

# Refund Policy and Procedure

## Policy Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide refund guidelines for all potential and currently enrolled Think: Colleges domestic and overseas students.

## Policy Scope

This policy applies to all potential and currently enrolled domestic and overseas students.

## Definitions

Refer to *Glossary of Terms*.

## Policy Content Domestic Students enrolled in a higher education course or a VET FEE-HELP enabled course

- Students who lodge their *Change/Defer/Withdraw Application* on or before the census date for a unit of study will be withdrawn or granted a deferral without penalty from any unit in which they were enrolled. They will not incur a FEE-HELP/ VET FEE-HELP debt for the unit and any fees paid for the unit will be refunded.
- Students who lodge their *Change/Defer/Withdraw Application* from a course or units of study after the census date will incur a FEE-HELP/ VET FEE-HELP debt for those units and/or remain liable for tuition fees.
- A student may apply to have their FEE-HELP balance re-credited if the student withdraws from a unit of study after census date, or has been unable to complete the requirements of a unit of study, and believes this is due to special circumstances.
- A student must apply in writing for re-crediting of their FEE-HELP balance within 12 months from the date of withdrawal from the unit of study or the date of receiving their final results for the unit. Think: Colleges may exercise its discretion to waive this requirement if in its opinion it was not possible for the application to be made before the end of the 12 month period.
- If Think: Colleges cancels a student enrolment based on a course no longer being offered, a course not being offered for a particular term, or other provider default, students will be notified in writing and will be given the option to transfer their enrolment to another course and/or term or request a full refund of their tuition fees. Requests for a full refund of tuition fees will be processed within 20 working days of the provider default unless a request to transfer enrolment to another course or term is received from the student in writing during this period.

Refer to *Student Review Policy and Procedure for Re-Crediting a FEE-HELP Balance* for more information.

## Policy Content - Overseas students enrolled in all courses and domestic students enrolled in a vocational course which is not VET FEE-HELP enabled

- If a student submits a *Change/Defer/Withdraw form* to Think: Student Services of the intention to withdraw from a course of study more than 28 days before the course commencement date, then all fees except AUD\$1,000 from the enrolment deposit will be refunded. For courses where the total fee is less than AUD\$1,000, all fees will be refunded less a processing fee of AUD\$450.
- If a student submits a *Change/Defer/Withdraw form* to 0-28 days before course commencement for a conditional offer where the conditions of the offer have not been met all fees will be refunded less a processing fee of AUD\$1,000. For courses where the total course fee is less than AUD\$1,000 all fees will be refunded less a processing fee of AUD\$450.
- If a student wishes to withdraw from a course of study for any reason 0-28 days before the course commencement date, after the course commencement date, or if the student enrolment is terminated by the College, then all fees for the full academic year remain payable and are not

refundable except in extenuating circumstances. Student enrolment may be terminated by the College because of a failure to comply with college policy, bad behaviour, unsatisfactory progress, failure at examinations, or unsatisfactory attendance, refer to the *Suspension and Expulsion Policy and Procedure*.

- Where a student withdraws 28 days or less before courses commencement and wishes to be considered for a refund of his/her tuition balance and/or exemption from liability for tuition fees the student must fill in a *Special Circumstances Form* and submit it within 20 working days of the date of his/her withdrawal/deferral from those units of study. Approval of special circumstances will only be given for extenuating circumstances, refer to the *Withdrawal Policy and Procedure*.
- If Think: Colleges cancels a student enrolment based on a course no longer being offered, a course not being offered for a particular term, or other provider default, students will be notified in writing and will be given the option to transfer their enrolment to another course and/or term or request a full refund of their tuition fees. Requests for a full refund of tuition fees will be processed within 2 weeks of the provider default unless a request to transfer enrolment to another course or term is received from the student in writing during this period.

#### **Policy Content - Overseas students enrolled in all courses and domestic students enrolled in a vocational course which is not VET FEE-HELP enabled and who have a packaged offer for multiple courses within the Think: Education Group or with a partner college**

If a student planning to articulate from one course to another within the Think: Education Group does not receive their final results until less than 28 days before the course commencement date and the results show that the student does not meet the entry requirements for the next course, and if the student submits a *Change/Defer/Withdraw form* to Think: Student Services of the intention to defer or withdraw from a course of study within 14 days of receiving their results, then one of the following will occur:

- a. all fees except AUD\$1,000 from the enrolment deposit will be refunded; or
- b. for courses where the total fee is less than AUD\$1,000, all fees will be refunded less a processing fee of AUD \$450; or
- c. the student can transfer the fees to the next available study period.

If a student planning to articulate from one course to another within the Think: Education Group does not receive their final results until less than 28 days before the course commencement date and the results show that the student does not meet the entry requirements for the next course and the student does not submit a *Change/Defer/Withdrawal form* to Think: Student Services of the intention to defer or withdraw from their next course, then the Policy Content in the *Policy Content - Overseas students enrolled in all courses and domestic students enrolled in a vocational course which is not VET FEE-HELP enabled* section applies.

If a student enrolled in an English language course meets the entry requirements for their next course early and withdrawal from the remaining study period(s) is approved by the Head of College, remaining fees may be forwarded to the student's next institution. This can only be done if the student's next course is with a college within the Think: Education Group or with a Partner Institution. Written authorisation signed by the student must be received before fees are forwarded.

#### **Additional Conditions for Overseas Students**

- If an overseas student enrolment is terminated because the Student Visa was not granted, then all fees will be refunded less a processing fee of \$450. This is subject to submission of documentary evidence from the relevant Australian government department that the visa was refused.
- The Think: Colleges refund policy is consistent with the requirements of the National Code and the ESOS Act 2000 (Sections 27-32) pertaining to student default and provider default. As a registered provider Think: Colleges will pay a refund to students in the following circumstances:
  - a) **Refund for provider default:** In the case of a default by one of the Think: Colleges:

- i. The College will refund all tuition fees within 2 weeks of the date of default. The College will also give the student a statement that explains how the refund amount has been calculated. **OR**
- ii. The student may be offered enrolment in an alternative course by Think: Colleges at no extra cost. The student has the right to choose whether they prefer a full refund of course fees, or to accept a place in another course. If the student chooses placement in another course, the student will be issued a new *Letter of Offer and Written Agreement*. The student must accept the offer following the *Admissions and Enrolment Policy and Procedure*.

If Think: Colleges is unable to provide a refund or place the student in an alternative course, the Overseas Student Tuition Assurance Scheme (OSTAS) administered by the Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET) will place the student in a suitable alternative course at no extra cost to the student. Finally, if ACPET cannot place the student in a suitable alternative course, the ESOS Assurance Fund Manager will attempt to place the student in a suitable alternative course or, if this is not possible, the student will be eligible for a refund as calculated by the Fund Manager.

b) **Refund for student default:** In the case of a student default, Think: Colleges will make a refund to the student according to this *Refund Policy and Procedure*. The terms and conditions are consistent with the National Code 2007. Any refund will be paid within 4 weeks of receiving a *Change/Defer/Withdraw form* along with required supporting documents from the student.

If the student wishes to be considered for a refund of his/her tuition balance and/or exemption from liability for tuition fees the student must fill in a *Special Circumstances Form* and submit it within 60 days of the date of his/her withdrawal/deferral from the course(s). Approval of special circumstances will only be given for extenuating circumstances.

### Procedure for Implementation

1. Students seeking a refund must apply to Think: Student Services. All applications must include a completed *Change/Defer/Withdraw Form* and have relevant supporting documents.
2. Applications are processed once all required documents have been received.
3. Refunds will be granted according to the above guidelines. The Head of College (or delegated nominee) will review each application for deferral or withdrawal application and may interview the student before approving or rejecting an application. The Chief Financial Officer (or delegated nominee) will review each application and may interview the student before processing payment.
4. If a student refund application is approved, Think: Student Services will cancel the student's enrolment and the tuition fees will be refunded in accordance with this policy. Students transferring to another course offered by a Think: Education Group College or Partner Institution may have their refund applied directly to the new course if written authorisation signed by the student has been received. All other refund payments will be issued to the person or organisation that initially paid the fees. Any fees received from Education Agents will be returned directly to the student.
5. If the student refund application is rejected then the student will have an option to lodge a formal grievance and appeal the decision within 20 working days after receiving the notification. (Refer to appeal section under the *Non Academic Grievance Policy and Procedure*).
6. The application for Deferral or Withdrawal and supporting documents are returned to Think: Student Services. Think: Student Services records the outcome in the student's record in The Student Records Management System, files supporting documents in the student's file, and coordinates payment and notifications with the Accounts Department.

Please refer to [www.swin.edu.au](http://www.swin.edu.au) for current information on the refund policy applying to Swinburne University's Bachelor of Design programs.

Please refer to [www.latrobe.edu.au](http://www.latrobe.edu.au) for current information on the refund policy applying to La Trobe University's Bachelor of Business program.

This policy, and the availability of complaints and appeals processes, does not remove the right of the student to take action under Australia's consumer protection laws.

### Publication

These procedures are to be published for students on the Think: Colleges website and in the Student Handbook to ensure current and prospective students have up to date and accurate information publicly available to them.

<b>Responsibility</b>	Student Services Manager, Head of College, Chief Financial Officer
<b>Record Management</b>	Student File The Student Records Management System Refund Statement Deferral and Withdrawal Form
<b>Reference</b>	Deferral Policy and Procedure Withdrawal Policy and Procedure Non Academic Grievances Policy and Procedure Student Review Policy and Procedure for Re-Crediting a FEE-HELP Balance Admissions and Enrolment Policy and Procedure Suspension and Expulsion Policy and Procedure Glossary of Terms
<b>Policy Developed By</b>	Group Academic Director
<b>Policy Endorsed By</b>	Academic Board
<b>Policy Approved By</b>	Board of Directors
<b>Policy Complies with</b>	HESA, National Code 2007 and AQTF 2007
<b>Version Number</b>	4.1
<b>Revision Date</b>	5 February 2008 Revised July 2008 Revised 26 August 2008 Revised 24 September 2008 Revised 23 February 2011 Revised 15 February 2012 (header and footer only)