

Re-Crediting of VET FEE HELP Policy and Procedure

VET FEE-HELP is a Commonwealth Government loan scheme to assist eligible students to pay their tuition fees. VET FEE-HELP can cover all or part of the student's tuition fees for units of study which form part of AIHM program which is approved for VET FEE-HELP.

POLICY PURPOSE

This document describes the Institute's processes and procedures for the recrediting of FEE-HELP balances, and the review of associated decisions. It covers:

- all potential and currently enrolled domestic students who are or would be entitled to VET FEE-HELP assistance
- formal requests from students for refund of paid tuition fees and/or re-credit of VET FEE-HELP balance and
- formal review of decisions associated with refund of paid tuition fees and/or re-credit of VET FEE-HELP balance.

Policy and Procedure

Student who withdraw from their VET studies (or VET units of study) after the census date, can apply in certain circumstances to have their FEE-HELP balance re-credited (***refer also to the Withdrawal Policy in this Manual***).

A student may apply to the AIHM for a re-credit of FEE-HELP balance if they withdraw from a VET course or VET unit of study after the census date or the student has not completed the requirements of that VET unit of study.

A student may not apply for a re-credit if they have successfully completed the VET unit of study. A student who receives a fail grade is considered not to have successfully completed the requirements for the VET unit of study.

Application for re-credit of FEE-HELP balance must be made in writing to the Training Manager AIHM, within 12 months of the withdrawal date, or if the student has not withdrawn, within 12 months of the end of the period of study the VET unit was to be undertaken. Where the AIHM allows a student to defer completion of their VET studies, the 12 month period applies from the end of the extended deferral period.

Applications for re-credit can be posted to the AIHM to PO Box 3079, SUCCESS, WA, 6964 or sent by email to info@aihm.wa.edu.au

The application should include any independent supporting documentation, such as letter from the student's doctor/medical provider or counsellor, to support their claim.

Each application will be examined and determined on its merits. The AIHM will consider the student's claims together with any supporting documentary evidence that substantiates the claim.

The AIHM will ensure that steps are taken as soon as practicable by the Training Manager to consider the application for re-credit of a student's FEE-HELP balance. The Training Manager will give a written response of the decision on applications for re-credit of FEE-HELP balance within one month of receiving them in writing. The letter to the applicant will

include a statement of reasons for the decision and of their rights for a review of the decision if the person is unhappy with the outcome. The person will also be advised in this notice, that the time limit for applying to the AIHM for a review of a decision is 28 days from the day the person first received notice of the decision.

The letter to the applicant will also include advice that the applicant has the right of appeal to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT), Deputy Registrar, Level 5, 111 St Georges Terrace, Perth, WA, 6000. ☎ 08 93277200. Web site: www.aat.gov.au and that if an appeal is lodged with the AAT, an application fee of \$682 may be charged by the AAT.
Information correct @ 26/03/10

A review of a decision may be requested by the person affected by the original decision, or without a request if AIHM is satisfied that there is sufficient reason to do so.

A request for a review of a decision by AIHM not to re-credit FEE-HELP balance must be made in writing to the Dean of Studies and must state the reasons why the application for review is being made.

The Dean of Studies will acknowledge in writing receipt of an application for a review of a decision within 14 days. This written acknowledgement will include advice that if the applicant has not been informed of a decision concerning the review within 45 days of the Dean of Studies receiving the request for review, then the Dean of Studies is taken to have confirmed the original decision of the Training Manager. A decision by the Dean of Studies shall supersede any decision made by the Training Manager.

The Dean of Studies will reconsider the original decision and may:

- (i) confirm the decision; or
- (ii) vary the decision; or
- (iii) set aside the decision and substitute a new decision.

The Dean of Studies will inform the applicant, in writing, of the decision and reasons for making the decision. In addition, this notification will advise the applicant of their right to appeal to the AAT (contact details and possible cost of appeal as aforementioned), for a review of the decision if they are unsatisfied with the outcome.

The Dean of Studies AIHM will inform the Training Manager AIHM in writing of the outcome of the review. If the original decision has been varied, the Training Manager is responsible for advising the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DIISRTE) in writing of the decision to re-credit the applicants FEE-HELP balance.

Upon written notification from DIISRTE, the AIHM will supply to DIISRTE all requested original documentation within 5 working days. Documents will be sent to DIISRTE by courier or Express Post and a copy of all documentation will be kept on the applicant's personal file at the AIHM.

Special Circumstances

The AIHM must, where it is satisfied that **special circumstances** apply, re-credit a students FEE-HELP balance with an amount equal to the amount of VET FEE-HELP assistance the student received for that VET course or VET unit of study.

The AIHM must re-credit if it is satisfied that special circumstances apply to the student that were:

- *^Beyond the student's control;*
- *^^Did not make their full impact on the person until, on or after the census date; and*
- Made it *^^^impracticable for the student to complete the requirements* for the VET unit of study in the period during which the student undertook, or was due to undertake the VET unit of study.

Special circumstances do **NOT** include, for example, but not limited to;

- Lack of knowledge or understanding of requirements for VET FEE-HELP assistance; or
- A student's incapacity to repay a VET FEE-HELP loan, as repayments are income contingent and the student can apply for a deferral of a compulsory repayment in certain circumstances.

^ Beyond the student's control

Circumstances could be considered beyond a student's control if a situation occurs that a reasonable person would consider is not due to the student's own action or inaction, either directly or indirectly, and for which the student is not responsible. This would generally be expected to be unusual, uncommon or abnormal. For example, lack of knowledge of how VET FEE-HELP works, or the requirements regarding census dates would NOT be considered beyond a student's control.

^^ Did not make their full impact on the person until, on or after the census date

Circumstances could be considered not to make their full impact on the student until on, or after, the census date of the VET unit of study if the circumstances occur:

- Before the census date, but worsen unexpectedly after the census date;
- Before the census date, but the full effect or magnitude does not become apparent until after that day; or
- On, or after, the census date

^^^impracticable for the student to complete the requirements

Circumstances that make it impracticable for the student to complete the requirements for their VET unit of study may include (but not limited to):

- Medical circumstances. For example, where a student's medical condition has changed to such an extent that he or she is unable to continue studying;
- Family/personal circumstances. For example, death or severe medical problems within a family, or unforeseen family financial difficulties, so that it is unreasonable to expect a person to continue VET studies;
- Employment related circumstances. For example, where a student's employment status or arrangements have changed so that the student is unable to continue his or her VET studies, and this change is beyond the student's control; or
- VET course related circumstances. For example, where the AIHM has changed the VET unit of study it had offered, and the student is disadvantaged by either not being able to complete the VET unit of study, or not being given credit towards other VET units of study or VET courses.

A student is unable to complete the requirements for a VET unit of study if the student is, for example but not limited to, unable to:

- Undertake the necessary private study required, or attend sufficient lectures or tutorials or meet other compulsory attendance requirements in order to meet their compulsory VET course requirements; or
- Complete the required assessable work; or
- Sit the required assessments; or



- Complete any other VET course requirements because of their inability to meet the above.