notified of new policies and policy changes and the documents will be available on the QMS.

8. POLICY APPROVAL

Approved and Endorsed:

Terry Durant

Managing Director

Date: 16 May 2017

9. DOCUMENT HISTORY AND VERSION CONTROL

Version	Date Approved	Approved by	Brief Description
V1.0	16 May 2017	Managing Director	Withdrawal and Refund policy for all courses delivered at SM TAFE.
V1.1	16 April 2018	Managing Director	Withdrawal and Refund policy for all courses delivered at SM TAFE.
V1.2	28 May 2018	General Manager & Organisational Services	Updated 5.5 and 5.6
V2.0	14 November 2018	CORPEX	Scope, 4. Key definitions, 5. Principles & 6. Documents supporting this policy updated
V2.1	20 February 2020	Manager Assessments and Admissions	CS050001 and CS050002 forms superseded, replaced by CS050005 form
V2.2	30 June 2020	Project Manager	Minor changes to form titles by adding “RPL (Advanced Standing)
V3.0	18/06/2021	General Manager & Organisational Services	Minor changes to 5.1 Full refund; 5.3 Pro-rata refund. Review is incomplete – only CS05 policy was reviewed and approved. Linked documents are currently under review.
V3.1	29/07/2022	Planning and Evaluation Officer	CS050003, CS050004 CS050005 updated according to AVETMISS Standards
V3.2	03/10/2022	Manager Customer Service	5.2.2 – line removed for clarity. 6.3, 6.2 updated
V3.3	04/11/2022	General Manager & Organisational Services	Policy structure updated – 4 key definitions changed to key terms
V3.4	14/12/2022	Manager Customer Service	Minor updates to forms – CS050003, CS050004, CS050005

V3.5	07/07/2023	Manager Customer Service	Minor updates to 6 and 5 grammar and punctuation
V3.6	17/10/2025	General Manager Organisational Services	Full Policy Set Review - Minor formatting changes
V3.7	05/03/2026	General Manager Organisational Services	Minor update to 3. Policy Governance – Changes to the Registration Standards for Registered Training Organisations (SRTOs) 2025
V3.8	09/11/2026	General Manager Organisational Services	Minor update to SE position.