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RELATED POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS:	PPP002 Statement of Intent: Excellence in Customer Service PPP153 VET Student Loans Refunds Procedure PPP146 Student Enrolment Guidelines PPP009 Access and Equity Policy CS004 Course Withdrawal Form SDM010 Enrolment Amendment PPP046 Privacy Policy Higher Education Support Act (2003) HESA

Introduction

The Department of Education and Training (DET) provides guidelines regarding tuition fees and other fees associated with government subsidised training. South West TAFE abides by these Guidelines.

South West TAFE is committed to providing every possible opportunity for students to successfully complete their studies. However, there will be occasions when students need to withdraw from all or part of their course and will be eligible for a fee refund.

South West TAFE collects tuition fees from students to participate in funded training through various funding methods, including:

- Government subsidised
- Self funded
- Fee for service
- VET Student Loans enabled

Definitions

Government Subsidised	where the full cost of the course is offset by a funding contribution from the Victorian Government
Skills First	The Victorian Government's program for funding individuals' entitlement to funded training
Self-funded	the student does not meet the eligibility criteria for a Skills First funded place within the course and is liable to pay the full course cost.
Fee for Service	training where the cost of the course has been negotiated with a third party (usually Industry client) and where the Government makes no contribution towards the cost of the course
Consumable Fee	A fee charged to recover the cost of providing textbooks, learner guides and resource modules that are retained by the student as his/her personal property
VET Student Loan	an income contingent loan scheme for the Vocational Education and Training sector that is part of the Higher Education Loan Program (HELP).
Course Commencement	The date at which a student engages in structured learning in a unit of competency for the first time.
Official Withdrawal	activated by submitting a completed Course Withdrawal Form (CS004) to any Customer Service Centre. The date of submission determines if a refund is applicable.

South West TAFE's responsibilities

Staff will ensure students are aware of the alternatives to withdrawal, the support services available, as well as the correct process to follow if withdrawal is necessary.

Prior to withdrawing a student and wherever possible, South West TAFE will contact the student to offer assistance and discuss their reasons for absence or withdrawal. All students will be treated equitably and will be provided with access to the full range of Institute personal and study support services. At all times their privacy and dignity will be respected.

General conditions

- Consideration of any refund is subject to the student having no outstanding commitments with South West TAFE including outstanding fees, Library loans or fines, and/or department equipment loans.
- Students who have not officially withdrawn and have outstanding fees are still liable for those fees. Outstanding fees remain on a student's record indefinitely and will affect future enrolment.
- In the event of a course being cancelled by South West TAFE prior to or within four weeks of course commencement, a full refund will be issued to the student.
- It is the responsibility of the student to complete a **Course Withdrawal Form (CS004)**. This form is available from Customer Service at all campuses.
- All refunds will be payable by cheque or electronic funds transfer (**CS012 – Request for student refund by EFT** must be received to provide electronic transfer of refund)
- Where the payment of fees (either partial or in full) has been receipted in the name of a third party (i.e. not the enrolled student) any refund will be issued in the name of the third party up to an amount not exceeding the total of their payment. If provided by written authorisation from the third party, South West TAFE can issue the refund in the name of the student.

Certificate I to IV Government funded courses

A student who officially withdraws by submitting a completed **Course Withdrawal Form (CS004)**

- Before the course commences will be eligible for a full refund minus an administration fee of \$55.
- Within four weeks of the course commencement date will receive a refund of fees paid, less fees associated with completed units of competency (where a Grade has been applied) and an administration fee of \$55. Where Units of Competency have been achieved, a Statement of Attainment will be issued to the student.
- Beyond four weeks of their course commencement date, will not receive a refund.

Self-Funded Enrolments

A self-funded enrolled student who officially withdraws by submitting a completed **Course Withdrawal Form (CS004)**

- Before the course commences will be eligible for a full refund minus an administration fee of \$55.
- After the course commencement date will be eligible to receive a refund of fees paid, less fees associated with completed units of competency (where a Grade has been applied) and an administration fee of \$55. Where Units of Competency have been achieved, a Statement of Attainment will be issued to the student.

Fee for Service enrolment

- For Fee for Service enrolments, any refund of fees paid will be in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Training Contract.

Refunds or re-crediting for VET Student Loan enabled courses

Where a student is withdrawing from a VET Student Loan enabled course, refunds will be made in accordance with the Higher Education Support Act 2003 (HESA). Refer to South West TAFE's **PPP153 VET Student Loan Refund Guidelines** for further information.

Consumable Fees

In all circumstances, the refund of unused materials is at the discretion of the teaching department and will be determined by the units of competency commenced and the condition of the materials. In some circumstances, materials cannot be refunded due to health regulations.

Unpaid fees or debt

It is a student's responsibility to make sure that all fees and debts (including course fees and library fines) are paid. This also applies where a third party (such as your employer) has agreed to pay your fees.

Outstanding fees and debts with South West TAFE may impact on a student's ability to continue studying with us; enrol in any further courses; impact on any fee refund; and will result in qualification documents being withheld until payment is made.

Where South West TAFE engages the services of debt collection agencies to recover unpaid fees or debts, we reserve the right to also recover associated debt collection costs from the student. In addition, debt collection processes have the potential to affect your future credit rating.

Legal Action

Legal action may be undertaken if all debt collection activities have been completed and;

- The student has not paid in full, organised a payment plan or have defaulted on a payment plan and;
- The student has not lodged a formal complaint with our Audit Risk and Compliance Manager to dispute the outstanding debt or
- A decision has been made in regards to the student's dispute and they have not taken any further action

Once legal action is initiated, the student may be liable for the legal costs incurred.

Special Circumstances

If a student is unable to officially withdraw within the specified required timelines to be eligible for a refund due to extenuating circumstances, they may write to state their case to:

Registrar
South West TAFE
P O Box 674
Warrnambool 3280
Or email registrar@swtafe.edu.au

ONLY **written claims** for Special Consideration will be addressed.

For Short Course Program Enrolments

To be eligible for a refund of fees associated with a Short Course Programs, the following conditions apply.

	Refund
More than 5 business days prior to course commencement date	Full refund – less a \$20 administration fee
Less than & including 5 business days prior to course commencement date	No refund - transfer to the next available identical course may be requested. A \$20 administration fee will be charged for 2nd and subsequent transfers.
Course commencement date and after	No refund No transfer No substitutions
Course cancelled by South West TAFE	Full refund

- Approved Corporate/Business clients can substitute/transfer an enrolment in the same course, up to 24hrs prior to the commencement date.

If a student is unable to officially withdraw within the timelines required for a refund due to extenuating circumstances, they should contact the Short Course Co-ordinator within 10 business days of the course commencement date. Each case will be considered individually.