



REFUND POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Refund Policy and Procedure		
Code: E2.15	Area: Non-Academic E	
Policy Owner: Executive Management Group	Version #: 2.4	Date: 19 Apr 2024
Policy Developer/Reviewer: CEO	Review date: 19 Apr 2027	

VERSION HISTORY

Version	Authorised by	Approval Date	Details
1.0	EMG	26 Jul 2013	Document creation
1.0	EMG	16 Jan 2014	Regular review (no amendments)
1.0	EMG	14 Jan 2016	Regular review (no amendments)
2.0	EMG	2 Oct 2019	Comprehensive review to align with HESF15, expanded to include all forms of refund (domestic and international)
2.1	PRG	29 Apr 2020	Corrected Section 3.2 "Refund before Course Commencement – International Students" for consistency with "Policy" section; clarified Finance Manager & Registrar responsibilities.
2.2	EMG	17 Mar 2021	Changed "a student may" to "a student will" receive a refund in Section 2.5(1).
2.3	EMG	13 Apr 2022	Revised to align with changes to the Special Circumstances Refund Policy and Procedure.
2.4	EMG	19 Apr 2024	Replaced "Finance Manager" with "Accounts Officer"

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The aim of this policy is to:

- Provide guidance to domestic and international students on when they are eligible for refunds.
- Provide guidance to domestic and international students on how to apply and receive refunds.

This policy applies to domestic and international students at the Sydney Institute of Traditional Chinese Medicine (SITCM).

1 OVERVIEW

This policy articulates under what circumstances SITCM will provide refunds to any student who withdraws from a unit on or before the unit's Census Date.

This policy is informed by the *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021*, particularly Sections 1.1 Admissions and 7.2 Information for Prospective and Current Students; the *Higher Education Support Act 2003 (HESA)*, *Higher Education Provider Guidelines 2012*, *Higher Education Support (VET) Guideline 2015*, *VET Student Loans Act 2016*, *VET Student Loans Rules 2016*, *Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000*, and *Education Services for Overseas Students (Calculation of Refund) Specification 2014*.

2 POLICY

2.1 REFUNDS IF A STUDENT WITHDRAWS

- 1) Students may apply to withdraw from a unit of study in accordance with the *Deferral, Suspension and Withdrawal Policy*.
- 2) To be eligible for a refund under this policy, a student must withdraw from a unit before or on the Census Date.
 - a. The Census Date can be found at: <https://www.sitcm.edu.au/calendar/>.
- 3) A withdrawal from a unit after Census Date does not give rise to eligibility for a refund unless the *Special Circumstances Refund Policy and Procedure* applies.

2.1.1 DOMESTIC STUDENTS WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR A HELP LOAN

- 1) If a domestic FEE-HELP or VET Student Loan (VSL) student withdraws from a unit of study on or before the Census Date (as per the *Deferral, Suspension and Withdrawal Policy*), the student will not incur a loan debt.
 - a. If the student has made any upfront payments, these will be refunded to the student.
- 2) All refund requests for upfront payments must be submitted on the *Refund Request Form* in accordance with Section 3.1 (Refund Before Census Date – Domestic Fee-Paying Students).

2.1.2 DOMESTIC STUDENT FEE-PAYING STUDENTS

- 1) If a domestic fee-paying student withdraws from a unit of study on or before the Census Date (as per the *Deferral, Suspension and Withdrawal Policy*):
 - a. If the student has not already paid tuition fees, they will not be liable to pay.
 - b. If the student has already paid some or all of their tuition fees, these will be refunded to the student.
- 2) All refund requests must be submitted on the *Refund Request Form* in accordance with Section 3.1 (Refund Before Census Date – Domestic Fee-Paying Students).

2.1.3 INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

- 1) In each international student's Letter of Offer, SITCM specifies the refund requirements that apply if the student defaults (as defined in Section 47A of the *ESOS Act 2000*).
- 2) If an international student withdraws from a unit of study (as per the *Deferral, Suspension and Withdrawal Policy*):
 - a. Before the semester commencement date, they will have 90% of their tuition fees refunded.
 - b. Between the semester commencement date and the Census Date, they will have 70% of the tuition fees refunded.
- 3) Section 2.1.3(2) does not apply in the following scenarios:
 - a. SITCM defaults; or
 - b. An international student defaults and SITCM failed to enter into a written agreement with the student that meets the requirements of Section 47B of the *ESOS Act 2000*; or
 - c. An international student defaults due to visa refusal.
- 4) For Section 2.1.3(3) scenarios, SITCM will use the calculations in the *Education Services for Overseas Students (Calculation of Refund) Specification 2014*.
- 5) All refund requests must be submitted on the *Refund Request Form* in accordance with Section 3.2 (Refund Before Census Date – International Students).

2.2 REFUNDS IF A VISA IS REFUSED

- 1) An international student will receive a refund if their student visa has been refused.
- 2) Refund amounts differ depending on whether:
 - a. An international student is already onshore and has commenced a course while awaiting the outcome of a new visa or extension of their visa; or
 - b. An international student has been refused a visa while they are still in their home country/offshore and therefore has not commenced a course.
- 3) All refund requests must be submitted on the *Refund Request Form* in accordance with Section 3.3 (Refund for Visa Application Rejection).

2.3 REFUNDS IF SITCM DEFAULTS

- 1) A student will receive a refund if SITCM defaults for the following reasons:
 - a. If the offered course does not start on the published or agreed starting day.
 - b. If the course stops being provided after it starts and before it is completed.
 - c. If the course stops being provided due to a sanction on SITCM from a regulatory body.
- 2) A refund of unspent tuition fees will be provided within 14 days of the default day.
 - a. Higher Education (HE) students should refer to the *Course Discontinuation Policy and Procedure* for further details.
 - b. Vocational Education and Training (VET) students should refer to the *VET Tuition Assurance Policy and Procedure* for further details.

3 PROCEDURES

3.1 REFUND BEFORE CENSUS DATE – DOMESTIC FEE-PAYING STUDENTS

- 1) In accordance with the *Deferral, Suspension and Withdrawal Policy and Procedure*, on or before the Census Date the student submits to the Registrar:
 - a. A *Request to Withdraw Form*, with a *Refund Request Form* either included in the withdrawal application or provided no more than one calendar month after the withdrawal application is submitted; or
 - b. A *Request to Defer or Suspend Form*, with a *Refund Request Form* provided no more than one calendar month after the deferral application is approved.
- 2) The Registrar assesses the refund request and provides the student with written notification of the outcome within 14 calendar days of receiving the request.
 - a. If the request is approved, the Registrar also notifies the Accounts Officer of this outcome within 14 calendar days of receiving the refund request.
- 3) If the Accounts Officer is notified that a refund request is approved, they ensure that the refund is paid into the nominated original bank account or credit/debit card within 14 calendar days of receiving the notification.

3.2 REFUND BEFORE CENSUS DATE – INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

- 1) In accordance with the *Deferral, Suspension and Withdrawal Policy and Procedure*, on or before the Census Date the student submits to the Registrar:
 - a. A *Request to Withdraw Form*, with a *Refund Request Form* either included in the submission or provided no more than one calendar month after the withdrawal request is submitted; or
 - b. A *Request to Defer or Suspend Form*, with a *Refund Request Form* provided no more than one calendar month after the deferral request is approved.

- 2) The Registrar assesses the refund request and provides the student with written notification of the outcome within 14 calendar days of receiving the request.
 - a. If the request is approved, the Registrar also notifies the Accounts Officer of this outcome within 14 calendar days of receiving the refund request.
- 3) If the Accounts Officer is notified that a refund request is approved, they ensure that the refund is paid into the nominated original bank account or credit/debit card within 14 calendar days of receiving the notification.

3.3 REFUND FOR VISA REFUSAL

- 1) International students who have been refused a visa complete a *Refund Request Form*, with documentary evidence of the visa refusal, to the Registrar within 14 calendar days of the rejection.
- 2) If the *Refund Request Form* is correctly completed and includes appropriate documentary evidence, the Registrar notifies the Accounts Officer within 14 days of receiving the form.
 - a. If the *Refund Request Form* is not correctly completed or does not include appropriate documentary evidence, the Registrar notifies the student of the issue within 14 days of receiving the form.
- 3) The Accounts Officer calculates the refund amount in accordance with the *Explanatory Guidance on the Education Services for Overseas Students (Calculation of Refund) Specification 2014*.
- 4) The Accounts Officer pays the refund into the nominated original bank account or credit/debit card within 14 calendar days of receiving the Registrar's notification.

4 RELATED POLICY AND OTHER DOCUMENTATION

- 1) Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021.
- 2) Higher Education Support Act 2003.
- 3) Higher Education Provider Guidelines 2012.
- 4) Higher Education Support (VET) Guideline 2015.
- 5) VET Student Loans Act 2016.
- 6) VET Student Loans Rules 2016.
- 7) Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000.
- 8) Education Services for Overseas Students (Calculation of Refund) Specification 2014.
- 9) Fee Remission (Special Circumstances) Application.
- 10) Deferral, Suspension and Withdrawal Policy.
- 11) Special Circumstances Refund Policy.
- 12) Refund Request Form.
- 13) Course Discontinuation Policy and Procedure.
- 14) VET Tuition Assurance Policy and Procedure.
- 15) Request to Withdraw Form.
- 16) Request to Defer or Suspend Form.