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RELATED POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS:	2018 - 2019 VET Funding Contract <i>Skills First</i> – HESG 2019 Guidelines about Fees Version 1.0.

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## Introduction

South West TAFE is responsible for the setting the tuition fees for Government funded courses in accordance with Fee Guidelines issued by the Higher Education and Skills Group from time to time. SWTAFE is required to allow concessions on standard hourly tuition fees in accordance with these Guidelines based on 20% of the published standard hourly fee.

Acceptable evidence of eligibility for a concession is documented in the 2018 VET Funding Contract *Skills First* (2019 Guidelines about Fees Version 1.0).

South West TAFE also has an obligation to publish on our website all fees associated with government funded training courses.

## Scope

This procedure is applicable to students enrolling in Certificate I to Certificate IV government funded courses at South West TAFE.

## Definitions

- **2018 - 2019 TAFE VET Funding Contract *Skills First* – Higher Education and Skills Group (HESG):**  
The Training Service Delivery Agreement between South West Institute of TAFE and the Department of Education and Training
- **Concession fees:**  
A reduction in tuition fees to an amount calculated on the basis of 20% of the published *Skills First* standard hourly fee.
- **Fee exemption:**  
Where the individual or course has no course fees imposed.
- **Financial hardship:**  
Being able to demonstrate that the imposing of full fees will cause financial difficulties, that will adversely impact on the student's ability to achieve positive educational outcomes.

## Delegated authority

The South West TAFE Board has delegated authority to consider and provide concession fees where cases of financial hardship can be demonstrated. The South West TAFE Board has nominated SWTAFE's Manager Client Services to oversee the fee concession process.

## Procedure to claim concession fees

- As part of the pre-enrolling information package, all potential students are provided with information on South West TAFE's fees and charges. This information is also available on South West TAFE's website at [www.swtafe.edu.au](http://www.swtafe.edu.au). The website provides the potential student with all the relevant information including:
  - > fees that may be charged
  - > acceptable concessions categories
  - > fee payment options
  - > what happens when you withdraw from a course
  - > how to apply for special consideration of having your fees reduced
- The Concession Card must be valid at and cover the commencement date for the concession rate to be applied to the student's fees.

- Concession tuition fees are available to students eligible for a government funded place within a course at AQF level IV or below, and who can provide the required evidence prior to the course commencement date. If the student is enrolling in a Diploma or above AQF level course, concession rates cannot be applied except in specific circumstances
- Concession General Service Fees are available to students eligible for a government funded place within all course levels.
- A student who has been issued with a current
  - Health Care Card;
  - Pensioner Concession Card **OR**
  - Veterans Gold Card;

is eligible to claim concession fees. Being listed as a dependent on their parent's or partner's Concession Card also makes them eligible for concession fees. The valid Concession Card must be sighted and a copy retained of the entitlement prior to commencement of training. In some instances an exception may allow the application of a valid concession provided within 10 days of enrolment.

- Where a student does not have a valid Concession Card, but believes they have a case for financial hardship, the student is required to write to the Manager Client Services outlining their claim. Alternatively, the Education Pathways team can make a recommendation to the Manager, Client Services for consideration of an Access and Equity Scholarship to be issued.

### **Applying Concession Fees without evidence to Government funded eligible individuals:**

The Government has nominated that in the following circumstances, Concession Fees are to be applied to *Skills First* eligible individuals, even if they do not have evidence of concession.

- **Indigenous Completions Initiative** – for enrolments in a course at any level, the concession fee must be applied to individuals who self-identify as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent once deemed eligible for *Skills First* funding.
- **Asylum Seeker VET Program**  
Under the Asylum Seeker VET program, for enrolments in courses at the Certificate IV level and below, the Training Provider must charge the concession fee to an asylum seeker or trafficked person enrolled on or after 1 July 2016.

### **Access and Equity Scholarships**

The intent of the Access and Equity Scholarship Fund is to support those students who wish to access TAFE training but who are unable to do so due to the impact of higher fees across some programs. The scholarship is particularly focused on potential full time students who are likely to have limited options in alternative training and / or employment and where the inability to pay higher fees may see them not being able to engage in meaningful education, training and / or future employment. The scholarship will cover course fees only and will effectively reduce the course fees to the equivalent concession rate fee.

- Applicants need to be able to demonstrate financial hardship
- Applicants should be able to articulate their commitment to the course and area of study
- Applicants must be an Australian citizen or permanent resident

Consideration for an Access and Equity Scholarship can only be made through the Education Pathways Team who ascertains a student's ability to pay the fees through alternative sources or processes.

- The EPO team will provide the Manager – Client Services with a background case of potential candidates.
- The Manager – Client Services will consider these and if viable, will make a recommendation to the South West TAFE Executive Team
- South West TAFE Executive Team to consider at each weekly IET meeting

Where a student believes they have a case for financial hardship, but do not meet the requirements of the Scholarship fund or the Fund is exhausted, they may write to the Executive Manager Education and Teaching Support outlining their claim and seeking a reduction in fees.

- The Executive Manager Education and Teaching Support will assess the claim and provide written advice to the student within 10 business days.
- Claims will be assessed on a case by case basis.

- Decisions will be based on the following criteria:
  - Impact on the student's ability to participate in the course and achieve a positive educational outcome.
  - Actual evidence provided to support the claim (i.e. doctor's certificate, financial information)
  - Information that indicates that the individual is borderline in qualifying for a Centrelink benefit.
- When making an assessment, additional evidence of financial hardship to support the individual's claim may be requested. This may result in the individual being referred to Centrelink for an official eligibility assessment.

UNDER REVIEW